

## Guidelines

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## *For the Present, but also the Future*

From our perspective, politics are a comprehensive tool to exert influence on our society. In everything we do, sustainability is a key factor. Social, economic and ecological goals have to be taken into account in a balanced way. The basis for such a policy is an innovative and sustainable market economy, a lively democracy, a responsible attitude toward the environment as well as a tolerant and solidary society.

A sound environment and healthy finances are the basis for the maintenance of our wealth. Our mission is to preserve this basis for our way of living for future generations by relying on sustainable development. We endeavour not to leave an ecological or financial burden to our descendants so that they are able to live up to their full potential as well. Whenever possible, incentives, rather than legal requirements and prohibitions, are the preferable tool to reach this goal. We commit to the preservation of biodiversity, which is an economic necessity.

The Green Liberals stand for a pluralistic society in which individual freedom and personal responsibility are held in high regard. This freedom shall only be restricted if the freedom of others is curtailed or if they are threatened to be harmed. The role of government is not to tell people how they ought to live, but to adopt a neutral stance toward all world views insofar as they are compatible with the rule-of-law-principle. Equal treatment of women and men as well as the equality of all family models and lifestyles are a matter of course and have to be ascertained. There is no place for discrimination and racism in our society.

We stand for the Swiss system of direct democracy and the Swiss federal state which does justice to the plurality of cultures and languages in our country. Basic rights and international law are binding. Green Liberal policies are fact oriented. Solutions are more important than partisan politics based on a traditional left-wing/right-wing divide. Our policies shall be in everyone's interest rather than favouring special interest groups if they pursue goals which run counter to the common good. Committed to shaping the future, we are convinced that prosperity, progress, a sound environment and a liberal legal system are compatible.

## **1. Environment, Energy, Mobility and Land-Use Planning**

### 1.1. Energy and Climate

Our current use of energy is not sustainable. We consume more energy than our renewable sources are able to provide. Since energy which does not have to be used is the most eco-friendly solution, the goal of energy efficiency and the lowest possible consumption of energy is primary in our view. We support the rapid introduction of modern standards for devices and technology and stand for reinforced efforts at building restoration.

Society will always depend upon energy as key resource. In order to treat our climate and environment with care, we have to change our energy supply: discarding CO<sub>2</sub>-heavy technologies and nuclear power, with their unforeseeable technical and financial risks, we have to move toward renewable energies. With this shift, we reduce not only the impact on the environment, but also the dependence on oil, gas and uranium imports from unstable world regions in which human rights violations are common.

Changes in the global climate have drastic consequences for people, the economy and the environment. They reinforce regional and global conflicts about decreasing natural resources. Efforts to reduce negative human influence on the climate, particularly the emission of greenhouse gases, thus have to be strengthened consistently and without delay. At the same time, it is important to focus on appropriate measures to adapt to climate change on a global, regional and local level. Natural resources have to be used more efficiently by closing material cycles. This increase in efficiency is to be accompanied by the reduction of their consumption and the avoidance of waste. A necessary requirement for this to work is cost transparency for the whole life cycle of products, natural resources and forms of energy.

We stand for energy transition and its implementation. Financial incentives such as steering taxes, bonus malus systems and changes in the tax code can lead to a safe, ecological and economically sustainable energy supply. We therefore attach crucial importance to cost transparency and an ecological tax reform which replaces existing taxes with taxes on energy or resources more generally. Such taxes ought to be based on the originator principle and neutral with respect to government quotas. Investments in renewable energies such as solar, hydro power, wind, geothermal and biomass thus become more attractive.

Nowadays, it is nuclear energy in particular which receives disguised subsidies. Radioactive waste management is an unresolved issue. In the event of damage, no sufficient insurance exists. Financial reserves for disposing of waste and dismantling

of nuclear power plants are insufficient. On the basis of increased energy efficiency and a focus on renewable energies, our energy supply will gradually become entirely renewable. We thus need no new nuclear power plants. After 40 years of active nuclear power plants in Switzerland, the question of how to deal with highly radioactive waste is still unresolved. A long-term storage of this waste remains impossible without a remaining risk for people and the environment. We are still far away from an ecologically and economically sustainable transmutation which could make nuclear waste significantly less harmful. All the more, it is the producers of nuclear energy who, at their own expense, have a duty to find the best possible solution to dispose of highly radioactive waste, whenever possible in Switzerland itself, as soon as the amount of waste has been defined in an official decision on a nuclear phaseout.

## 1.2. Soil, Air, Water

The excellence of our soil, the air we breathe and the water we use forms the very basis of our health and quality of life. The maintenance of this basis demands a sustainable use of natural resources as well as a circular flow of potentially recyclable resources which is as consistent as possible. For environmental control of air and water, the fertility of the soil and pollination of crop plants as well as wild plants, diverse ecosystems are essential. Still too many nutrient matters and pesticides end up in our environment as a result of improper use of fertilisers and plant protection products as well as contamination of products of the daily requirement. For this reason, our purpose is to reduce the burden on ecosystems by means of appropriate free-market incentives. A steering tax has to be raised on carbon dioxide emissions of all kinds, power fuels in particular. Critical values for harmful substances have to be respected in a consistent manner, the same going for the legal requirements for water protection. We stand for a careful use of water and support the renaturation and revitalisation of flowing waters.

## 1.3. Mobility

Mobility is an essential element of our social and economic life. Its causers, however, do not bear the costs sufficiently. Its price is artificially low. The demand for mobility in Switzerland is thus excessive and has been growing for years at a rapid pace. Motorised private transport is one of the main consumers of fossil resources and one of the main emitters of greenhouse gases, harmful substances and noise. It thus has to be used with care and responsibly and has to be financed on the basis of its individual employment. Accordingly, we support a sustainable reform of the Swiss traffic system. First and foremost, traffic ought to be avoided. Secondly, we ought to encourage more efficient means of transport such as pedestrian traffic and bicycles as well as public transport.

In order to sustainably reduce the demand for mobility, we intend to bring together housing, leisure time and work-related activities as closely as possible. For this purpose, the users of mobility ought to bear its costs and incentives have to be put in place for a careful and responsible use. Comprehensive mobility pricing is thus a central element of a Green Liberal traffic policy. Such a system ought to be neutral with respect to fiscal revenue and state quotas, which means that it has to go without an overall higher financial burden on the population. Besides public transport, new eco-friendly technologies such as renewable electric mobility can play a key role with respect to the reduction of noise and emissions. Furthermore, home office solutions and the increased use of modern means of communication make a substantial contribution to the reduction of work-related traffic. In order to reach cost reflectiveness in air traffic, substantial and internationally coordinated efforts are necessary. Switzerland's role is to actively support efforts to treat air traffic like other modes of transport, particularly with respect to taxation. The Green Liberals hold a critical attitude towards further expansions of the capacity of Swiss airports.

We stand behind the article on the protection of the Alps in the federal constitution and demand an effective and efficient implementation of the shift of transalpine freight traffic towards rail transport.

#### 1.4. Land-Use Planning

Our goal is to preserve the diversity of Switzerland's landscapes and architecture. For this purpose, a clear division is required between settlement and non-development areas. This necessitates an accordingly adapted spatial development. In cities, densification of built-up areas is a necessity in order to preserve as well as create recreational areas and green oases within urban landscapes. Agglomerations shall remain attractive areas with intact landscapes, which demands moderate densification. Apart from the protection of landscapes as recreational areas, land-use planning has to provide for socio-economic concerns in mountain areas and peripheral regions. For instance, ecologically responsible tourism needs to have its place.

The right of appeal for associations is crucial for the implementation of environmental law. It enables associations to draw the attention of authorities to omissions and thus to ensure compliance with the law.

#### 1.5. Agriculture and Forestry

Agriculture plays a central role in sustainable food production as well as the preservation of soil quality, environmental quality, biodiversity and landscapes. We support ecologically sustainable, entrepreneurial and multi-functional agriculture respective of exemplary animal welfare and species-appropriate keeping of farm animals. This requires a rethinking of agricultural policy. In order to reach ecological goals and to strengthen entrepreneurship, we need less rather than more public funds. Incentives which are harmful to the environment are to be eliminated. Instead of general income support, more and increased compensations for sustainable production methods as well as ecological accomplishments and achievements in the common interest such as the care for the cultural landscape or the preservation of biodiversity are in order. We hold a critical view of agricultural production with genetically engineered organisms. Without a sufficient scientific basis, such a production method has to be rejected.

Forests have to be protected as an important habitat for plants and animals, safeguard against natural disasters and recreational area. Being an important source of raw materials, forests have to be managed sustainably. The use and processing of domestic wood contributes to a reduced consumption of non-renewable energy and thus protects nature and the environment.

### 2. Economy, Government, Finance

#### 2.1. Economic Order

We regard Switzerland's liberal market economy and flexible job market as major location advantages. It is the government's duty, whenever possible, to avoid setting up barriers to the economy and to provide for sound competition in functional markets. Thousands of small and medium-sized businesses are an important cornerstone of our economy. Rather than imposing futile bureaucratic restrictions, entrepreneurship is to be actively supported by ensuring a good business environment. In the event of market failure, however, the government has an obligation to intervene. This is the case, for example, when causes of environmental emissions are not held responsible. State intervention in the market process shall, whenever possible, focus on free-market incentive systems such as steering taxes rather than legal requirements and prohibitions. From business leaders and companies, we expect ethically responsible behaviour with respect to human rights and the environment, nationally as well as internationally. Innovation is a crucial success factor for Switzerland and shall be supported by means of incentives such as innovation parks.

#### 2.2. Role of Government

We support a strong but lean government which focuses on key functions, is based on personal responsibility and organises its services like a modern business. Key government functions include the creation of framework conditions for free and fair competition, the correction of market failure, the protection of individual freedom and safety, providing access to education and health as well as financing the basic needs of citizens who require aid. Regular and careful examinations shall ascertain if the government performs its tasks in a satisfactory manner or if private organisations could perform them more effectively and efficiently.

## 2.3. Financial Policy

We demand from the government to spend no more than it collects in tax revenue. It has a duty not to leave mountains of debt to future generations. Since we intend to preserve the relatively low share of the public sector in Switzerland, clear-cut spending priorities are in order. Necessary austerity programmes for national budgets have to be carried out by means of targeted plans to rein in expenditure. Structural problems have to be solved in a sustainable manner. We welcome an anti-cyclical financial policy, for instance within the framework of a debt cap, a mechanism which the government has made use of for a number of years now. Throughout the economic cycle, expenditure shall not grow more strongly than GDP in order for the state to create a financial cushion during good times and exert a stabilising influence on the national economy during a recession. However, we hold a critical attitude towards stimulus packages. We intend to simplify the tax system and to bring it in line with our sustainability goals by means of ecological tax reform. We support tax competition between cantons and municipalities as well as the national fiscal equalisation system. Tax competition encourages an efficient handling of limited state resources and a needs-oriented offer of government services. At the same time, equalisation of resources and burdens ensures solidarity between cantons and regions. We favour effective measures to combat tax evasion and tax fraud.

## 2.4. Swiss Financial Centre

We stand for an internationally successful Swiss financial centre. Political stability, good infrastructure and a high level of education are important cornerstones. The Swiss financial centre shall operate exclusively with assets which have been subject to taxation. An important goal of our financial market policy must be safe access to all relevant global markets. In order for Switzerland not to suffer market disadvantages, we support efficient international regulatory standards. The Swiss financial centre shall continue to provide services which are excellent in an international comparison. The state shall be as uninvolved in the financial centre's risks as possible. Any remaining risks which the state has to carry ought to be compensated by the financial centre.

## 3. Society, Education and Health

### 3.1. Culture and Sports

Culture not only includes art and literature, but also lifestyles, basic human rights, value systems, traditions and belief systems. Culture reflects the state of a society, informs the development and the preservation of traditions and creeds. We recognise that culture conveys identity and has an important mediating function between various generations, lifestyles, languages and regions. In times of globalisation and change, it offers an orientation and teaches us to perceive the world in a differentiated manner.

Sports have an inclusive function, bring people together, cross political boundaries and connect various sections of the population. They are crucial for health, but also for integration and the cohesion of society. We support a targeted encouragement of youth and mass sports as well as good basic conditions for top-class sports.

### 3.2. Welfare System

The role of government is to support personal responsibility and solidarity, not to relieve autonomous, mature individuals of all responsibility. People in distress shall receive all the support they need for a dignified standard of living. Government support has to be measured and correspond to needs. It has to be organised in a way which maximises incentives to improve personal income or to return to the job market. We welcome incentives for employers to increasingly hire workers with physical and/or cognitive limitations.

We stand behind Switzerland's time-tested three-pillar pension system, but hold the opinion that the time of retirement ought to be more flexible, regardless of sex. The financial burden of the system has to be distributed more equally among generations. While the Old Age Insurance with its pay-as-you-go approach ("Umlageverfahren") based on solidarity is meant to lead to redistribution, pension plans are for personal provisions. The amount of a pension must be based on the total of contributions made. In order to keep the government's social welfare systems in balance, a debt cap is required as well as financially sustainable pensions.

### 3.3. Lifestyles and Family Models

To us, equal treatment of men and women as well as of all family models and lifestyles is a matter of course and must be guaranteed. This demands, for instance, to ensure equal wages for equal work, equal treatment for married couples, registered partnerships and concubinage in tax law and social security legislation as well as marriage equality and adoption rights for same-sex couples. The raising of children shall be compatible with a career for both women and men. Day-care facilities and part-time jobs should be a matter of course for both sexes on all levels. It is not the government's role to take over the responsibility of families, but it ought to support them if necessary.

### 3.4. Education and Research

Education is of central significance in a liberal society. It enables people to participate in social and economic life in a self-determined manner and act responsibly. Research is an essential stimulus for progress and indispensable for mastering the challenges of the future.

A strong public school system, the dual education system, first-class universities and the international recognition of Swiss degrees are of central significance for Switzerland as a research site and business location. For this reason, we support an internationally competitive university and research site. We also strive for an education system which is coordinated between the cantons and want young people to be able to receive an education which corresponds to their talents and skills. In order to counteract the increasing shortage of skilled professionals, regular training and further development courses in the affected professions shall be made more attractive for both sexes. In spite of the high value attached to education, expenditure has to be critically examined in this area as well. Control mechanisms ought to ensure the best possible cost-benefit ratio. We hold a critical view of the tendency to impose increasingly strict criteria and compulsory tertiary education degrees in certain professions. Learning a second official national language as a first foreign language in public schools is essential for a multilingual country such as Switzerland in order to enable linguistic and cultural exchanges amongst the different parts of the country.

### 3.5. Health

Our goal is a health care system which ensures a good medical service for the whole population and supports personal responsibility and prevention at the same time. We stand behind our current insurance system based on freedom of choice and competition. False incentives have to be eliminated, however. In particular, an efficient risk allocation amongst insurers is a necessity and the contractual obligation between insurers and care providers has to be called into question. The steady growth of health expenditure is something we observe with concern. Reasons include demographical ageing, increasing treatment opportunities, physician density in cities, partially ineffective hospital planning as well as medication costs. In order to reduce pressure on health spending, we require a centralisation of certain specialised medical services. We therefore support a health care system which is coordinated amongst the cantons.

Patients' rights need to be strengthened and better information needs to be provided. The topics of illness and death must lose their taboo stigma. By means of a living will, patients can reduce the number of questionable and cost-intensive life-prolonging measures. Conventional and complementary medicine shall be on an equal footing. Furthermore, prevention and personal responsibility need to be strengthened. The availability of necessary medical data which benefit patients shall be guaranteed at all time while respecting data protection.

### 3.6. Drug Policy

With respect to drug policy, we support the time-tested four-pillars-policy consisting of prevention, therapy, mitigation and repression. The goal must be to prevent people from becoming addicted, to provide good care for addicts, to offer them a regular daily routine and, whenever possible, to get people off drugs. At the same time, we strive for a strict prosecution of illegal drug-trafficking. Prosecution of addicts, however, does not make sense. Soft drugs such as cannabis ought to be legalised in due consideration of protection of minors and ought to be taxed on the same basis as alcohol and tobacco.

## 4. Foreign Policy and Immigration

### 4.1. Foreign Policy

From an economic, social and political viewpoint, Switzerland is among the most tightly networked countries in the world. We see this situation as an opportunity and stand behind an active policy in favour of peacebuilding, democracy, the rule of law, environmental protection and human rights. Switzerland, being a wealthy country which has profited from globalisation, has a responsibility to contribute to solutions to global problems. For this purpose, Switzerland actively works with international organisations and, having regard to the principle of neutrality, creates appropriate partnerships.

Free trade and economic partnerships secure our wealth and, given appropriate social and economic framework conditions, entail economic development opportunities for all countries. This creates stability, encourages peace and alleviates poverty around the world.

In accordance with our global responsibility, we stand behind a sustainable, bilateral and multilateral development cooperation which accords great importance to ecological challenges. In doing so, a targeted, efficient and – above all – transparent use of funds is an urgent necessity. Moreover, a renunciation of export subsidies and the access of developing countries to the Swiss market form an integral part of a coherent development policy.

### 4.2. Europe

In terms of geography and culture, Switzerland is part of Europe. We have strong political and economic ties with the European Union. A good partnership is in our basic interest, which is why we strongly support the bilateral approach and its further development. We recognise the EU's achievements with respect to peace and prosperity on the European continent. Our purpose is to continue to develop bilateral agreements with the EU and extend them to new states. If the bilateral approach should turn out to be impossible one day, we are open for alternatives.

### 4.3. Immigration and Asylum Policy

We strongly believe that our economy and society have profited from immigration over the past decades and will continue to do so in the future. It is our conviction that access to foreign job markets is an asset for the Swiss. When people intend to permanently take up residence in our country, their will to integrate is a prerequisite. In basic terms, the principle of personal responsibility applies in this context as well. However, the government ought to support integration efforts, for instance by means of language training.

After successful integration, immigrants ought to have the possibility to attain Swiss citizenship. Allocation of citizenship must primarily depend upon the level of integration, linguistic skills in particular. It shall not be based solely on the in-country-period or fail due to exaggerated administrative requirements.

We stand behind Switzerland's humanitarian tradition. Our country shall continue to provide shelter to victims of persecution in the future. In order to ensure this, asylum procedures must be conducted rapidly while effectively combatting abuses.

## 5. Security Policy

### 5.1. Internal Security

Basic civil rights such as personal freedom and integrity as well as the personal property of every person must be protected. Where personal responsibility and decency fail, it is the government's duty to protect these basic rights and to effectively punish offences. At the same, we have to be aware that absolute safety cannot exist in a free society. Protective measures require a legal basis and an effective political control. People who observe the law shall benefit from trust and privacy guarantees.

## 5.2. Army

We recognise the necessity of a national defence in the form of a lean and cost-efficient militia army. However, the purpose and structure of the army has to be in line with today's gravest threats and dangers. Examples include cyber-risks and terrorism, protection of critical infrastructure and subsidiary operations such as supporting cantons in the event of environmental disasters. The army's duties also include peace missions within the framework of UN mandates in case of foreign conflicts. With respect to the air force, air policing is a priority. Furthermore, we support a general compulsory service model as replacement of the current military conscription system. Thus, women and men will be free to choose on which level (civil defence, community service or military) they wish to serve in times of peace. We strive for service models which allow for the best possible compatibility of compulsory service with education, professional and family life.