

# Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ)

## General information

### Where can I find the programme for the upcoming session?

The session programme and the agenda for the first day of the session are published on [Swiss Parliament \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch) two weeks before the session. At the end of a session day, the President of the Council sets the agenda for the next day, which is immediately published on [Swiss Parliament \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch).

### What are the sitting times of the chambers during the sessions?

Sitting times can be found on [The sessions \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch). As a rule, the meetings of the Councils take place as scheduled. However, the meeting times can also change at short notice. If your visit cannot take place as planned due to a change in sitting times at short notice, we cannot offer a substitute. We ask for your understanding in this regard.

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## Reservations

### How can I make reservation for a visit during the sessions?

Under [Visits when Parliament is in session \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch) you will find all information on registration as well as the direct link to the online reservation platform.

### When is the booking confirmed?

Once the booking is completed, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to your reservation page. You can check your reservation at any time and make changes up to three weeks before your reservation date.

### Do I receive a ticket for my booked visit?

You will receive your ticket by email two weeks before your booked visit. Please note that only as many people as are listed on the ticket will be admitted. The ticket must be presented on paper or electronically on the day of the visit.

### How can I obtain information about my reservation if I lose my confirmation email?

If you accidentally delete your confirmation email with the direct link to your reservation page, it can be sent to you again. To retrieve your confirmation email, send an email to [sessionsbesuche@parl.admin.ch](mailto:sessionsbesuche@parl.admin.ch) including your reservation number, if you have it. If not, provide your name and the date of your booked visit.

### Can the time for seats reserved in the gallery be changed before a scheduled visit?

If all time slots are fully booked, the reserved grandstand seats cannot be rebooked for another time slot.

### Can the Q&A session and/or the short guided tour of the Domed Hall be organised before the grandstand visit?

It is not possible to change the visit programme.

**Can any number of councillors be committed?**

Only one councillor each from the Council of States and the National Council can be committed and indicated.

**Is it possible to shorten the 60-minute time slot in the gallery to 30 minutes?**

For organisational and logistical reasons we are not able to shorten the grandstand time.

**Can I book more than 40 seats in the gallery?**

If your group consists of more than 40 people and there are enough places in the desired time slot, you will have to split the group. It is important that each booking includes the minimum size of 10 people.

**Can two or more groups schedule the programme together?**

If the groups are in the gallery during the same time slot, their Q&A sessions can be combined. If you wish to do so, please indicate this under "Remarks".

**Can a group of 9 people book a visit online?**

The minimum group size is ten people. We do not accept reservations from smaller groups.

**Can people on their own book one seat in the gallery?**

Seats are available for individual visitors. Reservation of places is possible on [Visits when Parliament is in session \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch/en/visits) at the earliest one week before the start of the session. Reservation by telephone is not possible.

**What is the purpose of the barcode on the ticket?**

The barcode is not yet activated. It will be used at a later date in conjunction with new admission regulations.

**Can the number of booked seats be adjusted anytime?**

The link in your confirmation email will take you directly to your reservation page. You can adjust your reservation as long as there are still seats available. If you get an error message when attempting to add seats to your reservation, this means all seats have been booked and no additional seats are available.

**Why am I unable to make any changes to my reservation page?**

For organisational reasons, changes to your reservation page may only be made up until three weeks before your scheduled visit.

**Is it necessary to provide the names of the members of my group?**

It is not necessary to provide the names of the members of my groupe.

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## **Day of the visit**

### **Where is the entrance?**

The visitors' entrance is located on the Bundesterrasse. It can be reached from the Bundesplatz by taking the steps at either side of the Parliament Building.

### **How early do I need to arrive before my visit?**

Please arrive at least 30 minutes before the starting time of your visit, to give you enough time to go through the security check.

### **Can late visitors still join their group?**

For organisational reasons late visitors can no longer be added to their group.

### **Can our coach stop for a short time outside the Parliament Building to let passengers off?**

At the east wing of the Parliament Building (towards the Bellevue hotel) there are two short-term parking spaces reserved for coaches. Coaches may park there to let passengers off for their visit during the session, and then to collect them after their visit.

### **Where is the best place for coaches to park during their passengers' visit?**

The most convenient parking facilities for coaches are at the Bärengraben.

### **Who meets the groups of visitors at the entrance?**

After the security check, your group will be shown the way to the gallery where the security staff will assign you your seats.

### **Where do wheelchair users go?**

Wheelchair users are requested to use the north entrance on the Bundesplatz side. Please report to the security staff there.

### **Are visitors ushered from one event to the next?**

Staff from the Visitors' Service will pick you up from the gallery and accompany you from place to place according to your programme.

### **What do I need to know for the security check?**

All visitors are subjected to a security check. Please note the [rules on access](#).

### **Does everyone in the group need to bring ID?**

All visitors aged 16 and over must bring a valid identity document. Valid identity documents include: passports, IDs (from Switzerland and EU member states), driving licences (from Switzerland and EU member states), foreign national identity cards issued in Switzerland.

### **Are foreign passports or a permanent residence C permit accepted as identity cards?**

Valid official identity cards include: passports, IDs (from Switzerland and EU member states), driving licences (from Switzerland and EU member states), foreign national identity cards issued in Switzerland.

### **What do you need to do if your identity card has expired and you don't have enough time to renew it before your visit?**

Identity cards or passports that have expired within the last six months are accepted.

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## **Q&A session and short guided tour**

### **Is it possible to book a Q&A session with a member of Parliament and/or a short guided tour of the Domed Hall without an existing reservation for watching a debate from the gallery?**

It is not possible to book a Q&A session or a short guided tour unless you reserve seats in the gallery.

### **How long is the short guided tour of the Domed Hall?**

The short guided tour lasts no longer than 30 minutes. If the Q&A session scheduled before the guided tour is delayed, the guided tour will be shortened.

### **Is it possible to pass on the Q&A session with a member of Parliament, and have a short guided tour of the Domed Hall directly after watching a debate from the gallery?**

The Q&A session and the short guided tour are optional. Visitors can decide to pass on either option or both options, by ticking the options of choice on the reservation platform. Visitors who decide to pass on the Q&A session will be given a short guided tour directly after watching a debate from the gallery.

### **Do Parliamentary Services organise the member of Parliament for the Q&A session?**

It is the visitors themselves who are responsible for organising the Q&A session. The group organiser needs to contact the member of Parliament of choice in advance and add the member's name to his reservation page via the personal link received at least three weeks before the day of the visit.

### **How do I contact a member of Parliament?**

You can contact members of Parliament by email or, where their number is known, by phone. You can find all the information you need on the following website:

National Council members: [National Council members \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch/en/national-council-members)

Council of States members: [Council of States members \(parlament.ch\)](https://www.parlament.ch/en/council-of-states-members)

### **Are visitors responsible for reserving a room for the Q&A session?**

Parliamentary Services takes care of reservations of rooms for the Q&A session and informs members of Parliament about Q&A session schedules. Members of Parliament are informed about the time and place (room number) on the day of the Q&A session at the latest.

### **Are the groups of visitors accompanied to the committee rooms for the Q&A session?**

Groups are met at the gallery and ushered to the committee room concerned.

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## **Council of States**

### **Is it also possible to visit the Council of States?**

Visitors may also watch debates in the chamber of the Council of States, if the Council of States is meeting and there are free seats available in the gallery. These seats cannot be reserved in advance. Groups that have requested a meeting with a member of the Council of States for the Q&A session will be given priority.

### **Do I have to decide whether to visit the National Council of the Council of States? Or is it possible to visit both for about half an hour each?**

The reservation of the visit during the session refers to the gallery in the National Council. If desired, the debate in the Council of States can also be followed. If this is possible due to the sitting times of the Council of States and the available seats, we will fulfil this wish.

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## **Miscellaneous**

### **Is it also possible to visit the lobby (*Salle des pas perdus*)?**

During the sessions, the only people admitted to the lobby (*Salle des pas perdus*) are members of Parliament and persons with special access rights.

### **Is the restaurant in the Federal Palace open to the public?**

The Grand Café Galerie des Alpes restaurant in the Federal Palace is not open to the public. Reservations can only be made by members of the Council.

### **Is there an area for picnics in the event of bad weather?**

There is no possibility for a picnic at the Federal Palace.

### **Are there facilities for the hearing impaired?**

Induction loops are available for people with a hearing impairment. The induction loops only work for hearing aids that are equipped with a radio button. They can be used in the gallery to listen to the simultaneous interpretation. Groups with a need for induction loops must indicate this in their reservation.

### **Are the debates translated into sign language?**

There is no translation into sign language.