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Decentralization and Local Governance Network

Study Tour Guideline

Results of the Learning Project

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What have been highlights when conducting a study tour?

- *The vivid exchange between the delegation and Swiss partners*
- *The interest, even thirst for knowledge of the delegation*
- *The positive influence on the group dynamic*
- *The active engagement of Swiss experts, the hospitality of Swiss institutions*
- *It opened doors for future activities*

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Be selective: Consult those parts of the study tour guideline that seem useful to you. If you are very limited in time, invest some time in thinking about objectives of the study tour and the major issues that shall be addressed (step 2 and 3) and consult the checklist in Annex 2.

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For whom is this guideline?

The study tour guideline shall mainly serve SDC/PD IV staff and partners for organising meaningful study tours to Switzerland. The first section provides information, tips and tricks that are also useful for study tours to other countries than Switzerland. The study tour guideline wants to support SDC/PD IV staff and partners in designing, organising, conducting and monitoring study tours in such a way that the study tours are an integral part of the overall SDC/PDIV program and are oriented at effectively taking up issues that are of relevance for the country in question. The guideline is based on the assumption, that SDC/PD IV will cooperate with a supporting organisation to realise the study tour.

What does the guideline offer

The study tour guideline proposes **10 steps** for organising study tours (**PART 1**). The order of the steps will have to be adjusted depending on the concrete situation at hand. Amongst others the guideline provides useful links to SDC and PD IV internal information, e.g. to examples of terms of references, maximum costs for hotels and meals, information on protocol and security issues. Through this, the study tour guideline can become a reference document and can make the otherwise sometimes burdensome and time consuming search for information much easier. In addition, there are sections with 'tips and tricks' and 'shared experience' extracted from the rich experience of SDC, PD IV and its partners.

This study tour guideline puts a **focus on** study tours that deal with **issues of decentralisation and local governance (PART 2)**. The study tour guideline aims at supporting the definition of an **appropriate thematic focus** for the study tour and provides ideas and information on possible program elements (relevant Swiss experience, expertise). For this, **eight issues** from different phases of a decentralisation process were selected that could arise as main issues for study tours. This provides important basic information for designing and organizing the program.

Our principles

It is our objective to promote study tours that contribute to positive change. In our understanding study tours should be

- Part of a broader, more comprehensive process, not a one-off event
- With clear aims and focus, shared by the major stakeholders
- Carried by strong ownership of the initiators of the study tour and the participants
- With the appropriate group of participants (those who can change something and are motivated), addressing the needs and demands of the participants
- Addressing issues of current importance for the study tour group and/or the country as such
- with a focus on issues linked to the participants needs, responsibilities and experiences
- presented in a way that participants can link them to their needs, responsibilities and experiences
- Based on a methodology that allows for reflection and open discussion and provides practical insights
- Conducted in a positive atmosphere
- with a vision of future follow-up

Part I:
Ten steps for organising study tours

Step (1) Conducting a study tour, yes or no?

The decision whether to propose or to react positively to a demand for a study tour will depend on several factors. Answers to the below posed question can provide an indication whether to conduct a study tour. Of course the different question do not have equal weight. The weight given to each question will differ depending on the context at hand.

Tips and tricks: Key questions

- Who proposed the study tour? Are these relevant partners/stakeholders with the necessary influence, connections, knowledge of the context?
- Is the study tour supported by important stakeholders/the government/parliament?
- Are the initiators of the study tour/stakeholders clear about what they want to achieve and what they expect?
- Is the country in a conflict/post conflict situation? Can the study tour support conflict transformation? Is the study tour correspond in line with a "do no harm" strategy? (i.e. not increase the risk of open conflict?)
- Is the proposed topic/focus of relevance for the country, for institution-building within the country? Does it correspond to country priorities?
- Can experience or expertise in the host country (e.g. Switzerland) offer insights in respect to the topic/focus of the study tour?
- Does the study tour fit within the overall SDC country program?
- Is it expected that the study tour will help to achieve outcomes defined in the SDC/PD IV country strategy? (Based on what assumptions?)
- Is SDC/PD IV willing to engage with a mid- or long-term perspective with the stakeholders or on the topic at hand?
- Is the study tour part of a broader program/process? Is there follow-up planned so as to make use of the results (know-how, contacts) of the study tour?
- Can the study tour provide benefits that activities within the country cannot offer (so easily)?
- Will there be opponents to the study tour within the home country e.g. because of the thematic topic, political connotations, prospective participants, time away from the home country? Has this opposition been taken into account?
- Are there political sensitivities within the host country that have to be considered?
- Is budget available for the study tour?
- Does the desk officer have sufficient time to support the preparation and implementation of a study tour?

Step (2) Defining the objectives of the study tour

Study tours can have a variety of objectives. In many cases, the main objective will be the transfer of practice oriented, state of the art know-how. Further objectives can concern culture change within institutions, changes in respect to group dynamics, consensus-building among participants or networking between the delegation and counterparts from the host country. On the side of SDC/ PD IV objectives can for instance include a better understanding of the context and of the challenges the country is facing as well as the way stakeholders react to and are addressing these challenges, the building of goodwill and the creation of entry points for future activities.

The following questions can help to clarify objectives:

Tips and tricks: Key questions for defining objectives

- Why was the study tour proposed? What was the major motivation for proposing the study tour?
- What shall be achieved with the study tour? What shall be different when the delegation returns home? What difference shall the members make once back home?
- What kind of changes shall occur within the delegation in respect to group dynamic, knowledge, motivation?
- In what way shall the study tour contribute to the overall SDC/PDIV program?
- When will the study tour be regarded as a success? What is different if the study tour was successful? Who will notice the difference?
- How would you / others know that you have achieved the objectives? Which are positive or negative effects if the objectives are reached and for whom?

Clarity about objectives is important for all stages of the study tour (from the decision whether to conduct a study tour, to its design, implementation and follow-up, incl. the selection of participants, location, program elements).

In addition, clarity of objectives will contribute to

- expectation management: there should be a minimum common understanding and motivation why the study tour is conducted and why particular persons shall be members of the study tour group participate,
- facilitate coordination: objectives will guide the definition of the design of the study tour and will help organisers to define the roles and priorities,
- define the appropriate indicators for evaluating the success of the study tour: The success of the study tour will depend on whether the objectives were achieved or positive steps were taken towards achieving the objectives. Therefore care should be taken that objectives and related indicators for success are realistic and based on sound hypothesis

Time used for the discussion on objectives is never wasted.

→**Read more:** [additional tips and tricks and learn about experiences: objectives](#)

Step (3) Understanding the issues at hand

Already in an early phase it is necessary to take a closer look at the context and the main issues that shall be addressed through the study tour. Study tours that aim at know-how transfer should provide a good match between the issues and challenges that members of the delegation are facing in their home country and the experiences or expertise presented in the host country.

The desk officer, supporting organisation and other counterparts in the host country must be aware of the issues and challenges so that they can establish the study tour program accordingly, shape the visits and presentations appropriately and can engage in a meaningful exchange with the members of the delegation. They have to be aware of the political context so as not involuntarily being instrumentalized or being caught in political disputes and sensitivities. A short context assessment will also be required e.g. for official and semi-official meetings with participation of the SDC directorate, for high level counterparts, e.g. parliamentarians, for ToRs of a supporting organisation.

In most cases, firsthand knowledge about the context will be limited on the side of the host country. Therefore someone in the home country will have to explore the issues and challenges at hand. The one who prepares this short assessment should have good knowledge of the context and should still have enough critical distance and openness for assembling information that is relevant for the counterparts in the host country.

Tips and tricks: General key questions for gaining understanding of the major issues.

See also [Part II:](#)

[Study Tours on Decentralisation and Local Governance \(dlg\) to Switzerland](#) of this guideline

- What are the issues that currently are of relevance for the country/for the cooperation with the country (general political (reform) agenda)?
- What issues/questions shall receive particular attention during the study tour?
- What issues in respect to the reforms are mainly debated/are most controversial/pose problems? Why are these issues raised?
- Does the current debate mainly centre on (1) political issues (objectives, major direction, ideology, power), (2) technical issues, for instance the appropriate institutional framework, legislation, approaches, procedures (3) the process of reforms, its stages, sequences, actors involved, the implementation of reforms?
- Do different political parties, government and opposition, civil society and interest groups have similar visions/demands concerning the identified issues or are there major differences? Do they identify the same challenges? In case of divergences, what is behind the differences?
- In the case of reforms, why are the reforms conducted? Is there general agreement on the purpose of the reforms?
- How is the reform process designed? What stages are envisaged? Who is involved (actor mapping)? Who can expedite, who can block the process?
- In which stage is the reform process at the moment? Is legislation prepared, did implementation commence or is the process in a stage of building political consensus, exploring issues and options?
- What are previous experiences, what worked, what failed in the past?
- What are other major reform agendas that are supposed to be conducted in parallel? Do the different reform agendas influence each other?

→ **Read more:** [Tips and tricks: Understanding the issues](#)

Step (4) Selection of relevant participants

Participants of the study tour are selected in view of the set objectives (see [shared experience participants](#)). Participants are normally selected by the home country or jointly by the home country and the Swiss. It is recommended that the Swiss organiser and the counterpart in the home country jointly establish criteria for the selection of participants in line with the objectives.

Tips and tricks: Some key questions for the selection of participants

- Who should participate in order to be able to best achieve the objectives?
- Who will have influence to promote change, at the centre, at the regional level, at the local level, within the institution?
- Who can contribute to the discussions in Switzerland with his/her knowhow and experience?
- Who has to participate so as to promote that participants can also learn from each other?
- Who should be included from a perspective of gender equity, representation of different groups, political parties?

Tips and tricks: Criteria for the selection of participants

- Number of participants: Delegations with more than 25 participants are difficult to manage (accommodation, transportation, transfer times, visits, time for discussion as well as costs). However, the optimal size should mainly be determined by the objectives of the study tour (e.g. need for inclusiveness) and not by organisational considerations only.
- Level of delegation: The level of the delegation will have influence on the programme (for instance, members of the delegation will expect to meet with (some) counterparts of the same level. If meetings at the same level will not be possible this should be explained in advance.) The higher the level of delegation the more focus can be put on other aims than pure knowledge and know-how transfer. The level of the delegation will also influence e.g. protocol, security arrangements, accommodation and choice of means of transportation. High level members might demand to bring their advisors or personal security (see also [step \(9\) on protocol and security](#)).
- Professional background, education of participants: Members of the delegation should have a relatively similar level of understanding of the topics. The professional background of participants should be taken into account when the programme is established so that - if possible - every member of the delegation will meet a Swiss counterpart with similar professional background. In addition, language knowledge might be of advantage, however, for achieving the objectives it will often be more effective to work with interpreters than to exclude relevant persons because of a lack of language knowledge.
- Inclusiveness, Balance: Delegations should be composed in a balanced way, unless the purpose of the study tour demands a very targeted and homogeneous group (e.g. for fostering intra-group understanding). Depending on the context and topic, different criteria can be of relevance, e.g. ethnicity, religion, regional representation or party affiliation. Gender balance should be realised whenever possible.

Step (5) Identifying the different tasks and roles, defining the timing

Tasks, actors, and roles

For organising a study tour there is a multiplicity of tasks. Different actors will be involved with a variety of roles. The desk officer will have to clarify tasks and roles of those involved in the study tour. The distribution of tasks will not yet define the roles. For instance, a supporting organisation can be mandated to organise the program from A-Z. This supporting institution can but need not automatically appear as the host of the study tour.

Tips and tricks: Key-questions for defining roles and relations among different actors

- Who will be doing what?
- What will be the roles of the various involved actors, e.g. who will be hosting the study tour (a supporting organisation, SDC or PD IV, another institution in the host country, e.g. a ministry, parliament), what will be the status of the accompanying person (assistant for organisational question, expert, moderator), will there be a head of delegation?
- How will the different roles be communicated in the home and in the host country?
- Who has the lead for various tasks, e.g. for deciding on the program, for organisational tasks, for communication with the press, for financial decisions? Who has the decision-making power? Who has to be involved in decisions?
- How will be reporting lines, lines of communication?
- How will good cooperation look like?

List of Actors

In the home country

- Swiss Embassy
- Swiss Cooperation Office, e.g. Head of Cooperation, National Program Officer
- Representative of the Political Division IV, or the SECO
- Co-organiser, e.g. GTZ, OSCE, UNDP, Worldbank
- Local partners, e.g. partner institutions (e.g. parliamentary commission, bar association), local project implementing partner, international (Swiss) implementing partner in home country
- Media
- Others

In the host country (Switzerland)

- Department of Foreign Affairs, in particular (1) SDC in Bern, e.g. desk officer, thematic focal point, head of department, directorate (2) Political Division IV, other political divisions, (3) Information service, (4) Protocol service
- There might be co-hosts in host country , e.g. Parliament
- Supporting institutions in Switzerland
- Embassy of home country in Switzerland
- Experts, officials
- Media
- FedPol
- Others

Defining the timing

Quite often demands for study tours come on relatively short notice. The later the organisation starts the more time consuming (and with it more expensive) it will be to organise the tour. Also political institutions in Switzerland plan relatively far in advance and high level meetings will be difficult to realise if requests are not made far in advance. In [Annex 2](#) there is a **checklist with a tentative timeline for organising study tours**. Timelines are of course only indicative and sometimes there is no other choice but to organise a study tour with less time..

Find a checklist with a tentative timeline in [Annex 2](#).

Step (6) Selection of a supporting organisation, definition of their terms of reference, task clarification, budget

It can be worthwhile to engage a supporting organisation that has the relevant experience and expertise and can give their full attention to the study tour. The SDC desk officer or staff of the Swiss Cooperation Office will remain engaged, e.g. for determining the objectives and the major focus of the study tour, for providing country background and reform assessments, for providing suggestions on program elements and facilitating contacts, for accompanying the delegation to some events or the whole time, as hosts for official events, as contact person for the media.

Selection of a supporting organisation

The choice of supporting organisation will depend on the profile of organisation needed. Tasks of the supporting institution can include one or several of the following: (1) logistics and general organisation, (2) program design, interaction with the delegation and accompaniment, (3) practical insights and/or conceptual inputs.

In particular, if the supporting organisation prepares the program design, it is recommended to include the supporting organisation early on, for instance by already providing possibilities to give feedback on objectives or to conduct/assist in the context/reform assessment. Their close involvement in these early stages improve the chance that the study tours is tailor made to the needs of the delegation.

→ **Read more:** [Tips and tricks for the selection of supporting organisations.](#)

Terms of Reference and Task clarification

Whenever an implementing organisation is engaged they need clear terms of reference. Roles and tasks have to be clarified.

→ **Read more:** [Tips and tricks: questions for task clarification](#)

Budget

The supporting organisation will provide a budget for its own services and can also be asked to establish cost estimates for other costs related to the study tour. SDC and the Political Divisions have their own regulations on tariffs for food and lodging. These are also binding for supporting organisations (see [Annex 5](#)).

Find a list of supporting organizations in [Annex 3](#)

Find elements for ToRs in [Annex 4](#)

Find an overview of tariffs in [Annex 5](#)

Step (7) Deciding on the content of the program

Major elements of the program are based on the objectives and the short assessment of the issues at stake. A good program will be designed by 'looking through the eyes of the participants'. The supporting organisation can be mandated to prepare a draft program (with a program description). This draft program can be consulted with the prospective participants of the study tour. A participatory process for establishing the program tends to improve ownership of the study tour group and can enhance the quality of the program. The prospective members of the delegation can propose changes or additional program elements to cater to their interests and needs if the consultations take place early enough. Participants will be clear about what to expect from the study visit.

Tips and tricks: Some key-questions

- What information do the participants need for understanding the system of the host country?
- What is of special interest to the members of the delegation?
- What are concepts/issues/functions/tasks they can relate to?
- What might be (wrong) preconceptions about the Swiss system due to differences in experience or the institutional framework the participants normally are confronted with?
- Does a particular focus have to be given to create a relaxed atmosphere in order to improve group dynamics?

There are a number of standard program elements which can be combined, e.g. practical and conceptual inputs, discussion and reflection, skill training, exchange and experience sharing, or sight-seeing. Depending on the set objectives, these program elements will receive different levels of importance and of course also the sequencing of different elements is of importance.

→**Read more:** [Tips and tricks for program elements and their sequencing](#)

→**Consult Part II:** of the Study Tour Guideline for more information on possible study tour content in the field of dlg.

Step (8) Briefing of participants and experts: Bridging gaps in context, experience and understanding

Briefing of participants

Participants should receive a briefing before they leave for the host country. This briefing will include information on the program as well as necessary logistic information (flights, hotels, transportation, weather in the host country). The briefing should include already all those issues that otherwise could create problems if not explained properly (e.g. language of translation, level of protocol or lack thereof, unavailability of the federal councillor/parliamentarians, small hotel rooms but in the city centre). The briefing can also include some information about the context of the host country. In addition, participants can already receive some background documents. They can be invited to reflect on lessons for their context during the study tour. It can also be discussed what kind of follow-up might be useful. This briefing is normally conducted by the SDC or PD IV representative in the country (together with a local partner organisation - if there is one).

Bridging function

The main organiser in Switzerland will have the task to ensure that differences in context, experience and understanding are bridged. Experiences have to be translated in a way that their (potential) relevance for the country specific context can become apparent and that a common deeper understanding of the issues at stake, the underlying values and mechanisms can develop. In order to fulfil this function, the following is of importance:

Tips and tricks: Opportunities for bridging the gap

- The briefing of the experts so that they are aware of the key issues and questions as well as of sensitivities
- The briefing of the participants so that they have a general understanding of the Swiss context (see above)
- The moderation of presentations (introduction, moderation of discussion, conclusions)
- Other events particularly designed to bridge the gap, e.g. reviews at the end of the day, at the end of sessions, discussions on similarities and differences, joint workshops on specific issues)

Accompaniment

Study tour groups will be accompanied by one or two persons. These will see to it that the logistics are working and that the schedule can be maintained. In addition, accompanying persons are recommended to take over the above mentioned bridging function. This will have consequences for the profile of the person: he or she must have good knowledge of the context of both countries, of the topics at hand and enough sensitivity and sense for the process to interact with the participants and to contribute to steering the process of learning and exchange.

Step (9) Media, protocol, security, official events, accommodation, food, transportation, Translation

Many further aspects can be left almost entirely to the supporting organisation. Here issues are mainly addressed from the perspective of the desk officer.

Media

Study tours can find the interest of Media. Therefore SDC/PDIV should consider whether they want to inform the media proactively through press statements, info packages, press conferences with or without the participants and how they want to react to demands for information by the media. SDC/PDIV, the supporting organisation and the participants might have conflicting interests concerning the visibility of the study visit in the media. Participants to the study tour are free to talk to the media of the home or the host country. If - for whatever reason SDC/PDIV - prefers low visibility it should be discussed with the participants to the study tour what and how to communicate. If the host facilitates meetings with the press for members of the study tour it has to be considered who participates in the press meeting and what message is given in the home and in the host country with the choice of participants.

Don't forget: SDC Info has to be consulted on all media related issues.

Protocol, security

→**Read more:** [Tips and tricks and some shared experiences in respect to protocol and security](#)

Official dinners and other official events

In most study tours there is at least one official event, frequently an official dinner. In many cases, the invitation for the official dinner comes from the host of the study tour. The host can also request another person, e.g. a parliamentarian to host the dinner. The list of invitees is established by the host. The level of invitees is determined by the level of the members of the delegation. The list of invitees normally includes representatives from different political divisions and SDC as well as the ambassador of the home country..

Other (semi-)official events or events in more formal settings can for instance include an exchange of a Memorandum of Understanding, the signing of an agreement, a meeting with a federal councillor or another high ranking personality. If such a meeting is only bilateral (e.g. between the head of delegation and the personality from the host country), it has to be determined whether there are accompanying persons. Usually, a high ranking official is accompanied by someone, e.g. an assistant.

→**Read more:** [Tips and tricks for defining the seating order and shared experience](#)

Accommodation, Food, Transportation, Translation

If there is a supporting organisation, accommodation, food, transportation and translation are normally organised by the supporting organisation. Here only some tips and tricks are included in order to avoid problems.

→**Read more:** [Tips and tricks on accommodation, food, transportation and translation](#)

Find an example for a annotated glossary for interpreters in [Annex 6](#)

Step (10) Documentation, reporting and follow-up

Documentation and reporting

Depending on the responsibilities given to the supporting organisation, also the documentation and reporting can be delegated. The extent and form of both should be clarified in the ToR with the organisation. The reporting should make sure that lessons learned are available for others and thus that reporting can contribute to the institutional learning processes. It is also useful to have a CD Rom with all presentations and background information. Documentation and reporting in the form of videos and pictures can also be used as small gifts for the participants as well as for the different counterparts in the host country.

Debriefing of the delegation in the home country

In addition to a discussion on impressions in the host country at the end of the study tour, usually, a debriefing takes place shortly after returning to the home country. Sometimes the ambassador of the host country wants to participate or even invites for a meeting with the delegation. Otherwise, the SCO/PDIV or the local partner organisation in the home country can do it. The debriefing could for instance include: What are lessons? Was this experience useful for the situation in the country? Have expectations been fulfilled? What were strengths and weaknesses of the study tour? What could further help to move forward in a specific topic/bring new insights? What's next? It is most productive if the participants to the study tour know of the planned debriefing even before the study tour starts.

Thank you to experts and speakers, debriefing:

Sending a thank you letter to all the experts and speakers is an act of courtesy, which also helps to maintain a network of people who are willing to support such study tours in the future. In particular experts who had more intense interactions with the study tour group will be interested in hearing about the results of the debriefing of the delegation. In particular for the follow-up, it can also be useful for SDC/PDIV to learn about the insights the counterparts in the host country gained from the delegation.

Follow-up

As pointed out, a study tour will be most effective if it is part of a longer term strategy. Depending on the overall program the follow-up will take different forms. Depending on the objectives, members can be used as multipliers for knowledge transfer, can open doors for the realisation of other activities, etc.

→**Read more:** [Shared experience: Follow-up](#)

Find a list of literature that can be provided to delegation in Annex 7
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Part II:
**Study Tours on Decentralisation and Local Governance (dlg) to
Switzerland**

Selection of Issues for Reflection

Based on a process-oriented logic, study tours are best built around those issues the study tour group is confronted with. This approach necessitates that study tours are tailor made and focus on the specific needs of the delegation. As a consequence the study tour guideline

- will provide examples of possible issues from different stages of the decentralisation process (designing dlq, implementing dlq and living dlq)
- will reflect how issues can be translated into a study tour program
- by identifying relevant Swiss experience
- by proposing possible program elements.

Process	Issues for reflection
<p>Designing dlq</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making on the design of dlq (process, participation and consultation, involved actors, core values) • Defining territorial units • Defining local institutions • Distribution of powers between centre and local level • Distribution of resources between centre and local level • Information coordination, cooperation, and control mechanisms • Dispute resolution mechanisms 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should decentralised units be defined based on ethnic criteria or based on capacity? What ideal size? 2. What powers should the local level have? 3. How to accord financial autonomy?
<p>Implementing dlq</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of implementation (sequencing, involved actors) • Establishing local institutions • Reorganisation of the central administration • Transfer of powers • Transfer of resources • Capacity building, coaching • Coordination mechanisms for implementation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. When shall powers and funds be transferred? When are decentralised units deemed ready to receive more powers, more funds? How to build the necessary capacities? 5. How to create a multilingual local administration with equitable representation of different groups?
<p>Living dlq</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms of local democracy including direct democracy • Local planning and decision-making • Budgetary processes • Local spending • Local service-delivery • Coordination and cooperation between decentralised units • Cooperation with the centre • Control mechanisms 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. How to improve service-delivery in small municipalities? 7. How can the population be more directly involved in planning processes? How to improve accountability of local officials towards the population? How to improve the responsiveness of politics to citizens' demands, e.g. through direct democracy? 8. How to manage inter-communal cooperation?

[For gaining a better understanding on decentralization and local governance, consult Annex 1.](#)

Issue (1) Should decentralised units be defined based on ethnic criteria or based on capacity?

Issue as presented:

Should decentralised units be defined based on ethnic criteria or based on capacity?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- Fragile context
- Differences in objectives concerning decentralisation: decentralisation for internal self-determination or decentralisation for improved effectiveness/development.
- Demands for autonomy by groups facing some resistance by others. Disputes between majority and minorities with a risk of hardening of positions (either/or arguments)

(Assumption: an either/or discussion (capacity or ethnicity) will probably entrench divisions. The study tour can contribute to soften positions by moving away from either/or arguments)

Objectives:

Know-how transfer in view of supporting the decision-making/negotiation process on the future territorial organisation

Participants:

Representatives from different political parties, from different ethnic groups, one third of the group are women

Swiss experience:

Swiss experience of state formation differs from the experiences of most other countries. For instance, when introducing federalism, a debate on how to design federal units was not necessary as the cantons already existed. However, at various times demands for changes to the territorial organisation arose. These might teach interesting lessons, e.g. on factors that contributed to stable boundaries (e.g. why could bilingual cantons survive), on reasons for demands for changes to territorial organisation (showing the complexity of motivations), on procedures/processes to find agreement and change the territorial organisation. Swiss experience can demonstrate approaches how small municipalities can survive despite of limited capacity or how different groups can be accommodated within one territorial unit.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. History of the formation of Switzerland, Introduction to the Swiss political system, including power-sharing between different groups
2. Experiences with territorial reform in Switzerland

Further program elements to soften positions (how to promote capacity and accommodate diversity), e.g.:

3. Strategies of small, financially weak municipalities to survive despite of limited capacity
4. Multicultural organization of municipalities to provide for integration of different groups.

→**Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "Should decentralised units be defined based on ethnic criteria or based on capacity?"](#)

Issue (2) What powers should the local level have?

Issue as presented:

What powers should the local level have?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- The country was so far very centralised.
- The political landscape is rather stable.
- Decentralisation is mainly regarded as a mechanism to promote more effective service-delivery and as a tool for democratisation.
- The Ministry of Local Government shall prepare a draft law on decentralisation. Currently they are working on the distribution of powers between the centre and local government.
- Main underlying question: What shall be criteria and principles for the distribution of powers?

Objectives:

Provide technical knowhow, share Swiss experience

Participants:

Civil servants from the ministry and some representatives from local government

Swiss experience:

Switzerland has an old tradition of strong local government. The debate on the distribution of powers is vivid in Switzerland in recent years, in particular in the context of new schemes of financial equalisation. There have been constitutional revisions to reflect the changes in the distribution of powers between the confederation and cantons as well revisions of legislation at cantonal level in respect to municipal powers.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on the distribution of powers between different levels of state
2. Experiences with the distribution of powers and with changes to it
3. Experiences with drafting respective laws, with negotiating changes to the distribution of powers

→**Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "What powers should the local level have?"](#)

Issue (3) How to accord financial autonomy?

Issue as presented:

How to accord financial autonomy?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- Some years ago the country attributed some decision-making powers to local governments.
- However, so far local governments have very limited own resources. Almost all their revenue is coming from conditional transfers by the centre and the budgetary process remained highly centralised. Funds often arrive towards the end of the budgetary year so that local governments have difficulties spending them.
- The Ministry argues that local governments do not have the capacity for financial autonomy
- Local governments demand more own funds, more predictable funds and more liberty to decide how to spend them.
- There are huge differences in development and economic capacity between different local governments. Weaker local governments want a chance to catch up.
- The assessment shows that for effective reforms the whole system of fiscal decentralisation would have to change. This would have to involve various actors on different levels of government

Objectives:

Reflect on fiscal decentralisation, in particular the possible allocation of own revenues to local governments as well as on systems of financial equalisation in order to form a common understanding and to be able to lobby for a change of legislation.

Participants:

Mayors from local governments, representatives from municipal association, some experts, some journalists

Swiss experience:

In comparison to most other countries, Swiss local governments have a very high degree of financial autonomy. In particular, they have rather strong powers in taxation, to define their own budgets and decide on their spending. In addition, there are systems of financial equalisation that allow to provide assistance to financially disfavoured local governments. Switzerland developed systems of cooperation between different levels of government. For instance, for the creation of reformed cantonal systems of financial equalisation cantons and municipalities cooperated.

Furthermore, over the years, expertise on fiscal decentralisation in developing countries was developed.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on fiscal federalism
2. Main sources of revenues of local governments, budgetary processes, spending power
3. Systems of financial equalisation
4. Challenges: What happens when local governments cumulate debts?
5. Lobbying for more financial autonomy

→**Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "How to accord financial autonomy?"](#)

Issue (4) When shall powers and funds be transferred?

Issue as presented:

When shall powers and funds be transferred? When are decentralised units deemed ready to receive more powers, more funds? How to build the necessary capacities?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- Rather stable context
- Five years ago new decentralisation legislation was passed.
- In a first round, some powers and funds were transferred to local governments.
- A second round of transferring powers and funds was planned for this year, however the Ministry of Local Development and the Ministry of Finance came to the conclusion that several local governments were not ready yet.
- This led to disputes between the Association of Local Governments and the central government. Switzerland has good contacts to the Association (its partner for years) and relatively good contacts to the Ministries.
- A major challenge poses the still very centralised mind-set of politicians as well as the top-down approach to reforms

Objectives:

The main (and official) objective is know-how transfer. In particular the association hopes that the journey will also contribute to building common understanding between the two ministries and the Association. The ministries are at least not opposed to the second objective. The Swiss would like to give the delegation also some insights into the Swiss political culture

Participants:

Equal number of representatives from the Ministries and from the Association of Local Governments.

Swiss experience:

Switzerland has some but overall only limited experience on questions of a transition to decentralisation, including on transferring powers and funds. However there are relevant experiences on capacity assessment and capacity building. In addition, the Swiss political culture with its traditions of negotiation, consultation and participation of various stakeholders might provide interesting insights to the delegation

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system
2. The distribution of powers and of resources
3. Required capacities and capacity building
4. Transition experiences of other countries
5. Consensus-building

→ **Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on " When shall powers and funds be transferred?"](#)

Issue (5) How to create a multilingual local administration with equitable representation of different groups?

Issue as presented:

How to create a multilingual local administration with equitable representation of different groups?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- So far the country had only one official language.
- Due to high pressures from other language groups within the country, other languages received an official status at the local level.
- In addition, within the administration of the country, including at the level of local government, there is a high overrepresentation of one group.
- Now the composition of the administration shall become more representative of all groups and at the same time the capacities of the administration to work in more than one official language shall be improved.
- A joint working group with government representatives from central and local level shall prepare a working plan for implementing the project 'multilingual local administrations'.

Objectives:

Share experience on Swiss experiences with multilingual administrations

Participants:

Members of the working group (includes persons from different ministries belonging to different political parties, representatives from the centre and the local level, including minority parties). Head of the working group and of the delegation is a secretary of state.

Swiss experience:

Switzerland has experiences of multilingual administration on all state levels (centre, cantons, municipalities). It knows about some of the technical (and emotional) challenges that language issues can pose.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system with a special focus on mechanisms to accommodate linguistic groups
2. The Functioning of Multilingual Administrations in Switzerland

→ **Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to create a multilingual local administration with equitable representation of different groups?”](#)

Issue (6) How to improve service-delivery in small municipalities?

Issue as presented:

How to improve service-delivery in small municipalities?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- SDC implements a program on improving service-delivery in a number of small rural municipalities. Focus of the Swiss cooperation is in particular on water and on garbage collection. Mayors from these municipalities requested to interact with counterparts in Switzerland.
- Service-delivery is hampered amongst others by the limited resources of small municipalities.
- There are only few fulltime staff.
- The relations with the centre are difficult. The centre remains omnipresent because most funds are earmarked for certain services, the centre sets minimum standards for service-delivery and the local governments have to provide reports.
- Pressure on mayors to perform well is high.
- Upward accountability is high.
- There is some debate to change the territorial organisation so as to create bigger municipalities.

Objectives:

Experience sharing and know-how transfer on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of service-delivery of small municipalities. The Swiss would also provide the participants with some impressions on the cooperation between cantons and municipalities

Participants:

Mayors and project partners

Swiss experience:

Switzerland is confronted with a high number of small municipalities. Many of them face challenges in respect to service-delivery. Municipalities developed their strategies to overcome them. They include cooperation among municipalities for know-how and service delivery. In addition there are mechanisms to provide financial support to weaker municipalities. Several cantons are pressuring that small municipalities merge in order to create bigger more efficient local governments.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system
2. Challenges of small municipalities in respect to service delivery, approaches of small municipalities to improve service delivery
3. Cooperation between municipalities and mergers of municipalities

→ **Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to improve service-delivery in small municipalities?”](#)

Issue (7) How can the population be more directly involved?

Issue as presented:

How can the population be more directly involved in local planning processes? How to improve accountability of local officials towards the population? How to improve the responsiveness of politics to citizens' demands?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- Decision-making is strongly party driven. The citizens have limited influence on the politicians because they are elected based on closed party lists.
- The centre sets priorities for local development. Municipalities have to reflect these priorities in their planning processes
- Budgetary processes and planning processes are not well harmonised, districts often already submitted their budgets before the planning of villages is concluded.
- Consultations of civil society during planning takes place, recommendations are however often not included.
- NGO sector is weak and the few active NGOs are aligned to political parties
- There are demands to introduce forms of direct democracy at the local level
- SDC proposed a citizens' council to improve participation of citizens.

Objectives:

Learn about participation of citizens in planning processes in Switzerland. Gain some common understanding on how to foster participation of citizens in the home country.

Participants:

Representatives of NGOs, local public administration, district administration, local politicians, central government

Swiss experience:

Switzerland has developed very strong citizen participation in almost every aspect of political decision-making. Whether in consultation phases during the legislative processes, via referendum and popular initiatives on all three levels, the citizens can give their opinion.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system, with a focus on participation and direct democracy
2. Municipal autonomy in respect to planning, Mechanisms of direct democracy and participation at the local level
3. Excursus: Election system and direct democracy and their influence on the party system in Switzerland

→**Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How can the population be more directly involved?”](#)

Issue (8) How to manage inter-municipal cooperation?

Issue as presented:

How to manage inter-municipal cooperation?

Background and potential underlying challenges (based on short assessment):

- Some years ago municipalities in the home country received more powers and resources.
- So far there is no municipal association and municipalities do not cooperate with each other.
- The initiative for more cooperation is coming from the municipalities who want to strengthen their position vis-a-vis the centre. Also donor organisation are pushing for cooperation.
- The centre was so far reluctant towards strong cooperation between municipalities. However, lately became more receptive because the central government hopes that cooperation will bring better service-delivery.
- SDC would be willing to financially support the secretariat of an Association of Municipalities

Objectives:

Learn about inter-municipal cooperation in Switzerland and the work of the Swiss and cantonal associations of municipalites in Switzerland.

Participants:

Mayors and high level officials from local government, Secretary General of the Ministry of Local Development, representatives of the Ministry, local governance experts

Swiss experience:

In Switzerland there is a long tradition of inter-municipal cooperation amongst others as an attempt to ensure effective service-delivery. The associations of municipalities at the federal and the cantonal level provide services to municipalities and lobby on their behalf.

Main program elements of study tour:

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system, with a focus on the different levels of government, their interaction and their tasks
2. Different forms of inter-municipal cooperation
3. Associations of municipalities in Switzerland

→**Read more:** [Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to manage inter-municipal cooperation?”](#)

Annex 1: Background Information on Decentralisation and Local Governance

Definitions

Definition of Decentralisation

Although there is no overall accepted definition of decentralization, the most common approaches orient themselves at the different functions or dimensions of decentralisation and distinguish between political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation. In this understanding decentralisation denominates the **transfer of political, administrative and/or fiscal powers to units at the middle and/or lower level of state**. In a fully decentralised state, sub-national units possess their own political institutions and administration, are attributed with their own decision-making powers, deliver services to the citizens, and have own sources of revenue. This comprehensive transfer of political, administrative **and** fiscal powers is often called devolution. (In the Anglo-Saxon tradition, however the term devolution is only or at least mainly used if the powers are transferred *back* to territorial units that in history already once had such powers (*de*-evolution)).

There are certain other processes and forms of state organisation that are related and sometimes even considered part of decentralisation. In some contexts, the term decentralisation is also used in the meaning of transferring competencies to local branches of central institutions or agents of central government (deconcentration), to the private sector (deregulation) or para-state or private organisations (a form of delegation), and sometimes even federal arrangements (federalism, federation) are termed decentralised. Systems are deemed federal when the composing federal units have own institutions, decision-making powers, revenues (self-rule) and also participate in decision-making at the centre (e.g. in a second chamber of parliament - shared rule). Federal systems are entrenched in the constitution.

Definition of Local Governance

Local Governance refers to the way how public authority is exercised to manage a country's economic, social and political affairs. Local governance is the “set of institutions, mechanisms and processes through which the citizens and their groups can articulate their interests and needs, mediate the differences, and exercise their rights and obligations at the local level” (see UNDP 2004). Of course, the principles of good governance also apply to the local level of state institutions.

With the ongoing trend towards non-centralised or de-centralised state organization, local governance is gaining importance. Decentralisation and federalism open political space for local authorities and provide citizens with more and more opportunities to engage with local institutions and to participate in local decision-making, and citizens receive (or are supposed to receive) an increasing number of services from decentralized structures. Local governance is an issue even in contexts without decentralisation, for instance when citizens interact with the local offices of government agencies. 'Bad' performance at the local level as well as challenges in the coordination and cooperation between the various levels of State structures directly affect the citizens and their development perspectives.

Local authorities are part of a complex system of relations and interactions, involving a variety of state institutions, political and administrative processes. The performance of local authorities depends very much on the national framework in the area of decentralization and in sectors relevant for local responsibilities.

Why decentralisation and local governance?

Decentralisation is not just an end by itself but a means to improve the state's capacity to cope with its various tasks and functions indispensable for development. Although priorities may differ, decentralization processes are guided by a variety of goals and expectations which are not always explicit. Expectations are based on hypotheses of effects. However, experiences show that expectations are frequently not fulfilled. Three main groups of expectations can be distinguished:

... to improve democratic participation and balance power

Decentralisation is seen as a means to provide for political institutions closer to citizens, with own decision-making powers at the local level, locally elected, and catering to the local needs. Thus decentralisation is expected to create the public space for democratic participation and public accountability at the local level, and often it is hoped that there will be a spill-over effect at national level.

Decentralisation can also be a means to create a new power-balance by sharing power, in particular between the centre and the different regions of the state (vertical power-sharing). In many cases, decentralisation is promoted specifically for the purpose of power- in order (1) to strengthen local power holders, promote local governance accountable to a local constituency and foster internal self-determination and with it (2) to create a counter-balance to the centre. It can provide new entry-points for citizens into politics and thus create new opportunities and diversify the political playing field.

... to transform conflict

In some cases, decentralization is seen as a means to transform conflicts. From the conflict transformation perspective, decentralisation shall provide new political ways to address challenges and help to avoid new conflicts. Decentralisation and other forms of non-centralised governance as power-sharing mechanisms are used as a way to provide autonomy to regions and territorially defined groups. These forms of internal self-determination are expected to ease or avoid quests for external-self-determination. Concretely, the expectation is that local communities might be better able to find pragmatic compromises on sensitive issues. Sensitive decisions, for instance those that are important for regional or local identity can be left to the decision-making of lower levels of government so that they will not divide at the centre. On these potentially divisive issues, the centre can limit its role to the role of mediator and protector of individual and collective rights. When communities experience that they can take important decisions on their own, without major interference by the centre, this can also strengthen their loyalty to and integration into the state that provides this degree of self-rule.

Decentralisation is not only attractive for groups that demand internal self-determination, but can also be an acceptable option to dominant groups. Decentralisation provides powers to territorial units and not directly to groups thus it is in a way a neutral or general way of addressing specific demands.

... to improve governance and service delivery

Decentralisation is often seen as a way to improve governance, particularly in countries suffering under a centralistic bureaucracy not able or not willing to respond to the varying needs of groups and regions. It is expected that decentralized authorities are closer and more accessible to their electorate, and therefore feel more responsive and accountable for their performance. Decentralisation is particularly expected to improve basic service delivery. In accordance with the principle of the economies of scale, powers for service delivery can be given to those units where people share preferences and where the ratio between output and costs is best. Local involvement shall increase effectiveness through increased transparency, better targeting and better response to priority needs as

well as improve efficiency and responsiveness by providing services adapted to local circumstances. Decentralisation is expected to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of public funds.

In many cases, decentralisation is linked to reforms in particular sectors, e.g. decentralisation is promoted to improve primary health care services, by giving tasks and responsibilities to local units. Although the development of decentralized structures and processes can be treated like a sector of state activities on its own, in practice, the decentralisation process is relevant for all sectors in which at least some powers are decentralised. Sector reform will not be possible without due regard to the challenges and potentials of the decentralisation process. Even if different authorities are in charge, these reforms have to go hand in hand and must be harmonised.

Tips and tricks: Some questions to learn more about the reason why a country promotes decentralisation and local governance

- How did demands for decentralisation and local governance come up?
- Do official documents (e.g. explanatory notes to legislation, legislation itself, strategies, planning documents) provide reasons for decentralisation and local governance?
- Do political parties provide reasons for decentralisation and local governance? Do all political parties have decentralisation and local governance on their agenda? If there are differences, what are these and why?
- Are there any groups who in particular have demands in respect to decentralisation and local governance? What are these? Why do they demand so?
- Has there been external pressure for decentralisation and local governance (e.g. by donor organisations)?
- What are the perceptions of why different actors promote (or block) decentralisation or local governance?

Decentralisation is a multi-actor, multi level process

Decentralisation process are complex and are influenced by a multitude of actors. First of all, any decentralisation process involves actors from different state levels. Decentralisation is a multilevel process and merits multilevel approaches. In addition decentralisation involves various actors at each level, e.g. several ministries. There are also actors that are not necessarily directly part of the system but take influence on decentralisation, e.g. in some cases the army or NGOs. Those who aim at supporting decentralisation and local governance will have to take all the different actors into account, including potential spoilers, even if the support focuses on one institution or one level of the state.

Levels	State actors	Other actors
Central	<p>Parliament (<i>for passing legislation, for monitoring</i>), parliamentary committees</p> <p>Executive (<i>for defining policy, for defining time lines, for implementing</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President/Prime Minister - Ministry (Ministries) in charge of dlg - Ministry of Finance - Line Ministries, e.g. education, health - coordination bodies <p>Judiciary (<i>as protector of the system, as</i></p>	<p>Internal actors:</p> <p>NGOs, CSBO, universities, unions, interest groups, political parties, armed or non-armed movements, business community, others</p> <p>External actors:</p> <p>INGOs, IGOs, development partners, neighbouring countries</p>

	<i>dispute resolution mechanism)</i>			
	Other bodies: e.g. Finance commission, treasury, national planning commission, natural resource commission, election commission, the army The people (through elections, participation, consultation)			
Local	Actors from central level Branches of line ministries	Own institutions: - Parliament - Executive Ministries/ Administration - Courts? - Citizens within the local unit	Actors from central level active at local level - development partners - NGOs - business community	Local other actors, e.g. - local political parties - local movements - local NGOs - local CSBOs, local business community

Tips and tricks: Some questions to learn more about the different actors and their roles

- Who does officially have the lead in relation to dlg among state actors? Is there a coordinating body? Which ministries are most powerful in relation to dlg (e.g. never underestimate the influence of the Ministry of Finance).
- Who among all actors advocates for dlg? What is their main motivation? Who can expedite the process? Who is sceptical of dlg? What is their main reason? Is there competition, e.g. between ministries in respect to decentralisation? Who might lose power by strengthening or reforming dlg? Who can block reform processes?
- Is there a regional (middle) level, what are its actors? What are relations to the centre, to local government?
- Does the centre have its own (deconcentrated) administration at the local level (e.g. branches of line ministries, branch of election commission)? How are relations between these deconcentrated actors and the administration of decentralised units?
- Can local actors freely organise themselves? Are there variations in the organisation of local government? What is the influence of local governments on central politics/policy making?

Political, administrative and financial decentralisation

When discussions on decentralisation and local governance take place, normally the political sphere, the administrative sphere and the financial sphere are distinguished. Effective decentralisation attributes political, administrative and financial powers (autonomy) to lower levels of state. However, not all decentralisation processes actually do so. Quite often, this creates weaknesses in local governance, already because of the design of decentralisation. The distinction into political, administrative and financial decentralisation is useful for gaining a better understanding of the challenges at hand. Answers to these challenges however in most cases include measures that concern all the different spheres. Service delivery by local bodies is normally considered part of administrative

decentralisation. Weak service-delivery can however come for instance from a lack of finances (financial sphere), from the impotence of the political actors (political sphere), or from a lack of staff in the administration (administrative sphere).

Tips and tricks: Some questions to assess political, administrative and financial decentralisation

Political decentralisation

- Are there freely elected democratic institutions at the local level?
- Are candidates for elected local positions locally selected? Who selects them, how are they selected?
- Is the local executive locally selected? Who selects them, how are they selected?
- What is the relationship between elected and appointed officials?
- Do the institutions have own decision-making powers in certain policy areas in which they can decide without the interference from the centre?
- What is the influence of local governments on the centre/ on the regional level?
- When can the centre remove local officials, dissolve local institutions, issue directives, revoke decisions, withhold funds, fund additional activities in the area of local powers?

Administrative decentralisation

- Do local bodies have their own administration? Do they implement their own policies without the interference of the centre?
- Can they decide on whom to employ, the number of employees and the structure of the administration, capacity building?
- Does the centre have their own bodies/representatives at local level, e.g. branches of line ministries, a governor as representative of the centre? What are their powers? How are their relations with local bodies/local elected officials? Are there disputes about powers and competences between them?
- When can the centre issue directives, control activities, take over service delivery, do quality control, withhold funds or fund additional activities?

Financial decentralisation

- What is the percentage of overall public funds that is allocated to decentralised units? How much of these funds are conditional (it is predetermined for what they have to be spent) are unconditional (decentralised units decide how to spend them)?
- Do decentralised units receive these funds regularly without delay? Is the amount predictable?
- Can decentralised units raise their own funds (from taxation, natural resources, fees, borrowing)?
- Can decentralised units influence the amount of revenue, e.g. by determining tax rates, tax scales, by improved tax collection?
- Can decentralised units freely establish their budgets, define budget priorities? Are central bodies involved in preparing or approving budgets?
- Are there mechanisms to control the spending of decentralised units? Can they make debts? What will happen to indebted decentralised units?
- Is there an equalisation system according to which poorer decentralised units receive more than richer units?
- What equalisation formula is used, how was it established?

Local (good) governance

Implemented decentralisation provides the room for local governance. Local governance depicts governing at the local level viewed broadly to include not only the institutions (local government) but also the governance processes and the interaction between local authorities and the community. Amongst others, decentralisation is –at least officially- introduced to improve (local) governance. Governance is normally assessed based on criteria of good governance. These include accountability, transparency, citizens' participation, efficient and effective service delivery, and non-discrimination/equity. (For more information on terminology, consult the [dlgn-glossary](#)).

Tips and tricks: Some questions for assessing local (good) governance

Accountability of local bodies

- How much discretion do local bodies have in decision-making? Does the same body decide on the subject matter and on the financing?
- Can the people select their representatives in local bodies?
- Can the people influence decision-making of local bodies? Are they involved in planning processes? Can they demand explanations from local bodies?
- Are there representatives from the central state/para-state actors who in fact influence decision-making, e.g. through performance agreements of mayors, through directives, through decisions on transfers?
- What is the relation between executive and legislature at local level? Is there a clear division of tasks?

Transparency

- Is information to citizens, interest groups readily available?
- Are decision-making procedures easy to understand?
- Is the selection of candidates for political offices transparent?
- What is the people's perception of corruption?

Citizens' participation

- Are there free and democratic elections for local bodies?
- Can the citizens give their inputs, e.g. in planning processes?
- Are there citizens' organisations that can take up different interests? Do local bodies consult citizens' organisations?
- Are there other tools for participation, e.g. referenda, initiatives?

Efficient and effective service-delivery

- Can local bodies define priorities for service-delivery?
- Do the citizens participate in defining these priorities?
- Do citizens experience service-delivery as efficient and effective?
- Are there sufficient funds available for service-delivery?
- Do all citizens have access to basic services?

Non-discrimination

- Are women represented in elected local bodies, in the local administration?
- Do women participate in elections, in consultation procedures?
- Do women have access to basic services? Are special needs taken into account?
- Are different groups represented in elected local bodies, in the local administration?

- Do different groups participate in elections, in consultation procedures?
- Do different groups have access to basic services? Are special needs taken into account?
- Are there forms of social and/or legal discrimination?

Annex 2¹

What	By whom (based on the assumption that a supporting organisation is available and in addition to logistics has a lead in establishing the program)	By when
Provisional planning, including provisional definition of the dates of the visit		6-12 months in advance
Objectives of the study tour - Objectives are defined and formulated	SCO/PDIV in consultation or cooperation with stakeholders	3-4 months in advance
Definition of the main focus of the study tour - Main issues are identified in cooperation with the different stakeholders - context is clarified - Main focus is defined in cooperation with the different stakeholders - A short context description which can be shared with high-level stakeholders in the host country (e.g. SDC directorate) is formulated	SCO/PDIV/supporting organisation in consultation or cooperation with stakeholders	3-4 months in advance 1-2 month in advance
Internal Coordination/Communication - If applicable, request for a meeting with a Federal Councillor - Coordination with the Office of External Relations of the Parliament if meetings with Swiss Parliamentarians are envisaged	SDC/PD IV (who is in charge?) SDC/PD IV desk, can then be delegated to supporting organisation	3-4 months in advance Should be involved from the very beginning onwards.
Contracting of supporting organisation(s) - Tasks and roles are clarified - ToRs are established - Budget is established - Contract is signed	SDC/PDIV desk	3 months in advance
Selection of participants - Criteria are established - Selection is done - List of participants is sent to Swiss organisers - CVs are collected → <i>Is translation needed and will the delegation be accompanied by a translator? Are languages a sensitive issue?</i>	SCO/PDIV, (Swiss embassy), local partner, stakeholders, supporting organisation	3 months in advance 2 months in advance 2 months in advance 1 month in advance

¹ The Checklist is an amended version of a checklist developed for PD IV and was harmonized with an internal SDC checklist.

- Translator is identified		6 weeks in advance
Visa and travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embassy or visa section is informed about study tour - Visas are issued - Flights are booked → Will all participants travel economy or business? What are the criteria? How are they communicated? - VIP services are arranged at the airport (if applicable) → Who will welcome the delegation at the airport? - Transport during the study tour including transfer from the airport is organised, taking into considerations accompanying persons, translators, "guests". 	SCO/PDIV or local partner CH-visa section SCO/PDIV or local partner Supporting organisation Supporting organisation	As early as possible 6 weeks in advance 6 weeks in advance 3 weeks in advance 2 months in advance
Hotel accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotel is selected, rooms are reserved → Are there specific requirements due to security, protocol level of the delegation, conflicts within the delegation, disabilities? Is the hotel informed about specific requirements? - For high-level delegations, flowers and welcome gift with visiting card (if necessary) 	Supporting organisation Supporting organisation in the name of the host	2 months in advance
Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning with the Protocol services of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs - if on minister level 	Contact to be established by SDC/PDIV desk, then supporting organisation	1-2 months in advance
Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restaurants for lunch/dinner are reserved. → Are there special dietary requests, restrictions? → Is the restaurant willing to send a bill or to accept credit cards? Does the accompanying person carry enough cash? → Shall alcoholic beverages be served? Who will pay? → Will experts, driver, security etc. eat with the delegation? - The number of people who will eat is confirmed 	Supporting organisation	1 month in advance 1 day in advance
Official dinner or lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning with the protocol service of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (minister level) - Host is determined - Restaurant is reserved - Preparation of speeches (delegation is informed if they are expected to give a speech) - Menu is decided on - Invitations with venue, time are sent, briefing documents, CVs if required - Seating order is established 	SDC/PDIV desk in cooperation with supporting organisation	1-2 months in advance 3 weeks in advance 2 weeks in advance 2 weeks in advance 3 weeks in advance 1 week in advance

<p>Establishing the programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics are determined - Programme description and programme outline is established including the major elements of the program (visits, presentations, discussions, workshops) - Programme description and programme outline is discussed with counterpart - Experts are identified - Experts are contacted and have confirmed - Programme is finalised - Accompanying persons are identified and fully briefed - Programme description and programme are translated if necessary - Participants and experts (as well as embassies) received the programme description, programme and list of participants, short CVs - Driver received the programme 	<p>Depends on terms of reference, supporting organisation with input from SDC/PDIV desk/local organisation SCO/PDIV, local organisation</p> <p>Depends on terms of reference, supporting organisation with input from SDC/PDIV desk/local organisation Organised by supporting organisation or SCO/PDIV Supporting organisation Supporting organisation</p>	<p>3 months in advance 2 months in advance</p> <p>2 months in advance 2 months in advance</p> <p>6 weeks in advance 4 weeks in advance 3 weeks in advance 3 weeks in advance 2 weeks in advance</p> <p>2 weeks in advance</p>
<p>Meeting rooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting rooms are reserved (if possible at the work place of the expert, at the venue of field visits) - Installation of beamer, overhead projector, microphone if required - Breaks are organised (water is available for longer meetings) - Reservation confirmed 	<p>Supporting organisation</p>	<p>As early as possible</p>
<p>For each visit/presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert is contacted by phone - Exact topic, time, place, length of presentation (including translation) is agreed on - Expert received more detailed briefing, programme description, programme, list of participants - Expert sends presentation, other background information (if available) <p>- Reminder is sent to expert → <i>What is needed? Beamer, flip charts, translator, honorarium or gift for expert?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Photographer is booked for ceremonial meetings, certain program elements 	<p>Supporting organisation</p>	<p>2 months in advance 2 months in advance 2 weeks in advance</p> <p>1 week in advance, if material shall be distributed beforehand and/or translated earlier 3 days in advance</p> <p>3 weeks in advance</p>
<p>For meetings with SDC, internal information according to internal SDC guidelines (in case of high ranking delegations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invitations to all concerned persons and the directorate for all events in which presence is wanted - Information on country context, objectives of the study tour, initiator of the study tour, CVs of participants - Clarification of topics, issues to be addressed at the meeting, by the delegation and by SDC, consultation with other departments, decision on participants from Swiss side in 	<p>SDC/PDIV desk, preparation of invitations can be delegated to supporting organisation</p>	<p>1-2 months in advance</p>

<p>the meeting, clarification of the structure of the meeting, determination of who writes the protocol,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informal note to the Federal Councillor - Internal information within SDC and of the Swiss embassy in the home country - Copies of all correspondence to the SDC Information service - Regular information to the director (for high-ranking delegation, minister level) 		<p>For the last 1-2 months Regularly, for the last 1-2 months</p>
<p>Predeparture briefing of participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Date for pre-departure briefing is set - Pre-departure briefing took place, info on logistics, finalised program and background material is distributed 	<p>SCO/PDIV, local organisation, material to be provided by supporting organisation</p>	<p>1-2 months in advance 2 weeks in advance</p>
<p>Contacts with the Embassy in the host country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint planning of events 	<p>Supporting organisation (SDC/PDIV desk establishes first contact)</p>	<p>1-2 months in advance, afterwards regular information</p>
<p>External Information, Media, Communication → <i>Shall there be a press statement or a press conference?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information to interested circles in other departments, private sector, civil society - Information to the press is prepared - Participants at a press meeting are determined - Venue is determined, media is invited to the press meeting - weekly Telex is prepared 	<p>SDC/PDIV desk always in cooperation with information services (and supporting organisation)</p>	<p>1-2 months in advance Depending on kind of information shortly before or during the study tour</p>
<p>Security → <i>Will the delegation or members of the delegation need security? If yes, is the federal police and airport police informed? Are special arrangements made for field visits?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FedPol is informed 	<p>SDC/PDIV desk in cooperation with PD I and supporting organisation</p>	<p>As soon as tentative list of participants is available</p>
<p>Supporting Programme, Leisure time</p>	<p>Supporting organisation</p>	<p>Depending on program</p>
<p>Documentation, thank you letters, reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The study tour is documented (e.g. photos) <i>Who documents, takes photos?</i> - Thank you letters - Report is prepared - Remaining questions are clarified/addressed - Follow-up is agreed on 	<p>Supporting organisation</p> <p>Host (can be prepared by supporting organisation)</p> <p>Supporting organisation + Management response All stakeholders</p>	<p>Continuously</p> <p>A week after the departure of the study tour group To be agreed</p>

Annex 3: List of Supporting Organisation

(based on the dlgn list of competence centres)

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
Acade échanges	Acade échanges Rue de l'industrie 35 1030 Bussigny Switzerland Tel +41 (0)21 701 48 16 E-mail: aesa@groupe-ae.ch Contact person: François Ramseyer Guy Deriaz	www.groupe-ae.ch	Communal development Governance Public infrastructure Citizens' participation Crosscutting themes	Appraisals Project development & implementation Monitoring & Backstopping Evaluation
Advokatur AFS	Advokatur AFS Kramgasse 70 Postfach 3000 Bern 8 Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)31 312 33 30 E-mail: Info@advokatur-afs.ch Contact person: Mirjam Strecker E-mail: mirjam.strecker@advokatur-afs.ch	www.advokatur-afs.ch	Constitutional law Administrative law Institutional reforms Municipal development Fiscal decentralization (Finanzausgleich) Citizens' political participation Accountability of Local Governments Municipal taxation Political rights for municipalities Inter-municipal cooperation	Consultancies Advisory services Backstopping Publications Research
Bundesamt für Justiz	Bundesamt für Justiz Bundesrain 20 3003 Bern Switzerland Contact persons: Werner Bussmann Werner.bussmann@bj.admin.ch Tel. +41 (0)31 322 47 98	www.ejpd.admin	Federalism Institutions of Direct Democracy Active participation of civil society organisations in legislative processes	Thematic inputs in: Trainings / seminars Study tours from abroad

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
	Luzius Mader Luzius.mader@bj.admin.ch Tel. +41 (0)31 322 41 02			
CSD (public service management)	Liebefeld-Bern Hessstrasse 27d 3097 Liebefeld Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)31 970 35 35 E-mail: bern@csd.ch	www.csd.ch	Environmental Protection, Geology, Engineering and Energy, Waste, Water Resources Management	Public Sector Consulting, Training, Knowledge Transfer
Convivenza – Internationales Zentrum für Minderheiten	Stiftung Convivenza c/o Europa Institut an der Universität Zürich (EIZ) Hirschengraben 56 8001 Zürich Switzerland Tel. +41 44 634 48 91 office@convivenza.ch	www.convivenza.ch	Diversity Minorities	Organisation of Study Tours in Switzerland
DPI Development Partnership International GmbH, Bern	DPI Development Partnership International GmbH Holligenstrasse 44 3008 Bern Switzerland Contact person: Elena Krylova-Mueller Lena.krylova@dpint.org	www.dpint.org	Governance Citizen participation Decentralisation-related issues Civil society building Community development Public private partnership Participatory processes	Training Backstopping Evaluations Networking
Eidgenössisches Finanzdepartement (EFD) Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung Abteilung	Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung EFV Bundesgasse 3, 3003 Bern Tel. 031 322 21 11 (Hauszentrale) oder 031 322 85 31 Fax ++41 (0)31 322 61 87E-Mail: info@efv.admin.ch		Grundlagen für den Budgetierungs- und Finanzplanungsprozesses Sämtliche Fragen im Zusammenhang mit dem bundesstaatlichen Finanzausgleich, namentlich auch solche betreffend die auf den 1.1.2008 in Kraft getretene	Presentations

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
Finazpolitik, Finanzausgleich, Fiianzstatistik	Contact Person: Hr. Pascal Utz EFV, Sektion Finanzausgleich Tel.+41 031 323 08 52 Pascal.utz@efv.admin.ch		Neugestaltung des Finanzausgleichs und der Aufgabenteilung zwischen Bund und Kantonen Statistik der öffentlichen Haushalte der Schweiz (Bund, Kantone, Gemeinden und Sozialversicherungen)	
EPF Lausanne, Communauté d'étude pour l'aménagement du territoire (CEAT)	CEAT Bâtiment Bp Station16 1015 Lausanne Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)21 693 41 65 E-mail: Secretariat.ceat@epfl.ch Contact person: Laurent Thevoz laurent.thevoz@epfl.ch	http://ceat.epfl.ch/	Administrative, fiscal and political decentralisation Public private partnership Urban and regional planning	Teaching Training Research Advisory Services
FORS, Université de Lausanne Swiss Foundation for Research in Social Sciences	FORS C/o Université de Lausanne Bâtiment Vidy Route de Chavannes 33 1015 Lausanne Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)21 692 37 30 Contact persons: peter.farago@fors.unil.ch georg.lutz@fors.unil.ch	www.fors.unil.ch	Social sciences Elections	Surveys Production of survey data Dissemination of data Research in empirical social sciences, with focus on survey methodology Consulting services for researchers
Helvetas	Helvetas Weinbergstrasse 22a 8021 Zürich Switzerland	www.helvetas.org	Civil society and the State Good Governance principles in the state as well as civil society and private sector Resource management	Projects / programmes Lobbying

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
	Tel. +41 (0)44 368 65 00 E-mail: info@helvetas.ch		Participatory and transparent decision-making Human rights Rule of law Support to decentralisation and democratisation efforts Civil peace-building	
Hochschule Luzern, Institute of Management and Regional Economics	Zentralstrasse 9 6002 Luzern, Switzerland Tel.+41(0)41 228 4150 Contact person: Prof. Stefan Pfäffli stefan.pfaeffli@hslu.ch	www.hslu.ch	Public Management Public Finance, fiscal equalization, tax reform Nonprofit Management Regional Development Allocation and funding of tasks in multi-level governments Strategic planning at local level Organisational structures, processes and culture Customer focus of public services	Teaching Advisory Services Training Study tours on municipal development planning Study tours on fiscal federalism
IDHEAP - Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration	IDHEAP Route de la Maladière 21 1022 Chavannes- prés-Renens Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)21 557 40 00 Contact persons: Prof. A. Ladner Andreas.ladner@idheap.unil.ch Prof. Soguel nsoguel@idheap.unil.ch	www.idheap.ch	Public Sector Management Public Finance Public Marketing Public Law International Public Governance	Teaching Training Research Advisory Services
Institute for Development Studies (IDS) Participation, Power and Social Change Team,	Institute of Development Studies University of Sussex Brighton, BN1 9RE UK Tel. +44 (0)1273 606261	www.ids.ac.uk	Citizen engagement and rights Participation Local democracy Decentralisation Women's empowerment Citizenship	Research Teaching Training Knowledge Sharing

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
Brighton (UK)	Contact person: Dr. John Gaventa j.gaventa@ids.ac.uk			
Institute of Federalism, Fribourg	Institut für Föderalismus Universität Fribourg Route d'Englisberg 7 1763 Granges- Paccot Switzerland Tel. +41-26-300-8125 Contact persons: Prof. P. Hänni : Peter.Haenni@unifr.ch Prof. E.-M. Belser: evamaria.belser@unifr.ch	www.federalism.ch	Federalism Decentralisation Democracy Good Governance Human Rights Administrative and Territorial reform Judiciary Conflicts Sector reform	Assessments Analyses Teaching Training Study tours Research Documentation Centre Summer University
Intercooperation Bern	Intercooperation Bern Maubeerstrasse 10 3011 Bern Tel. +41 31 385 10 10 E-mail: info@intercooperation.ch Contact person: Pascal Arnold pascal.arnold@intercooperation.ch	www.intercooperation.ch	Local Governance Civil Society Natural Resources Management Rural Economy Administrative and political decentralization Public Private Partnerships Local fiscal policy and financial management Participative budgeting New public management Local public service provision Local self government Local Development Local planning	Assessments Plans / strategies Programme development and planning Backstopping M+E on programme/project level Support to local governments in development of quality management and monitoring systems Knowledge platforms on local governance and decentralisation Trainings, Workshops, coaching, organisation of study tours etc Development of handbooks and tools

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
			Rural (and partly urban) planning Regional development and regional planning Municipal management Local public services Human Rights Gender Policy Dialogue	
KEK-CDC, Zurich	KEK-CDC Consultants, Universitätstrasse 69, 8006 Zürich Tel. +41 44 368 58 58 E-mail: info@kek.ch Contact persons: Dieter Zürcher zuercher@kek.ch Markus Engler engler@kek.ch	www.kek.ch	Decentralisation Regional development Local economic development Local self-governance Local planning Local public services Multilevel governance Budgeting procedures Role of Civil Society Local governance mechanisms	Development of concepts and strategies Evaluations Backstopping Advisory services Coaching Moderation Project Management
NADEL, Zurich	NADEL Voltastrasse 24 8092 Zürich Switzerland Tel. +41 (0) 44 632 42 40 E-mail: info@nadel.ethz.ch	www.nadel.ethz.ch	Corruption Political reforms Decentralisation & local governance	Teaching Training Research Strategic Planning Advisory services Evaluations
Nordic Consulting Group, Denmark	NCG Kirkevej 8 DK-2630 Taastrup, Denmark Tel. +45 43 71 62 00 E-mail: secretary@ncg.dk	www.ncg.dk/	Institutional development Governance Human rights Conflict resolution & mediation Decentralisation, administrative and political decentralization,	Assessments, analysis Strategy Development Programming and Planning Backstopping M&E Training

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
	Contact person: Tina Graven		Fiscal decentralization, tax collection, Local budget support Electoral systems Access to justice New public management Constitutional reform Social mobilization Gender Intergovernmental relation	Knowledge Management
SEREC, CH-Vissoie	SEREC Schweizerische Beratungsgruppe für Regionen und Gemeinden Place de la Poste 1 3961 Vissoie Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)27 475 60 30 Contact person: Philippe Chauvie E-mail: Chauvie@serec.ch	www.serec.ch/	Municipal and regional development Inter-municipal cooperation Regional associations Municipal merging Development strategies Public finances Local democracy Access to justice	Advisory services Reviews Organisation of study tours Drafting of guidelines
Skat, St.Gallen	Skat – Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development Vadianstrasse 42 9000 St.Gallen Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)71 228 5454 E-mail: info@skat.ch Contact persons: Jürg Christen Juerg.christen@skat.ch Claudia Schneider claudia.schneider@skat.ch	www.skat.ch	Decentralisation of services provision in communal infrastructure Local self-government Local development Municipal management Public services provision Urban planning Fiscal decentralisation Budgeting processes Civil services reform Social mobilisation, NGO cooperation Minority rights Community development	Sector analysis Strategy development Advisory services Backstopping Programming and planning M&E Knowledge Management Study Tours Training, workshops

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
Swisspeace, Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF), Bern	Swisspeace Sonnenbergstrasse 17 3000 Bern 7 Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)31 330 12 18 Contact person: Anita Müller Anita.mueller@swisspeace.ch	www.swisspeace.ch	Political decentralization during armed conflict and authoritarian political regime Federalism as an instrument for conflict transformation Community participation in local governance and decentralisation Fiscal decentralization Electoral systems Mediation and Rule of law Voters registration Population administration Human rights Gender mainstreaming in Peacebuilding Post-conflict state reconstruction Humanitarian Law	Assessments, analysis Research Strategy Development Programming and Planning Backstopping M&E Training Knowledge Management
Technische Universität München, Deutschland	Lehrstuhl für Raumentwicklung Arcisstr. 21 D- 80333 München Tel +49 89 289-22489 Contact person: Prof. Alain Thierstein thierstein@tum.de	www.raumentwicklung-tum.de/	Regional Development Spatial Development	Teaching Research
Tulum, CH- Caslano	Tulum Ltd Via Rompada 40 6987 Caslano Switzerland Tel +41(0)91 606 6373 E-Mail: info@tulum.ch Contact person: Mr. Oliviero Zasa	www.tulum.ch/	Federalism Local government public administration. Local governance Fiscal decentralization District level budget support Citizen consultation and participation Municipal development	Assessments Strategy development Advisory services Backstopping Programming and planning M&E Knowledge Management Training

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
University of Basel, Öffentliches Rechts: Staats- und Verwaltungsrecht Prof. Markus Schefer	Universität Basel Juristische Fakultät Peter Merian-Weg 8 4002 Basel Tel. +41 61 267 25 13 Contact person: Prof. Markus Schefer Lstschefer-ius at unibas.ch	ius.unibas.ch/	Constitutional law Administrative law	Teaching Research
University of Basel Abtl. Wirtschaft und Politik Prof. Alois Stutzer	University of Basel Department of Business and Economics Peter Merian-Weg 6 4002 Basel Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)61 267 33 61 Contact person: Prof. Alois Stutzer alois.stutzer-at-unibas.ch	wwz.unibas.ch/personen /profil/person/stutzer/	Markets and public policy Politics and economy Public economy	Teaching Research
University of Bern, Institut für Politikwissensch aft	Universität Bern Institut für Politikwissenschaft Lerchenweg 36 3000 Bern 9 Switzerland Tel +41 (0)31 631 83 31 E-Mail: info@ipw.unibe.ch	www.ipw.unibe.ch/	Political science European politics Comparative Political Data	Teaching Research
University of Bern, Kompetenzzentru m Public Management, Prof. Reto Steiner	Kompetenzzentrum für Public Management Universität Bern Schanzeneckstrasse 1 Postfach 8573 3001 Bern Switzerland	www.kpm.unibe.ch	Institutional development Municipal development Local Governance Public Management	Teaching Research

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
	<p>Tel. +41 (0) 31 631 53 11 E-mail: kpm@kpm.unibe.ch</p> <p>Contact person: Prof. Reto Steiner Tel. (direct) +41 31 631 53 14</p>			
University of Fribourg	<p>University of Fribourg Av. Europe 20 1700 Fribourg Switzerland</p> <p>Tel. +41 (0)26 300 7111</p> <p>Contact persons: Prof. Bernard Dafflon Bernard.dafflon@unifr.ch</p>	www.unifr.ch	<p>Local governance Federalism Administrative reforms Municipal merging Territorial reforms Distribution of tax resources in multi-level finance (including tax competition) Financial transfers (vertical and horizontal) Fiscal equalization Local public finances</p>	<p>Assessment and analysis Programming and planning M&E Training Teaching Research Manuals</p>
Université de Genève Département de droit public (PUB)	<p>Faculté de Droit 40, Boulevard du Pont-d'Arve 1205 Genève Switzerland</p> <p>Contact person: Alexandre Fluckiger Alexandre.Flueckiger@unige.ch Tel. +41 22 37 98525</p>	www.unige.ch/droit/	<p>Constitutional law Administrative law Fiscal law Administrative procedures</p>	<p>Teaching Research</p>
Université de Genève Département de droit public (PUB)	<p>Faculté de Droit 40, Boulevard du Pont-d'Arve 1205 Genève Switzerland</p> <p>Contact person: Thierry Tanquerel Thierry.Tanquerel@unige.ch Tél : +41 22 37 98529</p>	www.unige.ch/droit/	<p>Comparative administrative jurisdiction</p>	<p>Teaching Research</p>
Université de	Département de science politique	www.unige.ch/ses/	Political sciences	Teaching

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
Genève Département de science politique et relations internationales	et relations internationales Université de Genève 40 boulevard du Pont d'Arve 1211 Genève 4 Switzerland Tel: +41 22 379 83 62/63 E-mail: secretariat- politic@unige.ch Contact person: Simon Hug Simon.hug@unige.ch Tel. +41 22 379 89 47		Decision-making Political economy Political / electoral behaviour	Research
University of Lucerne Comparative and Anglo-American Law	Universität Luzern Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät Dekanat Hirschengraben 31 Postfach 7460 6000 Luzern 7 Switzerland Tel +41 (0)41 228 77 00 rf@unilu.chSwitzerland Contact person: Prof. Alexander Morawa Tel. +41 (0)41 228 79 04, 74 18, 74 02 alexander.morawa@unilu.ch	www.unilu.ch/deu/	Transnational Legal Studies Human Rights	Teaching Research
Université de Neuchâtel, Prof. Pascal Mahon	Faculté de Droit Avenue du 1er-Mars 26 2000 Neuchâtel Switzerland Contact person: Pascal Mahon	www3.unine.ch/	Comparative Constitutional Law	Teaching Research

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
	<p>pascal.mahon@unine.ch Tel. +41 32 718 12 72</p>			
<p>University of St.Gallen, Institut für Systemisches Management und Public Governance (IMP-HSG) Public Management: Prof. Dr. Kuno Schedler</p>	<p>University of St.Gallen, Institut für Systemisches Management und Public Governance Dufourstr. 40a 9000 St. Gallen Switzerland Tel. +41 71 224 73 45</p> <p>Contact person: Kuno Schedler kuno.schedler@unisg.ch</p>	<p>www.imp.unisg.ch</p>	<p>Public Management Public Management reforms Public Sector Accounting and Budgeting</p>	<p>Teaching Research</p>
<p>University of St.Gallen, Institut für Politikwissenschaft (IPW-HSG)</p>	<p>Universität St. Gallen Institut für Politikwissenschaft Rosenbergstrasse 51 9000 St.Gallen Switzerland</p> <p>Tel. +41 (0)71 224 2600</p> <p>Contact person: James W. Davis james.davis@unisg.ch</p>	<p>www.ipw.unisg.ch/</p>	<p>Political science and international relations Global Democratic Governance</p>	<p>Research Training</p>
<p>University of St.Gallen, Schweizerisches Institut für Aussenwirtschaft und Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung Prof. Dr. Gebhard Kirchgässner</p>	<p>University of St.Gallen, SIAW-HSG Bodanstrasse 8 9000 St.Gallen Switzerland</p> <p>Contact person: Gebhard Kirchgässner gebhard.kirchgaessner@unisg.ch h Tel. +41 71 224 23 47</p>	<p>www.siaw.unisg.ch</p>	<p>Political economics</p>	<p>Research Training Advisory services</p>

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
University of Zurich, Competence Center for Human Rights (UZHR)	Competence Center for Human Rights (UZHR) Kuenstlergasse 15a 8001 Zurich Switzerland Tel. +41 44 634 41 87 E-Mail: info@menschenrechte.uzh.ch Contact person: Susanne Tobler susanne.tobler@menschenrechte.uzh.ch	www.menschenrechte.uzh.ch	Local Governance Political Participation Multi-level governance Transnational development Public Sector Reforms Local Democracy Reforms Civil Society Minority rights Human rights Women in Local Governance Institutions	(Field) Research
University of Zurich, Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Prof. Kübler	Affolternstrasse 56 8050 Zürich Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)44 634 38 41 Contact person: Daniel Kübler daniel.kuebler@ipz.uzh.ch Tel. +41 (0)44 634 38 86	www.ipz.uzh.ch	Political Sciences Public Governance Direct Democracy Political Communication Representation of Minorities Inter-regional Cooperation Civic Education	Research Teaching
University of Zurich, Rechtswissenschaftliches Institut, Prof. Dr. A. Auer	Lehrstuhl für Öffentliches Recht Universität Zürich Treichlerstrasse 10 8032 Zürich Switzerland Tel. +41 (44) 634 15 50 E-Mail: 1st.auer@rwi.uzh.ch Contact person: Andreas Auer	www.rwi.uzh.ch	Constitutional Law Democracy Legislation Federalism E-Voting Civil Society and Institutions	Teaching Research
Urbaplan (Local	Urbaplan	www.urbaplan.ch	Territorial development	Advisory Services

Name	Contact Details	Website	Thematic Areas	Services provided
planning and management)	Avenue de Montchoisi 21 1006 Lausanne Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)21 619 90 90 E-mail: lausanne@urbaplan.ch		Urbanism Mobility Masterplanning Participation	Project Management Evaluations Programme and Project Design
Ximpulse, Bern	Ximpulse GmbH Postfach 645 Klösterlistutz 16 3000 Bern 8 Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)31 332 95 60 E-Mail: contact@ximpulse.ch Contact person: Nicole Töpferwien nt@ximpulse.ch	www.ximpulse.ch/	Administrative and political decentralization Devolution Deconcentration Public private partnership Federal institutions Federalism in multi-ethnic societies Administrative territorial reforms Distribution of powers, Access to justice and legal aid Good governance and governance principles Human Rights Gender equality Comparative and constitutional law Administrative law	Assessment and analysis Strategy Development Programming and Planning Backstopping, monitoring and evaluation Capacity Development, study tours Mediation, dialogue and participatory processes
Zentrum für Demokratie, Aarau	Centre for Democracy Studies Aarau (ZDA) Villa Blumenhalde Küttigerstrasse 21 5000 Aarau Tel. +41 (0)62 836 94 44 E-mail: info@zda.uzh.ch Contact person: Dr. Marc Bühlmann marc.buehlmann@ipw.unibe.ch Tel. +41 (0)31 631 83 28	www.zdaarau.ch	Institutions and practice of Direct Democracy Democratic Innovation Forms of Participation Federalism	Research Training

Annex 4: Elements of ToR

Ideally the ToR should include the following elements:

1. General background

- short description of key aspects of Decentralization/Local Governance (DLG) context in given country, and in particular description of key elements of ongoing reforms, policy changes, programs;
- in this context, short description of the particular role of the visitors, profile of the delegation, their needs and interests with regard to the visit
- short description of DLG commitment of SDC in given country and rationale for organizing such visit (how is it linked to SDC DLG work)

2. Objectives and expected results of the study visit

3. Topics to be covered during the study visit

4. Operational modalities

- Who organizes, who is responsible for what, who finances
- Steps: Needs assessment, consultation and preparation of the delegation members, follow up activities after return

5. Mandate for supporting organization

- Objectives of the mandate
- Specific tasks
- Expected outputs
- Timeline and Budget

Annex 5: Tariffs for Food and Accommodation in Switzerland

Based on SDC guidelines:

Normal tariffs (valid from 01.07.2011 onwards):

Breakfast	CHF 14.--
Main meal (lunch, dinner), as a lump sum	CHF 27.50
Hotel Accommodation single (including breakfast), against voucher	CHF 180.--
Hotel Accommodation double (including breakfast), against voucher	CHF 230.--

Special tariffs (as per February 2009)

On the level of minister and top management, e.g. minister, deputy minister, general director and presidents of international organisations, head of office

Main meal	CHF 150.--
Hotel Accommodation (including breakfast)	CHF 300.--

On the level governor and director, e.g. mayor, governor of province, head of department

Main meal	CHF 100.--
Hotel Accommodation (including breakfast)	CHF 230.--

On the level of senior management of international organisations, private economy, cantons, communes, non-profit organisations, e.g. employees of local administrations, cadres of relief agencies, international organisations, representatives of the business community, employees of cantonal and communal administrations

Main meal	CHF 50.--
Hotel Accommodation (including breakfast)	CHF 180.--

Annex 6: Glossary on the Swiss political system for interpreters from Germany

Used for the visit of a parliamentary delegation from Macedonia for interpreters who knew the German but not the Swiss political system. It is based on the Glossary provided on www.parlament.ch/d/wissen/parlamentswoerterbuch

Zur Vorbereitung der Übersetzer

Aus dem Parlamentswörterbuch der Schweiz
(www.parlament.ch/d/wissen/parlamentswoerterbuch)

(Achtung die Terminologie unterscheidet sich von der in Deutschland)

Abschreibung

Ein **Vorstoss** eines Ratsmitglieds oder einer **Fraktion** wird ohne Ratsbeschluss abgeschrieben, wenn:

1. der Rat den Vorstoss nicht innert zwei Jahren nach seiner Einreichung abschliessend behandelt hat; oder
2. die Urheberin oder der Urheber aus dem Rat ausscheidet und nicht ein anderes Ratsmitglied während der ersten Woche der folgenden **Session** den Vorstoss aufnimmt.

Überwiesene **Motionen** und **Postulate** können auf begründeten **Antrag** des **Bundesrates** oder einer **Kommission** abgeschrieben werden, wenn sie erfüllt sind oder wenn sie nicht aufrechterhalten werden sollen.

Amtliches Bulletin

Das Amtliche Bulletin der **Bundesversammlung** macht die Debatten von **National-** und **Ständerat** seit 1891 umfassend der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich.

Heute protokolliert der Dienst für das Amtliche Bulletin sämtliche im National- und im Ständerat gehaltenen Voten unmittelbar und fortlaufend in der Originalsprache. Gemäss **Geschäftsverkehrs-gesetz** dürfen die Ratsmitglieder innerhalb einer mehrtägigen Frist noch stilistische, nicht aber inhaltliche Korrekturen vornehmen.

Das Amtliche Bulletin ist Teil der juristischen Materialien im Gesetzgebungsprozess. Parallel zu den Redetexten enthält das Amtliche Bulletin deshalb eine Fülle zusätzlicher Informationen zu den einzelnen Ratssitzungen. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Anfrage

Wie mit der **Interpellation** können Mitglieder des Parlaments mit der Anfrage Auskunft über Angelegenheiten des Bundes verlangen. Der **Bundesrat** beantwortet die Anfragen. Die Antwort des Bundesrates ist an das einzelne Parlamentsmitglied gerichtet. Eine Anfrage wird im Rat nicht behandelt.

Antrag

Mit einem Antrag kann ein Ratsmitglied zu einem in Beratung stehenden **Geschäft** inhaltliche und formelle Änderungen vorschlagen.

Aufsichtskommission

Von den 12 **ständigen Kommissionen** jedes Rates zählen die beiden Finanzkommissionen und die beiden Geschäftsprüfungskommissionen zu den Aufsichtskommissionen.

Die Finanzkommissionen beschäftigen sich mit allen grundlegenden Fragen der finanziellen Führung des Bundes. Sie beraten nicht nur Budget und Staatsrechnung vor, sondern befassen sich mit der Haushaltführung des Bundes insgesamt. Damit kommt ihnen die Oberaufsicht über den Finanzhaushalt zu.

Die Geschäftsprüfungskommission übt die Oberaufsicht über die Geschäftsführung des **Bundesrates**, der Bundesverwaltung und der **eidgenössischen Gerichte** aus. Die Aufsicht erfolgt nach folgenden Kriterien:

1. Rechtmässigkeit

2. Ordnungsmässigkeit
3. Zweckmässigkeit
4. Wirksamkeit
5. Wirtschaftlichkeit

Ausserordentliche Session

Die ausserordentliche Session dient dazu, die **Bundesversammlung** für dringende Fälle einzuberufen. Eine ausserordentliche Session können bereits ein Viertel der Mitglieder eines Rates oder der **Bundesrat** verlangen. Dieses Recht erlaubt es auch einer politischen Minderheit, die politische Agenda mitzubestimmen.

Berichterstatter/in

Die **Kommissionen** berichten dem Rat schriftlich oder mündlich über ihre Verhandlungen und Anträge. Sie bestimmen dazu einen Berichterstatter oder eine Berichterstatterin (sowie allenfalls weitere, anderssprachige BerichterstatterInnen), die über die Verhandlungen und **Anträge** der Kommissionen im Rat informieren.

Bestätigung von Wahlen

Bei der Bestätigung von Wahlen nimmt die **Vereinigte Bundesversammlung** nicht eine Wahl vor, sondern fällt einen Beschluss, ob sie einer Wahl zustimmt oder nicht. Lehnt sie die Wahl ab, muss das Wahlorgan eine neue Wahl vornehmen. Zur Zeit bedürfen die Wahl eines Direktors oder einer Direktorin der eidgenössischen Finanzkontrolle sowie die Wahl des **Generalsekretärs oder der Generalsekretärin** der Bundesversammlung einer Wahlbestätigung. Bei der Wahl des Generalsekretärs oder der Generalsekretärin der Bundesversammlung übernimmt die **Koordinationskonferenz** die Rolle des Wahlorgans.

Bundesbehörden

Zu den Bundesbehörden zählen die **Bundesversammlung (Nationalrat und Ständerat)**, der **Bundesrat** mit der Bundesverwaltung und das **Bundesgericht**. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Bundesbeschluss

In der Form des Bundesbeschlusses ergehen Verfassungsbestimmungen, wichtige Einzelakte und Grundsatzbeschlüsse. Ein Bundesbeschluss, der dem **Referendum** nicht unterstellt ist, wird als einfacher Bundesbeschluss bezeichnet. Er ist die eigentliche Verfügung der **Bundesversammlung**.

Bundesblatt

Das Bundesblatt ist seit 1849 das allgemeine Mitteilungsblatt der Eidgenossenschaft. Im Bundesblatt werden folgende Texte veröffentlicht:

1. Botschaften des **Bundesrates** mit den Gesetzes- und Beschlussentwürfen und den dazu gehörenden Erläuterungen an die **Bundesversammlung**
2. vom Parlament verabschiedete Beschlüsse und Gesetze, die dem **fakultativen** oder dem **obligatorischen Referendum** unterstehen
3. die **Bundesbeschlüsse**
4. die Verfügungen der **Bundeskanzlei** über die Vorprüfung, das Zustandekommen oder das Scheitern von **Volksinitiativen** und **Referenden**
5. die Beschlüsse des Bundesrates über die Ergebnisse der Volksabstimmungen (mit allen Resultaten je Kanton)
6. die Berichte des Bundesrates an den **Nationalrat** über die Nationalratswahlen (mit allen Resultaten je Kanton)

(Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Bundeskanzler/in

Die Bundeskanzlei ist die allgemeine Stabsstelle des **Bundesrates**. Ihre Leitung liegt bei der Bundeskanzlerin oder beim Bundeskanzler. Die Bundeskanzlerin oder der Bundeskanzler unterstützt den **Bundespräsidenten** oder die Bundespräsidentin und den Bundesrat bei ihren Aufgaben. Die Stellung der Leiterin oder des Leiters der Bundeskanzlei entspricht der eines Vorstehers oder einer Vorsteherin eines Departements. (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland) (Entspricht dem Generalsekretär der Regierung Mazedoniens)

Bundespräsident/in

Den Bundespräsidenten oder die Bundespräsidentin wählt die **Vereinigte Bundesversammlung** aus den Mitgliedern des Bundesrates für eine Amtsdauer von einem Jahr. Der Bundespräsident oder die Bundespräsidentin leitet die Sitzungen des **Bundesrates** und übernimmt besondere Repräsentationspflichten.

Bundesrat

Der Bundesrat ist die oberste leitende und vollziehende Behörde, die Regierung des Bundes (**Exekutive**). Der Bundesrat besteht aus sieben Mitgliedern, die ihre Entscheidungen als Kollegium geschlossen nach aussen vertreten (Kollegialprinzip). Jedes Mitglied des Bundesrates ist zugleich Vorsteherin oder Vorsteher eines Departementes, das die oberste Verwaltungseinheit des Bundes darstellt. (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Bundesratswahl

In der **Session** nach der Gesamterneuerung des **Nationalrats** erfolgen die Wahlen in den **Bundesrat**. Die Mitglieder des Bundesrates wählt die **Vereinigte Bundesversammlung**. Die Mitglieder des Bundesrates, **Bundespräsident/in** und Vizepräsident/in werden einzeln gewählt. Zur Wahl benötigt eine Kandidatin oder ein Kandidat mehr als die Hälfte der Stimmen (absolutes Mehr). Bisherige Bundesräte kommen in der Reihenfolge des Amtsalters zur Wiederwahl. Für neue Mitglieder des Bundesrates erfolgt die Wahl in der Reihenfolge des Amtsalters ihrer Vorgänger. In den beiden ersten Wahlgängen können alle wählbaren Personen kandidieren. Ab dem dritten Wahlgang sind keine weiteren Kandidaturen zugelassen. Wer ab dem zweiten Wahlgang weniger als 10 Stimmen erhält, scheidet aus der Wahl aus. Bei jedem Wahlgang scheidet zudem Kandidierende mit der geringsten Stimmenzahl aus. Bei Stimmgleichheit findet eine Stichwahl statt; wenn sie unentschieden ausgeht, entscheidet das Los. Bei der Stimmzählung fallen leere sowie ungültige Stimmzettel ausser Betracht. Ungültig sind mehrdeutige Stimmen, Stimmzettel, die auf eine nicht wählbare, eine bereits gewählte oder eine ausgeschiedene Personen lauten, sowie Stimmzettel, die ehrverletzende Äusserungen oder offensichtliche Kennzeichnungen enthalten.

Bundesverfassung

Sie ist das oberste Gesetz der Eidgenossenschaft und bildet die rechtliche Grundlage für die gesamte Gesetzgebung und die föderalistische Ordnung des Staates. Sie regelt die grundlegenden Rechte und Pflichten der Bürgerinnen und Bürger und der gesamten Bevölkerung sowie den Aufbau und die Zuständigkeiten der **Bundesbehörden**. Jede gesamthafte Überarbeitung (Totalrevision) und jede Änderung (Teilrevision) muss Volk und Ständen (Kantonen) zur Genehmigung vorgelegt werden (**obligatorisches Referendum**).

Bundesversammlung

Die Bundesversammlung (**Legislative**) übt die oberste Gewalt im Bund aus. Sie wahrt dabei die Rechte des Volkes und die der Kantone. Als oberstem Organ des Bundes fällt der Bundesversammlung die Aufgabe zu, den **Bundesrat** zu wählen, die Grundzüge und den Rahmen der Tätigkeit des Bundesrates zu bestimmen und eine wirksame Oberaufsicht über diese Tätigkeit auszuüben.

Die Bundesversammlung besteht aus zwei Kammern: dem **Nationalrat** und dem **Ständerat**. Beide Kammern sind einander gleichgestellt. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Büro

Das Büro ist jenes Organ eines Rates, das sich mit dem Verfahren, der Organisation und der Verwaltung des entsprechenden Rates beschäftigt.

Die Büros von **Nationalrat** und **Ständerat** erstellen das **Sessionsprogramm** des jeweiligen Rates, ernennen die **Kommissionen** und **Delegationen**, weisen ihnen ihre Aufgabenbereiche und die zu behandelnden **Geschäfte** zu und legen den Zeitplan der Beratungen fest.

Das Büro des Nationalrates setzt sich zusammen aus der **Präsidentin** oder dem Präsident des Rates, den ersten und zweiten Vizepräsidentinnen oder -präsidenten, vier **Stimmzählenden** und den Fraktionspräsidentinnen und -präsidenten.

Das Büro des Ständerates setzt sich zusammen aus der Präsidentin oder dem Präsidenten des Rates, den ersten und zweiten Vizepräsidentinnen oder -präsidenten sowie einer Stimmzählerin oder einem Stimmzähler und einer Ersatzstimmzählerin oder einem Ersatzstimmzähler. Das Büro des Ständerates wird zudem um je ein weiteres Mitglied aus denjenigen **Fraktionen** der **Bundesversammlung** ergänzt, welche im Ständerat mindestens fünf Mitglieder umfassen und noch in keiner der oben erwähnten Funktionen vertreten sind.

Das Büro des Nationalrates und das Büro des Ständerates bilden zusammen die **Koordinationskonferenz**.

Delegation

1. Bei einer Delegation im engeren Sinn handelt es sich um eine **Subkommission** innerhalb einer **Kommission**. Delegationen sind in der Regel mit besonderen Aufgaben betraut. **National-** und **Ständerat** kennen folgende gemeinsame Delegationen:

- Verwaltungsdelegation: Die Verwaltungsdelegation überwacht die Geschäftsführung und die Finanzverwaltung der **Parlamentsdienste**.
- Finanzdelegation: Die Finanzdelegation prüft und überwacht laufend den gesamten Finanzhaushalt des Bundes. Die Finanzdelegation kann auch Vorlagen des **Bundesrates** an das Parlament beraten und die Finanzkommissionen oder andere Kommissionen schriftlich oder mündlich über ihre Beratung und **Anträge** informieren.
- Geschäftsprüfungsdelegation: Die Geschäftsprüfungsdelegation hat den Auftrag, die Tätigkeit im Bereich des Staatsschutzes und der Nachrichtendienste regelmässig näher zu prüfen. Sie informiert nach Anhören des Bundesrates die **Geschäftsprüfungskommissionen** über ihre Prüfungen.
- NEAT-Aufsichtsdelegation: Die NEAT- Aufsichtsdelegation überwacht als Oberaufsicht der **Bundesversammlung** das NEAT-Projekt. Sie setzt sich aus Mitgliedern der Finanzkommissionen, der Geschäftsprüfungskommissionen und der Kommissionen für Verkehr und Fernmeldewesen beider Räte zusammen.

2. Delegationen, die einen Spezialfall der Kommissionen darstellen, sind die Delegationen internationaler parlamentarischer Versammlungen. Sie haben die Aufgabe, die Schweizerische Bundesversammlung in einer internationalen parlamentarischen Versammlung zu vertreten. National- und Ständerat unterhalten Delegationen bei:

- EFTA/EP Europäische Freihandelsassoziation / Europäisches Parlament
- IPU Interparlamentarische Union
- APF Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
- OSZE Parlamentarische Versammlung der OSZE
- ER Parlamentarische Versammlung des Europarates

Differenzbereinigung

Falls die Beschlüsse von **National-** und **Ständerat** voneinander abweichen, kommt es zum sogenannten Differenzbereinigungsverfahren. Die **Kommission** des ersten Rats beurteilt die einzelnen Unterschiede und macht darauf ihrem Rat einen Vorschlag (zum Beispiel in einem Punkt die Version des anderen Rates gutzuheissen, in einem anderen aber auf der eigenen Fassung zu beharren). Bestehen nach gesamthaft drei Beratungen in jedem Rat noch Differenzen, kommt das **Geschäft** vor die **Einigungskonferenz**.

Einigen sich die Räte in einer der ersten drei Beratungen, so entscheiden sie in der **Schlussabstimmung** definitiv über die Vorlage.

Für Vorlagen, zu welchen die Räte nur Ja oder Nein sagen können (zum Beispiel für die Genehmigung von Staatsverträgen oder Gewährleistung der Kantonsverfassungen) kommt ein verkürztes Verfahren zum Zug. Beharrt derjenige Rat, der eine Vorlage ablehnt, in der zweiten

Beratung auf seinem Beschluss, ist die Vorlage nicht zustandegekommen und von der **Geschäftsliste** zu streichen.

Einigungskonferenz

Die Einigungskonferenz sucht eine Kompromisslösung, wenn nach drei Beratungen in jedem Rat zwischen den Räten noch Differenzen bestehen. Die mit dem Geschäft betrauten **Kommissionen** beider Räte entsenden je 13 Mitglieder in die Einigungskonferenz. Findet die Einigungskonferenz eine Verständigungslösung, stimmen die Räte in der **Schlussabstimmung** über den Vorschlag ab. Kommt keine Einigung zustande oder lehnt einer der Räte den Kompromiss ab, so gilt die ganze Vorlage als nicht zustandegekommen und wird von der **Geschäftsliste** gestrichen.

Eine besondere Differenzregelung gilt für den Voranschlag und die Nachtragskredite. Verwirft ein Rat den Einigungsantrag zum Voranschlag des Bundes oder einen Nachtrag, so gilt der Beschluss der dritten Beratung als angenommen, der den tieferen Betrag vorsieht.

Erlasse der Bundesversammlung

Die Erlasse der Bundesversammlung sind:

1. das **Bundesgesetz**
2. die **Verordnung**
3. der **Bundesbeschluss**
4. der **Einfache Bundesbeschluss**

Rechtsetzende Bestimmungen erlässt die **Bundesversammlung** in Form des Bundesgesetzes oder der Verordnung. Die übrigen Beschlüsse ergehen in der Form des Bundesbeschlusses. Untersteht ein Bundesbeschluss nicht dem **Referendum**, so ist er in die Form des einfachen Bundesbeschlusses zu kleiden.

(Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Erstrat

Erstrat ist jener Rat, der ein **Geschäft** als erster behandelt. Die erstmalige Beratung von **parlamentarischen Vorstössen** erfolgt im Rat, dessen Mitglied den Vorstoss eingereicht hat. Geschäfte die der **Bundesrat** einreicht, **Volksinitiativen**, **Standesinitiativen**, Kantonsverfassungen, die der **Bundesversammlung** zur Gewährleistung zu unterbreiten sind, und **Petitionen** werden einem Rat zur Erstbehandlung zugewiesen. Die **Ratspräsidentinnen oder Ratspräsidenten** verständigen sich über die Zuweisung. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Exekutive

Nach dem Prinzip der Gewaltenteilung ist die Exekutive jene Staatsgewalt, der das Regieren obliegt. Die Regierung führt die vom Parlament beschlossenen Gesetze aus und leitet die Verwaltung. In der Schweiz bildet der **Bundesrat** die Landesregierung. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Fraktion

Die **Bundesversammlung** gliedert sich politisch in Fraktionen und nicht in Parteien. Die Fraktionen umfassen Angehörige der gleichen Partei oder gleichgesinnter Parteien. Eine Fraktion ist also nicht immer mit einer einzigen Partei identisch. Zur Bildung einer Fraktion ist der Zusammenschluss von mindestens fünf Mitgliedern eines Rates erforderlich. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Generalsekretär/in der Bundesversammlung

Die Generalsekretärin oder der Generalsekretär der Bundesversammlung leitet die **Parlamentsdienste**. Den Generalsekretär oder die Generalsekretärin wählt die **Koordinationskonferenz**; die **Vereinigte Bundesversammlung** hat diese Wahl zu bestätigen. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Initiativrecht

Als Initiativrecht bezeichnet man das Recht von Organen eines Staates, einer Institution der gesetzgebenden Gewalt (**Legislative**) oder der Bürger einen Gesetzesentwurf zur Abstimmung vorzulegen.

1. Der **Bundesrat** besitzt ein Initiativrecht, indem er der **Bundesversammlung** Entwürfe zu ihren **Erlassen** unterbreitet.
2. Die Kantone können einen Gesetzesentwurf mit der **Standesinitiative** anregen.
3. Das Parlament kennt die **parlamentarische Initiative** und die **Kommissionsinitiative**.
4. Bürgerinnen und Bürger können mit der **Volksinitiative** Einfluss auf die Gesetzgebung nehmen.

Interessenbindung

Beim Eintritt in den Rat und auf jedes Kalenderjahr hin unterrichtet jedes Ratsmitglied das **Büro** schriftlich mit folgenden Angaben über seine Interessenbindungen:

1. berufliche Tätigkeit
2. Tätigkeit in Führungs- und Aufsichtsgremien und Beiräten von Körperschaften (z.B. Verwaltungsratsmandate), Anstalten und Stiftungen
3. dauernde Leitungs- und Beraterfunktionen für wichtige Interessengruppen
4. Mitwirkung in Kommissionen und anderen Organen des Bundes
5. Beratungstätigkeit für Bundesstellen

Über die Interessenbindungen gibt das öffentliche Interessenregister Auskunft. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Interpellation

Mit der Interpellation können die Mitglieder der **Bundesversammlung** Auskunft über wichtige Ereignisse oder Probleme der Aussen- oder Innenpolitik oder der Verwaltung verlangen. Die Räte können Interpellationen als dringlich erklären. Der **Bundesrat** beantwortet die Interpellation in der Regel während der folgenden **Session**. Die Antwort ist an den jeweiligen Rat als Ganzem gerichtet. Über die Antwort kann der Rat diskutieren.

Kommission

Kommissionen haben grundsätzlich die Aufgabe, die ihnen zugewiesenen **Geschäfte** vorzubereiten und ihrem Rat Antrag zu stellen. Sie arbeiten dabei intensiv mit dem **Bundesrat** zusammen. Die Kommissionen des **Nationalrates** setzen sich aus 25 Mitgliedern zusammen, diejenigen des **Ständerates** aus 13 Mitgliedern.

Als weitere Aufgaben der Kommissionen nennen die **Geschäftsreglemente** der Räte die regelmässige Verfolgung der gesellschaftlichen und politischen Entwicklungen sowie die Ausarbeitung von Anregungen zur Problemlösung in ihren von den **Büros** zugewiesenen Sachbereichen der Bundespolitik (**Kommissionsinitiative**).

Die Kommissionen tagen durchschnittlich 3-4 Tage pro Quartal. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Legislative

Nach dem Prinzip der **Gewaltenteilung** ist die Legislative jene Staatsgewalt, welcher vor allem die Gesetzgebung obliegt. In Demokratien befassen sich in Vertretung des Volkes die Parlamente mit dieser Aufgabe. Das ist in der Schweiz auf Bundesebene die **Bundesversammlung**. Indirekt kann in der Schweiz auch das Volk über **Initiativ-** und **Referendumsrecht** die Gesetzgebung beeinflussen.

Lobbyist/innen

Lobbyist/innen vertreten die Interessen von Verbänden, Firmen oder anderen Organisationen bei den Mitgliedern des Parlaments. Sie sind selber nicht Angehörige des Parlaments und haben auch keinen Zutritt zu den Debatten. Jedes Ratsmitglied hat die Möglichkeit, zwei Personen zu bestimmen, die als seine Gäste im Parlamentsgebäude ein- und ausgehen können. Solche Gäste haben damit auch die Gelegenheit, Lobbying zu betreiben.

Milizparlament

Während in den meisten Ländern die Ratsmitglieder ihr Amt als Beruf ausüben, gehen in der Schweiz die meisten Ratsmitglieder daneben noch einem Beruf nach. Die **Bundesversammlung** ist demzufolge

ein Milizparlament oder Halbberufsparlament. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Nationalrat

Der Nationalrat vertritt das Schweizer Volk. Er zählt 200 Mitglieder. Beim gegenwärtigen Bevölkerungsstand kommt auf je rund 35'000 Einwohnerinnen und Einwohner 1 Sitz. Jeder Kanton bildet einen Wahlkreis, der mindestens eine Vertreterin oder einen Vertreter wählt, auch wenn seine Bevölkerung unter 35'000 Einwohnerinnen und Einwohnern liegt.

Das Volk bestimmt seine Abgeordneten in direkter Wahl nach dem Grundsatz des Proporz. Alle vier Jahre finden Gesamterneuerungswahlen statt. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Öffentlichkeit

Grundsätzlich sind die Sitzungen der Räte öffentlich. Ein Sechstel der Mitglieder eines Rates oder der **Vereinigten Bundesversammlung** können eine **geheime Beratung** beantragen.

Im Gegensatz dazu führen die **Kommissionen** ihre Sitzungen unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit durch. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Parlamentarische Verwaltungskontrolle

Die Parlamentarische Verwaltungskontrolle (PVK) ist das Kompetenzzentrum der **Bundesversammlung** für Evaluationen. Sie unterstützt die **Geschäftsprüfungskommissionen** (GPK) des Parlaments bei der Wahrnehmung der Oberaufsicht über den **Bundesrat**, die Verwaltung sowie die **eidgenössischen Gerichte** und weist die GPK auf abklärungsbedürftige Themen hin. Gestützt auf Artikel 170 der Bundesverfassung überprüft die PVK zudem auf Antrag parlamentarischer **Kommissionen** die Wirksamkeit politischer Massnahmen des Bundes. Die PVK ist in der Bearbeitung ihrer Evaluationsmandate unabhängig. Administrativ ist sie dem Sekretariat der GPK unterstellt.

Parlamentsdienste

Die Parlamentsdienste unterstützen die **Bundesversammlung** bei der Erfüllung ihrer Aufgaben. Die Parlamentsdienste planen und organisieren die **Sessionen** und die Sitzungen der **Kommissionen**, erledigen die Sekretariatsgeschäfte und erstellen Berichte, Protokolle sowie Übersetzungen, beschaffen und archivieren Dokumente, und beraten die Ratsmitglieder in Fach- und Verfahrensfragen.

Sie stehen unter der Leitung der **Generalsekretärin der Bundesversammlung**. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Redaktionskommission

Die Redaktionskommission ist eine **gemeinsame Kommission** beider Räte. Sie legt die endgültige Fassung der **Erlasse** fest, beseitigt formale Widersprüche und sorgt für die Übereinstimmung der Texte in den drei Amtssprachen (deutsch, französisch, italienisch). Sie macht aber keine materiellen Änderungen. Für jede Amtssprache besteht eine **Subkommission**.

Referendum

Das Referendum erlaubt den Stimmberechtigten, über wichtige Beschlüsse des Parlaments selber an der Urne endgültig zu entscheiden. Das Gesetz unterscheidet zwischen dem **fakultativen** und dem **obligatorischen Referendum**.

Session

Als Session bezeichnet man den Zeitraum, in dem das Parlament zusammentritt. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Sessionsprogramm

Das Sessionsprogramm ist eine chronologische Übersicht der **Geschäfte**, die **National-** und **Ständerat** während einer **Session** behandelt. Das Sessionsprogramm muss spätestens 14 Tage vor Sessionsbeginn im Besitz der Ratsmitglieder sein.

Ständerat

Der Ständerat setzt sich aus 46 Vertreterinnen oder Vertretern der Schweizer Kantone zusammen. Die Kantone Obwalden, Nidwalden, Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, Appenzell Ausserrhoden und Appenzell Innerrhoden wählen je eine Vertreterin oder Vertreter, die übrigen Kantone je zwei. Für 40 Mitglieder des Ständerats erfolgt die Wahl gleichzeitig mit den Wahlen für den **Nationalrat**. Die Wahlen für die Vertreterinnen oder Vertreter der Kantone Zug und Graubünden finden jeweils ein Jahr vor den Nationalratswahlen statt. In Appenzell Innerrhoden wählt die Landsgemeinde (Versammlung aller Stimmbürger) die Ständevertretung jeweils im April vor den Nationalratswahlen. Das Wahlverfahren richtet sich nach kantonalem Recht. Der Kanton Jura wendet das Proporzverfahren an, die anderen Kantone wählen nach dem Majorzverfahren. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie) (Achtung andere Terminologie als in Deutschland)

Standesinitiative

Mit der Standesinitiative hat jeder Kanton die Möglichkeit, der **Bundesversammlung** einen Entwurf zu einem Erlass einzureichen oder die Ausarbeitung eines Erlass textes vorzuschlagen.

Tagesordnung

Die Tagesordnung ist die chronologische Übersicht der **Geschäfte**, die ein Rat während eines Sitzungstages behandelt. Die **Präsident/innen** beider Räte legen am Schluss einer Sitzung dem Rat die Tagesordnung für den nächsten Tag vor.

Vereinigte Bundesversammlung

Nationalrat und **Ständerat** verhandeln gemeinsam als Vereinigte Bundesversammlung. Für die Einberufung der Vereinigte Bundesversammlung ist die **Koordinationskonferenz** zuständig. Die Vereinigte Bundesversammlung tagt unter dem Vorsitz der Nationalratspräsidentin oder des Nationalratspräsidenten um:

1. Wahlen vorzunehmen, vor allem **Bundesratswahlen** und **Wahlen ins Bundesgericht**
2. Zuständigkeitskonflikte zwischen den obersten Bundesbehörden zu entscheiden
3. **Begnadigungen** auszusprechen

Die Vereinigte Bundesversammlung versammelt sich ausserdem bei besonderen Anlässen und zur Entgegennahme von Erklärungen des **Bundesrates**. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Vertraulichkeit

Die Vertraulichkeit umfasst die Pflicht der Ratsmitglieder nicht bekannt zu geben, wie andere Ratsmitglieder an Sitzungen Stellung bezogen haben. Ausserdem sind die Ratsmitglieder an das Amtsgeheimnis gebunden, sofern sie auf Grund ihrer amtlichen Tätigkeit von Tatsachen Kenntnis haben, die zur Wahrung überwiegender öffentlicher oder privater Interessen geheim zu halten oder vertraulich sind. Die Kommissionssitzungen sind vertraulich. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Volksinitiative

Mit der Initiative können Bürgerinnen und Bürger einen Volksentscheid über eine von ihnen gewünschte Änderung der Bundesverfassung verlangen. Damit eine Initiative zustande kommt, müssen innert einer Sammelfrist von 18 Monaten 100'000 Stimmberechtigte mit ihrer Unterschrift das Begehren unterstützen. Die Initiative kann als allgemeine Anregung formuliert sein oder als fertig ausgearbeiteter Text vorliegen, dessen Wortlaut Parlament und **Bundesrat** nicht mehr verändern können.

Zweikammersystem

Nach dem Vorbild der Verfassung der USA wurde mit der Gründung des Schweizerischen Bundesstaats 1848 das Zweikammersystem eingeführt. Der **Nationalrat** repräsentiert die Gesamtbevölkerung, der **Ständerat** die Gliedstaaten, die Kantone. Beide Räte sind einander gleichgestellt. (Für diese Reise wichtige Terminologie)

Zweitrat

Zweitrat ist jener Rat, der ein **Geschäft** zur Beratung übernimmt, nachdem es der **Erstrat** behandelt hat.

Weitere wichtige Ausdrücke mit schweizerischer Besonderheit

Kantone: entspricht den deutschen Bundesländern

Gemeinde: Der Ausdruck Kommune ist in der Schweiz nicht gebräuchlich

Der Bund kurz erklärt 2011



Diese alljährlich erscheinende, stets reich bebilderte Broschüre will Ihnen einen möglichst breiten, aber doch leicht verständlichen Einblick in die politische Schweiz und ihre obersten Behörden vermitteln sowie die Struktur und die Aufgaben unseres Staates aufzeigen.

[Der Bund kurz erklärt 2011](#)

The Swiss Confederation - a brief guide 2011



This richly illustrated brochure is published each year and gives you a broad yet clear picture of Switzerland's political institutions and executive authorities while also highlighting the structure and role played by the State.

[The Swiss Confederation a brief guide 2011](#)

La Confédération en bref 2011



Cette brochure qui paraît tous les ans vous donnera, grâce à une illustration abondante et un langage simple, un aperçu aussi complet que possible de la Suisse, de ses institutions politiques et des autorités fédérales. Elle vous familiarisera également avec la structure et les tâches de notre Etat.

[La Confédération en bref 2011](#)

La Confederazione in breve 2011



Questo opuscolo pubblicato annualmente e sempre arricchito da immagini intende offrirvi una panoramica possibilmente ampia, ma nello stesso tempo di facile lettura, della politica svizzera e delle sue massime autorità, nonché illustrare la struttura e i compiti del nostro Stato.

[La Confederazione in breve 2011](#)

La Confederaziun en furma concisa 2011



La brochura che cumpara mintg'onn e che cuntogna numerusas illustraziuns vul dar a Vus in'invista cumplexsiva, ma tuttina bain chapibla en la Svizra politica e sias autoritads supremas, e preschentar las structuradas e las incumbensas da noss stadi.

[La Confederaziun en furma concisa 2011](#)

Andrea Iff, Nicole Töpferwien, Power-sharing - the Swiss experience, Politorbis No. 45, 2/2008

An introduction to the Swiss experiences of power-sharing in ten chapters, including a two-page handout for each chapter.

[Politorbis Nr. 45 - Power sharing - The Swiss experience](#) (5635 Kb, pdf)

2 / 2008 (112 Seiten)

The Swiss Constitution of 1999, non-official translation

<http://www.admin.ch/org/polit/00083/index.html?lang=en> also available in German, French, Romansh, Spanish, Portuguese, Nepali, Arab, Japanese

Further Publications published by the Swiss administration (some additionally exist in other languages)

Verstehen Sie politisch?	2008	Bundeskanzlei BK	104.810.D
Die Ziele des Bundesrates 2011, Band I	2011	Bundeskanzlei BK	104.613.D
Bundesratsfoto	2011	Bundeskanzlei BK	104.18
Political agenda of the Federal Council and Parliament, Legislature planning for the period 2007 - 2011	2009	Federal Chancellery FCh	104.811.ENG
Welcome! A Visit to the Federal Supreme Court	2008	Federal Supreme Court	
Statistical Data on Switzerland	2010	Federal Statistical Office FSO	025-1000
Sustainable Development - Pocket Statistics	2009	Federal Statistical Office FSO	737-0900
SLFS 2009 in Brief	2010	Federal Statistical Office FSO	363-0900
Von der Idee zur Tat - das heisst CEDAW Übereinkommen zur Beseitigung jeder Form von Diskriminierung der Frau	2009	Eigenössisches Büro für die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann EBG, Eidgenössisches Departement für auswärtige Angelegenheiten EDA	301.800.D
The debt brake - a success story	2010	Federal Department of Finance	600.003.ENG

		FDF	
Swiss Financial Market Policy	2010	Federal Department of Finance FDF	600.004.600.004 .ENG
Stories from the internet	2010	Federal Office of Communications OFCOM	808.001.en
Swiss environmental statistics a brief guide	2009	Federal Statistical Office FSO	694-0900
Swiss Agriculture Pocket Statistics 2010	2010	Federal Statistical Office FSO	1112-1000
Sustainable protection of groundwater	2009	Federal Office for the Environment FOEN	810.400.037E
Swiss climate policy at a glance	2010	Federal Office for the Environment FOEN	810.400.043EN G
Die Bilateralen Abkommen Schweiz - Europäische Union November 2010	2010	Integrationsbüro EDA/EVD	201.337.D
ABC of International Law	2009	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA	
ABC of International Humanitarian Law	2009	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA	
ABC of Human Rights	2008	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA	
ABC of diplomacy	2008	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA	
Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict	2009	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA	
Die Neutralität der Schweiz	2004	Eidgenössisches Departement für Verteidigung, Bevölkerungsschutz und Sport VBS	95.630.D
Menschliche Sicherheit in der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik	2007	Eidgenössisches Departement für auswärtige Angelegenheiten EDA	860182788
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (institution flyer)	2010	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC	11108E1000
Annual Report Switzerland's international cooperation 2009	2010	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, SECO	11001E0900
Report on effectiveness swiss development cooperation in the water sector	2008	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO	3-03798-088-5
Die volle Wahrheit zum halbleeren Saal	2007	Parlamentsdienste	104.804

Further literature

Thomas FLEINER, Alexander MISIC, Nicole TÖPPERWIEN, *Swiss Constitutional Law*, Kluwer/Stämpfli, The Hague 2005 (new edition to be published late 2011)

Walter HALLER, *The Swiss Constitution in a Comparative Context*, Dike, Zurich 2009

Wolf LINDER, *Swiss Democracy, Possible Solutions to Conflict in Multicultural Societies*, Palgrave, Houndmills Basingstroke 2010.

Issue 1:

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "Should decentralised units be defined based on ethnic criteria or based on capacity?"

1. History of the formation of Switzerland, Introduction to the Swiss political system, including power-sharing between different groups

A. Notes on the Swiss experience:

- The process of introducing federalism was amongst others an approach to maintain and allow for diversity while increasing unity and efficiency.
- Switzerland created political institutions that aim at balancing the interests of the country as such and of different groups/the cantons.
- Switzerland managed to design institution in such a way that different groups were sure to receive representation though there were no fix quotas. The political system is geared towards favouring compromises.
- There are of course also challenges: e.g. slowness of decision-making, critique of consensus politics, integration of new minorities, representation of women.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation (with discussion on the presentation):

Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on power-sharing

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- Formation of the Swiss Confederation
- From Confederation to Federation
- The different levels of government
- Main features of federalism
- Political institutions at the centre with a focus on power-sharing between different groups
- (semi-direct democracy)
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Main features of the political system in the home country
- The importance of capacity and ethnicity in the political discourse of the home country

2. Experiences with territorial reform in Switzerland

A. Notes on the Swiss experience:

- The experience with territorial reform provides for examples in which capacity arguments dominated and others in which arguments of identity played a crucial role.
- Overall it shows that at different times, different arguments might prevail and that in many cases a mix of criteria will be appropriate.
- Swiss experience provides interesting examples for procedures how to do territorial reforms and to balance different interests.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Merger of municipalities, e.g. Glarus (as more capacity oriented)
- Debate on the merger of the half cantons of Basle (as more identity oriented)
- the creation of the Canton Jura (e.g. for a mix of motivating elements; as example for procedure; as examples for conflict management and that demands for territorial reforms might always re-emerge), for instance including meetings with members of the Interjurassian Assembly, parliamentarians from the Canton of Jura and the Canton of Berne, the Mayor of a municipality at border between the two cantons
- a debate on the legal provisions in various cantons on territorial reforms, with focus on the procedures of merging municipalities
- a debate on ameliorations (Flurbereinigung) (to show participatory procedures in capacity oriented reforms)
- a debate with politicians, interests groups how they managed the public debate on a merger of municipalities

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Debate on the lessons of Swiss experience on territorial reform.

3. Strategies of small, financially weak municipalities

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Those who bring arguments in favour of capacity for territorial re-organisation often point out that some territorial units created based on ethnic criteria might not be viable or that such an approach would create misbalances in capacity between different territorial units.
- Switzerland provides experiences that small territorial units (with weak economic capacity) can find strategies to lessen the effects of this lack of capacity, e.g. through cooperation with others or systems of financial equalisation.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit of a small municipality, discussion with a mayor on the challenges of a small municipality
- Cooperation as a strategy for small municipalities: Discussion with officials and citizens of two municipalities that cooperate, discussions with members of intercantonal working groups, e.g. of the conference of the cantons in the centre of Switzerland (Innerschweizer Regierungskonferenz)
- Discussion with an expert of public finances on financial equalisation schemes at cantonal level for supporting small municipalities

Time for discussion and reflection:

- E.g. What could be done to improve the capacity of otherwise weak territorial units in the home country?
- What is the minimum capacity that territorial units need that they remain viable and can assume their powers?

Multicultural organisation of cantons/municipalities

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- While the debate on *Strategies of small, financially weak municipalities* might contribute to soften positions on those who demand ‘capacity’ as the major element of territorial reform, the discussions on multicultural cantons/municipalities could show to the promoters of ethnic criteria that identity accommodation can also be achieved within multicultural territorial units.
- In Switzerland, linguistic diversity is the most prominent example of different identities. Accommodation of linguistic groups at the federal and cantonal level can demonstrate many different mechanisms. Though a majority of municipalities in Switzerland are relatively homogeneous in respect to language there are still several municipalities which have to accommodate. In general, municipalities are more reluctant to accommodate linguistic diversity than the Switzerland as such or the cantons.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit of multilingual municipalities/multilingual cantons, e.g. Fribourg, Biel, Samedan, Canton Grisons, Canton Fribourg
- Discussion on the relations between different communities within the municipality/within the canton
- Power-sharing within a canton, within a municipality, eg. within the parliament, the executive
- Other examples of multilingual/multicultural life: official languages, multilingual administration, school system
- Protection of minorities within the municipality/within the canton

Time for discussion and reflection:

- What can be done to accommodate ethnic groups within multiethnic territorial units?
- How can minorities be assured that they will not be 2nd class citizens.

Potential other program elements:

- Skill training, e.g. negotiation training
- Workshop, e.g. to discuss/work on the proposals for territorial reform

Tips and tricks

- For most study tours it will be useful to provide an introduction to the Swiss political system, as foreseen here. Such an introduction can provide the basis for all other visits, presentations, discussions. To some extent such an introduction can also be provided in the home country or can be replaced by providing background documents. In this specific case, the introduction is an important part of the program to set the scene for the overall program, to make sure that all participants are at the same level.
- The briefing of the expert would include the request to look at the formation of the Swiss confederation and on the current political system with a focus on how a balance for ensuring capacity and for providing room for different groups was created and how rebalancing is taking place.
- In many cases it will be difficult to have a satisfactory number of female participants. The introductory presentation is a good opportunity to include a gender perspective from the start

onwards and thus to show awareness for gender specific issues even if/in particular when there is a less than ideal gender balance in respect to participants.

- Time for 'discussion and reflection' could help to reflect on differences between the two political systems already early on. The reflection on the two systems can be deepened over time. The initial discussion will also help Swiss counterparts and the accompanying person to get first hand insights on the issues at stake and on group dynamics. This will help to provide last minutes briefings for other program elements if necessary.
- In some cases however it is difficult to engage participants in a serious discussion that concerns their own system early in the process. Trust is not yet built. In particular a discussion on the political discourse in the home country can become emotionalised. The moderator needs to be attentive and has to intervene in the discussion accordingly.
- Topics for discussion and reflection can be adapted so as to be responsive to the demands and needs of the delegation. This requires to have a constant eye on the process.
- Care should be taken to give similar relevance to examples where capacity elements were dominant and others with a focus on identity arguments. The accompanying person could/should explain before each visit why the specific example was chosen.
- A visit of the Canton Glarus can be combined with a visit to the Landsgemeinde, as example of direct democracy
- There is a certain risk of overlaps between topics, because alternatives to mergers or to the division of territorial units will probably come up in presentations and debates. A certain amount of overlaps is not necessarily problematic as participants will then get similar information from different perspectives. Clear information for Swiss counterparts on other elements of the programs can help to keep overlaps to a minimum. Another option would be to take up the other two topics with the same counterparts.
- A discussion with an expert can be used to reflect on field visits and the various inputs. This could be combined with the reflection of participants on lessons learned.
- Associations of municipalities can assist in selecting interesting examples and in creating contacts.

Issue 2:

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "What powers should the local level have?"

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on the distribution of powers between different levels of state

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- In Switzerland, the federal level has only those powers that it got attributed in the constitution. In principle, all other powers belong to the cantons.
- The cantons can decide which powers they want to give to the municipalities.
- The autonomy of municipalities is not very well protected. Cantons can withdraw powers. Based on a law, they could even dissolve municipalities. It is mainly due to the strong history of local governance and a tradition of participatory decision making that local government remained strong.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on the distribution of powers

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre
- (semi-direct democracy)
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Main features of the political system in the home country
- The role of local government within the political system of the home country
- The current distribution of powers between the centre and local bodies

2. Experiences with the distribution of powers and with changes to it

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Only recently, Switzerland introduced an explicit reference to the subsidiarity principle in the constitution. It is not clear whether this will in effect change the approach to the distribution of powers.
- Already before Switzerland had the tendency to attribute powers to the lowest possible level, to keep decision-making close to the people. Efficiency was one criteria but not the only one. Democratic arguments and arguments of identity were also of importance. Centralized were amongst other powers directly linked to sovereignty and others where common values were at the forefront (e.g. criminal law).
- Over time a rather complex and not very transparent system developed. The reform of the mechanisms of financial equalization was used to disentangle powers. It is hoped that the changes

to the distribution of powers will strengthen efficiency, accountability and transparency and will incorporate considerations based on democracy (participation) and identity (conflict management).

- After the reforms in the distribution of powers between the centre and the cantons, reforms continue at cantonal level in respect to local governments.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Presentation and discussion with an expert (public administration, law, economy) on criteria for the distribution of powers in Switzerland, in the past and today
- Discussion with a representative of the Bundesamt für Justiz (Office of Justice) on the constitutional revisions (What did they bring? What were arguments in favour and against?)
- Discussion with a representative from a cantonal department (ministry) on the criteria applied for the distribution of powers between the cantons and municipalities?
- (Creation of agglomerations and the debate on the attribution of powers)
- Discussion with a mayor and citizens in a municipality. What powers are important to them?

Time for discussion and reflection:

- What are lessons from Swiss experience?
- Good governance criteria as criteria for the distribution of powers?
- What could be criteria for the distribution of powers in the home country?

3. Experiences with drafting respective laws, with negotiating changes to the distribution of powers

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

See above

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Meeting with representatives of cantonal departments (ministries) in charge of local governments for discussions on the process of rebalancing the distribution of powers between the cantons and the centre and between the cantons and the local level. (What were the different steps, what was the role of the canton, what has been experienced as difficult, as positive? What has been major differences between both processes (centre - cantonal, cantonal - local)?)
- Discussion with a representative of the association of municipalities and with representatives from local governments and their experiences in current negotiations on the distribution of powers (e.g. in the framework of reforming the system of financial equalisation). (What was the role of representatives of local governments, of the association of municipalities?, what has been experienced as difficult, as positive?)
- Discussion with a team that worked on establishing agglomerations with a discussion how they decided on the powers of the agglomeration

Time for discussion and reflection:

- What are lessons from Swiss experience?

- Potential challenges during the next steps of drafting the law on decentralisation and the distribution of powers?
- How can challenges be addressed through process design?
- Outlook discussion: from criteria to the distribution of powers (to what kind of a distribution of powers do the different criteria lead?)

Potential other program elements:

- Skill training: legal writing
- Workshop to discuss and work on the legal draft

Tips and tricks

- The workshop can be used to provide the members of the delegation some time to work on the legal draft. In this case, the organiser would provide the venue with the necessary technical equipment. The other option would be to invite Swiss experts who previously received copies of the draft and to have a discussion based on the draft. The two options can of course also be defined. It would have to be clarified beforehand whether the participants are authorised and willing to work on the draft, whether they are allowed to share the draft with Swiss experts.
- Delegations normally appreciate to meet their Swiss counterparts. Therefore it would be good to include some civil servants from the federal level who have a similar status as the civil servants from the study tour group, though most likely, based on the tasks, the civil servants from the Ministry of Local Development will have more common experiences with civil servants at the cantonal level.
- Switzerland developed rather unique techniques for legal drafting, for instance in respect to consultations in early stages but in particular concerning (parallel) drafting in several languages. As one consequence, Swiss legislation tends to be written in rather easy to understand language with a clear structure. Drafting standards are high.

Issue 3:

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on "How to accord financial autonomy?"

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on fiscal federalism

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- The federal level, the cantons and the local level have each about 1/3 of overall public financial resources. The share of local levels is much higher than in most other countries, in particular in developing countries
- Each level can raise own taxes, the taxing power of the centre is limited by the constitution.
- Taxing power by the local government is regulated in the cantonal constitution and cantonal laws. Normally, municipalities can define tax rates and tax scales (within certain limits). Fees form an important part of income of local governments
- Citizens pay different amounts of taxes depending on where they live
- There is a strong political pressure towards tax harmonization
- Cantons established systems of financial equalization between local governments
- Local governments prepare their own budgets and decide on their spending. Local governments can accumulate debts.
- The people is involved in financial decisions at the local and the cantonal level through mechanisms of direct democracy.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on fiscal federalism

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level
- Semi-direct democracy: the role of referenda and other direct democratic instruments in respect to financial issues
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Main features of the political system and of fiscal decentralisation in the home country

2. Main sources of revenues of local governments, budgetary processes, spending power

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- see above

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit of a big municipality. Discussion with the Representative of the Executive in charge of finances, discussions on revenues, on the budget process, on spending powers
- Visit of a small municipality, discussion with Mayor, financial officer on revenues, budget process, spending powers, direct democracy
- Other visits, e.g. on the tax collection system at cantonal/municipal level, at a citizens assembly when financial issues are discussed
- Presentation and discussion with an expert on fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy in developing countries

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Lessons from the Swiss experience?
- What hampers financial autonomy in the home country most? What would be most important changes?

3. Systems of financial equalization

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Amongst others because cantons and municipalities have relatively high degrees of financial autonomy, there are also significant differences in available funds from canton to canton, from municipality to municipality. Financial equalization schemes are an important aspect to ease these difference.
- Systems of financial equalization have just been re-negotiated at federal and at cantonal level
- Swiss mechanisms of financial equalization do not aim at absolute equality in respect to financial capacity or available revenues but at equalizing financial capacities to a certain extent.
- The recent debates on financial equalization can also demonstrate the link between revenue and power allocation.
- Systems of financial equalization need a certain degree of solidarity between financially strong and financially weaker units.
- The financially weakest canton (Canton Uri) receives 56% of its funds from financial equalization.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Presentation on the history of financial equalisation
- Discussion with a representative of a cantonal administration on the mechanisms of financial equalisation, on experiences with financial equalisation and recent reforms (or discussions with a representative of the federal administration)
- Visit of a rich municipality and discussions on financial equalisation (or discussions with representatives of a rich canton (e.g. Zurich/Zug))
- Visit of a poor municipality and discussions on financial equalisation (or discussions with representatives of a poor canton (e.g. Uri), discussion on strategies to increase revenue and to reduce costs)
- Discussions with an expert on incentives for sound financial management in systems of financial equalisation.

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Lessons from the Swiss experience?
- Is financial equalisation an option, in particular to assist weaker local units?
- Is financial equalisation sufficient for financially weaker local units to catch up?

- What else does it need, e.g. in the sphere of capacity building?
- Discussions on other equalisation payments, e.g. on contribution of Basel Land for the theatre in Basel Stadt

4. Challenges: What happens when local governments cumulate debts?

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Financial autonomy is an important aspect of the Swiss system of governance. Swiss experiences also shows that financial autonomy can create challenges. The hypothesis, the more financial equalization the better is not necessarily justified.
- The Swiss system of financial autonomy can lead to the situation that municipalities can accumulate debts. For instance, in the case of the municipality of Leukerbad the canton intervened to reduce municipal debts. There are only limited possibilities of cantonal control over municipal finances.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Discussion_ with a representative of the cantonal administration on cantonal municipal financial relations, with a representative of a municipality, with a representative of the association of municipalities on challenges in respect to financial autonomy.

Time for discussion and reflection:

- What kind of control mechanisms exist in the home country?
- What kind of control mechanisms remain necessary/become necessary in a reformed system of fiscal decentralisation?

5. Lobbying for more financial autonomy

Forms of interaction: e.g. Workshop to develop a strategy for lobbying

Tips and tricks

- The study tour has mainly the purpose to strengthen the capacity of local politicians to be able to effectively lobby with higher levels. Therefore a focus is given to discussions with politicians from municipalities. However interactions with politicians from the (federal or) cantonal can help to better understand the multilevel dimensions of financial decentralisation and to learn about the concerns and arguments of higher levels of state.
- The study tour should also invite critical reflections on the limits of financial autonomy.

Issue 4

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on " When shall powers and funds be transferred? When are decentralised units deemed ready to receive more powers, more funds? How to build the necessary capacities?"

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Switzerland cannot provide immediate experiences for a transition to decentralised governance. Swiss history much more shows a process of centralisation.
- However, the Swiss system can provide an example of non-centralised governance.
- Additionally, the Swiss political system is characterized by the continuous attempt to balance and re-balance different interests

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of Swiss federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level
- Political processes as bottom-up processes, multi-stakeholder processes
- Semi-direct democracy
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Can there be lessons for the home country despite the limited transition experience in Switzerland?

2. The distribution of powers and of resources

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Switzerland can provide examples how powers and funds can be distributed between different levels of state.
- It can also provide approaches how smaller and/or financially weaker municipalities strive for providing good services.
- Swiss experience, like experiences of decentralized or non-decentralised countries in general, show that power allocation and resource allocations should go hand in hand. Discussions between the cantons and municipalities can demonstrate the attempt/the challenges to match powers and resources.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit of a financially weak municipality, visit to the municipal administration or e.g. of a primary school and discussions on the challenge to deliver effective services, discussion on approaches of the municipality, e.g. to organise services in a cost effective way, to attract pupils, to cooperate with other municipalities.
- Discussion with persons involved in cantonal/municipal negotiations on resource allocation e.g. concerning cantonal transfer. Discussions on how the amount of transfer per municipality is decided on including a discussion on the procedure of setting the amount.
- Discussion with the cantonal department in charge for municipalities/ in charge of finances. Discussions on cooperation with municipalities, discussions on their view concerning challenges in respect to the distribution of powers and of resources.

3. Required capacities and capacity building

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- There is no standardized Swiss system to measure the performance of municipalities...
- Different cantons and municipal associations developed their own training programs for municipal civil servants. Though not necessarily legally required participation in these training programs are expected for certain civil servants.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Discussion with representatives from the canton: How do they measure the performance of municipalities, what are quality standards, what do they think about the capacity/performance of municipal civil servants? What support can the canton offer when municipalities do not perform? What happens if a municipality continues not to perform?
- Discussion with representatives from the municipality: How do they measure the performance of their municipality, what are quality standards, what do they think about the capacity/performance of their civil servants? What support does the canton offer to the municipality? What support does the association of municipalities offer?
- Visit to a training institution: What training programs are available to municipal civil servants? How does the training institution respond to the needs of the municipality?
- Visit of an association of municipalities. What services do they offer to their members?
- Discussion with a person from human resources: what is done to keep positions in the municipal administration attractive?

Time for discussion and reflection:

- What are the lessons from the Swiss experience?
- What are the minimum capacities needed of municipalities to perform their tasks, to manage their budget?
- What can the ministries/the municipalities do to improve capacity

4. Transition experiences of other countries

- Discussion with an expert/with experts (public administration, law, political science, economy) on lessons of transition experiences.

- Reflection on challenges during transition and approaches how to manage them

5. Consensus-building

- Closed door discussions with or without representatives of the host

Tips and tricks:

- The limited own experience of Switzerland with a transition to decentralisation should be communicated already during the planning phase. Potential experience sharing is limited to experiences with non-centralised governance. mainly, know-how on transition is mainly based on the experiences of other countries
- Reconfirm during the trip in how far the Ministries are ready to engage in consensus-building
- It is a declared objective to improve the understanding between the association and the ministries, for this also the framework program is of importance, e.g. meals, sight-seeing, time for relaxed interaction
- Meetings in which both representatives from a Cantonal association of municipalities and of a cantonal government/administration are present can show the working relations between the two.
- Care should be taken that the demands from local governments but also the concerns of the Ministries (outspoken and non-outspoken) receive enough importance, e.g. the fear of ministries of downsizing and the resulting resistance of civil servants.
- Normally the golden rule is that delegations should always have a meeting with counterparts of the host country that have a similar position. If no meeting with the Swiss Federal Department of finance is foreseen it should be explained why this is so (e.g. cantons decide on local government). It would be good to organise at least a lunch or a dinner.

Issue 5

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to create a multilingual local administration with equitable representation of different groups?”

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- The Swiss constitution recognizes four languages as national languages. The four languages have also official status at the Federal level (Romansh is recognized as an official language for communicating with Romansh-speaking citizens)
- The cantons can decide which languages shall have official status. They are asked to respect the traditional territorial distribution of languages and shall take into account the indigenous linguistic minorities. There are three bilingual and one trilingual canton. There are several bilingual municipalities.
- The different indigenous linguistic communities are represented in the political institutions at the federal level. There are no fixed quotas.
- Previously there was no law on languages. The Canton Grison is the only canton that has a law on languages.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system with a focus on the accommodation of linguistic groups

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Diversity in Switzerland, in particular linguistic diversity
- Main features of Swiss federalism
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level and the accommodation of linguistic groups
- Official languages in Switzerland
- (Semi-direct democracy)
- Critical assessment

2. The Functioning of Multilingual Administrations in Switzerland

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Swiss citizens can choose in which official language they want to address the federal administration and they have the right to be addressed in their official language of choice. They can address cantonal administration in the cantonal official language(s) and the municipal administration in the municipal official language(s).
- Staff within the administration is supposed to have the opportunity to work in their (official) language.
- Administrations take language competencies into account when hiring civil servants

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit of the trilingual Canton Grison (or if less time visit to the Canton Fribourg)
- Discussions on the language law (at federal level or at the Canton Grisons) and the reasons why it was promoted and adopted.
- Discussions with the personnel office of a bilingual municipality of their hiring criteria and procedure
- Discussion with representatives of different language communities on challenges in respect to multilingualism
- Visit of a municipal office in a smaller bilingual municipality. Discussion with civil servants on working in a multilingual environment
- Visit of a bilingual school

Issue 6:

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to improve service-delivery in small municipalities?”

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Switzerland is confronted with a high number of small municipalities.
- Many of them face challenges in respect to service-delivery.
- Municipalities developed their strategies to overcome them.
- They include cooperation among municipalities for know-how and service delivery. In addition there are mechanisms to provide financial support to weaker municipalities.
- Several cantons are pressuring that small municipalities merge in order to create bigger more efficient local governments.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of Swiss federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level
- Political processes as bottom-up processes, multi-stakeholder processes
- Semi-direct democracy
- Critical assessment

2. Challenges of small municipalities in respect to service delivery, approaches of small municipalities to improve service delivery

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

See above

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Visit to an association of municipalities. Discussion on municipal autonomy, its scope and limits.
- A longer visit to one municipality in order to get to know its challenges, see how decisions are taken, get to know the organisation of the municipality and of the municipal administration, see how the municipality interacts with citizens, experience contacts between the municipality and the cantonal authorities, discuss on relations with the canton, visit a municipal infrastructure project, e.g. waste disposal.

- Discussions with cantonal authorities on their relations with municipalities, ways of cooperation between the cantons and municipalities, consultation procedures

3. Cooperation between municipalities and mergers of municipalities

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Most municipalities have several cooperation agreements with other municipalities. These can improve efficiency however have limited democratic legitimacy
- In general, there is a trend towards reducing the number of Swiss municipalities. Most cantons passed legislation. Cantons mainly work with incentives. Some cantons however also foresee the possibility to force municipalities into mergers

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Discussion with an expert on the ‘optimal size of municipalities’ from the perspective of service delivery and other aspects of good governance.
- Discussions with representatives of municipalities that cooperate, opportunities and challenges of inter-municipal cooperation
- Discussion with representatives of municipalities that merged, discussions on whether the merger improved effectiveness of service delivery, pros and cons of a merger.
- Discussions of representatives from municipalities that decided against a merger

Issue 7

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How can the population be more directly involved in local planning processes? How to improve accountability of local officials towards the population? How to improve the responsiveness of politics to citizens' demands?”

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Switzerland has developed very strong citizen participation in almost every aspect of political decision-making.
- For instance the citizens can give their opinions, in consultation phases during the legislative processes, during planning processes. In some cases, it is mandatory to consult.
- Citizens can make decisions in citizens assemblies', via referendum and popular initiatives.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of Swiss federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level
- Political processes as bottom-up processes, multi-stakeholder processes
- Semi-direct democracy
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Discussion on the main instruments, opportunities, challenges for public participation in the home country

2. Municipal autonomy in respect to planning, Mechanisms of direct democracy and participation at the local level

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Swiss municipalities have a relatively high degree of municipal autonomy. This includes that they define their own priorities and do their own planning
- Planning process normally include consultation of citizens, bigger projects will need an approval of the citizens (popular vote or vote at an assembly of the citizens)

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Presentation and discussion on municipal autonomy
- Discussion with representatives of a municipality on their planning process
- Discussion with interest groups on their possibilities to participate in planning

- Discussion with a municipal association on their support to municipal planning processes
- Discussion with municipal authorities on local instruments of direct democracy, what are they, how are they used
- Visit of a citizens assembly (Gemeindeversammlung)

3. Excursus: Election system and direct democracy and their influence on the party system in Switzerland

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- The election system provides Swiss citizens not only to choose between parties but also between politicians. Even in proportional elections based on list systems they can express preferences. This makes politicians more accountable to the citizens.
- Direct democracy further promotes accountability. Citizens can express their opposition to proposals. In addition they can initiate a political debate.
- Political parties are umbrella parties composed of cantonal parties. A political career normally starts at the local level

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Discussions with representatives of political parties on the electoral system, the influence of direct democracy on the political life
- Discussion with an expert on the structure and organisation of political parties in Switzerland

Issue 8

Reflections and ideas for a study tour on “How to manage inter-municipal cooperation?”

1. Introduction to the Swiss political system

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- Switzerland has three main levels of government: the federal level (centre), the cantons, and the municipalities (urban and rural). The powers and resources of municipalities are defined by the cantons. In all cantons municipalities have substantial powers and resources.
- Switzerland has a high number of small municipalities. Half of all municipalities have less than 1000 inhabitants. In particular small municipalities can face challenges to render services effectively. Therefore, municipalities cooperate amongst each other.

B. Forms of Interaction

Presentation:

Introduction to the Swiss political system

Potential aspects to be included in the presentation:

- From Confederation to Federation
- Main features of Swiss federalism
- The different levels of government, their powers and their resources
- Political institutions at the centre, at the cantonal level, at the local level
- Cooperation between municipalities, facts and figures, benefits and challenges
- Critical assessment

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Discussion on the main areas for which the cooperation between municipalities could be useful in the home country.

2. Different forms of inter-municipal cooperation

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- All of Swiss municipalities have multiple cooperation agreements with other municipalities, e.g. for waste water treatment, health services, schooling, fire fighting.
- It can be argued that these forms of cooperation have contributed to better service delivery and are more flexible than the merger of municipalities. However they also lead to a certain democratic deficit because once a cooperation is agreed on, more tends to be decided by the executive than by the municipal legislature..

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Presentation and discussion on municipal cooperation with an expert on local governance.
- Discussions with mayors of two small municipalities that cooperate with each other about cooperation experiences.

- Discussion with a manager of a City municipality or middle sized municipality on different forms of cooperation (Stadtschreiber)
- Visit of a water cooperation to learn about one specific mode of cooperation.
- Discussion with representatives of cantonal administration on the legal framework for municipal cooperation, for benefits and challenges the canton sees in cooperation,

3. Associations of Municipalities

A. Notes on the Swiss experience

- In Switzerland there is a Swiss association of municipalities (Schweizer Gemeindeverband) and there are different cantonal associations of communes. In addition, there is a Swiss Association of Cities (Schweizer Städteverband)
- Membership is voluntary, 70% of Swiss communes are member of the Swiss association of communes.
- The associations of communes have an important function for communal political life. They provide a platform for lobbying for communal concerns within the canton as well as at federal level. At the same time they provide services to communes, e.g. legal advice, support in planning processes, training offers.
- The Swiss association of communes is financed through membership fees as well as through its services.

B. Forms of Interaction

Various different options to combine **presentations, field visits, discussions** with concerned persons. Examples could include:

- Discussions with the secretary general of one of the Swiss or cantonal associations on their organisation, strategy, tasks
- Discussion with representative of a municipality that is member of a municipal association about the perceived benefits of being member in such an association.
- Discussion with someone from federal or cantonal administration on the role of municipal association and their cooperation with such associations (e.g. in the frame of tripartite agglomeration conference).

Time for discussion and reflection:

- Lessons from the Swiss experience?
- Discussion among participants about possible benefits, challenges of an association of municipalities in the home country.

Follow-up

Shared experience: Brainstorming session during the DLGN f2f in March 2011:

Main recommendations reconfirm the principle vision that study tours shall contribute to positive change as part of a comprehensive process rather than being just one-off event:

- The follow up will depend on the main purpose of a study tour which should be clearly articulated beforehand. E.g. sensitization of politicians will require different follow up than concrete learning on municipal governance for local government representatives..
- For effective follow up the content must be relevant for participants and the right participants (change agents) have to be selected. This requires thorough analysis of in country DLG situations, challenges and a needs assessment of possible delegation members.
- Follow up is easier if the study tour is closely linked to and relevant for specific SDC engagement and programs in a country. The closer the match, the easier the follow up within usual program progress monitoring.
- One way of pre-considering follow up measures is to preserve time for brainstorming sessions at the end of each study tour day and to pre-plan a final debriefing session in Switzerland and after return in the home country. Identify key learning and key messages to convey and think about respective communication strategies. Or, jointly define follow up action plan or start brainstorming on possible elements of envisaged future program.
- A method for understanding about the outcomes of a study tour could be a story telling workshop one year after the visit, focusing on “stories of change”.
- Expectations with regard to study tour follow up should be realistic and not too ambitious; immediate translation might not be obvious; a study tour is just one aspect within a wide range of capacity development activities.

Other Shared experience:

Follow-up of study tour knowledge exchange

When designing a study tour for a specific delegation, it was already clear that the members of the delegation would later be useful as resource persons in other activities in the home country, i.e. during workshops, round-table discussions or conferences. Special attention was therefore paid to giving them enough space to reflect and critically analyse the Swiss insights. Back home, their experience made them valuable for knowledge transfer. They were trusted as local people, but had some first hand experience of the Swiss system and could constructively build bridges.

Use of questionnaires

If the delegation is asked to fill in a questionnaire, this is best done while still in the host country. 15 minutes can be dedicated to this task in order to give a general feedback, on quality of accommodation, transport and meals, quality of translation and the individual program elements. Once they are back home, it is harder to get questionnaires back. The higher the members of a study tour the less appropriate it is to use a questionnaire.

Shared experience: participants

A Study Tour from an Asian country had as one objective to provide an impression of the political culture in Switzerland which is amongst others characterised by the continuous negotiations and interactions between different stakeholders. For this purpose, attention was paid that also the study tour group was composed as a multi-stakeholder group.

In another Study Tour, also from an Asian country, there have been two main objectives: one objective was know-how transfer on federalism, the other was to improve relations between major leaders of political parties. Here political leaders were selected who have influence within their parties and who were considered as willing to engage with leaders from other parties. In addition, some as far as possible non-political experts were included to enrich the internal debates and to help bridge differences between the participants.

One of the major challenges for many study tours is to reach gender balance or also inclusiveness in respect to other criteria, like for instance ethnicity, religion, caste, profession. As experience shows it can help to discuss these criteria with the main counterpart in the home country. In one case the Swiss organiser decided that the event will only take place if fifty percent of the participants are qualified women. The counterpart of the home country was at first reluctant but then obliged.

In one study tour from Asia, women could only be convinced to participate in the study tour when they were assured that in Switzerland a women would be accompanying the group.

In one study tour a lot of pressure was made on the organisers from the home country to include at least one third women. These women participants and the organisers later criticised that during the study tour they had met only one female expert and no gender specific issues had been addressed. It should be self-evident however here shall be mentioned after all: the same values and criteria that are made mandatory for the counterpart of the home country should also apply for the organisers in the host country.

Accommodation, food, transportation and translation

Tips and tricks on accommodation, food, transportation and translation

- There are different tariffs for maximum costs for accommodation and food depending on the level of the delegation. See the Annex on Tariffs
- Members of the delegation might correlate the size of rooms with the importance given to them. In particular, if there are rooms of different sizes, care has to be taken how to allocate them. This decision should not be left to the hotel but to someone who knows the participants and their status well. Communication in advance will be crucial, e.g. if hotel rooms are small or differ in size.
- Delegations tend to prefer hotels with a lobby in which they can meet each other or with guests.
- Of course food restrictions have to be considered. Some of these are obvious and well-known, others might not be. For instance, eggs are not considered as vegetarian. The embassies in the host and home country can normally provide information.
- Many study tour groups prefer if they can organise some meals themselves and receive a per diem for those meals.
- Some members of study tours might be used to transportation in official cars with or without police convoy. Communication on the choices of means of transportation can help to avoid misunderstandings.
- Translation will be necessary if not all members of the delegation (and Swiss experts) speak and understand the same language. It is often easier that the delegation provides the interpreter(s). If this is not possible, an interpreter has to be arranged in the host country. Courts have lists with accredited translators. In addition there are specialised companies.
- The decision into which languages translation is offered can be politically sensitive. Translation into multiple languages might be necessary from a political and principled point of view though it can pose challenges and might require specialised portable translation equipment. Communication on the choice of languages is crucial if the matter is politically sensitive.
- Especially if there are tensions within the delegation or if trust-building and informal consensus-building is one of the aims, not only the qualification of the translator but also his/her political, ethnic or religious background and sensitivity on these topic can be of importance.
- Translators have to be briefed on key concepts and terms of the study tour's topic. It is helpful to them, to have presentations a few days beforehand to prepare the technical terms. It can be particularly tricky if translators from Germany have to be used because there are no translators available in Switzerland. An example of a glossary provided to interpreters from Germany explaining Swiss terminology in German is available in [Annex 7](#).

Objectives: the steering wheel for the study tour



→ Objectives and the design of study tours

The objectives of the study tour will be the guiding wheel for almost all aspects of the organisation of the study tour. Participants will be selected in view of their possible contribution to achieving the objectives. The program elements, the balance between leisure time and work time, the methodology of the study tour, the partners and experts, all will be defined based on the set objectives.

→ Expectation management and coordination through objectives

It is important to be clear about objectives and to ensure that the key stakeholders in the home country, the hosts, implementing organisations and the members of the delegation have a common understanding of these objectives and that these objectives are clearly communicated. Otherwise the chances are high that expectations of the different involved sides will not coincide and that at least some expectations will be disappointed. This does not mean that all participants and stakeholders need complete uniformity in priorities and interests. However, there should be a minimum common understanding and motivation why the study tour is conducted and why the members of the study tour group participate in it. In addition, realism about what can be achieved through the study tour (and future follow-up activity) will further help expectation management. A common view of objectives will also facilitate coordination because objectives will guide the definition of the design of the study tour and will help organisers to define the roles and priorities.

→ Objectives and measurement of success of study tours

The objectives also provide the major elements for assessing the success of study tours. Success does not only consist in the satisfaction of the participants, of SDC staff or the involved counterparts in the host country. In most cases it will not be enough that the delegation had a good time. The success of the study tour will depend on whether the objectives were achieved or positive steps were taken towards achieving the objectives. Therefore care should be taken that objectives and related indicators for success are realistic and based on sound hypothesis.

Additional tips and tricks:

- Not every visit of a delegation is a study tour even if it is called so. In some cases, for instance diplomatic contacts, e.g. for the signing of a MoU, or dialogue and negotiations are prime

purposes of the visit. Some knowledge sharing elements can be part of the program for providing a frame for the other activities. Be sure to be very clear about what is the major purpose so as to avoid misunderstandings and to have the priorities right.

- Whenever possible, define the objectives jointly with the initiator of the study tour and key stakeholders, perhaps even the implementing organisation. This will also improve ownership. In some cases, it might be necessary to agree on how the objectives are communicated in the home country or towards participants.
- Sometimes it will need time to gain clarity about the objectives. This is an important reflection process. Objectives should be realistic (being in balance with resources (finances and time) to be spent).
- Make sure that the implementing organisation in the host country as well as other partners and experts are clear about the objectives and support them, too.
- A discussion on objectives will help to learn about the motives of the initiator of the study tour, of key stakeholders and prospective participants and will show the level of motivation as well as whether the study tour fits within the SDC country program.

Shared experience: Defining objectives

Experience 1: The study tour was planned mainly for knowhow transfer. The members of the delegation were all members of one parliamentary committee. It was known beforehand that the members of the delegation did not have good personal relations with each other. Previous study tours led to open fights. This study tour was different. Precautions had been taken. The study tour was planned in a very participatory way and included program elements that all participants were eager to attend. In addition, attention was paid that presentations and visits took place in a positive atmosphere and sometimes even scenic settings. The delegation started to interact constructively with each other. It was not the objective of this study tour to discuss on divisive issues or to directly work on group dynamics and the program was designed accordingly. Quite soon it became apparent that the conditions had been there to do more than knowhow transfer, and that participants would have welcomed to do it. This could potentially have provided an even bigger contribution to institution-building. However, it was too late to amend the program. Some more reflection on the objectives in the beginning would have allowed providing for space to take up divisive issues and discuss on internal dynamics in case that the conditions were conducive to such discussions.

Experience 2: In an exchange program the main initiator, the Ministry of Justice, and SDC had very clear understanding that the study visits should mainly contribute to a culture change within the institutions in the home country. Also participants were aware of this objective. For political reasons this was not publicly communicated, neither in the host country nor in the home country and it was helpful to included terms like 'learning from each other', or 'gaining a better understanding of a different culture'.

Official dinners

Tips and tricks on defining the seating order for an official event:

- Round or rectangular table? Round is only advisable for small groups (up to 6 persons per table), since it is more difficult to discuss with those sitting opposite. An advantage of round tables: the seating order does not single out one person as the most important one.
- Size of the rectangular table: The table should have on each long side an impair number of seats. The most important persons sit in the middle, facing each other. The places on the small ends of the table should not be used, except for seating unimportant persons (driver, translators etc.)
- Seating the most important person: He or she is seated in the middle of the table (seat of honor), if there are more tables, the persons sits at the table in the centre and if possible receives the seat with the nicest view. The most important person of the host sits opposite.
- The second and third most high-level persons of the delegation are seated on the right resp. left hand side of the host. If there are more than one table, there are two options: the most important persons are seated at the central table, or the most high ranking persons get the seats of honour at the different tables. The second option necessitates that there are enough high ranking persons from the host side to take the seats opposite of the high-ranking members of the delegation.
- Seating persons with special functions: If the head of delegation is accompanied by his/her personal security, the latter should be seated close by, with a good overview on the entries, and space to move quickly.
- Defining the seating order can be especially tricky in groups with different languages, where translators have to be distributed to the tables. According to the protocol, the most important person always has his/her translator on the left side of him/her, even if he/she speaks the language of the host person.

Shared experience: Dinner hosted by the embassy.

A high level study tour group visited Switzerland. In addition to the official dinner organised by the hosts, the embassy of the home country also wanted to host an event. The embassy however had limited funds to do so. In the end, the embassy hosted a dinner and costs were shared between the embassy and SDC.

Program elements

Read more: Practical and conceptual inputs

Study tours provide the advantage that study tour group members do not only have to listen but can also see and experience during the study tour. It can be much more impressive to see a Mayor of a small municipality at work and to hear first hand of the challenges to govern a municipality in a globalising context instead of listening to a presentation on the tasks of mayors in small municipalities in a non-descript conference room in the home country. Study tour programs that aim at know-how transfer normally include several field visits to provide study tour members with the opportunity to see how challenges are actually addressed and to experience for instance the working environment or the culture of political debate. Introductory and conceptual inputs remain important. They serve to gain a better understanding of the context of the host country, including the political system, to prepare participants for the field visits, and to systematise relevant experiences in order to put them in perspective. The combination of conceptual inputs and field visits shall help the study tour delegation to conceptualise and to contextualise, thus to provide them with the information and tools to place specific experiences within the broader context.

→ Read more: Discussion and reflection

Study tours shall invite participants to reflect on what they hear and see and to enter into a discussion with different resource persons as well as with each other. This time is key for internalising the experienced and for further inquiries. And it provides the host with time to build bridges for a better understanding of the realities of the host country. Generous time for discussion and reflection also provides for flexibility so as to have a time reserve for taking up issues that emerged as important during the visit or to work on group dynamics if necessary.

→ Read more: Skill training

Sometimes, study tour participants might be interested in skill training, e.g. in negotiations or legal drafting. Skill training should only be provided on request. Participants should be aware in advance that skill training will be included.

→ Read more: Exchange and experience sharing

Study tours can be easily experienced as one sided, with the participants at the receiving end. Study tours are however an opportunity for an exchange of experiences and know-how, for mutual learning of all involved as well as for building relations between representatives of the two countries or for explaining to the Swiss public and politicians about Swiss engagement in the home country. Workshops, panel discussions, presentations by members of the study tour or also semi-official dinners can provide fora through which the participants of the study tour are acknowledged as know-how and experience bearers and which help to stress the two-sided approach to learning and experience sharing.

→ Read more: Useful sight-seeing and leisure time

For many members of study tours, this might be the first visit to the host country perhaps even the first trip to a foreign country. It is understandable that participants to a study tour also want to see some of the sights of the host country. Sight-seeing can be a way to provide a deeper understanding of the history and culture of the country. Sight-seeing can be easily combined with other parts of the program, e.g. a boat ride can be a scenic way to travel from one place to the next, a meal on a train

likewise. The visit of historic sites and monuments can provide an appropriate venue for related discussions. In addition, study tour participants need time for themselves, to meet people, to do some shopping or to check the news at home.

In order to avoid stress by lengthy journeys, sight-seeing activities are best planned after the locations of meetings are defined.

→ **Read more: The importance of sequencing**

When combining these elements, it is important to consider the sequencing. Usually, it is recommended to start with a general introduction to the subject. This helps to level out knowledge gaps between participants, and to familiarise them with country specific concepts. Based on the discussion following the introduction, the accompanying person can further improve his or her understanding of the delegations main interests and concerns and - if necessary - brief the experts or guide the later discussions accordingly. Knowledge exchange with experts should be located towards the end, after a round of knowledge input. By then, the participants have the necessary knowledge to make cross-references, and start explaining their political system by referring to the system of the host country. A wrap-up workshop with internal or external moderation in the end (especially for study tours of 5 days or more) can help to reflect on experiences and lessons, can be used to reflect on "what next", and for SDC/PD IV and supporting organisations to get direct feedback from participants. Of course, due to time constraints and limited availability of experts the ideal sequencing might not be possible.

Shared experience:

Experiencing political culture in the host country

A delegation was invited for a discussion with a mayor of a Swiss medium-sized city. After the discussion (it was lunch time) the mayor left his office together with the delegation, climbed his bicycle and cycled away. For the delegation, this experience left a big impression, since it showed the proximity of a politician with normal citizens.

Special sight-seeing wishes by participants of the study tour

When, during the planning phase, asked about special wishes for the study tour, the partner in the home country answered: A visit to the Jungfraujoch! Of course, this visit would consume a whole working day and cost a lot of money. But how to say "no"? Since the focus of this particular study tour was more on creating a good relationship between SDC/PD IV and the organisation in the home country, and the time anyway included two public holidays where it was difficult to organise meetings with experts, and the small size of the group, the visit was nevertheless realised.

Exchange between Parliamentarians

On invitation of SDC, a group of parliamentarians visited Switzerland. One of their priority requests was to meet with their Swiss counterparts. A major objective was relation-building between parliamentarians. Meetings with Swiss parliamentarians were organised in various settings: a dinner with parliamentarians provided room for informal exchange, a visit to parliament including a meeting with the president of the Council of States provided a more official note and finally a facilitated roundtable discussion gave opportunity for a substantial exchange on issues of common interest.

Protocol and security

Tips and tricks on protocol and security

- It can help to brief the study tour group already before departure that Switzerland is relatively relaxed about protocol.
- In particular, **official and semi-official events have to be organised in accordance with protocol.** (Responsible: FDFA, protocol). For most events, sensitivity and adherence to the rules of politeness and etiquette will sufficiently contribute to making the members of the study tour feel at home, respected and acknowledged.
- **VIP service** is available at the airport upon arrival and departure, against a fee. VIP service upon arrival allows that high ranking study tour groups can be welcomed by the ambassador and/or a representative of SDC/of the host in front of the airplane and that the delegation can wait for the baggage in a VIP room (if the baggage is marked). Group check-in can contribute to more comfortable check in at departure. Group check does not need to be pre-organised but can be requested ad hoc.
- The airports prefer to be informed when high ranking delegations travel. Airport security can provide facilitated transfer to and from the gate. If VIP service is organised they can establish the link to airport security.
- FedPol can provide the necessary information on procedures if study tour members want to travel with own security. Counterparts in the host country should be informed in advance if the group is accompanied by armed security from the home country as special procedures might apply for entering public buildings (e.g. parliament, prisons).
- When members of delegation bring their own personal security the costs for food and accommodation are normally covered by the home country and the home country should take care of most logistical issues. Still, the organiser in the host country has to think ahead of the logistics. For instance, to choose restaurants that are not overly crowded and in which the body guard can keep the exits in sight, hotel accommodation with adjoining rooms.
- **The FedPol can help to decide whether some members of the study tour have to be considered at risk in the host country or during the travel to the host country. In such a case, FedPol can provide security for the whole time or for specific events. For the visit of State Presidents and Minister, Switzerland (FedPol) is obliged to assure security.**
- For high-ranking members a separate limousine can be organised
- Most study tour groups have a head of delegation. There are however cases in which it is not clear who is the highest ranking. In the best case, the study tour group decide themselves whether there is a head of delegation. If there is no head of delegation it is good to communicate this in advance to counterparts in the host country. Heads of delegation might expect special treatment. If possible, a vice-head of delegation should be designated as well, in case the head of delegation does not participate in all events.

Shared experience: A study tour without a head of delegation.

In a study tour of newly elected parliamentarians there was a dispute on who is the highest and should therefore be head of delegation. In particular rivalry developed between a representative from the

biggest political party and a former minister from the second biggest party. In order to avoid confrontations it was decided not to have a head of delegation. Some counterparts of the host country were not informed of this and for instance had a present available for the head of delegation or had foreseen a specific seating order that singled out one person. This led to threats by one member of the delegation to return home. Based on this experience other counterparts were informed in advance that there is no head of delegation. In the end, the group organised themselves and took turns for instance in thanking experts for their presentation or for returning speeches at lunches and dinners.

Shared experience: security concerns of the delegation

During a study tour, upon leaving a restaurant, the delegation was attacked by a few individuals belonging to a minority group of their home country. Quick reaction and beatings with the hand bag of the accompanying person drove the attackers back. Although the study visit had been kept confidential, somehow this information got through to this group. Confidentiality and risk assessment help limit the risks of such negative encounters.

Shared experiences: security for certain events

During a visit of a minister, FedPol insisted in providing security for certain events, for instance for meetings with the Diaspora and at university. Security was provided though the minister did not think it was necessary and would have preferred to travel without.

Selection of Supporting Organisation

Check here what kind of supporting organisation you need. The implementing organisation shall most of all provide:

- ▶ **Logistics and general organisation** (because the content side is not so important, or because SDC (and its partners) will take the lead in defining the program, in briefing the experts and in giving knowledge based support during the visit). In this case it is advisable to take an implementing organisation that specialises on event management/organisation, if possible with experience in intercultural events). Qualifications in the field of decentralisation and local governance are not necessarily required.
- ▶ **Program design, interaction with the delegation, accompaniment** (because - though SDC has a vision of the main focus of the program and some program elements it desires expert support in designing the program and wants to ensure a professional accompaniment that can lead to further interaction with the delegation on the way). In this case it is advisable to select an implementing organisation with experience and expertise concerning the topics at hand. Several of these organisations will also have the capacity to take care of logistics and organisation.
- ▶ **Conceptual inputs and practical insights.** Different implementing organisations tend to have different strengths. An academic institution might have good contacts to academic experts and provide excellent theoretic or conceptual insights. Other organisation might be more rooted in practical work and thus have good access to prepare field visits and facilitate exchange between practitioners. In most cases, academic institutions will have contacts to networks of practitioners and other institutions will be aware of academic experts in the field. Thus many organisations will be able to design and prepare a combined program.

Another possibility is to mandate more than one supporting organisation, for instance to use a supporting organisation with an academic background for introductory and conceptual parts and another one with a more practice-oriented focus for field visits and discussions with practitioners or to mandate one supporting organisation with logistics and the other with the content part of the program. In such cases, clarity about roles and tasks and coordination between the two organisations will be crucial.

Task clarification

Tips and tricks: some questions for task clarification

Task clarification (from the point of view of the supporting institution)

- Are the objectives clear? Who participated in defining the objectives? What are underlying assumptions? What are motivations of those involved?
- Does the assessment of the issues at hand cover the necessary questions? What additional information would be needed?
- What are concerns/possible challenges that could jeopardize the study tour or parts of it?
- Who is involved in designing, organising, conducting the study tour, its preparation and follow-up?
- What are the roles of the involved actors (SDC desk, SCO, local partner organisation, implementing organisation, study tour group). Who will be doing what? What will be the specific tasks of the implementing organisation, in which fields can it count on support of SDC desk officers or the SCO/embassy (e.g. logistics, thematic input, program design, organisation, briefing papers, media reports, speech writing, reporting, preparation and follow-up). Who decides what, when?
- What tasks are expected of the supporting organisation?
- What are the expectations towards the implementing organisation? What would be the criteria for a good co-operation?
- To whom will the implementing organisation report to? How much decision-making power does the implementing organisation have, e.g. concerning the program, concerning logistics?
- In the preparatory phase or the follow-up, will the implementing organisation directly communicate with members of the delegation, a partner institution in the home country, the SCO? How will smooth communication and a short paths of decision-making be ensured?
- Who will communicate with Swiss experts, practitioners, parliamentarians, members of the federal council, SDC staff, other staff of the Department of Foreign Affairs and other federal departments, the media.
- How will the financial side be organised? Who bears the financial risks if the study tour has to be cancelled or postponed at short notice?

Understanding the issues

Additional tips and tricks: On the context assessment

- The short context assessment can for instance be prepared by the cooperation office, a partner organisation, or the supporting organisation during an assessment mission, a consultant with a back-stopping mandate
- The input from the key stakeholders in the home country and of prospective participants of the study tour will of course be key and will form an important part of the 'assessment'. The less politicised the context the more the context assessment can be provided by the key stakeholders and participants.
- Counterparts in the host country will not have the time to research on their own or to study lengthy documents on the reform processes. If they do not receive the relevant information (and make good use of it) there is the risk that the study tour program or parts of it are not to the point, that the delegation leaves with the impression that experiences are not relevant for their context or that parts of the delegation experience the program as politically biased. The context assessment should include warnings on possible stumbling blocks, sensitivities, differences in conception.

Additional tips and tricks: Info to high-level counterparts in the host country

- In particular for official and semi-official meetings, for instance with members of the SDC directorate a short and precise context description is necessary. The context description can be one output of the short context assessment.
- In addition, high level counterparts will expect a short description of the objectives of the study tour, information on who initiated the study tour and CVs of the participants.
- Concise context background, the objectives of the study tour, information on the study tour initiator should also be included in the ToR of a supporting organisation.