**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL LIBRARIES**

# ANNUAL REPORT

# SEPTEMBER 1997 - AUGUST 1998

# SWISS NATIONAL LIBRARY

## 1. Introduction

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***Swiss National Library in short (at the end of 1997) :***

Budget Sfrs 17'145'666
Collections 2'413'477 Monographs
477'490 Volumes of Periodicals
329'744 Graphical documents
45'371 Musical scores
8'777 Microfilms/CD-ROM
9'768 Audiovisual documents
45'194 Other documents
Total 3'329'821 units
New acquisitions in 1997 63'315 units
Staff (1.1.1998) 103,2 full time positions

## 2. Major achievements during the year

The reorganization, that we started in 1992, is still under way. Because of lack of resources and staff, we were not able to achieve all the goals defined at the beginning of the project in the time of four years as planned initially.

In 1997, we finished two major projects :

1. the transfer of our entire collection (3,3 million documents using 45 kilometers of shelves) into our new underground stacks.

1. the introduction of an automatic lending system allowing end users to order / reserve their print documents or photocopies directly over the network with an option to either pick them up at the library or have them sent by mail.

## 3. Legal Status
New application rules for the law by which the SNL is regulated were introduced in February 1998. These define more precisely collection coverage which is in fact extended to cover all media. In addition they define the services the SNL should provide to its public and other libraries (union catalogue of monographs and serials).

## 4. Legal Deposit
As already mentioned, the SNL has no legal deposit and work with direct agreements with the numerous publishers in the country. The idea to introduce such a law is in discussion again. Our minister asked us to prepare a report on that topic until the end of 1998. It should take into account not only every kind of material but also respect the existing laws on a cantonal level.

## 5. Building
The construction of underground stacks, begun in March 1994, was finished on time in May 1997. This new building (7 floors) just next to the library enables us to store our entire collection (3.3 million items). The transfer was finished three weeks ahead of schedule in August 1997. 1400 metric tons of material were moved, taking a total of 15,000 hours of work. Each removal person covered more than 26 km per day. We used a private removal company who provided us with more than 40 people (of whom a large proportion were women !) for this work.
At the end of 1996, Parliament accepted our second phase of construction which aims to adapt our current facilities. The work, initially planned for Autumn 1997, has been delayed and will begin in Autumn 1998. The work, costing an estimated Sfrs. 35 million, should not last three years as initially planned but has been reduced to two years, keeping thus the end of the project in Autumn of the year 2000. Our first idea was to keep the whole SNL staff in the building during the renovation. As this would have been very painful for all, we found another solution. The entire staff will move into

another building during the renovation. The problem will then be to keep a maximum of activities and services available to our public having the staff and the collection not at the same place. We intend to open a temporary reading room on the top floor of the underground stacks, but it is inevitable that there be much inconvenience to all concerned, both staff and users. We have started to plan the third phase of our construction project : building more underground stacks on the other side of the building.

## 7. Conservation, Preservation

Our **mass deacidification** project which we prepare in co-operation with the Swiss Federal Archives is progressing well. The equipment we plan to use (same supplier as the Deutsche Bibliothek) will be managed by a private company. The project has been transmitted to the Parliament in February 1997. A final decision for this Sfrs13 million project should be taken until Summer 1998. If the Parliament agrees, we plan to install the system in 1999 and start production in the beginning of 2000.

In the **audiovisual** field, the association MEMORIAV (created in December 1995 and bringing the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, the National Sound Archives, the Swiss Film Archives, the Federal Office for Communications, the Federal Archives and the SNL together) keeps on going with its work trying to save parts of audiovisual material in great danger. The number of members has increased to more than 40 institutions, proving that the interest in that question is very high in the country. We intend to create a network of skills in the country in order to improve the information exchange on that topic and to prevent the loss of more audiovisual material. The federal government has recognized MEMORIAV officially in June 1997 and supports it financially from 1998.

## 8. IT and new technology

In Winter 1996, we started to convert the Swiss Union Catalogue (6 million records on cards). The first phase, which was planned to be finished before Summer 1997, was to microfilm the entire catalogue. This step has two reasons. First of all, we need to have a security copy of this catalogue before starting our building transformation. Secondly, during these transformations, we cannot guarantee an access to the cards. The staff will then have to work temporarily on microfilms. Unfortunately we encountered several problems with the quality of the microfilms made by an external company. Half of the films were not usable and we were obliged to ask our partner to refilm them. This first phase should be finished by the end of April 1998. We plan to digitize this information as soon as possible hoping that this step will be carried out before the end of 1999.

The main IT project currently under way concerns the migration of our local computing infrastructure to Window NT (servers and workstations). This will involve replacing more than 140 PCs and training all our staff in new interfaces and new versions of office suites. The financial and personnel investment will be considerable.

## 9. Services to readers

The circulation control module was opened to the public in November 1997 and has proved to be successful with both staff and users. Before installing the module, we needed to create item records attached to the bibliographic records. A program was developed by our library system supplier to create over 1 million item records. In addition the SNL developed some in-house additions to the module. The first is a series of programs on our HP3000 which intercept the lending request form before it is printed out when an online order is sent by the user. The application reformats the form and adds a bar-code which acts as the document ID. We needed to add this as our documents do not have bar-codes for document preservation reasons. The 'on-the-fly' bar code means the circulation transaction can be entered using a light pen rather than obliging staff to type out an ID. The second application is a series of programs in perl and javascript which improves the online document ordering capability from our WWW-Gateway interface: it adds bibliographic information to the order form so that the user does not have to type this in himself. HELVETICAT can be accessed via the VTLS WWW-Gateway at <http://www.snl.ch/helveticat/english>

## 12. Cataloguing

In February 1998, the old in-house, UDC-based subject indexing system has been abandoned and documents are now indexed using the SWD list and RSWK rules from Germany. The Deutsche Bibliothek has helped SNL with training and organization of this move to a more standardized approach to subject indexing. The SNL, the Deutsche Bibliothek, the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the British Library are working together on an evaluation of the feasibility of linking three subject headings systems - SWD, RAMEAU, LCSH using the latter as a pivot - in order to provide multilingual subject access. (See also 13, Library co-operation)

## 13. Library Co-operation
### on the international level
The Swiss National Library has remained active in COBRA+ and participates in different European projects (NEDLIB, MALVINE).
Since March 1997, the Swiss National Librarian chairs one of the two Task Groups of COBRA+. One of the main accents of this group is focused on multilingual aspects. A pilot project has been started with the BNF, the BL and the DDB. The working group should produce a prototype until the end of 1998.
### on the national level
As mentioned in the last report, the implementation of a **national information network** is still very difficult. The Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich has decided to stop developing its own library system (ETHICS) and to acquire and install a commercial solution before end of 1998. Most of the university libraries in the German part of Switzerland intend to follow this choice. A call for proposals has been published in March 1997. The deadline for presenting offers was set at the end of April 1997. Unfortunately, the results of the evaluation seem to reach another choice as the one made by the SNL and the University libraries of the French part or Switzerland. As such, this could be seen as not so dramatic. The decision to use the same standards (MARC

format, cataloguing rules) are positive but we could lose a great deal of synergy using different systems. The expertise of the few experts in the country will be weaken as they will be distributed on different systems.

In parallel, we achieved a first step of sharing data. The two largest library networks in the country have agreed to co-operate with the Swiss National Library to create a CD-ROM using data from these different sources. This product, made with the help of the British Library and a commercial company, contains more than 5 million records and has been produced in July 1997. The question of updates is now under discussion : the most probable scenario though will be that only the data from the SNL and the Union list of serials will be updated as the other partners are heavily involved in system migration.

The Swiss Library Association has started a project which aims to re-evaluate the principles on which cataloguing and indexing are based. The first results from this working group, in which the SNL is taking an active part, have been presented at the end of 1996. Many ideas and suggestions have been developed to reduce cataloguing costs and to accelerate procedures. It seems quite clear that the main Libraries will agree to adopt the AACR rules in the very near future and give up the idea, still current only recently, to maintain and update specific Swiss library cataloguing rules.