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User Services

The redesign of public areas and the updating and re-organisation of the open stacks have improved onsite services. Six periodicals are now available in digital form, offering key sources for research into the history of education.

ServicePlus Project

ServicePlus, the major project launched in 2007 with an eye to better serving the NL's main user groups, is proceeding, albeit with some delays. The year in review saw implementation of the redesign of public areas (see "Information Retrieval" below), the integration of records from *Helveticat* into the *swissbib* metacatalogue and the indexing of catalogues by search engines (see "Catalogues" page 12). Retroconversion of the years 1975–1998 of the *Bibliographie der Schweizergeschichte* is complete, and the years 1913–1974 have been digitised. Tests have been carried out to enrich the *Helveticat* catalogue with tables of contents.

Circulation

In the year in review 3697 users borrowed a total of 80321 documents from the collection, thus keeping figures more or less stable compared to the previous year (2009: 3675 active users, 79052 documents borrowed). While borrowing of printed documents increased slightly (2010: 68980 versus 2009: 66914), the use of microfilms declined (2010: 8358 versus 2009: 9508). The demand for documents from the Swiss Literary Archives (SLA) rose (2010: 2983 versus 2009: 2630). Documents were lent among other places to exhibitions in Berlin (Humboldt Universität), Lisbon (Museo Berardo) and Brussels (Alternative Culture).

Information Retrieval

Workplaces saw average occupancy in 2010 of 39% (2009: 41%). A total of 17868 requests for information and research were treated, as against 16268 in the previous year. Finding aids provided by the Swiss National Library (NL) are now also available on the collection of social links known as *delicious*.¹⁰ Research inquiries by users are now published on the website, responses to which, previously only available to those submitting the inquiries, are now publicly accessible. Onsite, the public areas redesigned as part of the ServicePlus project now offer more services and better orientation assistance. The newly established information desk offers a highly visible initial stop for those seeking information and advice, while improved signage further facilitates orientation. The desire of many users for a lounge area has been fulfilled, and there are also more of the heavily used individual work booths and rooms for group work.

Many of the NL's holdings have been rendered more accessible: newspapers on microfilm may be consulted without pre-registration or ordering, and reference-only shelves have been arranged according to the subjects "Swiss history", "Swiss literatures", "Swiss art and architecture" and "Information science", in addition to being enhanced with additional stock.



The redesigned public areas at the NL: Information desk



Specialty libraries



Microfilms

Outreach

The www.nb.admin.ch website and *Helveticat* library catalogue saw less traffic, with 294 337 visits for the website (2009: 463 168) and 353 571 sessions for the online catalogues *Helveticat*, *Biblio* and *RP/VZ* (2009: 381 102). The decline is likely due to the NL's greater presence in networks like *swissbib* and *The European Library*. What is more, relevant results derived from *Helveticat* also appear in response to inquiries launched by way of web search engines. Consultation of bibliographic records or documents in networks or via search engines does not figure in statistics compiled by the data owner.

Newly available in digital form are 76 books with Swiss representational character digitised for The European Library's virtual exhibition *Reading Europe* and accessible over their website.¹¹ As part of a project to provide access to sources for the history of schooling and education, six periodicals were digitised, among them the *Archiv für das schweizerische Unterrichtswesen* ("Archive of Swiss Education"). All of the NL's digitised periodicals are available at retro.seals.ch.

Digital reproductions of copyright-free books have been available, on demand and for a fee, for some time already. With the launch of the eBooks on Demand service (cf. "Catalogues" p. 12), the ordering process has been significantly simplified, and 2010 saw 78 titles supplied in this manner. In addition, 2009 photographs (2009: 1332) and 45 087 copies (2009: 44 490), many of them in digital form, were supplied to external clients.

Exhibitions and events hosted by the NL were visited 8341 times, in keeping with typical frequency. The spike in visits in the previous year (13 782) was due to the open days held in 2009. The high point of the year in Bern was the exhibition *Swiss Appeal – Switzerland in Travel Guides*, while events held at the NL, particularly those organised by the SLA, also enjoyed considerable popularity. Indeed, some events were plagued by acute lack of space, with would-be attendees often having to be turned away at the door. So as to harmonise demand with space available, as of 1 January 2011 public events at the NL will as a rule be subject to a seat reservation fee.

The Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel's exhibition *Günter Grass – Bestiarium* and the celebration held to mark its tenth anniversary made for a massive increase in visitor numbers, with 12 164 guests in 2010 (2009: 9784). The series of tenth-anniversary events began with a ceremony on 25 September and continues into 2011.¹²



Reading Europe exhibition: prospectus for the Jungfrau Railways, 1903



L'Educatore della Svizzera italiana, title page of the 1st edition

11 www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/exhibition-reading-europe

12 For more detailed information on exhibitions and events see pp. 5ff. and 18.