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4 Insufficient monitoring of consultancy work in large-scale IT projects

The Federal Ministry of the Interior did not sufficiently plan, monitor and control consultancy work in two large-scale IT projects. For instance, the Ministry remunerated the consultants according to the amount of work without evaluating the work done. Since the Federal Ministry of the Interior did not set detailed key performance indicators for the consultants, it should have thoroughly monitored their work.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior intends to update, centralise and enhance the security of the federal IT system by means of the two large-scale projects "Networks of the Federal Government" and "Federal IT Consolidation". For this purpose, the Ministry commissioned consultants. It needs to ensure that deadlines are met, cost limits are complied with and project results are of the required quality.

In 2015 and 2016, the Ministry arranged for being charged according to the amount of work done in 109 out of 110 consultancy contracts. However, these contracts did not specifically define the expected success. As from 2017 until 2022, the Ministry intends to pay more than €230 million for external consultants for the two projects.

The Ministry planned consultancy work only in broad terms. It did not fully determine how much time the consultant needed to carry out what tasks and what the results were. It did also not establish a quality management system for large-scale IT projects which also included consultancy work. The Ministry evaluated the work done by the consultants without consistent criteria. Often, there was a complete lack of evaluation criteria. In many cases, it was unclear whether the service provided by the consultants was adequate.

We requested the Federal Ministry of the Interior to efficiently use the working hours of external consultants. We demand that the Ministry continuously plan and monitor consultancy work, especially when consultants are paid according to the amount of work. We expect the Ministry to establish a quality management system and make its application mandatory for large-scale IT projects.