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Swiss Post to focus solely on new system with universal verifiability

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Swiss Post has decided to pool its strengths in the e-voting sector and work solely on the new system with universal verifiability. It plans to make the system available to the cantons for trial operation from 2020. Swiss Post will no longer offer the system that was previously in use. Swiss Post made the decision after a careful analysis. The Federal Council's decision not to introduce e-voting as an official voting channel for the time being influenced the assessment. Under these preconditions, there is too much effort required on Swiss Post's part to develop and operate two systems.

05.07.2019

On 26 June 2019, the Federal Council decided not to introduce e-voting as an official voting channel for the time being. Following the decision, Swiss Post carried out an assessment of the situation. The majority of the population, politicians and cantons generally support e-voting, and at the same time place high demands on the security of the system. "Swiss Post has been listening carefully over the past few months and has analysed the situation. We believe that e-voting meets the requirements of Swiss voters. This is why it will continue to be part of Swiss Post's portfolio in the future", says Roberto Cirillo, CEO of Swiss Post. "I have decided to use our resources exclusively for the new system in the future." Swiss Post had originally planned to gradually switch to the new system from 2020. It wants to offer the new system to the cantons for trial operation from 2020.

In light of the Federal Council's decision, it makes little economic sense for Swiss Post to continue to develop and operate two systems at the same time. The system that was previously in use in four cantons will therefore no longer be operated by Swiss Post, and will therefore not be available for the National Council elections in the autumn.

The new system with universal verifiability was subject to a public intrusion test (PIT) in spring 2019. During the test, it withstood attacks from over 3,000 international hackers.

Universal and individual verifiability

The central security mechanisms of Swiss Post's e-voting systems are universal and individual verifiability. In the case of universal verifiability, the electoral authorities can check whether votes have been manipulated in the electronic ballot when counting votes. The check is comparable to the recounting of physical ballots. Universal verifiability enables independent control and verification of the ballot by the cantons.

In the case of individual verifiability, the voters receive verification codes on paper together with the voting documents. They compare the codes when they cast their vote with the codes shown on the screen, and can thus be sure that their vote has arrived correctly in the ballot box.

The new e-voting system has both mechanisms. The previous e-voting system only offered individual verifiability.

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