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Top Performance, High Impact

For the Swiss National Library (NL) managing the institution under performance mandate and global budget (MPM) has proven its worth. At the end of the first three-year performance mandate period the NL appears stronger. In particular, what stands out is the progress in digitisation. *Digicoord* provides Swiss libraries with a platform for their digitisation projects. A trailblazing form of cooperation was achieved by the digitisation of the *Journal de Genève*. Since the end of 2008 this historic Swiss-French newspaper can be consulted free-of-charge on the Internet.

On 1 January 2006, the NL was transformed from a classical administration institution into a new public management entity to be run under performance mandate and global budget. Since then expected impact and expected performance have been precisely defined, and the NL is in the position to use its resources flexibly in order to optimally fulfil its mission, namely to be the leading institution internationally for print repositories concerning Switzerland. A prerequisite for this is the double mandate that is characteristic of national libraries worldwide: on the one hand, collecting documents; and, on the other, making them available to the public. This is reflected in the two product groups of the NL: *Collection* and *User Services*.

Assessment of the First Performance Mandate

On 31 December 2008, the first MPM period came to an end. The results can already be seen purely in terms of the numbers. All five primary goals and all eight impact goals were achieved. Of the fourteen performance goals twelve were achieved, one was partially completed and one was not realised. This very good result is a direct consequence of the high motivation of the staff¹ on the one hand; on the other hand, this also reflects the financial commitment of the federal government. The costs for the first three MPM years amount to CHF 91.8 million; under the financial framework of the MPM CHF 87.9 million had been projected. The additional expenditures are the consequence of the introduction of internal accounting for services within the Federal Administration.

National and International Cooperation

The NL has consistently communicated its task – to collect ‘All about Switzerland’ – by repeatedly discovering and emphasizing new facets, achieving a 60% rate of recognition among the Swiss population. On the national level cooperation has been strengthened. Together with cantonal and university libraries as well as with publishers, the collection of electronic publications is being built up. Since 2008, the NL chairs the Conference of University Libraries in Switzerland. Internationally the NL is a member of the executive committee of the *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions* (IFLA), takes an active part in various standardisation committees and in Europe-wide projects such as *The European Library*. In addition, the Swiss Literary Archives, the Preservation & Conservation Service and the Prints and Drawings Department are engaged in national and international research in cooperation with other institutions.

Digitisation Eases the Challenge of the Double Mandate

Using the instruments of MPM makes it possible for the first time to measure how well the NL is fulfilling its double mandate. According to regularly conducted evaluations and a report by experts, the NL complies with international standards for the conservation of printed documents and originals (for online media there is no auditing agency yet). The completion of the second underground stacks in 2008 ensures that the acquisitions of the upcoming decades can also be optimally conserved.

1 See Annual Report 2007, p. 4

The high demands of preservation partially limit the use of the documents. Nonetheless users are satisfied with the availability of the collections.² The digitisation of analogue documents offers a way out of the dilemma of the double mandate. What is available digitally does not have – as a rule – to be physically loaned out. Here the NL – like Switzerland in general – is unfortunately only at the beginning. This year, however, considerable progress has been made. *Digicoord* provides Swiss libraries and archives for the first time with a common platform for digitisation projects.³ Thanks to the cooperation with *Le Temps* and the *Bibliothèque de Genève* the *Journal de Genève* is the first Swiss newspaper still in copyright to be available online free-of-charge.⁴ *HelveticArchives*, the new database in which the archival and image holdings of the NL have been catalogued, went online this year. It will contain not only the inventories, but also as far as possible digitised versions of documents.

Services Development

In the last three years the provision of services has been expanded above all in the area of online options. The information platform *SwissInfoDesk* was substantially enlarged and the national bibliography *The Swiss Book* was made available in an online version. A broadly defined survey of users forms the basis for further development of the provision of services; the corresponding project is currently running under the name *ServicePlus*. In order that resources for new services can be freed up, existing provisions have to be regularly reviewed and eventually even discontinued. For example, in 2008 the free-of-charge use of Internet on-site had to be limited.

Performance Mandate 2009–2011

The NL will maintain its established course in the next performance mandate period. Online access in all forms will have to be expanded. The remaining card catalogues should be converted into online catalogues. The backlog in digitising needs to be gradually reduced, the building up of the electronic Helvetica collection should be pushed ahead, and common access to all digital documents has to be set up. Services for the main users – experts and students of all areas of Swiss history, literature, art and architecture, as well as information and documentation specialists – will be extended further.

In view of the future tasks the organisation structure was slightly adjusted. Since 1 January 2008, the Vice-Director position has once again been filled. The former Head of the Collections Section Elena Balzardi has been appointed to this position; her successor as Section's Head is Dagmar Uebelhard-Petzold. The Vice-Director supervises both of the sections 'Collections' and 'User Services', as well as the Swiss Literary Archives and the Prints and Drawings Department. The Director continues to directly head the *Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel*, as well as the support services, such as, Information Technologies (IT), Marketing and Communication, Training, Finance and Corporate Resources, and National and International Cooperation.

In addition, since this year the Commission of the Swiss National Library has been under new management. I would like to thank the new President Christiane Langenberger for her cooperation during her first year and I'm looking forward to her accompanying us in the next MPM period.

Marie-Christine Doffey
Director

² See Annual Report 2007, p. 3

³ www.digicoord.ch

⁴ www.letempsarchives.ch