

# Audit of risk management

## Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property

### Key facts

---

The Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI) manages commercial intellectual property rights (patents, brands and designs). Working together with other authorities, associations and companies, it enforces the indication of source "Switzerland" both nationally and internationally. The IPI provides various information services and oversees the organisations for the utilisation of copyrights. It has around 300 employees and turnover of approximately CHF 55 million a year in fees and CHF 6 million in services.

The Confederation set the first strategic targets for the IPI for the 2022–2026 period. Among other things, these specify that the IPI must establish a corporate risk management system based on ISO 31000. To this end, the IPI launched a project in June 2023 to update its existing risk management processes. The Institution Council is expected to approve the new risk management system in spring 2025.

The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) examined the quality of risk management at the IPI. It found that this is fragmented and overwhelmingly informal in character, and shows a significant need for improvement in terms of its processes and content. Key risks are not recorded.

### Risk management shows significant shortcomings

The IPI is lacking an effective risk policy that provides information on how it intends to handle risks, and which risks it can bear in order to perform its work conscientiously and economically. The risk policy and strategy should be approved by the Institute Council.

There is no systematic, comprehensive record of the IPI's risks. The IPI also needs to examine whether the measures are appropriate and effective, taking into account the targeted use of personnel and financial resources (cost-benefit considerations). The risks are managed without sufficient monitoring. The Executive Board and the Institute Council do not have sufficient information on the IPI's risk situation to be able to intervene and provide guidance.

The risk management system in its current form is unable to systematically handle the occurrence and effects of risks, and is therefore ineffective. The SFAO welcomes the project initiated by the Executive Board to revise the risk management system. However, the implementation of the risk management process needs to be accelerated, and the risk policy and strategy approved by the Institute Council by autumn 2024.

**Original text in German**