Collection

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Agreement with the publishers' associations

Under the terms of an agreement dating from 1915 which was renewed for the first time in 1961, most Swiss publishers supply their publications to the National Library (NL) free of charge. The agreement was completely revised in 2017. The NL will continue to receive most printed publications without payment of a fee, and will make an annual contribution of CHF 20,000 to defray the costs of supply. The NL will continue to list the publications in its catalogue and preserve them for posterity. Publishers now also offer their digitally born publications to the NL for archiving. The NL then decides which ones it will accept: unlike with printed publications, it can only collect a representative selection of digital publications.

The agreement came into force on 31 January 2018. The contracting partners are the Schweizer Buchhändler- und Verlegerverband, the Association des Diffuseurs, Editeurs et Libraires and the Società Editori della Svizzera Italiana.

Disaster contingency plan exercise, 5.7.2017

Acquisitions

The NL's General Collection grew by 1.9% in 2017. It now comprises 4 676 483 units, including 918 621 volumes of journals and 489 718 prints, photographs and cards. The NL holds 85 001 items of sheet music, 21 112 audiovisual media and 21 350 miscellaneous electronic data storage media. The number of digitally born documents in the long-term archive grew by 41.6% to 107 610 archive packages.

The Swiss Literary Archives recorded 12 new acquisitions, and now holds a total of 381 literary estates and archives. The number of individual collections in the Prints and Drawings Department rose from 81 to 83. The Swiss National Sound Archives housed 293 819 audio carriers (2016: 288 212), a large proportion of them in 165 (2016: 155) historical fonds.

The VIVA project, which was launched in 2014, is addressing the future management of the association and company publications. The fully system-based working process, which employs the library management system for acquisition, cataloguing and administration, operated successfully in a pilot phase extending over a number of months. Integration of the association publications into the online catalogue Helveticat began in October 2017.

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Catalogues

Helveticat, the NL's library catalogue, comprised 1 760 459 bibliographic records at the end of 2017 (2016: 1 707 996), the Bibliography on Swiss History (BSH) 113 577 (2016: 109 354) and the Swiss Poster Catalogue 87 235 (2016: 84 252). The HelveticArchives database grew by 10% to 567 639 records. The National Sound Archives catalogue contained 293 985 records (2016: 290 024).

The new library management system, operated by the company Ex Libris, is scheduled to come into operation at the end of 2018. It consists of the Alma management system and the Primo VE user interface. Ex Libris was awarded the contract in 2017 on the basis of a WTO tender.

To prepare for the migration, data quality in the applications affected was tested, and the data were cleansed where necessary. They are now all coded in accordance with the international standard MARC21 and correctly linked to the combined authority file GND. Both are requirements for the migration and also for interoperability of the NL's data.

HelveticArchives, the database for documents of the Swiss Literary Archives and the Prints and Drawings Department, migrated to a new version with new functionalities in 2017.

Preservation and conservation

In total, 37 306 new acquisitions underwent conservation treatment during the year in review (2016: 37 889), 3387 protective covers were manufactured (2016: 4009) and 336 publications were repaired (2016: 288).

On 5 July 2017 the NL conducted the first comprehensive exercise to test its disaster contingency plan in more than 15 years. The plan sets out how NL documents are to be safeguarded in the event of a major accident. The results showed that the NL is well prepared for such an eventuality. At the same time, it was clear that such exercises need to be repeated at regular intervals. Guests from other institutions followed the exercise with interest and also learned lessons from it.

A newly acquired luminometer is used to establish whether and to what degree an object is affected with mould, and whether the mould is active. Since mould is hazardous to human beings, staff were first trained in how to protect their own health when dealing with mould-affected documents. A secure workbench for cleaning such documents will be set up in 2018.

Almost a third of the NL's documents are photographs. They are held in the General Collection, the Prints and Drawings Department, the special collections and the Swiss Literary Archives. The COPHOT (conservation des photographies analogues) project aims to bring them together at a single location and store them under the best possible conditions. The first step was to locate all the photographs. Meanwhile, almost 10 000 photographic documents, chiefly glass negatives, were cleaned and moved.

Restoration of the "Sistine Chapel" was completed. This is the toilet of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's home in Neuchâtel which he painted with vividly coloured, grinning figures. It now forms part of the exhibition rooms at the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel.

Documents from the Swiss National Sound Archives (FN) are to be moved to a new external storage facility at Schlierbach, Lucerne in 2018. Their future accommodation was made ready for them in 2017.

On 11 February and 6 September water entered the stacks of the NL. In the first instance only the infrastructure was damaged, but in the second, approximately 10 running metres of the collection were also affected. To minimise the damage, the documents affected were immediately frozen and freeze-dried.

Digital Collection

The digital collection grew substantially, to occupy 21.0 TB of storage space, an increase of 21.3% since the end of 2016 (16.5 TB). The digitally born publications comprised 107 610 archive packages, 41.6% more than in the prior year (75 999). There are a further 42 489 archive packages containing digitised material (2016: 42 350). The majority of the digitised materials are stored not on the NL's own servers but on those of third parties. The NL has for some time been planning to store its digital data in a central repository. Subject to approval by the Federal IT Steering Unit (FITSU), the first step will be to migrate the archiving system for e-Helvetica to the existing server infrastructure of the Swiss National Sound Archives.

The e-Helvetica-Deposit[12] platform was expanded in 2017. Since 2016 self-publishers and small publishers have been able to use it to submit their electronic books themselves. Now members of Web Archive Switzerland (cantonal libraries and some special libraries) can also use it to register websites.

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