



The Cantonal Government

The Cantonal Government is the supreme governing and executive authority in the Canton of Bern. It sets the goals for governing the canton and plans and coordinates activities under the Bernese political system.

The Cantonal Government comprises seven members, elected every four years by Bernese voters according to a first-past-the-post system. One of the seats is reserved for a politician from the Bernese Jura. This member of the Cantonal Government represents the French-speaking minority.

For the legislative period 2022–2026, the Cantonal Government is made up of representatives from five parties.

Party	seats
Social Democratic Party SP	2
Swiss People's Party SVP	2
The Centre	1
Free Democratic Party FDP	1
Green Party	1



The Cantonal Government's tasks

The members of the Cantonal Government work full-time for the Canton. They convene every week for a meeting in the Rathaus. The Government is headed by a president, elected each year by the Cantonal Parliament. The Cantonal Chancellor also takes part in the meetings and supports the government in carrying out its tasks.

Cantonal administration

Each member of the Cantonal Government heads one of the seven departments of the cantonal administration and ensures that cantonal affairs are administered effectively. In addition, the Cantonal Government sets the priorities for the many tasks that the canton has to carry out and submits these to the Cantonal Parliament for approval.

Finances

The Cantonal Government plans the canton's finances (management and financial plan, budget) and ensures through forward-looking planning that income and expenditure remain in balance. It has power to decide on new non-recurring items of expenditure of up to CHF 1 million, new recurrent expenditure of up to CHF 200 000 and tied expenditure.

Legislative procedures

The Cantonal Government is also responsible for preliminary legislative procedures (Constitution, acts, decrees) and issues cantonal ordinances (the implementing provisions for acts and decrees). It implements acts, decrees and ordinances, and decisions of the Cantonal Parliament and executes legally binding court judgments.

Representation in external affairs

In addition, the Cantonal Government acts as the Canton's representative in its external affairs – whether in its dealings with the Confederation, other cantonal authorities or the media. It also receives guests from abroad and is responsible for safeguarding public order and security. In emergencies, it has the power to take whatever measures are required.



2022 —
2026

The Bern Cantonal Government

Christoph Neuhaus	Director of Planning and Transport President 2025 2026
Christoph Ammann	Director of Economic Affairs, Energy and the Environment Vice President 2025 2026
Pierre Alain Schnegg	Director of Health, Social Services and Integration
Christine Häsler	Director of Education and Culture
Philippe Müller	Director of Security
Evi Allemann	Director of Home affairs and Justice
Astrid Bärtschi	Director of Finance
Christoph Auer	Cantonal Chancellor

The seven members of the Cantonal Government are elected by voters in the Canton of Bern for a four-year term of office. The most recent general election was held in 2022. The President of the Cantonal Government changes every year on 1 June.



Photo: Thomas Baumann



Christoph Neuhaus



Director of Planning and Transport

Born in 1966
Attended school in Arch and Solothurn
Studied at the University of Bern
Graduated in business management, economics and politics
Married, one child
Lives in Kaufdorf
Hobbies and interests: family, animals, nature

Since 1.6.2018	Director of Planning and Transport
2008–2018	Director of Home Affairs and Justice
24.2.2008	Election to the Cantonal Government
2006–2008	Head of Communications for Euro 2008 at federal level
2005–2008	Vice-President of the Communal Council in Belp
2001–2006	Secretary of the SVP party and parliamentary group for the Canton of Bern
2000–2001	Head of the economic affairs and communication section at the Department of Economic Affairs of the Canton of Bern, Expo project manager for the Canton of Bern
1992–2000	Worked as a journalist/business studies teacher
Since 1985	Member of the Swiss People's Party (SVP)



Christoph Ammann



Director of Economic Affairs, Energy and the Environment

Born in 1969
Attended school in Meiringen and Interlaken
Studied at the University of Bern
Graduated in German and Latin
Diploma for teaching at upper secondary schools
Married, two children
Lives in Meiringen
Hobbies and interests: mountains, cities, lakes and rivers

Since 1.7.2016	Director of Economic Affairs, Energy and the Environment
28.2.2016	Election to the Cantonal Government
2014–2016	Member of the Security Committee of the Cantonal Parliament
2011–2016	Rector of the Gymnasium Interlaken
2006–2012	Member of the Justice Committee of the Cantonal Parliament
2006–2016	Member of the Cantonal Parliament
1999–2006	President of the Commune of Meiringen
1993–2014	School teacher at the Gymnasium Interlaken
Since 1993	Member of the Social Democratic Party (SP)



Pierre Alain Schneegg



Director of Health, Social Services and Integration

Born in 1962
Attended school in Bévilard and Malleray
Federal Vocational Diploma in business, degree in engineering
and business informatics
Studied at the University of Geneva (MBA)
Married, four children
Lives in Champoz

Since 1.7.2016	Director of Health, Social Services and Integration
3.4.2016	Election to the Cantonal Government
2015	Member of the Communal Council in Champoz
2015–2016	President of the Bern-Jura Council
2014–2016	Member of the Bern-Jura Council
2014–2016	Member of the Cantonal Parliament
Since 2013	Member of the Swiss People's Party (SVP)
2009–2016	President of the Board of the Hôpital du Jura bernois SA
1987–2014	Joint founder and CEO of an IT company
1984–1986	Joint founder of a company dealing with agricultural and industrial buildings



Christine Häsler



Director of Education and Culture

Born in 1963
Attended school in Grindelwald and Wilderswil
Federal Vocational Diploma in Business
Four children
Lives in Burglauenen
Hobbies and interests: mountains, nature, cooking

Since 1.6.2018	Director of Education and Culture
25.3.2018	Election to the Cantonal Government
2015–2018	President of the board, Ärztezentrum Oberhasli AG
2015–2018	Member of the National Council
2011–2018	Head of communication for Kraftwerke Oberhasli AG
2010–2018	President of the school board, Schule für Holzbildhauerei, Brienz
2006–2014	President of the Green parliamentary group, Canton of Bern
2006–2011	Head of social policy, Procap Switzerland
2002–2015	Member of the Cantonal Parliament
1996–2006	Manager of the Green Free List, Canton of Bern
Since 1994	Member of the Green Party
1986–1992	Communal clerk in Lüttschental



Philippe Müller



Director of Security

Born in 1963
Attended school in Stettlen and Bern
Studied at the ETH Zurich and the University of Bern
Graduated in agronomics and law, cantonal qualification as an attorney-at-law
Military rank: Major
Lives with partner, one child
Lives in Bern
Hobbies and interests: mountains, skiing, jogging

Since 1.6.2018	Director of Security
25.3.2018	Election to the Cantonal Government
2013–2017	President of the FDP for the City of Bern
2010–2018	Member of the Cantonal Parliament
2005	President of the City Parliament Bern
2004–2018	Member of management CSL Behring AG
2001–2010	Member of the City Parliament Bern
Since 1992	Member of the Free Democratic Party (FDP)



Evi Allemann



Director of Home Affairs and Justice

Born in 1978
Attended school in Grossaffoltern, Rapperswil BE, Spiegel by
Bern and Köniz
Studied at the University of Bern
Graduated in law
Lives with partner, two children
Lives in Bern
Hobbies and interests: swimming in the River Aare, mountains,
cinema

Since 1.6.2018	Director of Home Affairs and Justice
25.3.2018	Election to the Cantonal Government
2016 – 2018	Member of the board of BERNMOBIL
2013 – 2018	President of the VCS Swiss Association for Transport and Environment
2007 – 2018	Freelance work focusing on NGOs
2006 – 2018	President of the Canton of Bern Tenants Association
2005 – 2007	Lecturer in administrative law for the Bern Commercial Association, Cantonal Administration Bern branch
2004 – 2011	President of the «Läbige Stadt» transport policy association
2003 – 2018	Member of the National Council
1998 – 2003	Member of the Cantonal Parliament
Since 1997	Member of the Social Democratic Party (SP)



Astrid Bärtschi



Director of Finance

Born in 1973
Attended school in Ostermundigen und Bern
Studied at the University of Bern
Graduated in law
Married, one child
Lives in Ostermundigen
Hobbies and interests: Horse riding, reading

Since 1.6.2022	Director of Finance (FIN)
27.03.2022	Elected to the Cantonal Government
2022	President of the Communal Parliament in Ostermundigen
Since 2021	Member of The Centre
2021 – 2022	Head of Communication, The Centre Switzerland
2018 – 2022	Vice President of BDP / The Centre, Canton of Bern
2017 – 2020	Secretary General of the BDP in Switzerland
2017 – 2022	Member of the Communal Parliament in Ostermundigen, Member GPK 2017 – 2020
Since 2010	Member of the BDP, Canton of Bern
1999 – 2017	Manager of an SME



Christoph Auer



Cantonal Chancellor

Born in 1966
Attended school in Speicher and Trogen AR
Studied at the University of Bern
Graduated in law, cantonal qualification as an attorney-at-law,
doctorate in law
Married, two children
Lives in Wabern
No political party affiliation
Hobbies and interests: singing, reading, cross-country skiing,
cycling

Since 2016	Lecturer in Bernese constitutional law at the University of Bern
Since 2013	Head of the Cantonal Chancellery
11.9.2012	Election as Cantonal Chancellor
Since 2012	Member of editorial team for the Schweizerisches Zentralblatt für Staats-und Verwaltungsrecht (Swiss Journal of Constitutional and Administrative Law)
Since 2009	Lecturer on Bernese administrative procedure law at the University of Bern
Since 2008	Member of the Canton of Bern Bar Examination Committee
2006–2013	Head of legal services in the Department of Justice and Communal and Ecclesiastic Affairs of the Canton of Bern
2000–2006	Advisor to the directorate and other positions in the Federal Office of Justice
1992–2000	Clerk to the Bern Administrative Court
1997–1998	Period abroad in the USA (postgraduate studies, graduated with LL.M.)