

Combating corruption – Evaluation of the implementation of the Federal Council's resolution of 19 October 2008

Federal Council

Key facts

A recommendation of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) called on Switzerland to step up the exchange of information, coordination, prevention and awareness-raising among stakeholders exposed to the risks of corruption. To address this issue, the Federal Council set up the interdepartmental working group (IDWG) on combating corruption in December 2008. This mandate is limited to ten years. The Federal Council will use the activity report of the IDWG and the evaluation of the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) as a basis for the further development of its anti-corruption policy.

A relevant mandate but with insufficient framework conditions

The Federal Council's mandate addresses concerns about the risks of corruption in Switzerland, particularly for federal players. Some of the objectives need to be clarified, but they are generally relevant. However, the framework conditions do not allow for adequate implementation.

For the SFAO, important reforms must be undertaken to increase the effectiveness of the IDWG and the role of the government in the fight against corruption. Independence, resources (financial and human), skills, authority, institutional memory and visibility are not appropriate. The Federal Council must also provide and express its political support in a clear manner in order to better prevent corruption.

A change of model is required

The IDWG has a militia organisation, headed by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Above all, it offers an information exchange service between the members attending workshops and plenary sessions. Some recommendations have been proposed, but no anti-corruption strategy has been established in Switzerland.

The SFAO encourages the Federal Council to rethink the implementation of its mandate in order to strengthen the current system and empower itself to take legislative action. Analysis and an international comparison show that a change of model would be more effective than a step-by-step transition. The SFAO proposes maintaining an information-sharing group with a secretariat and trained specialists and establishing an anti-corruption delegate function. The latter would accompany Swiss representatives at the international level, play a coordinating role at the federal level and raise awareness among public authorities and civil society. It would also have a link with the legal services of departments and offices to anchor the fight against corruption in the Federal Administration. This organisational change must be carried out over time without

additional resources. An inventory of the Federal Administration players currently involved in the fight against corruption should enable potential synergies to be exploited and existing resources to be allocated in the best possible way.

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