



*Press release (no embargo)*

## **Transparency in political funding – final accounts from 2023 federal elections are available**

*Bern, 19 January 2024 – Political funding at federal level is subject to new transparency requirements. The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) now has the final reported receipts from the 2023 elections, together with a list of the people and organisations audited during the election campaign. The budgeted receipts for the campaigning in connection with the popular votes on 3 March 2024 are also available.*

### **Final accounts for National Council elections**

With regard to the National Council elections, the budgeted amounts were to be submitted by 7 September 2023. As regards the final accounts, the reporting register shows 277 final accounts amounting to CHF 54.6 million as at 18 January 2024. The discrepancy relative to the budget submissions is as follows: declared receipts before the National Council elections were 1,4% lower. The electorate was thus able to rely on the budget assumptions submitted before the vote. The largest individual campaign is that of SVP Switzerland, at CHF 4.6 million, with the FDP declaring the highest amount of reportable receipts overall, at CHF 12.9 million.

### **Council of States elections: receipts of up to CHF 417,000 reported per campaign**

As regards the Council of States, only the final accounts exceeding CHF 50,000 of successful campaigns are subject to the reporting requirement. Reported receipts range up to a maximum of CHF 417,000. Cantons with large populations and those with hotly contested Council of States seats reported the highest amounts.

### **List of people and organisations audited has been published**

The SFAO has published a list of the people and organisations subjected to a material audit (see enclosures). It audited a random sample of 24 campaigns with a receipts volume of CHF 17,1 million. This represents 28,2% of the total amount of submitted final accounts for the 2023 National Council and Council of States elections. The audits revealed that those being audited were very willing to cooperate and to comply with the legal requirements. The SFAO is not authorised to provide information on the audit findings. Only when a legally binding conviction has been passed down does it publish a reference to this judgement, without further comment, in response to the corresponding entry in the public register.

### **Budgeted receipts for the popular votes on 3 March 2024**

The two federal popular votes on 3 March 2024 represent the first occasion when campaigns exceeding CHF 50,000 on proposals submitted to a popular vote will be subject to reporting requirements. Thanks to this innovation, citizens can consult the SFAO website to find out about the receipts, and in particular donations of more than CHF 15,000, relating to both popular initiatives before they go to the polls. According to their self-declarations, the advocates of the popular initiative "For a better life in old age (initiative for a 13th AHV pension payment)" have an estimated CHF 3,56 million at their disposal, and the opponents CHF 1,54 million. In the case of the popular initiative "For a secure and sustainable old-age provision (pension initiative)", the supporters expect

receipts of CHF 0,9 million, and the opponents CHF 0,1 million. The SFAO subjected the reported budget assumptions to a formal audit – material audits will be carried out on a random sample based on the final accounts.

Enclosures:

- Chart: Final accounts figures, 2023 election campaign/budgets for popular votes on 3 March 2024
- List of those audited

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