

Abstract

Switzerland and the European Union share common values and have peaceful and well functioning economic and political agreements. Nevertheless, the Swiss banking secrecy is definitely a thorn in the EU's flesh, especially because of tax fraud or money laundering. Since the existence of the Swiss banking secrecy it has been associated with holocaust money, tax evasion, potentates' money etc. and also has been confronted with espionage attacks by foreign authorities and various other disputes. Recent global events have shed light on the Swiss banking secrecy's wider international agenda. A newly debate about the Swiss banking secrecy started with the global economic crisis and the Euro crisis. Finally, not a day goes by where there is no report or article in the media regarding the banking secrecy, the Swiss banks and its issues concerning the European Union or the United States. This writing focuses on the relationship between Switzerland and the European Union which is affected by Swiss banking secrecy: By explaining the history and importance of the Switzerland as a financial centre, its banking secrecy and the differences to other systems, possible issues and conflicts can be outlined. This thesis covers existing issues with EU member states. What regulations and restrictions were enforced by the Swiss government under pressure from international institutions or the European Union towards the Swiss banking secrecy or Swiss law due to international conflicts, issues and recommendations will be analysed.

Keywords: Swiss Banking Secrecy; Swiss Banks; Bank Client Confidentiality; Tax Fraud; Tax Evasion; Switzerland; European Union; Bilateral Agreements