

General collection

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General Collection

Use of the digital offerings increased, while use of on-site services was impacted by coronavirus measures. An initial milestone was reached in the replacement of the digital long-term archive.

Collection

The General Collection of the Swiss National Library (NL) comprised some 4.94 million units at the end of 2021 (2020: 4.88 million). The growth remained moderate due to pandemic-induced postponements and reorganisation of publishing programmes.

The NL's deposit agreement with the Swiss Association for Student History, which was terminated in 2017, was physically implemented in 2021 and the collection temporarily stored in the NL was finally handed over. Since 2021, the Swiss Association of Writers of Serbia has once again been transferring the monographs of its members to the NL after a lengthy hiatus.

The collection of digitally born publications again saw significant growth. At the end of 2021, it comprised 209,430 publications, an increase of 27,113. A part of this growth comes from websites of Swiss artists who were identified in cooperation with the *SIKART Lexicon on Art in Switzerland*. The collection of websites of Swiss parties, which has existed since 2016, was completed and now contains some 300 domains. In addition, the event collections on the Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo and on the events and celebrations to mark 50 years of women's suffrage in Switzerland were completed. The collection of websites on COVID-19 topics was continued and currently contains some 180 domains.

Catalogues

At the end of 2021, *Helveticat*, the NL's library catalogue, comprised 1,933,690 bibliographic records (2020: 1,888,151), an increase of 2.4%.

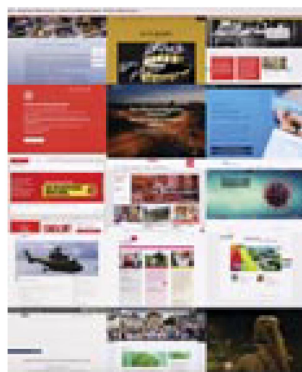
In association with the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland in Fribourg, an online tool was developed in 2021 which allows integration of the old subject catalogue into the online catalogue *Helveticat*. From 1898 to 1998, new entries were catalogued according to subject on cards using UDK decimal classification. In 1999/2000 they were put on microfilm and scanned. The scans were then made available for searches in their own database. This knowledge base, which has been continually developed since 1898, has now been integrated into *Helveticat*: of 1.297 million scanned cards, 1.129 million were automatically allocated to data sets in *Helveticat*. The accuracy rate of allocation to cards is 94.12%, which is very high. The remaining 168,000 cards are being manually allocated in *Helveticat*.

The static PDF edition of the *Bibliography of Swiss History (BSH)* has been published without an index since 2020. The listed publications on Swiss history are still ordered thematically. Doing without the index led to significant time savings, so it was possible to publish two report years (2015 and 2016) in 2021. The database remains the principal edition of the BSH. It contains the complete records and offers convenient search options.

Owing to the previous changeover to the new library management system and the coronavirus restrictions, there was a backlog of over 10,000 documents in alphabetical cataloguing. To ensure that these documents could still be correctly conserved in the stacks in a timely manner, an accelerated integration process was developed. For documents with ISBN numbers, the bibliographic data were imported (semi-)automatically from other library catalogues and automatically signed. This method was used for documents that were not displayed in *The Swiss Book* and for publishers with a very large number of publications (e.g. *Springer*, Cham). The imported data do not correspond to the NL's conventional indexing standard, for example, the search entries may be lacking a link to the GND (Integrated Authority File). However, the data can be processed automatically with rules



Zaveštanja: zbornik književnih radova, 2021



Web Archive Switzerland: web collection on coronavirus

in Alma so that they meet the requirements of the RDA rules and are interoperable with the NL's other bibliographic data.

Since January 2021, monographic online publications (e-books) have been displayed in the national bibliography of Switzerland, *The Swiss Book*. A facet was also set up in the online edition to enable users to search for online publications. These are displayed in the issues together with the print publications, classified according to DDC groups.

Preservation and conservation

In all, 47,314 new acquisitions underwent conservation treatment, a decline of over 5% compared with 2020 (50,161).

Newly acquired collections and archives are cleaned, categorised and indexed before they are definitively brought into the stacks. To prevent the introduction of pests, items are kept in a quarantine room for a certain period. As they have to be pest-free before they are brought into the stacks, they were inspected, cleaned and arranged in a complex process at the future interim site on Monbijoustrasse in Bern.

The lift in the eastern stack room was closed for servicing for several weeks. To be able to deliver orders and to house new acquisitions, an emergency goods lift was fitted for the bottom four floors of the seven-floor underground stacks. The transportation of orders and new acquisitions to and from the remaining three upper floors was done manually by stack room staff during this phase.

Circulation

In 2021 the NL had 2,415 active users of the General Collection, 26% fewer than in the previous year (2020: 3,268). The number of documents borrowed fell by 27% to 42,621 (2020: 58,471). Some 1,132 microfilms were consulted, which is 46% fewer than in the previous year (2020: 2,078). This decline can be attributed to the closure of the reading rooms and circulation desks due to the pandemic, and the fact that people needed to show a COVID certificate to access the library.

Information retrieval

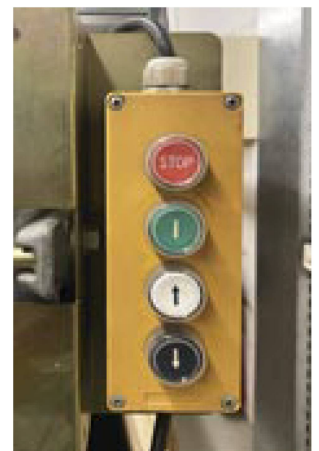
The number of information and research requests stood at over 9,000, down 25% versus the previous year (2020: 12,000). Additionally, 2,237 in-depth searches were conducted for users, a decline of 20% compared to the previous year (2020: 2,805). In connection with the NL's two exhibitions (*Meat – An exhibition on the inner life* and *Vote Now! On the right to have a say*), in-depth searches were conducted on the topic of food and on the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage. During the pandemic-induced closures, users received information by post or as digital scans.

Outreach

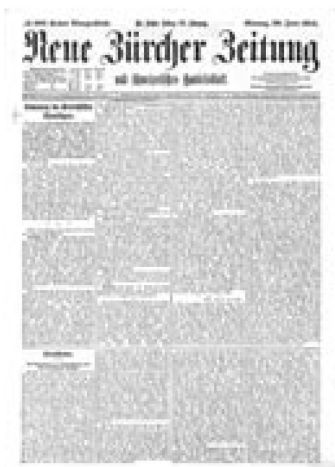
In the year under review, 20 digitised periodicals were put online on the *e-newspaperarchives.ch* platform operated by the NL, including 11 titles from the Misox, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* from its beginnings (1780) to 1914 and the *Journal du Jura*. In addition, the Neuchâtel newspapers *Express*, *L'Impartial* and *ArcInfo*, which had previously been presented on a separate platform, were also integrated. At the end of 2021, *e-newspaperarchives.ch* provided access to 164 digitised newspaper titles (2020: 144), which equates to 9,001,585 pages (2020: 6,534,153). A total of



Extract from *The Swiss Book*, issue 17, 2021



Goods lift in the stack room (Photo: Simon Lässer, FOBL)



Neue Zürcher Zeitung
dated 29.6.1914



L'Impartial dated 30.12.2017

931,388 pages were put online in 2021. 401,343 page visits were recorded, up from 341,928 in 2020, an increase of 17%.

The NL put 15 periodicals on the platform *e-periodica.ch* operated by the ETH library Zurich, including several on the topic of the Swiss abroad (e.g. *Revue économique franco-suisse*, *Helvetia*, magazine of the *Swiss Society of New Zealand*) and magazines relating to women's history (e.g. *Zeitschrift für Krankenpflege* and *Schweizer Frauen-Zeitung*). A total of 195,319 pages were put online. No figures on user services are available for the year under review.

Some 1,190 public domain images were uploaded to *WikiCommons*. The NL's images recorded a total of 15.9 million page views (2020: 12.4 million).

Some 1,190 documents containing 3,239 pages from Hermann Hesse's estate, which is held in the Swiss Literary Archives, were integrated in the *e-manuscripta.ch* platform, operated by Swiss libraries and archives. The pages were consulted 127,172 times in 2021 (2020: 92,641).

The NL's website *nb.admin.ch* recorded 164,701 visits. In all, the NL's German-language Facebook page has almost 10,400 followers and the French-language page a little over 9,000. The NL's German Twitter feed has over 2,900 followers and the French-language version just under 1,900. With 2,257 subscribers, the multilingual Instagram channel again doubled the number of users compared with a year earlier. The NL posted monthly updates on its social media on newly archived websites in the Web Archive Switzerland. By providing information on new content in its collection, it participates in *#WebArchiveWednesday*, which was launched in 2019 by the International Internet Preservation Consortium.

Helveticat, the catalogue of the General Collection, was accessed 347,385 times (2020: 413,601), while the figure for the *Swiss Poster Collections Union Catalogue* was 46,472 (2020: 27,937). *The Bibliography of Swiss History* was consulted 36,827 times (2020: 25,830). *HelveticArchives*, which mainly describes the holdings of the Swiss Literary Archives and the Prints and Drawings Department, was consulted 118,706 times (2020: 217,913). The figure for the *e-Helveticat* Access portal to the digital collections was 34,703 (2020: 25,258).

A total of 6,802 people attended the NL's exhibitions and events in Bern (2020: 6,757). The online events were also well attended, attracting 2,655 participants, while 456 people took part in guided tours.

Training

The NL has offered an apprenticeship in mediamatics since August 2021.

IT

The Federal Council assigned central ICT resources to address the delayed operation of the long-term archive project. The procurement of the central components of the future long-term digital archive were put out for public tender on *simap.ch* and evaluation of the bids submitted was almost complete at the end of 2021.

As a way of promoting innovation and the digital transformation, the NL developed a lab environment, which will be made available to technically experienced staff. It will be used to test ideas for their technical feasibility in the sense of a proof of concept, to test software in terms of its suitability for use at the NL, and to produce scripts to facilitate work processes.

As part of information security, backups created in the *e-Helveticat* environment were thoroughly tested to ensure that they could be restored in the event of a crash. The tests covered backed-up archive data, databases, search indexes, and the use and consistency of various backups. The tests produced positive results.

Construction work

With a view to the temporary relocation of the NL due to renovation work in late 2024, work was done on planning the relocation. The total renovation of the National Library project, which is being led by the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics FOBL, was launched in the autumn of 2021. It involves a full renovation and optimisation of the premises at 15 Hallwylstrasse in order to meet the needs of a modern library in the future.

Museumsquartier Bern

The *Museumsquartier Bern association* was set up in June 2021 with 11 members, including the NL. The association got to work immediately. The set-up phase between 2021 and 2024 will involve developing joint content formats and clarifying structural issues.

National coordination

NL staff participated in the activities of the national library association *Bibliosuisse* and were involved on the Board and in various commissions. Particularly worth mentioning is the commission on library statistics. Following extensive conceptual work, this commission reached a milestone in March 2021 with the first survey of revised library statistics. The Federal Statistical Office then published the new 2020 library statistics in December 2021.

Library law

In the context of digitalisation, issues relating to copyright and data protection in libraries and cultural memory institutions have become much more relevant. The NL took account of this situation by increasing the number of staff in the Copyright & Data Protection Department, which was set up in 2020, and renaming it the Library Law Department in 2021. The expansion and reorganisation of the department meant that most of the smaller and larger library-specific legal issues could be handled by NL specialists, who are familiar both with the relevant issues and with the particularities of the institution.



Il Mesolcinese dated 1.12.1989



Museumsquartier Bern: summer party (Photo: Sally De Kunst)