ICTSWITZERLAND

UMBRELLA ORGANISATION FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

Press release
Berne, 15 April 2019

Statement on the transition of electronic voting into regular operation

Essential e-government basic services should be priority, not pushing e-voting prestige project through

During the preliminary legislative hearing, the Federal Council proposed to end the e-voting test phase and roll out electronic voting throughout the entire country. As the security of e-voting solutions is a subject of controversy at the moment, ICTswitzerland is taking a critical stance against the transition of e-voting into regular operation at this time. The umbrella organisation for the digital economy is of the opinion that e-voting must undergo further testing and development in order to bolster security, user-friendliness and trust. There are other more important and time-critical e-government projects on which Switzerland urgently needs to press ahead. These are above all basic services such as electronic ID.

ICTswitzerland recommends that e-voting be further developed based on the principle that "security takes priority over speed". The top priority must be strengthening security, user-friendliness and trust. In the opinion of ICTswitzerland, it is therefore not advisable at this time to end the test phase and insist on its nation-wide introduction – particularly because there is no reason to hurry.

In view of the social significance of elections and voting, e-voting must meet the strictest of requirements. The basic tenets underpinning our direct democracy are most assuredly the wrong place for prestige projects. The potential consequences are too broad and trust is too easily damaged. "The federal government would do well to shore up the trust of its citizenry rather than gamble it on unnecessary prestige projects," emphasises ICTswitzerland Chairman and National Councillor Marcel Dobler. "The highly critical public debate on e-voting now threatens to cast a bad light on other e-government projects. We do not want this to happen."

ICTswitzerland CEO Andreas Kaelin underscores: "There is a much more urgent need for basic services, such as E-ID, and for introducing user-friendly electronic government services. This is where the government can create added value for everyone: the economy, the public and administrations would all benefit. These projects are the ones we need to prioritise."

Complete response to the preliminary legislative hearing:
https://ictswitzerland.ch/en/publikationen/stellungnahme-e-voting/

For more information, contact:
Andreas Kaelin, CEO of ICTswitzerland
Tel. +41 31 311 62 45 | andreas.kaelin@ictswitzerland.ch

About ICTswitzerland

ICTswitzerland is the umbrella organisation for the digital economy. Founded in 1980, the organisation brings together 30 large and medium enterprises, along with 21 associations. ICTswitzerland represents their interests towards the general public, the authorities and other associations, and aims to promote and develop digital technologies, and the education and further training of ICT specialists. ICTswitzerland is also committed to the identification and prevention of cyber-risks. In Switzerland, a total of about 200,000 ICT specialists are employed throughout all the business sectors and in public administration (2017). With a gross value of CHF 29.7 billion in 2015, the ICT core sector is Switzerland's seventh-largest industry. www.ictswitzerland.ch/en/