



## **Switzerland's participation in Expo Milano 2015 Financial oversight audit on Presence Switzerland**

### **Key points**

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2.1 million people visited the Swiss pavilion during the six months of the international exhibition in Milan, which corresponds to an average of 11 400 visitors per day. *Exhibitor*, the magazine for exhibitors, and the Italian press felt that this was the pavilion that had best interpreted the exhibition's theme ("Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life"). The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) conducted an audit on Switzerland's participation in the exhibition, primarily by visiting the Swiss pavilion at the end of October. Overall, it reported a positive result from this operation led by Presence Switzerland (PRS).

### **The real cost of the Swiss pavilion at Expo Milano 2015 is difficult to gauge**

In 2012, the Federal Council had budgeted for expenditure of CHF 23.1 million for the 2015 international exhibition in Milan. This sum was reduced to CHF 22.6 million in the meantime. In mid-July 2015, actual expenditure came to CHF 19.8 million. The SFAO therefore believes that the draft budget will not be exceeded.

Also in 2012, the Federal Council anticipated third-party contributions of CHF 8 million in return for its own support. These contributions, which had not been specified, currently amount to some CHF 9.5 million, in cash and in kind.

Moreover, the expenditure spot checks in 2015 did not reveal any errors. Nevertheless, the actual cost of this event is difficult to gauge for three main reasons. Firstly, part of the PRS management personnel costs is not recorded in the actual expenditure. Secondly, contributions in kind of over CHF 3.2 million are not included in the accounts. Thirdly, the income generated by sponsorship came to CHF 5.8 million at the end of October 2015, but estimates were based on CHF 6.3 million.

### **Competent management and contracts compliant with public procurement law**

The audit checked the appropriateness of the legal framework in place, adherence to the processes defined and the management tools used by PRS. The SFAO believes that PRS deals well with key elements such as risk analyses, organisational charts, accounting, expenditure management and controlling. Some operational details could be improved with a view to PRS's future participation in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, and the Expo Astana 2017 and Expo Dubai 2020 international exhibitions.

The analysis of more than 70 contracts shows that the selection of principals and other service providers complied with the legal provisions on public procurement. Nevertheless, the delegation of responsibilities with regard to procurement in the area of construction must be clarified.

### **Original text in French**