

World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2024 – Important information

The authorities of the federal government, the Canton of Graubünden and Davos will be providing continuous and objective information on their policy regarding the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2024 in Davos. The following information about the WEF Annual Meeting comes from the various agencies and authorities concerned.

World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2024 in Davos

1. General information

More than 2,500 leaders from business, politics, science and culture will be staying in Davos from 15 to 19 January 2024 to attend the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting. This figure includes approximately 200 to 300 internationally protected persons, such as heads of state and government, ministers, and high-level representatives of international organisations. The event in Davos will be covered by some 400 journalists reporting for domestic and foreign news outlets.

For more information about the central theme and programme of the WEF Annual Meeting 2024, go to <https://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2024>.

2. Importance

The Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum is one of the most important economic and socio-political events in the world. In 2020, on the occasion of the 50th annual meeting in Davos, the Federal Council, the government of the Canton of Graubünden and the Davos Communal Council expressly acknowledged the importance of this event for Switzerland. Staging this forum for exchanging views and seeking solutions to world problems has a strong positive impact in their view, and continues Switzerland's longstanding tradition of hosting international conferences and gatherings.

The gathering of leading representatives from the worlds of business, politics, science and culture in Davos offers Switzerland the possibility to cultivate relations with many influential figures in a unique setting. Many jobs in Davos depend on the economic benefits of conferences and other events, and the people of Davos have repeatedly expressed their support for hosting the WEF Annual Meeting in a number of popular votes.

3. Costs and benefits

The additional costs for security at the WEF Annual Meeting 2024 are estimated at around CHF 9 million.

As in previous years, the federal government, together with the WEF Foundation and its other partners (Canton of Graubünden, commune of Davos), will contribute to the costs of WEF Annual Meeting security measures for the period 2022-2024 as part of a three-tier finance model. These are split between the funding partners as follows: WEF: 3/8; federal government: 2/8; Canton of Graubünden: 2/8; Davos: 1/8. Klosters will contribute CHF 100,000 towards Davos's share of the costs.

Funding details are set out in the Dispatch accompanying the Federal Decree on the deployment of the armed forces to support the Canton of Graubünden with security measures at the World Economic Forum Annual Meetings 2022–2024 (BBI 2021 435).

The three-tier finance model for security costs has been applied since 2004:

Tier 1

There is a cost ceiling of CHF 9 million a year for security. The costs are shared among the partners as follows:

Partner	Contribution (in CHF)	Share
WEF	3.375 million	3/8
Federal government	2.25 million	2/8
Canton of Graubünden	2.25 million	2/8
Davos	1.125 million	1/8
Cost ceiling	9 million	

Tier 2

If the cost ceiling should be exceeded due to exceptional circumstances, level 2 of the finance model is applied. The cost ceiling could, for example, be exceeded due to:

- attendance at short notice of an unusually large number of internationally protected persons at the Annual Meeting;
- large-scale changes to the Annual Meeting programme at short notice;
- significant increase in accommodation costs for security staff from outside the canton;
- extension of security zone in Davos owing to the number of people requiring security;
- exceptional weather-related circumstances.

The federal government has set aside maximum additional funds of CHF 900,000 to cover such cases for the three annual meetings from 2022 to 2024. If the additional costs exceed this amount, the extra expenditure will be met by the finance partners according to the ratio set under level 1, unless level 3 comes into play.

Tier 3

In the event of exceptional incidents (e.g. terrorist attacks, assassination attempts, major threats or clear indications that such acts may be carried out), the federal government will meet 80% of any costs exceeding those under Levels 1 and 2. The remaining 20% will be met by the Canton of Graubünden and the WEF.

The deployment of the armed forces in support is funded through the normal DDPS budget. Overall, the cost of deploying troops at the WEF Annual Meeting is much the same as that incurred by the same battalions when on regular training. Deployments in connection with the WEF Annual Meetings from 2022 to 2024 will have an annual budget of CHF 32 million. Deployment costs in recent years have been under budget (2020: CHF 29.74m, 2022: CHF 21.4m).

The World Economic Forum is a foundation. In the financial year from July 2022 to June 2023, it reported total revenue of CHF 409 million. There was no surplus during this period.

4. Security

A number of agencies from the federal government, the canton and the commune of Davos work together with the World Economic Forum. Responsibility for coordination rests with the WEF committee of the Graubünden government (www.wef.gr.ch), which is chaired by Cantonal Council member Marcus Caduff. The Graubünden cantonal police and its partners ensure the security of visitors to the WEF Annual Meeting, the local population and guests.

During WEF Annual Meetings, the Graubünden Cantonal Police are responsible for drawing up plans to take account of possible security threats that would have an impact beyond cantonal borders. This will also be the case during the 2024 Annual Meeting. An analysis of the security situation for upcoming WEF Annual Meetings has demonstrated the importance of maintaining a comprehensive security plan in order for Switzerland to fulfil its protection obligations under international law.

All cantons in Switzerland participate in the inter-cantonal police operation to maintain security and protect people and property. The Federal Assembly has also authorised the deployment of up to 5,000 armed forces personnel in 2022–2024 for civil support duties to assist the Canton of Graubünden (www.armee.ch/wef).

Responsibility for two areas of security rests with the federal government:

- For internationally protected foreign persons such as heads of state, heads of government and serving members of government, the Federal Security Service will order special protective measures if necessary. These, along with the general security plans, are carried out by the cantonal police and its partners.
- The Federal Council has imposed security restrictions on the airspace over Davos to safeguard air sovereignty. Civilian aircraft may continue to fly through the restricted airspace on a limited basis provided they have been registered and identified. Authorisation is given by the air force. If the need arises, aerial policing measures can be ordered and executed in accordance with international rules and procedures. In addition, helicopter traffic to Davos has to be controlled during the WEF Annual Meeting. The restrictions also apply to paragliders, drones, model aircraft, etc. (see www.bazl.admin.ch and the FAQ page at www.wef.gr.ch).

5. Freedom of opinion and freedom to demonstrate

The authorities of the federal government and the Canton of Graubünden consider the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting to be a place of open dialogue. As such, critical debate on issues such as globalisation and the development of the world economy should be possible. However, the authorities expect the concerns, arguments and proposals of critics to be put forward in a peaceful manner.

The Graubünden authorities are again willing, in principle, to authorise a demonstration in 2024. However, it is essential that requirements to protect people, infrastructure and property are respected.

In order to hold a demonstration, detailed arrangements have to be made between the organisers and the authorities. Considerations such as traffic routing have to be taken into account, as do the needs of the local population and holiday guests. Requests for authorisation to hold a demonstration must therefore be submitted as early as possible (see information under FAQs at www.wef.gr.ch).

If a demonstration is held without authorisation, the authorities will take whatever measures are required to ensure the security and freedom of movement of residents and guests, while adhering to the principle of proportionality. Those who commit criminal offences will be prosecuted.

The threshold set for police intervention will be consistent with that applied in previous years, which has proven to be effective. Intervention is appropriate when the law is broken, in order to send a clear signal that violence will not be tolerated. The proven strategy of dialogue, de-escalation and firm, proportionate response will continue to be applied.

In order to ensure an open and comprehensive briefing of the media and the general public, the Graubünden authorities, in cooperation with the federal government and the commune of Davos, have set up an external media centre as well as the website www.wef.gr.ch.

6. Impact on tourism

Tourism in the Davos / Prättigau region is generally not affected during the WEF Annual Meeting. There are no general travel restrictions. Davos is accessible by public transport or by car.

Precautionary personal, vehicle and baggage checks will, however, be carried out on all access roads. The primary concern is to prevent any dangerous items being brought into Davos. The checks are intended to protect conference participants, residents and visitors. The Graubünden authorities guarantee that the checks on access routes to Davos will take place quickly and without harassment; delays are nevertheless possible.

Additional information on the latest travel and traffic situation can be found at www.rhb.ch, www.strassen.gr.ch and <http://www.sbb.ch/en/timetable/rail-traffic-information.html>

Certain areas within Davos have been designated as security zones where entry restrictions will be in place for the duration of the WEF Annual Meeting. These security zones are located around the Congress Center / Kongress Hotel / Hotel Hilton Garden Inn; the AlpenGold and Belvédère hotels; the ice rink and the Lago heliport incl. the lake car park and meadow (see www.wef.gr.ch for details). Persons resident in the security areas will be issued with badges and vehicle passes (cantonal police hotline: +41 81 257 58 15). All other hotels and all shops can be reached without restriction.