



Canton of Zurich

# Government Council 2023/2024

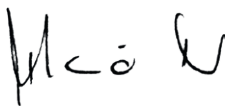




**Dear people of Zurich, dear guests from near and far. A warm welcome to a safe, socially responsible and sporty canton.** These are all things close to my heart. But there's much more to it than that. Zurich is connected with the whole world. We're modern and maintain our traditions. We're rural and urban. Zurich has factories and insurance companies as well as lakes and mountains. The many people who live in Zurich speak numerous different languages. Canton Zurich is a good place to live and work.

In recent months our canton, its inhabitants, its economy and society have also been confronted with very special challenges, and continue to be so: pandemic, the terrible war in Ukraine and the upheaval in banking.

The Government Council steers the Canton of Zurich wisely and with a steady hand. It does so in dialogue with the people of Zurich and with its partners in the towns, cities and municipalities, other cantons and the federal government. I hope that we will continue to approach the tasks that face us every day with humility and modesty, in the knowledge that amid all the uncertainty around the globe, we are still doing very well. I am grateful for that. We can trust and build on this together!



Mario Fehr

President of the Government Council of the Canton of Zurich

The Government Council is the supreme executive authority in the canton. Its seven full-time members are elected by popular majority vote every four years. The Government Council's duties include:

- Drafting laws, amendments to the constitution and legislation and sending bills for approval by the cantonal parliament or the electorate
- Managing a cantonal administration with about 37,000 staff
- Determining the interim and long-term goals of government policies
- Supervising the various authorities
- Preparing the budget
- Representing the canton within Switzerland with respect to the Confederation and other cantons
- Negotiating international and intercantonal agreements
- Ruling on administrative appeals
- Recruiting top-level administrative staff

# Mario Fehr

lic. iur.

President of the Government  
Council 2023/2024 and 2016/2017  
Head of the Department of Security  
since 2011

Party membership: independent  
Place of origin: Adliswil  
Date of birth: 13 September 1958  
Domicile: Adliswil



## Professional activity

- 1984 Degree in law from the University of Zurich
- 1984/1985 Academic assistant at the Faculty of Law of the University of Zurich
- 1985/1986 Intern at Zurich District Court
- 1986–1988 Intern at Horgen Juvenile Court
- 1989–1994 Educational Work Training Facility Uitikon
- 1992–2008 Teacher at the School for Technical Professions Zurich (TBZ)
- 2006–2011 President of the Swiss Society of Commercial Employees

## Political activity

- 1986–1994 Member of the Communal Parliament of Adliswil
- 1991–2000 Member of the Cantonal Parliament
- 1994–2010 Councillor in Adliswil
- 2000–2005 Member of the Constitutional Council
- 1999–2011 Member of the Swiss National Council

# Department of Security

The Department of Security deals with questions of public safety, social security and the promotion of sports. The Cantonal Police Force protects society, investigates crimes, guarantees traffic safety and provides administrative assistance and law enforcement as required by the authorities. The Road Traffic Office checks vehicles and tests drivers to ensure they are fit to be on the road. The Migration Office issues entry permits, residence permits and visas. The Office for Military Affairs and Civil Defence implements national legislation in the fields of military affairs and civil protection. The Cantonal Social Welfare Office shapes the social security system and coordinates asylum assistance. The Sports Office handles the canton's commitments in nonschool sport. The department is also in charge of the fire brigade and the fire safety and buildings insurance authorities.

[Cantonal Police Force](#) | [Road Traffic Office](#) | [Migration Office](#) | [Office for Military Affairs and Civil Defence](#) | [Cantonal Social Welfare Office](#) | [Sports Office](#) | [Passport Office](#) | [Business Permits/Legalizations](#) | [Weights and Measures Offices](#)

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## Natalie Rickli

Vice-President of the Government Council 2023/2024

Head of the Department of Health since 2019

Party membership: Swiss People's Party (SVP)

Place of origin: Madiswil BE

Date of birth: 19 November 1976

Domicile: Winterthur



### Professional activity

- 1995 Completed commercial apprenticeship at fenaco
- 1995–2005 Several assignments in advertising and marketing at various media companies
- 2005–2009 Site relation manager / team leader at Goldbach Group
- 2009–2017 Partner relation manager at Goldbach Group
- 2018–2019 Self-employed communications consultant, communication@natalierickli agency

### Political activity

- 2002–2007 Member of the Communal Parliament of Winterthur (Grosser Gemeinderat)
- 2007 Member of the Cantonal Parliament
- 2007–2019 Member of the Swiss National Council; Member of the Legal Affairs Committee and the Transport and Telecommunications Committee
- 2014–2019 President of Aktion Medienfreiheit (Action for Press Freedom; Member as of 2008)

# Department of Health

The Department of Health makes sure the public is provided with high-quality, needs-based and economically viable healthcare.

The people of Zurich should be able to rely on comprehensive healthcare. Besides hospitals and other medical facilities, this also includes flawless medicines and foodstuffs and protection from animal diseases and pandemics – all of which the Department of Health and its five offices are committed to assuring.

Office of Public Health | Cantonal Office for the Control of Medicines | Cantonal Pharmacy | Cantonal Laboratory | Veterinary Office

## Ernst Stocker

Head of the Department of Finance since 2015, Head of the Department for Economic Affairs 2010–2015  
President of the Government Council 2022/2023 and 2015/2016

Party membership: Swiss People's Party (SVP)

Place of origin: Wädenswil

Date of birth: 20 April 1955

Domicile: Wädenswil



### Professional activity

1983 Farmer (federal master diploma)

Until 2007 ran his own farm, also training apprentices

### Political activity

1987–2010 Member of the Cantonal Parliament

2003/2004 President of the Cantonal Parliament

1998–2006 Councillor of Wädenswil

2006–2010 Mayor of Wädenswil

2006–2010 Member of the Steering Committee of the Association of Municipal Mayors of the Canton of Zurich

# Department of Finance

The Department of Finance has primarily cross-cutting duties. They include planning and managing the process of preparing the canton's consolidated development and financial plan (KEF) and the annual budget and financial statements. Its cross-cutting tasks also include providing services for the other departments: human resources, all basic IT services, and printed matter. The Department of Finance is also responsible for procuring debt capital and assuring the canton's solvency at all times. The cantonal Tax Office enforces direct taxes, taxes at source and other levies. The General Secretariat reviews and approves applications to the charitable fund, financed with lottery money.

Office of Personnel | Finance Administration | Office of Information Technology | Tax Office | Cantonal Printed Matter and Supplies Office (kdmz)

# Carmen Walker Späh

RA lic. iur.

Head of the Department for  
Economic Affairs since 2015  
President of the Government  
Council 2019/2020

Party membership: FDP.The Liberals

Places of origin: Wassen and Zurich

Date of birth: 29 January 1958

Domicile: Zurich



## Professional activity

- 1983 Degree in law from the University of Zurich
- 1983/1984 Intern at the District Court, Pfäffikon ZH
- 1984/1985 Junior Associate in law firm, City of Zurich
- 1986–1988 Legal secretary, Building Appeal Commissions, Canton of Zurich
- 1988–2000 Deputy building secretary / head of office of the building inspection and legal service, Building Department, City of Winterthur
- 1989 Admitted to the bar
- 2000–2015 Self-employed lawyer in Zurich

## Political activity

- 2000–2005 Member of the Constitutional Council
- 2002–2015 Member of the Cantonal Parliament; Member of the Commission for Planning and Building (2003–2015)
- 2010–2017 President of FDP.Die Liberalen Frauen Switzerland

# Department for Economic Affairs

The Department for Economic Affairs promotes and develops the Canton of Zurich as an attractive place to live, work and do business. It's committed to creating a strong location with a good framework for enterprises and the people who work for them. That includes making sure those looking for a job are rapidly and permanently integrated in the workplace. Directly benefiting people in the Canton of Zurich, the Department for Economic Affairs manages the development of transport. It's in charge of strategic planning for the road, rail and water transport system, focusing on key topics such as expansion of the infrastructure, digitalisation and decarbonisation. The department works to ensure good international air connections and safeguards the interests of the public in matters of noise prevention. This way it does a great deal to the successful business location and maintain the outstanding standard of living in the canton.

[Office of Mobility and Transport](#) |  
[Office for Economy and Labour](#) |  
[Zurich Transport Authority \(ZVV\)](#)

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## Silvia Steiner

Dr. crim. et lic. iur.

Head of the Department of Education since 2015

President of the Government Council 2020/2021  
President EDK

Party membership: The Centre

Place of origin: Zurich and Lauerz

Date of birth: 14 March 1958

Domicile: Zurich



### Professional activity

1984 Degree in law from the University of Zurich

1984–1988 Intern and court clerk

1988–1995 District prosecutor

1995–2002 High-ranking police officer, head of the criminal police, city police of Zurich

2002–2005 Head of criminal police, Zug police

2004 Doctorate at the University of Lausanne

2005–2015 State prosecutor, head of department; specialist and lead state prosecutor in the field of human trafficking

### Political activity

1986–1998 Secretary of the District Schools Council in Zurich

2007–2015 Member of the Cantonal Parliament; Member of the Justice Commission, the Commission for Economy and Taxes, the Parliament Investigation Committee BVK

# Department of Education

The Department of Education ensures that a broad range of high-quality training and education is provided in the Canton of Zurich. Our schools and institutions bring together children, young people and adults with different backgrounds and needs. This is where they receive individual support and learn to develop a sense of community. In cooperation with the schools and local authorities the Department is responsible for all educational levels, including kindergarten, primary, secondary and high school, vocational training as well as higher education and adult education. Child and youth welfare, educational grants and career advice also belong to the Department's tasks. In all, the Department of Education supports the people in the Canton of Zurich in their working, family and social lives, thus creating the basis for outstanding achievements in academia, science and research.

Office of Elementary Education | Office for Upper Secondary Schools and Vocational Education | Office of Universities | Office of Youth and Careers Guidance | Educational Publishing House Zurich | School Inspection Agency | Educational Planning

Walcheplatz 2, 8090 Zurich

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## Jacqueline Fehr

Head of the Department of Justice and Home Affairs since 2015  
President of the Government Council 2021/2022

Party membership: Social Democratic Party (SP)

Places of origin: Rüdlingen and Schaffhausen

Date of birth: 1 June 1963

Domicile: Winterthur



### Professional activity

- 1987 Degree as a secondary school teacher, phil. I
- 1988–1994 Secondary and specialist subject teacher
- 1991–1994 Second degree course in psychology, management and political science with intermediate diploma qualification
- 1994–1996 General secretary, Department of School and Sport, Winterthur
- 1997–2002 Self-employed organisational consultant
- 2002–2012 Project associate
- 2012–2015 Owner of atelier politique, various mandates
- 2013–2015 Executive MPA, University of Berne

### Political activity

- 1990–1992 Member of the Communal Parliament of Winterthur
- 1991–1998 Member of the Cantonal Parliament
- 1998–2015 Member of the Swiss National Council
- 2008–2015 Vice-President SP Switzerland

# Department of Justice and Home Affairs

The main activities of the Department of Justice and Home Affairs include the prosecution of offences in adult and juvenile courts, the penal system and the administration of prisons. In addition to all affairs related to justice, the department is responsible for relations with municipalities and religious organisations, cultural promotion, aid for victims of crimes, equality, and the integration of foreign immigrants. The State Archives also come under the aegis of the Department of Justice and Home Affairs.

Public Prosecution Service | Juvenile Criminal Justice | Corrections and Rehabilitation | Office of Municipalities | Commercial Registry Office | Statistical Office | State Archives | Aid to Victims | Office for Equality | Cultural Affairs | Cantonal Integration Office | Offices of District Prefects | Chancelleries of District Councils

## Martin Neukom

Dr. rer. nat.

Head of the Building Department  
since 2019

Party membership: Greens

Place of origin: Rafz

Date of birth: 7 July 1986

Domicile: Winterthur



### Professional activity

- 2006 Completed apprenticeship as technical draughtsman (machinery designer)
- 2009 Degree in mechatronics from the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW)
- 2009–2011 Academic assistant at the ZHAW Institute of Computational Physics (ICP)
- 2016 Master's degree in solar energy engineering from the University of Freiburg (Germany)
- 2011–2019 Engineer and product manager at Fluxim AG
- 2019 Doctorate in Science at the University of Augsburg

### Political activity

- 2008–2012 President of the Young Greens (political party) Switzerland
- 2014–2019 Member of the Cantonal Parliament; Member of the Planning and Building Committee
- 2017–2019 Member of the executive committee of the Swiss Pedestrian Association (Fussverkehr Schweiz)
- 2017–2019 Member of the cantonal party executive of the Greens

# Building Department

The Building Department is as diverse as the Canton of Zurich itself, both mirroring and shaping this very special living environment. Among the department's responsibilities are planning spaces to ensure that, despite such a dense population, there's room for all the things that make the quality of life in our canton what it is: living, working and recreation. This includes a commitment to intact natural landscapes, clean air and water, and to agriculture and forestry. The Building Department is also responsible for infrastructure: constructing roads, schools and hospitals. Its job is to preserve this precious built environment – and the cultural legacy of our forebears – for the generations to come.

Office of Landscape, Agriculture and Environment | Office for Spatial Development | Office of Waste, Water, Energy and Air | Office of Planning and Architecture | Real Estate Office | Office of Civil Engineering

# Kathrin Arioli

Dr. iur.

Chancellor since 2018

Places of origin: Zurich and Basel

Date of birth: 16 April 1963

Domicile: Zurich



## Professional activity

- 1988 Degree in law from the University of Zurich
- 1988–1990 Assistant at the Faculty of Law of the University of Zurich
- 1991 Doctorate in law at the University of Zurich
- 1990–1998 Research associate at the Office for the Equality of Women and Men, Canton of Zurich
- 1999–2011 Head of the Office for the Equality of Women and Men, Canton of Zurich
- 2011–2013 Secretary General at the Department of Home Affairs, Canton of Zug
- 2013–2017 Secretary General at the Supreme Court of the Canton of Berne

## Chancellery

As the central office of the Government Council the chancellery provides services guaranteeing the smooth functioning of the Government Council as a collegial authority. Its regular tasks including preparing meetings, providing advice on legal matters and on matters of policy, strategy and performance management and organising events. In cooperation with the various departments, the chancellery is responsible for communicating to the public, and also provides general services to the administration in digitalisation, IT and postal services. The chancellery is headed by the Chancellor, who reports to the current President of the Government Council.

Legal Services | Government Council Communications | Governmental Strategy and Performance Management | Digital Government | External Affairs | Administrative Services

A panoramic view of a Swiss valley, likely Zurich, featuring a large lake in the middle ground, rolling green hills, and distant mountains under a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with dense evergreen trees.

**From large groups to SMEs: The canton of Zurich has the strongest economy in Switzerland, with almost every fourth franc in the country generated here.**

**From star sopranos to folk sessions: With more than 100 professionally managed arts establishments, there's a venue for every art and culture.**

**From football to climbing: The canton has 1,700 sports facilities where 2,400 clubs offer 110 different sports.**



**From foresters to road workers: The most populous canton in Switzerland is around one-third covered by trees and has a network of 1,333km of cantonal roads.**

**From trams to cable cars: every day more than a million passengers use the public transport network operated by the Zurich Transport Authority (ZVV).**

**From kindergarten to university: Every day, more than 315,000 children, young people and adults attend an educational institution, of which around 53,000 study at a university or university of applied sciences.**

**From cutting-edge medicine to nursing care: Around 50 hospitals and clinics, 260 old people's and nursing homes as well as 3,500 independent physicians work with other professionals and institutions to provide good health care.**





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