



## ***The Swiss Federal Audit Office focuses on subsidies, ICT and digitalisation projects***

*Bern, 21 May 2024 – In addition to numerous audit findings, the annual report of the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) contains two summary reports on the overarching topics of subsidies and digital transformation. The findings from numerous audits on such topics are important for the strained federal budget as it looks to the future. During the reporting year, the SFAO also successfully performed its new tasks relating to political funding for the first time.*

The SFAO audited the federal accounts and found them to be correct. Despite a lower deficit and fewer extraordinary expenses than in previous years, the federal budget continues to face challenges. One-off effects are becoming everyday occurrences. As a result, the economic efficiency of subsidies and the efficiency of digital transformation projects not only remain the order of the day, but were also recognised as overarching topics in two summary reports and addressed with forward-looking conclusions.

Other focal points of the annual report include the numerous audits of selected key projects of the Federal Administration and IT projects with major implications for internal and external stakeholders. Audit findings concerning sustainability – such as the effectiveness of support measures for decarbonisation – also form a focus area. At a time characterised by uncertainty and unpredictability, it is important to "keep an eye on the bigger picture", as SFAO Director Pascal Stirnimann writes in the foreword.

### **Political financing – new tasks successfully tackled**

In 2023, the SFAO performed its new tasks relating to political funding effectively and on time for the first time. During the federal election campaign for the National Council elections, 277 final accounts totalling CHF 54.6 million were reported. In the Council of States campaigns, CHF 6.02 million was reported across 42 final accounts. The political players showed a high level of willingness to comply with the legal requirements.

Before an initial assessment can be made, experience from the popular votes in the first half of 2024 and from the implementation of the new transparency rules on disclosing party funding in the summer must be gathered. An evaluation of the rules will then follow. Among other things, it will be assessed whether it makes sense for the SFAO to act as the body responsible for this task.

### **Key figures from the reporting year: whistleblowing, reports, personnel**

Over the course of the year, the SFAO's reporting office processed and analysed 372 reports from whistleblowers. This is an increase of 93 reports compared to 2022. Of these reports, 58% were useful for ongoing audits or triggered new audits in the short or long term (previous year 57%).

The SFAO published 81 reports, which is exactly the same number as in the previous year. At the end of the year, it employed 137 staff (124.6 FTEs), which represents a slight temporary decrease compared to the previous year. Expenditure totalled CHF 33.1 million.

The SFAO's 2023 annual report is available on its website ([www.efk.admin.ch/en](http://www.efk.admin.ch/en)). The website was relaunched at the same time as the report was published and is now more user-friendly. It also features a new look and interactive content.



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