



Parliamentary conference on ‘Holding elections in a time of crisis’ planned for 2023

A parliamentary conference on the theme “**Holding elections in a time of crisis: challenges and opportunities**” is to be held on 9 and 10 May 2023 in Bern, Switzerland, organised jointly by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and the Swiss Parliament in the context of the 60th anniversary of the accession of Switzerland to the Council of Europe.

The event, announced jointly by the Secretaries General of the two parliamentary bodies, will bring together key national and international bodies dealing with elections, as well as parliamentarians, to discuss the impact of the recent global health crisis and the effects of the war in Ukraine on electoral policies and practice in Europe.

Participants will share lessons learned from these and other crises and reflect on the new opportunities that could help to make democratic institutions more resilient in emergencies, and reinforce their ability to fulfil their functions in uncertain times.

“The Covid-19 pandemic exposed many systemic limits and vulnerabilities in long-established electoral policies and practices, built up over the past decades to protect electoral integrity against different and largely foreseeable risks through solid frameworks, regulations and procedures,” said the two Secretaries General. “Yet in today’s context of expanding challenges and risks, they have proven overly rigid – and need rethinking.”

“The conference will seek to define innovative policies that could pre-empt crises and mitigate their impact when they occur, combining them with strategies that would help safeguard our democracies through building greater resilience and adaptability into election procedures in order to make them the truly inclusive, representative, participatory and trusted processes they are meant to be.”

Registration for the conference (by invitation only) will open in November 2022.