

Meeting of the ETH Board 10/11 July 2019

ETH Zurich exonerated from accusations

At its meeting of 10/11 July 2019, the results of the external investigations conducted at the behest of the ETH Board into the accusations levelled against ETH Zurich in a supervisory complaint were on the ETH Board's agenda. They paint a positive picture of the allocation of funds and governance at ETH Zurich's Department of Physics. The ETH Board takes note of the results of the investigation with satisfaction.

Berne, 11 July 2019 – At its meeting of 10/11 July 2019, the ETH Board took cognisance of the independent report on the administrative investigation conducted by BDO AG, which notes that at ETH Zurich's Department of Physics, the rules governing the allocation of funds are complied with and that the funds are allocated in a lawful, appropriate and sufficiently transparent manner, that there is no discrimination regarding the appointment of leading functionaries and that there are no indications of corruption and of abuse of office and power at ETH Zurich.

The investigation was conducted by the renowned Swiss auditing, accounting and consulting company BDO. The anonymised report is being published alongside this media release.

Allocation of funds is lawful, appropriate and sufficiently transparent

BDO came to the conclusion that there are clear rules for the allocation of funds in the Department of Physics at ETH Zurich and that these rules are also complied with, adding that they are lawful, appropriate and sufficiently transparent. However, transparency with regard to fund allocation is limited and should be increased. There was no discernible discrimination or arbitrariness.

The ETH Board supports the institutions of the ETH Domain in further enhancing fund allocation transparency.

Transparent rules for the appointment of leading functionaries

According to the BDO report, the rules for the appointment of leading functionaries are transparent at the Department of Physics of ETH Zurich. BDO considered the organisation of management and supervision to be lawful, appropriate and transparent. However, the appointment proposals should be supplemented by a job profile and the candidates' qualifications and experience for the purpose of increased transparency.

No corruption and abuse of office

With regard to the charge of corruption and of abuse of office and power at ETH Zurich, it can be noted that the investigation did not find any indications of corruption or abuse of office.

Additional investigation by the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)

By way of complementing BDO's administrative investigation, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) conducted an additional investigation at two departments of ETH Zurich and at two faculties of EPFL. The main aim of the SFAO's investigation was to establish whether there was bias at the expense of women professors and whether there were sufficient options for objections in the case of differences of opinion.

The SFAO comes to the conclusion that there is no systematic discrimination on the basis of gender but suggests reinforced measures to promote transparency. The ETH Board supports this recommendation.

Link: [Administrative investigation in the Department of Physics at ETH Zurich](#), (28 June 2019, BDO AG, document in German only)

Enquiries

Gian-Andri Casutt, Head of Communication

Phone +41 (0)44 632 20 03

Mobile +41 (0)79 636 94 64

gian.casutt@ethrat.ch

ETH Board, Haldeliweg 15, CH-8092 Zurich, www.ethboard.ch

The ETH Board is the strategic management and supervisory body of the ETH Domain. The ETH Domain is made up of the two Federal Institutes of Technology, i.e. ETH Zurich and EPFL, as well as the four federal research institutes PSI, WSL, Empa and Eawag. The members of the ETH Board are appointed by the Swiss Federal Council. The ETH Board supervises the development plans of the institutions, is responsible for strategic management accounting and ensures coordination. It draws up the budget and the financial statements of the ETH Domain and coordinates the value maintenance and continued functionality of the properties. It is the authority responsible for appointments and represents the ETH Domain before the federal authorities. A staff unit assists the ETH Board in the preparation and implementation of its business.