



**Marie-Christine Doffey, April 2015**

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## **ANNUAL REPORT TO CENL 2014**

### **SNL Mission statement**

**The Swiss National Library is responsible for collecting and making available to the public, now and in the future, Helvetica i.e. documents (in all formats, printed or digital) published in Switzerland or produced elsewhere by Swiss authors or concerning Switzerland / Swiss people.**

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### **1. Mandate and strategy**

Since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, the NL has had the status of a new public management entity and is run according to a performance mandate and global budget (MPM). Within this, it retains its dual mandate: collecting documents and preserving for the future; but also making them available to the public. This is reflected in the two product groups of the NL: *collections* and *user services*. In contrast with other national libraries, part of the NL's mandate is to allow users to borrow material for home use (with some restrictions).

The analogue and digital worlds are merging into a single reality. As a memory institution of the Swiss Confederation, the Swiss National Library stands ready to address this development, as reflected in the four key action areas in the revised strategy to 2019:

1. Preserving records of the present for the future.
2. Making the NL's content easy to find and simple to use.
3. Supporting researchers in their work.
4. Fostering debate about Switzerland.

### **2. Preserving records of the present for the future**

The NL continues to collect Helvetica on all storage media, guaranteeing their long-term preservation in their original form and their ongoing readability. In 2014, the paper deacidification programme started in 2000 was completed. This enabled the NL to at least quadruple the lifespan of the documents treated.

For the digital collections, the NL plans to replace the current large number of storage locations with a central repository that can incorporate digital items from the NL as soon as possible. The WTO tender is currently being prepared.

The NL's collections will soon encompass sound storage media as well as text and image documents. In November 2014, when approving the Culture Dispatch, the Federal Council decided to incorporate the Swiss National Sound Archives into the Swiss National Library from 1st January 2016. The Sound Archives will remain in Lugano once the integration is complete. Lugano will thus become the NL's third location, in addition to its headquarters in Bern and the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel.

### **3. Access to content**

Globally accessible content requires standardised, high-quality metadata. The NL catalogues in accordance with international standards. Since 2013, subject indexing has been carried out using the new combined authority file. A new subject cataloguing concept has been drawn up to enable digitally born documents to be indexed as well, without more staff being required. The next few years will see the replacement of the library system and, with it, the user interface. In future, the aim will be to make bibliographic data available primarily via an appropriate metacatalogue. In the interests of wider availability and easier access, a separate NL user interface will no longer be provided. This will require the introduction of a new library system, scheduled for 2017. The aim is to enable not only the metadata but also the actual documents and their content to be easily located on site and, where the law permits, online. In terms of content, the focus is on Swiss personalities and places, as well as events of importance to Switzerland. As

with the library catalogue, the emphasis in terms of dissemination channels is on third-party platforms, which typically have greater reach and address other groups than the NL's own platforms. A prime example of this is the collaboration with Wikimedia Switzerland, which began in 2014. Two "Wikipedians in Residence" made the first documents from the NL's collection accessible on Wikimedia Commons. They placed the first freely usable images from the Prints and Drawings Department online. By the end of the year, 784 images were available on Wikimedia Commons. Pages containing images from the NL were accessed a total of 475 154 times, a reflection of Wikipedia's vast reach. They also organised two writing workshops in which participants learned to compose and publish their own Wikipedia articles.

#### 4. Supporting researchers

One of the NL's central concerns is supporting research in the humanities and maintaining close contacts with the relevant academic communities, with an emphasis on literary studies, historical sciences and visual studies. The NL is currently networking the Bibliography on Swiss History with platforms that deliver added value for researchers, such as the Historical Dictionary of Switzerland and Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland. In literary studies, and for the appraisal of the image collections, the NL enters into research partnerships with universities and memory institutions. One current example is the Swiss National Science Foundation project on artists' books, which is being carried out by the NL's Prints and Drawings Department together with the University of Lausanne. The NL also supports the a project using the digital archive of Le Temps contains four million newspaper articles from 200 years, including every issue of its predecessor publications Journal de Genève, Gazette de Lausanne and Le Nouveau Quotidien, digitized by the NL in cooperation with Le Temps and the Bibliothèque de Genève. Frédéric Kaplan, Professor at the Digital Humanities Laboratory (DHLAB) of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, is leading a project designed to create an information system from this material. The aim is to use an automated process to identify all the units described in the archive, such as places, people and things, and classify them unambiguously based on Wikipedia and other sources.

#### 5. Fostering debate

The NL presents a selection of documents in historical and cultural contexts, on site and online, aiming to combine familiar forms of presentation with new ones. Events and major exhibitions, both at headquarters in Bern and in the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel, will remain important for a wider audience. The exhibition Under Propaganda Fire. Switzerland and the First World War, a joint presentation with the Museum of Communication during 2014, offers an initial taste of the new methodology guiding cultural outreach activities. Documents not on show in the exhibition itself were regularly published on Facebook. In future, this extension into the virtual realm will be increased, enabling those who are unwilling or unable to travel to benefit. Encouraging participation in cultural heritage, social cohesion, and creation and innovation, are the three areas of action defined by the Federal Council in the Culture Dispatch. Transposed into the terms of the NL's mandate, they have been incorporated into the NL's revised strategy.

#### 6. International partnerships

International partnerships continue to play a major role in the NL's activities: the NL's director was acting President of the CDNL until the 2014 elections, then was elected as Vice-Chair, and is also a Vice-Chair of the CENL 2011-2015. An NL staff member is serving a second term (2013-2015) on IFLA's Governing Board and Professional Committee, another is a member of the IFLA National Libraries Section Standing Committee and chairs the IFLA Committee on Standards. In 2014, the Réseau francophone numérique ([www.rfnum.org](http://www.rfnum.org)) and Koop-Litera International ([www.onb.ac.at/koop-litera/](http://www.onb.ac.at/koop-litera/)), the network of competence for literary estates, met at the NL in Bern. In addition, the VTLS Users' Group Meeting for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) took place at the NL in September. It was attended by some ninety people from twenty different nations.

#### 7. Key figures

Holdings: General collection (in millions of units)	4.44
Holdings: Federal Archives of Historical Monuments,(in millions of units)	1.2
Fonds : Swiss Literary Archives	341
Staff (full time equivalents)	126
Operating expenditure (in millions of CHF)	36.1

The annual report is available from May 2015 on the NL website in four languages ([www.nb.admin.ch](http://www.nb.admin.ch)).