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ANNUAL REPORT TO CENL 2012-2013

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.

1. Mandate and vision

Since January 1st 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).

In 2012, the NL set out its vision for 2027:

“Internationally, the Swiss National Library (NL) is the most important source of information on Switzerland, its culture and history since 1848. It provides these resources online to researchers around the world and to any other interested persons. A catalogue that meets exacting professional standards guarantees the relevance of the search results, while careful conservation maintains the quality of its documents. Thanks to its services, its innovative capacity and its participation in research projects, the NL enjoys an excellent reputation among specialists. It is a meeting place for students and researchers of the humanities and cultural sciences. Through its events and programmes, it encourages debate on questions relevant to Switzerland, thereby contributing to the development of the national identity.”

In 2012, the strategy 2012-2019 was defined, taking as its guide the vision set out above. Its premise is: “The future is digital. But paper remains”, and states:

“The volume of digital information already exceeds that of information available on paper. This applies both to production and to usage, for both private and professional purposes. The Swiss National Library (NL) intends to play a full part in this transformation. It is realigning itself based on its statutory remit. It will adjust its practices in the fields of collection, conservation, cataloguing and outreach to the changing production and usage patterns. Its technical infrastructure and internal organisation will keep pace with society's changing expectations. Thanks to its close ties with partner institutions it will make a decisive contribution to the national coordination of libraries in the digital domain.

The collections on paper – in the General Collection, the Prints and Drawings Department, the Swiss Literary Archives and the Dürrenmatt Centre Neuchâtel – will retain their importance. They are part of our nation's cultural heritage, and there is an increasing need for direct encounters with original documents. For both reasons, the NL will retain its analogue collections and develop the range of services it offers on site.

By the end of 2019, the Swiss National Library should remain the first port of call in the world for sources on Switzerland, its culture and history on paper, but will also provide a substantially increased number of key collections in digital form.”

The vision and strategy are the basis for the specific goals of the 2012–2015 performance mandate conferred on the NL by the Federal Council.

2. E-publications

The strongest growth – more than 50% – was in the collection of online publications in the long-term archive (e-Helvetica), which expanded from 12 219 to 18 336 units. In 2012, websites on all popular votes at federal level were collected for the first time. One website for the campaign in favour and one for the campaign against are included in the long-term archive for each topic.

Parliamentary services are responsible for making the selection. This procedure is a prime example of how the e-Helvetica collection is built up: as a collaborative partnership involving cantonal and university libraries, publishers and official bodies.

3. Conservation

The vast majority of the monographs scheduled for deacidification have now been treated. Work has been undertaken to develop a combined deacidification and consolidation process to conserve newspaper volumes that were normally printed on lower-quality paper. As yet, however, research has not yielded any convincing results in this area. The NL therefore decided to deacidify the newspaper volumes and at the same time use microfilming as an alternative conservation method to preserve the information contained in the newspapers. Mass deacidification will thus be continued for a few more years. Meanwhile, especially sensitive documents are being deacidified individually.

The conservation guidelines were completely redrafted. The new version replaces the guidelines dating from 1999. In addition to specific handling instructions and rules, the fundamental approach is crucial: the guidelines oblige all members of NL staff to treat documents with care. Preservation of the collection is not the task of the specialists alone, but also of every member of staff. During 2012, all employees who regularly come into contact with original documents therefore received training on how to deal with them.

4. Digitization

158 books were digitised on request. The profile of this service has been raised by the integration of the NL into the e-Books on Demand (EOD) portal (<http://search.books2ebooks.eu>) during the year. 96 monographs and 14 periodicals on the topic of dialect were digitised for the exhibition Sapperlot! Swiss Dialects.

A selection of digitised documents from the NL was also included in international portals. The European Library is showing twenty books and posters from the NL in its virtual exhibition Science and Machines. Five “treasures” in French have been integrated into the Réseau francophone numérique.

Thanks to cooperation with other libraries and publishers, six new newspaper titles have been digitised and made available online at www.swisspressarchives.ch; they are the St. Galler Zeitung (years 1831–1881), Il Grigione italiano (1852–1980) and Fögl d’Engiadina (1887–1980). The joint platform now contains newspapers from all language regions for the first time. 24heures/Feuille d’avis de Lausanne and the Schaffhauser Nachrichten have been made available on other platforms, (<http://scriptorium.bcu-lausanne.ch> and <http://archiv.shn.ch> respectively).

5. Mobile access

Helveticat, the Bibliography on Swiss History, the periodicals catalogue (until 2002) and the poster catalogue have been available since autumn 2012 in a mobile version (mobile.catalogues_en.nb.admin.ch) for iPhone, iPad and Android 4.0. The functions include keyword search, ordering documents and access to the personal user account.

6. Open data

The NL has adopted an open data strategy: the metadata of the Helveticat electronic catalogue have been made available under Creative Commons License CC0 1.0 and can therefore be used by third parties without restrictions. Data from other databases are also scheduled for release step by step. For privacy and copyright reasons, however, these must be individually assessed.

7. Sapperlot! Swiss dialects

With some 6500 visitors, the exhibition Sapperlot! Swiss dialects was the most successful exhibition at the NL in terms of numbers since 1994. It centred around historical and present day sound recordings in all four national

languages. Those interested were able to make their own contribution to research by recording their own dialect, either in the sound studio within the exhibition or outside via the Internet. The recordings were evaluated by the Phonogram Archive of the University of Zurich, with which the NL co-produced the exhibition. The accompanying events programme examined issues for which there was no space in the exhibition itself, such as the relationship of migrants to dialect. The “word of the week”, selected each time from the Schweizerisches Idiotikon, brought the exhibition theme to Facebook. This was therefore the first time that an NL exhibition was not only held on site but also made partially available via the Internet.

8. National and International partnerships

The Swiss Literary Archives is much in demand nationally and internationally as a research partner in the field of literary studies. It also took part in a number of international conferences during 2012, for example jointly organising the 35th conference of the International Rilke Society. It is a great honour for the SLA, and a sign of the regard in which its work is held, that its head has been appointed to the board of the Deutsche Schillergesellschaft, the association that runs the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach (German Literature Archive).

In the fields of fine art and architecture the Prints and Drawings Department is involved in individual projects including the CTI-funded “4D Sites – Image-based Combination of Spatial Data and Graphical Material”. Headed by the ETH Zurich, this aims to develop a software that combines landscape photography with the virtual landscape space.

The NL works with cantonal libraries across Switzerland to build up its e-Helvetica collection. Under the aegis of the NL’s Prints and Drawings Department, a large number of major poster collections in Switzerland are co-ordinating their collecting activity. Their holdings are combined into a single, virtual Swiss poster collection – the Swiss Poster Catalogue (CCSA).

NL staff members occupy leading functions in IFLA, the European Dewey users’ Group, and the tri-national standardisation committee of the German National Library, among others. In May 2012 this committee decided to introduce RDA in the German-speaking area (Germany, Austria and Swiss National Library). The timing of this implementation is still under discussion.

The NL’s Director is Vice-Chair of the CDNL, Vice-Chair of the CENL and a member of The European Library Executive Committee.

9. Key figures

Holdings: General collection (in millions of units)	4.30
Holdings: Federal Archives of Historical Monuments, (in millions of units)	1.2
Fonds : Swiss Literary Archives	309
Staff (full time equivalents)	123.8
Operating expenditure (in millions of CHF)	37.1

The annual report is available on the NL website in four languages (www.nb.admin.ch).