



Swiss National Library

Annual Report 2024



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA
Swiss National Library NL



SS 24

von grafferned

- Alltag
 - Wie
 - Quotidienne
 - Vita
 - Quotidiana
 - Daily Life
- Schweizer Geschichten
 - Histories
 - Swiss
 - Stories
 - Swiss
 - Stories
- Sport
 - Sports
 - Sport
 - Sports
- Ausland
 - International
 - Estero
 - World



Ausland International Estero World

Dominic Nahr

Am 7. Oktober erreicht der Nahost-Konflikt mit dem Terroranschlag der radikal islamistischen Hamas eine neue Eskalationsstufe. Israel reagiert mit einer massiven militärischen Operation im Gazastreifen. Die Bilder entstehen zwischen Ende Oktober und Anfang Dezember 2023 und zeigen den Abschied der Hamas über die Grenze nach Scharm el-Sheikh, wo auch auch die Familie von Salwan Habakka ist. Die Hamas hat eine Erklärung gegeben, die besagt, dass die Hamas ein Einverständnis mit Israel hat, um die Familie von Salwan Habakka zu retten. Die israelische Armee hat die Familie von Salwan Habakka am 2. November in ein Boot gebracht, das sie nach Israel brachte. Die israelische Armee hat die Familie von Salwan Habakka am 2. November in ein Boot gebracht, das sie nach Israel brachte.

Il 7 ottobre, il conflitto in Medio Oriente ha raggiunto un nuovo livello di escalation con l'attacco terroristico di Hamas, un movimento islamista radicale. Israele ha risposto lanciando una massiccia operazione militare nella Striscia di Gaza. Le immagini, scattate tra la fine di ottobre e l'inizio di dicembre 2023, mostrano un aereo di Hamas sorvolato sulle città di confine di Salwan, con il fumo che si alza dagli edifici in fiamme. Hamas ha anche preso degli ostaggi e le famiglie sono disperate. Una madre pregna il figlio Salwan Habakka, ucraino israeliano. Il video mostra un'ambulanza il 2 novembre. Appartiene al ministero della Difesa, considerati cittadini Isr e Isr di Israele IS.

On 7th October, the Middle East conflict escalated to new heights, with the terrorist attack by the radical Islamist organisation Hamas. Israel responded with a massive military operation in the Gaza Strip. These images were taken between late October and early December 2023 and show the flight of a Hamas rocket over the border town of Salwan, the smoke rising above burning buildings. Hamas has also taken hostages, and the families are desperate. A mother mourns her unborn son: Israeli military member Salwan Habakka was killed in an ambush on 2nd November. He belonged to the Arab Israeli minority, who are considered ground and legal citizens of Israel IS.

Home Now!

קישור סרט צ להדהות עם הסרט הצהוב הנילאומי לת עם שבויים וחי



1 Dominic Nahr / Neue Zürcher Zeitung 2022



2 Michaela Mink / Neue Zürcher Zeitung 2022



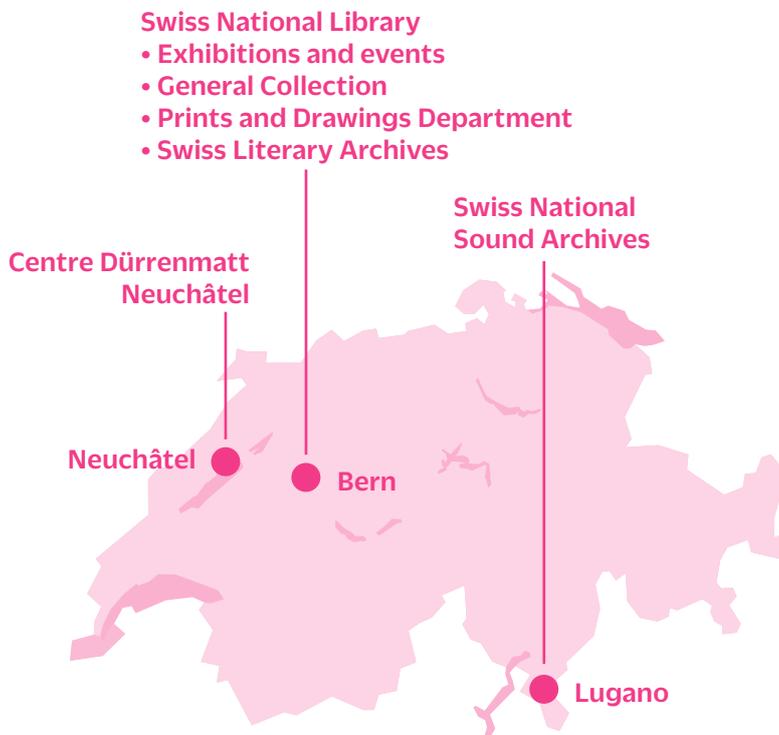


Swiss Press Photo 24

Which themes and pictures helped define 2023? The Swiss National Library presented the best Swiss press photos of the prior year in the *Swiss Press Photo 24* exhibition by the Reinhardt von Graffried foundation from 17 July to 11 October 2024. The event provided an opportunity to revisit 2023. Some of the photos were thought provoking, while others were more amusing.



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2023 2024

Media Holdings

Physical collections ¹

General Collection holdings, publications in million units	
3.185	3.111 ²

Prints and Drawings Department, holdings including special collections and Federal Archive for Monument Preservation in million units *	
1.712	1.842

Swiss Literary Archives in million units *	
1.629	1.661

Swiss National Sound Archives number of audio carriers (including audio media in historical holdings and collections)	
541,529	594,896

Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel number of works	
2,518	2,526

Digital collections

General Collection number of archive packages	
533,805	565,209

Swiss National Sound Archives number of archive packages	
105,857	112,905

Archive holdings

Swiss Literary Archives archives and literary estates	
442	455

Prints and Drawings Department archive holdings (including special collections and Federal Archive for Monument Preservation)	
292	292

User Services

Active users	
3,255	2,929

Individual loans	
52,140	50,881

Information retrievals	
15,217	14,169

Exhibitions, events, guided tours, training sessions number of visitors	
25,559	27,159

Digitalisation

General Collection number of digitised pages of Helvetica collection	
801,570	776,806

Swiss Literary Archives and Prints and Drawings Department number of digitised documents	
260	205

Swiss National Sound Archives number of digitised audio files	
49,198	50,427

Catalogues

Helveticat (General Collection catalogue) total bibliographic records	
2,163,841	2,214,821

Swiss Poster Catalogue total bibliographic records	
104,841	107,010

HelveticArchives (catalogue of Swiss Literary Archives and Prints and Drawings Department, excluding posters) total records	
812,260	852,167

Swiss National Sound Archives total records	
323,217	330,121

Resources

Employees full-time equivalents, annual average	
151.1	148.6

Operating expenses in CHF millions	
37.843	39.960 ⁴

Operating income in CHF millions	
0.709	0.723

Printed monographs acquired by the National Library

Monographs from the book market	
14,950	14,067

Non-commercial monographs	
3,755	2,546

* Solid estimate (based on CatCount project)

1 The result of the CatCount project was used as a basis on which to determine the size of the various collections.

2 The extent of the General Collection was calculated on the basis of the measured linear metres in the storeroom. The reduction is due to optimisation measures in the storeroom.

3 Solid estimate

4 The increase was due to a release of reserves that were not used in the previous year.

**The National Library is
attracting interest
from many new visitors
with its inspiring
innovative formats.**

Damian Elsig, Director

A meeting place for everyone

Damian Elsig, Director

As a memory institution of national import, the Swiss National Library is responsible for preserving Switzerland's cultural heritage and making it accessible and perceptible for society. In 2024, we took another step in that direction with significant developments in cultural outreach and in cooperation with partner institutions. We committed to reaching new target groups and making the National Library a meeting place for everyone.



In 2024, the Swiss National Library focused on many initiatives designed to make the library a lively venue for people to meet and interact.

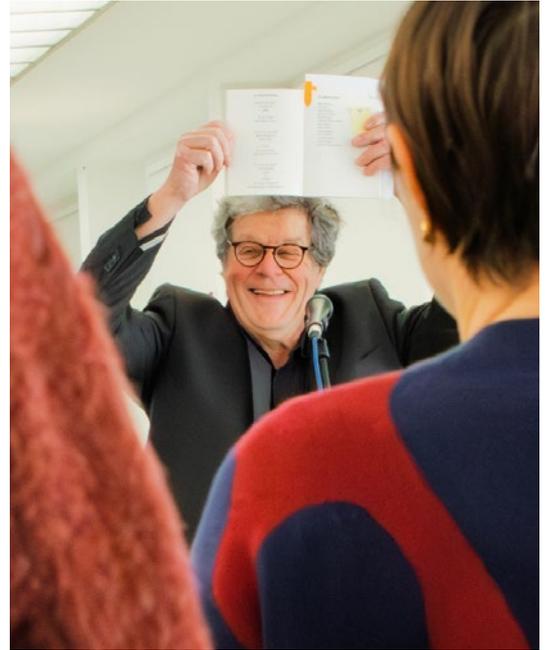
New approaches to cultural outreach

We achieved major milestones in the implementation of our new strategy in 2024. One key focus area was the development of outreach formats to address a broad public. For example, the major photo exhibition **Swiss Press Photo 24** by the Reinhardt von Graffenried foundation was held in the National Library and will now take place there on a regular basis. The exhibition presented the year's standout Swiss press photos in an exciting mix of News, Daily Life, Swiss Stories, People, Sports and World. It provided visitors with a unique look back at the previous year, thereby showing how visual documentation



Swiss Press Photo 24

A guided tour of the photo exhibition



Das Ganze aber kürzer

Beat Sterchi gives a reading in the National Library

contributes to reflecting and understanding social and cultural developments. The exhibition made a big impact and brought many interested visitors to the National Library.

We were also able to explore some innovative avenues through new event formats, for example **Das Ganze aber kürzer**. This was when well-known spoken-word artists visited the National Library where they brought texts to life in an informal way and established connections to the holdings of the Swiss Literary Archives. We also expanded the partnership with Villa Morillon in Bern during the year under review. As a result, the villa's grand interior is available to host the literary soirées organised by the Swiss Literary Archives.

The Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel also worked to bring people together. The offer *Le CDN en famille* enabled adults to tour the exhibition while the children took part in an age-appropriate guided tour and were allowed to express their own creativity in a workshop. All these offers help to make our holdings familiar and accessible across the generations.

Cooperation in the Museum Quarter Bern

One of the partnerships also on the strategic axis of the National Library is that with the Museum Quarter Bern. It unites eleven cultural and educational institutions and has now entered the realisation phase following an intensive four-

year development phase. In 2024, it evolved into a dynamic and inspiring cultural platform. Furthermore, the institutions of the Museum Quarter Bern worked closely together to create a common brand, which will be visible in the City of Bern from 2025. Events including the **summer party**, tandem guided tours and pop-up food stalls in the museum garden enriched the cultural scene and attracted visitors from near and far.

For example, the *SUPERPOWERS! cultural hackathon* was held in May 2024, bringing together about 70 participants from within and outside Switzerland to devise innovative formats. The resulting ideas offer new approaches to

disseminating cultural content in a creative and unconventional way.

The cooperation with the institutions in the Museum Quarter Bern unleashes synergies and adds to the variety of the cultural offering. This has also helped turn the Museum Garden into a meeting place, which is valued as a venue for events and recreation.

The initial results from the National Library's adopted approach are pleasing and encouraging. The closer cooperation with partners, such as Museum Quarter Bern, is also a significant step forward. I would like to thank everyone who has made this progress possible with their engagement and innovativeness.



Summer party
in the Museum Garden

Acquisitions guidelines

The Swiss National Library collects and archives Helvetica, which comprises all printed and digital publications connected to Switzerland. The establishment and expansion of these collections are among the National Library's main tasks. The library works with acquisitions guidelines to proceed efficiently with this work. The guidelines were updated in 2024 for the National Library's General Collection and for the Swiss Literary Archives. The acquisitions guidelines define the National Library's acquisition strategy and strengthen its role as Switzerland's national memory.

The National Library's acquisitions guidelines set clear criteria for the inclusion of publications, archives and estates and thus enable consistent acquisition decisions. The new guidelines specify the main collection areas, provide transparency and ensure the long-term relevance of the holdings for research and society.

The General Collection is the most extensive section with 3.2 million physical and slightly over 0.5 million digital publications and is the National Library's core holding. It grows annually by about 60,000 printed and 40,000 digital publications on average. The acquisitions guidelines for the General Collection follow several principles: the focus is on publications, which came out after 1848, collecting just one media form per work plus a selective and representative digital collection.

The Swiss Literary Archives document Switzerland's literary work. They include literary holdings from Switzerland's four languages and cultures with a focus on 20th and 21st century literature. The Swiss Literary Archives will focus in future on estates and archives of authors from the 1950s and 1960s. They are the next decades, which are yet to be properly represented in the Literary Archives. Another focus area is exile and migration literature after 1945.



General Collection



The Swiss National Library decided to acquire a share in the Swiss Library Service Platform Ltd (SLSP) to facilitate broader cooperation between SLSP and the patrimonial libraries. The national ISIL directory comprising the international standard identifier for libraries and related organisations was fully renewed and placed online.

Collection

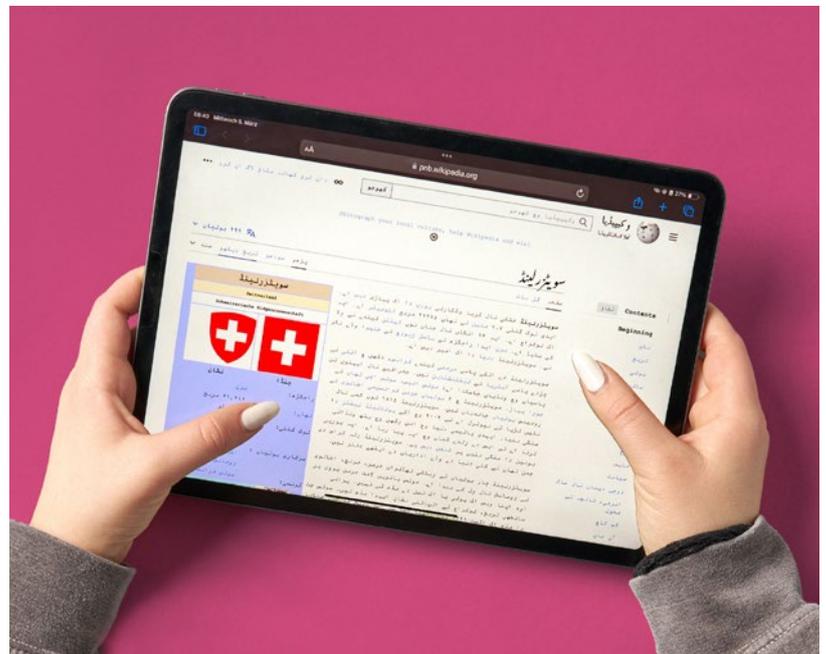
At the end of 2024, the General Collection had 3.1 million physical documents (2023: 3.2 million) and 557,078 digital archive packages (2023: 533,805). The reduction in the number of physical documents results from the extent of the collection corresponding to a linear-metre-based estimate, which the National Library was able to specify based on an optimisation of the periodical collection inventory.

The deposit interface *Deposit e-Helvetic*a for small and independent publishers was developed further and a completeness and duplication check was introduced. An examination of the possibilities for automated research into Helvetica outside Switzerland was launched. The National Library uncovered about 5,000 new articles related to Switzerland in the **Wikipedia collection**. Furthermore, the available articles on Switzerland were collected in the approximately 300 available Wikipedia language versions. The Swiss book industry and publishers' association (SBVV), which represents German-speaking Switzerland, held its General Assembly for the fourth time, and the association for Western Switzerland, *Livre Suisse*, for the second time in the National Library.

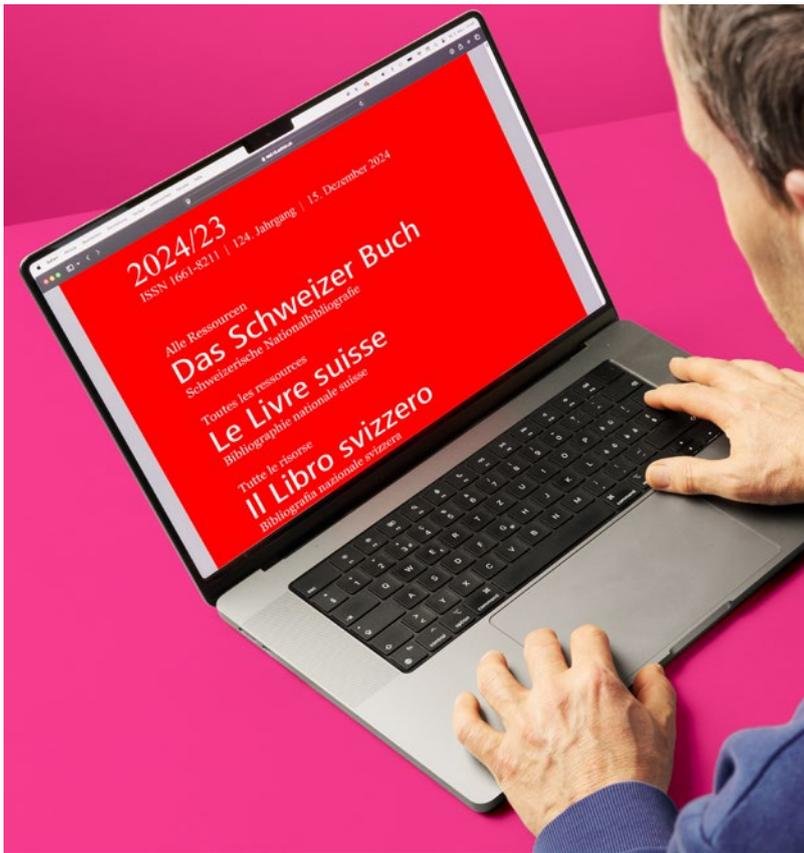
Catalogues

At the end of 2024, *Helveticat*, the library catalogue, comprised 2,214,821 bibliographic records (2023: 2,163,841). That corresponds to an increase of 2.4 % (2023: 9 %) and means that the cataloguing backlogs that occurred during the pandemic have now been eliminated.

The cataloguing frequency for new acquisitions remained stable and no backlog accumulated. Since 2024, the **National Bibliography of Switzerland** *The Swiss Book* has comprised four series with different publication frequencies: issue numbers 1–15 and 17–23 come out fortnightly and list all resources, issue number 16 covers musical scores, issue number 24 lists doctoral dissertations and 25 is a special issue. The 2019 and 2020 reporting years of the *Bibliography of Swiss History* were published and their classification scheme was updated.



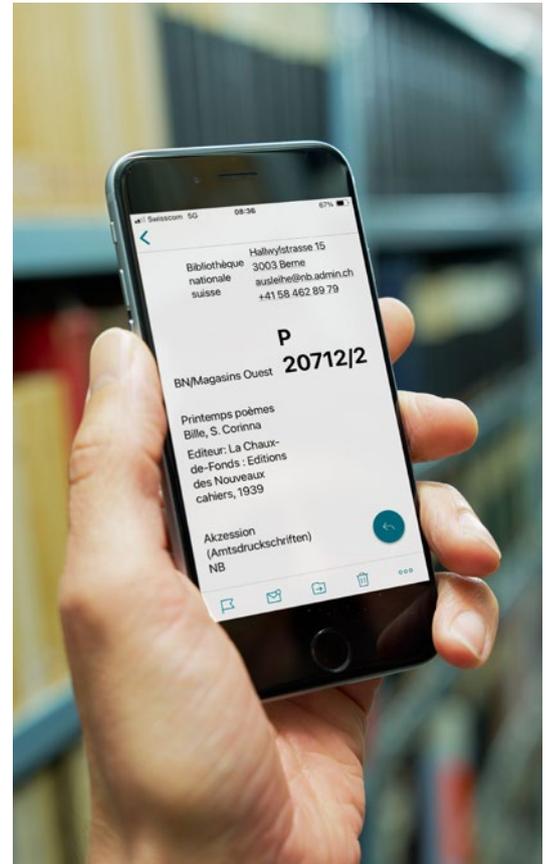
Wikipedia collection
Swiss articles in other languages



National Bibliography of Switzerland
The Swiss Book

Preservation and conservation

In 2024, the National Library provided conservation treatment to 46,314 new acquisitions (2023: 49,105). Mandates to external binderies for 2024–2027 were assigned by WTO tender, with an option for a two-year extension. In order to create space, the National Library optimised the storage of its newspaper and periodical holdings and reduced the growth reserve from ten to five years. Smartphones were procured to **manage orders digitally** and enhance efficiency. The long-term check of the holdings deacidified until 2014 confirmed the effectiveness of the measure.



Manage orders digitally
New smartphones make that possible

Circulation

In 2024, the National Library had 1,477 active users of its General Collection (2023: 1,874), which equates to a fall of 21 %. Meanwhile the upward trend in the use of digital services continued. The number of works in circulation was only slightly down at 41,261 items on loan, equivalent to a 1.5 % decline (2023: 42,082).

Information retrieval

The number of information and research requests came to 8,925, which corresponds to a reduction of 7 % (2023: 9,582). Employees underwent training with Procap Switzerland to better understand the needs of users with a disability.

Outreach

At the end of 2024, *e-newspaperarchives.ch* offered access to 190 digitised newspaper titles (2023: 180), which equates to 12,680,113 pages (2023: 11,935,471). There were 512,037 page visits recorded (2023: 490,542), an increase of 4.5 %.

The platform for digitised journals *e-periodica.ch* operated by ETH library Zurich and supplied by the National Library among others counted 125,956 visits (2023: 122,467) and 83,430 downloads (2023: 81,166).

The website *nb.admin.ch* was visited 169,110 times in 2024 (2023: 150,590), which corresponds to a 12 % increase. In total, 20,413 persons (2023: 20,308) followed the National Library on its German and French-speaking Facebook pages at the end of 2024. On X (formerly Twitter) its German, French and Italian-language feeds had 5,298 followers (2023: 5,510) and 7,842 on Instagram (2023: 7,322).

Helveticat, the catalogue of the General Collection, was accessed

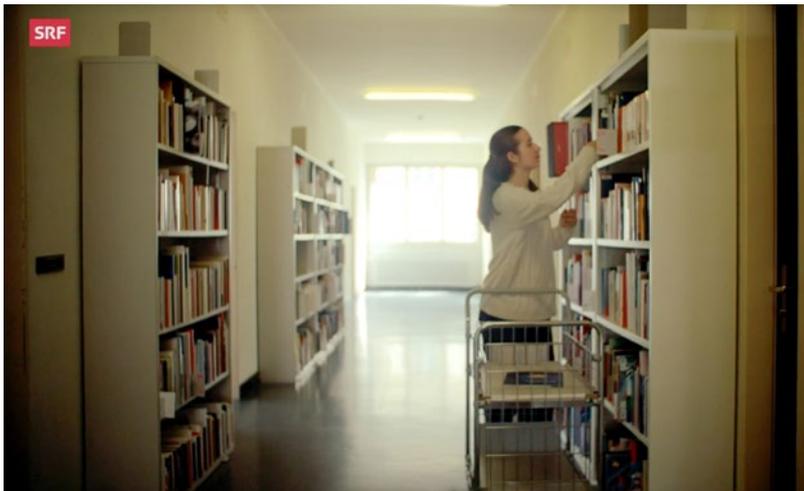
362,891 times (2023: 388,159); while the figure for the *Swiss Poster Collections Union Catalogue* was 77,087 (2023: 89,949). The *Bibliography of Swiss History* was consulted 28,712 times (2023: 41,098). *HelveticArchives*, which describes the holdings of the Swiss Literary Archives and the Prints and Drawings Department, was consulted 64,790 times (2023: 55,034). The figure for the *e-HelveticAccess* portal to the digital collections was 32,703 (2023: 27,162). The comprehensive catalogue *HelveticAll* was consulted by 58,437 persons (2023: 67,419).

In Bern, 9,695 people attended exhibitions and **events** on site (2023: 9,363), while 929 took part in guided tours (2023: 821).



Events

Vibrant museum night



Berufsbilder aus der Schweiz

Apprentice information and documentation specialist at work in the National Library

Training

The National Library supported the vocational school in running the cross-company course *Archive cataloguing and research* with training on working with the private archive. An apprentice was profiled for the series on acquiring professional experience **Berufsbilder aus der Schweiz** by Swiss Radio and Television.

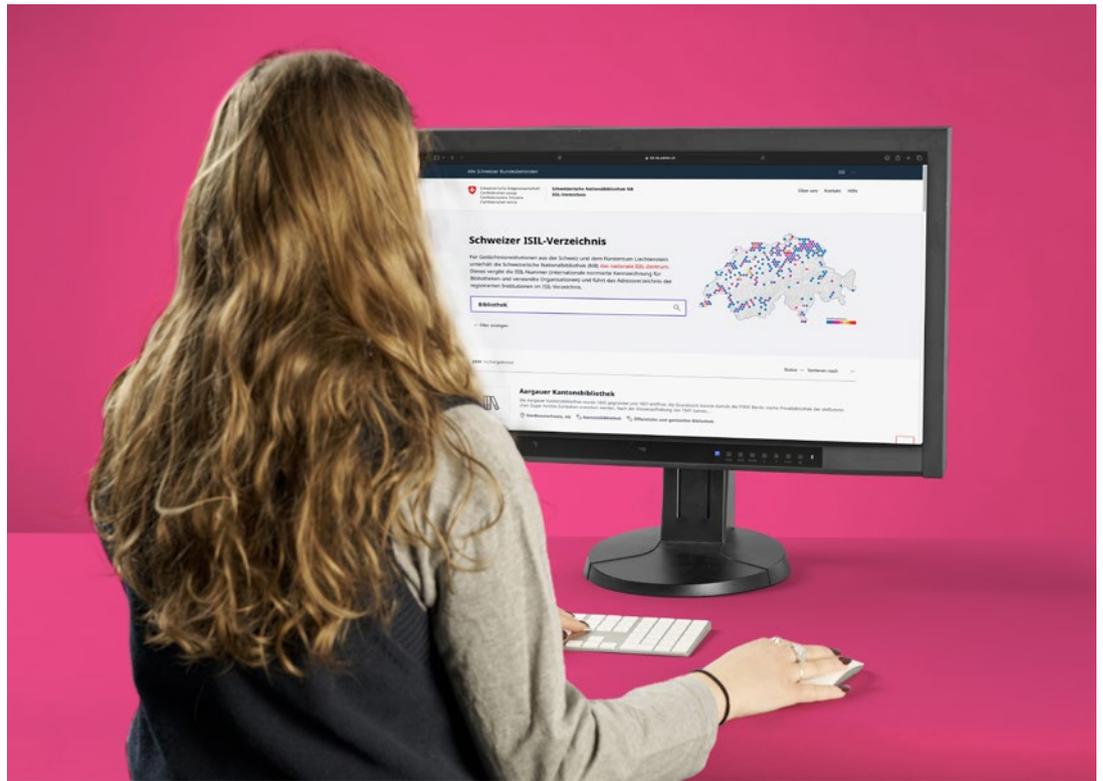
IT

All the procurements in the *digital long-term archive* project were completed and contracts awarded for the following components: *Pre-Ingest* (system for the acquisition and processing of digital collection items), *Access* (outreach system, user interface) and infrastructure for both systems. The digital archive, the actual core system of the long-term archive was tested and the input started for the digital publications.

The **ISIL directory** for the management of the international identifier for libraries and related organisations was fundamentally redesigned and presented to the public for use with a new user interface.

e-newspaperarchives.ch has newspapers digitised by the Swiss National Library and its partners. Following the WTO tender for the platform, which was won by the current provider, DL Consulting Ltd., the new platform was developed and released for operation.

The WTO tender for the replacement of *HelveticArchives*, the catalogue for the Swiss Literary Archives and the Prints and Drawings Department, was unsuccessful; there were no valid bids submitted. A new tender process is planned for 2026.



ISIL directory
With new user interface

From October, users were no longer able to access the protected library offers, due to problems with the external platform provider. A robust employee response enabled a solution to be identified.

National cooperation

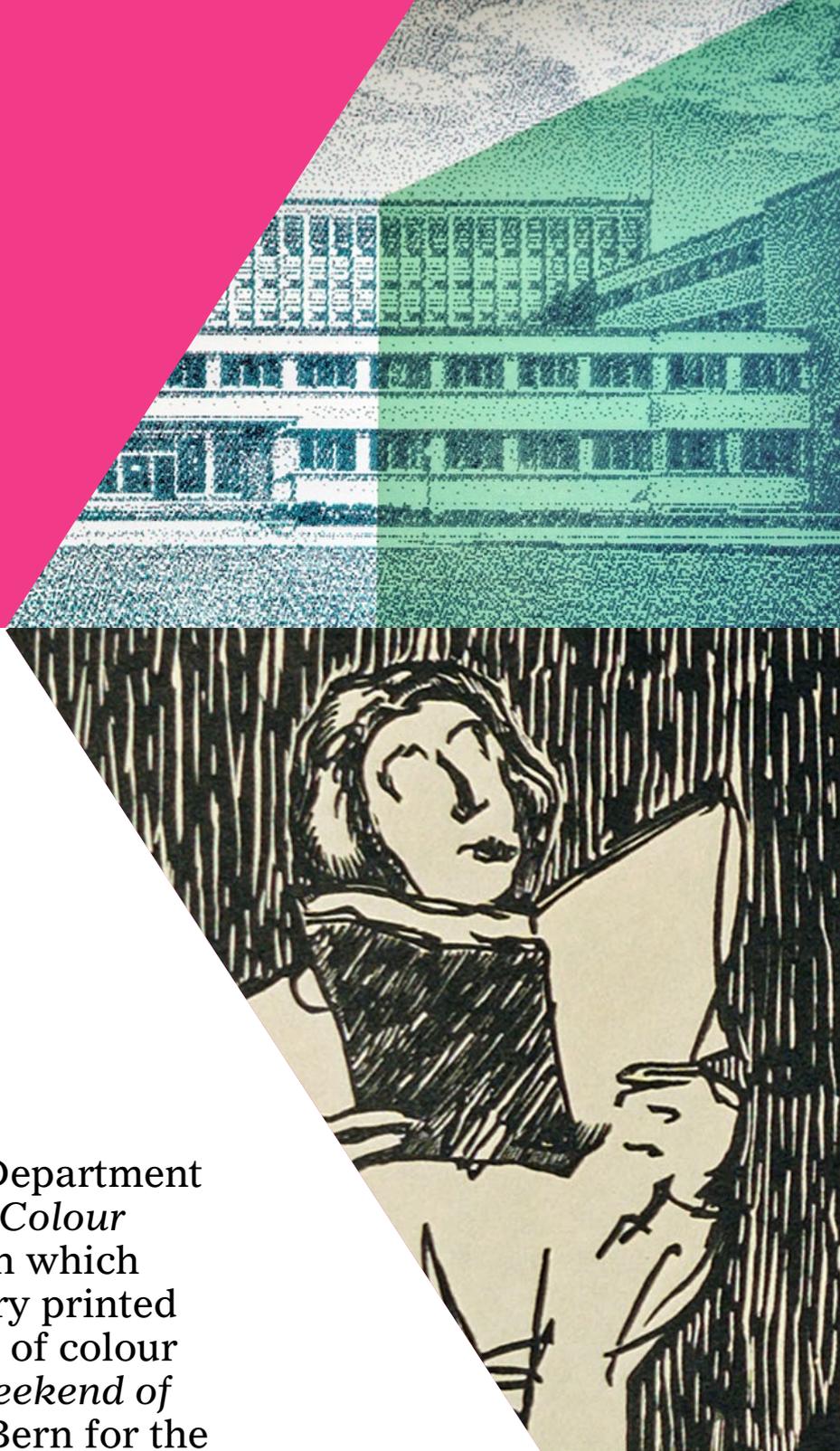
The National Library became a shareholder of the Swiss Library Service Platform (SLSP), the service provider for academic libraries in Switzerland. The aim of the shareholding is to develop SLSP services for patrimonial libraries.

Networking

2024 saw the launch of the research funded *Real Versus Digital (ReVer-Di)* international project, which examines sustainability optimisation in view of growing digital holdings in national libraries. The project is to develop recommendations for an optimal infrastructure mix, which is economically sustainable, improves access to collections and reduces CO₂ emissions. The project applies the *Life Cycle Sustainability Assessment (LCSA)* approach to analyse the infrastructures of the national libraries in Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The national research partner is Bern University of Applied Sciences and the project term is three years.

Prints and Drawings Department

The Prints and Drawings Department organised and curated the *Colour Space* exhibition in 2024, in which historical and contemporary printed works related to the theme of colour entered into dialogue. A *weekend of graphic art* was staged in Bern for the first time in partnership with Kunstmuseum Bern. A large donation from Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik), a generous donation from Visarte Neuchâtel plus individual purchases enlarged the art prints collection.





Collection

Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik) in Zurich has been working since 1948 to provide printed paper graphics at reasonable prices and expand this art form. The Prints and Drawings Department received 550 works in 2024 and thus increased its holding of contemporary prints. The donation also enables the documentation of manual and innovative skills applied in printing workshops in Switzerland.

The regional Visarte group in Neuchâtel, which has commissioned one or more artistic editions annually since 1917, also donated a copy of each one of its prints to the Prints and Drawings Department. In addition, printed works by Marco Ganz (*Red, green and blue*, 2022), Douglas Mandry (*Val Morteratsch, Engadine*, 2019), Anna Katharina Scheidegger (*Diamonds – Melting*, 2022) and Cecile Wick (*deep lake*, 2024) were bought. In parallel with these

acquisitions, the historical collection of art prints was made into a multi-year project and opened to the public.

The collection of artists' books grew by 40 works, the new acquisitions included a unique copy by Catherine Bolle (*L'Eau crucifiée*, 2006), the entire book collection of Valentin Magaro (1995–2024) as well as the 10-part conversion of a text by Hugo Ball about Hermann Hesse (*Sein Leben und sein Werk*, 1927) by Serge Chamchinov (2021–2024).

The unique entire collection of prints by **Marc Gonthier** (1895–1954) from Vaud, held in its entirety only in the National Library, with the associated printing blocks and exchange of letters with Cuno Amiet is now catalogued in the archive database. In SIKART, Lexicon on Art in Switzerland issued by the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) there was an article on Marc Gonthier, whose woodcuts

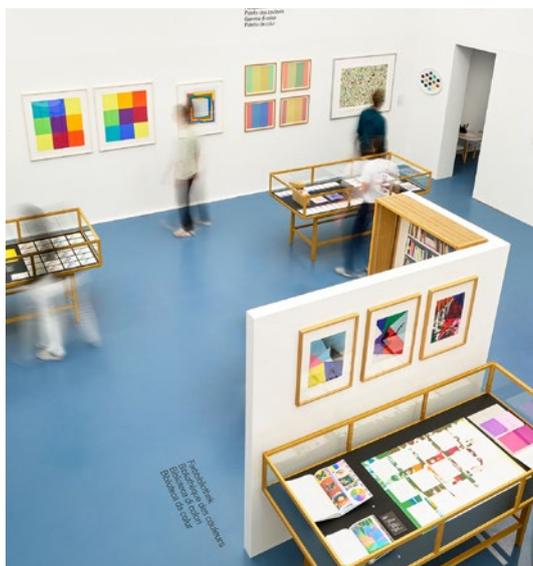
Marc Gonthier

Bass, tenor,
soprano and alto,
two printing blocks
and four wood en-
gravings, 1920/1954



Adolf Pochon

Uniforms dating from 1799 in Schwyz,
coloured drawing, ca 1900



Farbraum

View of the exhibition room

and engravings portray, among other things, circus life and landscapes in Vaud. The watercolour by Bernese **Adolf Pochon** (1869–1931), who meticulously researched and graphically documented all the uniforms from Swiss regiments available to him, are now catalogued and accessible via Wikimedia Commons.

Outreach

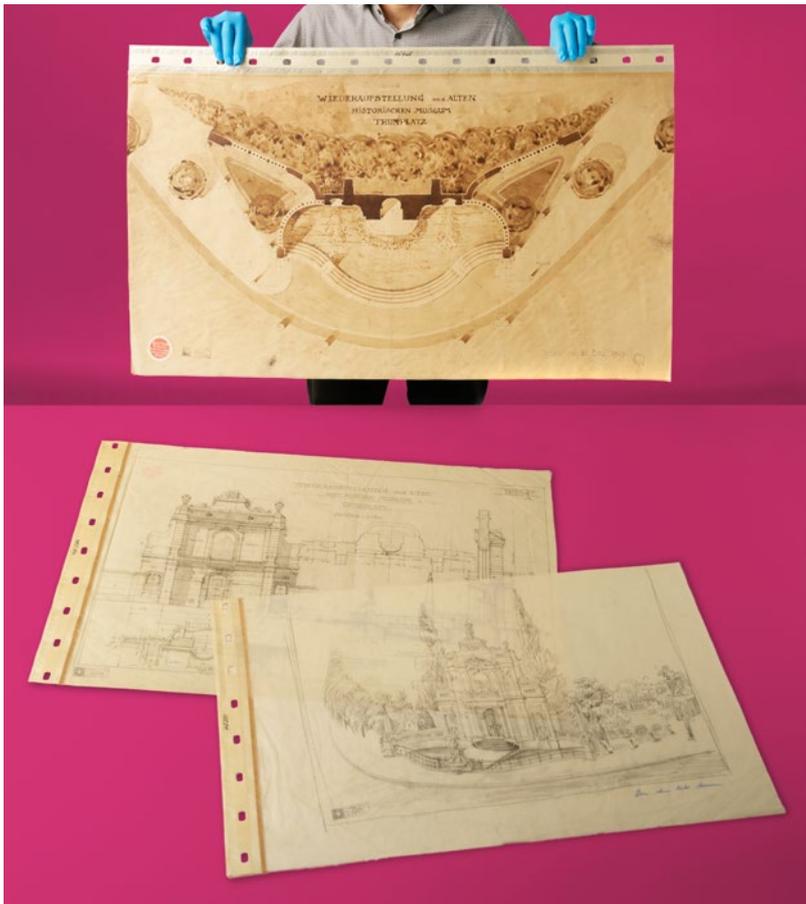
One of the highlights of 2024 was the **Colour Space** exhibition, which presented more than 50 works based on the theme of colour in historical and contemporary Swiss prints. Artworks from the Edition VFO donation and collections held by the National Library (including *Farbenklavier* by Karl Gerstner and *Prose du Transsibérien* by Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay) were dialogically juxtaposed. The monotype *blow /// /* by Izidora I LETHE was created for the exhibition, as was the edition *Entrance* by **Dominik Stauch**, which presents the National Library in colour.

A weekend of graphic art featured presentations and workshops centred around an in-depth examination of applying colour in prints. This outreach format is a joint project with the Prints and Drawings department of Kunstmuseum Bern and Tom Blaess print studio and was held in Bern for the first time.



Dominik Stauch

Entrance, lithograph, 2024 (© Edition VFO)



Henry B. von Fischer

Plans to restore the Bibliotheksgalerie building, ca 1910

Walks were held in Bern's Kirchfeldquartier as part of the *European Heritage Days*. Buildings designed by architect **Henry B. von Fischer** (1861–1949) were presented, including villas and the restored facade of the Bibliotheksgalerie building at the end of Thunstrasse. The archive of Fischer's plans is stored in the Prints and Drawings Department.

The film *Greina* features the immense print work of architect and artist Bryan Cyril Thurston (*1933) as well as his other activities. It is archived in the Prints and Drawings Department.

User services

There were 774 information and research requests, slightly more than in the previous year (2023: 745). Documents from all parts of the collection were again in demand, while reproduction orders were down. The number of users on site was similar to prior years at 111 (2023: 125, 2022: 116).

During the year under review, over 13,000 pictures from the Prints and Drawings Department in the public domain were uploaded to the Wikimedia Commons (WMC) platform, bringing the total number to 38,000. Growth in the number of hits was pleasing with a total of 20.5 million (2023: 16.8 million). This was partly due to a two-day *GLAM on tour* event held with Wikimedia CH in June 2024. The event featured digitised images from the archive of **photograph publisher Wehrli AG**, which merged with Photoglob 100 years ago.



Photograph publisher Wehrli AG

Traditional Graubünden costume from Val Calanca
Photograph from 1905



Swiss Literary Archives

The Swiss Literary Archives saw the emergence of new and innovative outreach formats in 2024: for example, a discussion series in the historic Villa Morillon salon and spoken-word performances accessible to a wide audience at midday were initiated. Collaborations with universities, museums and cultural associations were launched or enhanced. Thirteen archives and estates were acquired, including the estate of Afro-American writer and painter Vincent O. Carter, who processed his experiences in Bern from the 1950s through art.



Collection

In 2024, the Swiss Literary Archives (SLA) received a donation, which showed an external perspective of Switzerland: the estate of Afro-American writer and painter Vincent O. Carter (1924–1983) who lived in Bern from the 1950s reveals a subtle, thought-provoking and humorous take on how the locals responded to unfamiliarity. A total of 13 archives and estates were acquired, including the archives of two Swiss literary critics, Beatrice Eichmann-Leutenegger (*1945) and Pia Reinacher (*1954), of two authors and journalists, Fernando Grignola (1932–2022) and Jean-François Duval (*1947), and the archive of stage artist and writer **Jens Nielsen** (*1966) who completed many stage projects with writer and theatre artist Aglaja Veteranyi (1962–2002) who is also represented in the SLA. Through cooperation with other institutions, large holdings such as that of Eugen



Jens Nielsen

Material from the archive illustrating the cooperation with Aglaja Veteranyi



Ilma Rakusa and Rainer Gross

Dialogue in Villa Morillon

Gomringer (*1925), Albert Vigoleis Thelen (1903–1989) and Michel Thévoz (*1936) were catalogued and placed online.

Outreach

The Literary Archives launched three new event formats, which were well received: monthly soirées were held in Villa Morillon where guests engaged in dialogue about literary works in a salon atmosphere. Writer Vincenzo Latronico (*1984) spoke to a full room about the work of Anna Felder (1937–2023). The latest volume of the edition by Emmy Hennings (1885–1948), which includes the letters from the Dada years 1906–1927, was presented and writer **Ilma Rakusa** (*1946) discussed the topic of home with psychoanalyst **Rainer Gross** (*1953).

During the second half of the year, the Swiss Literary Archives also hosted spoken-word performances on Mondays at midday under the title **Das Ganze aber kürzer**, which attracted a young audience to the National Library. Jens Nielsen opened the cycle, followed by Jürg Halter (*1980) and Tabea Steiner (*1981). Author Meral Kureyshi (*1983) took a writing workshop with Matura classes from the vocational school in Bern, which involved using works held by the National Library to familiarise the students with literature.

One of the highlights of the year was a soirée with Russian-Swiss writer **Michail Schischkin** (*1961), who spoke about writing in emigration in view of the war in Ukraine.

Romansch author **Leta Semadeni** (*1944), winner of the *Swiss Grand Award for Literature*, provided insights into her bilingual work in conversation with **Rico Valär** (*1981).

The hybrid edition of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's late work *Stoffe* by the Swiss Literary Archives was revisited by edition philologists in a workshop. The final conference of the *Zukünfte der Philologien* series was dedicated to configurations in the archives of avant-gardists (Eugen Gomringer, Ilma Rakusa), in manuscripts and works (Rainer Maria Rilke, Peter Weber), in



Das Ganze aber kürzer
Tabea Steiner performs in
the National Library



Michail Schischkin
Reading and
discussion on writing
in emigration



Leta Semadeni and Rico Valär
Bilingual soirée in the National Library



Quarto

Two new editions about Adelheid Duvanel and Patricia Highsmith

editions (Emmy Hennings, Kurt Schwitters), in the archive as a knowledge space and in the “an-archive”, of an individually organised, sometimes even anarchic material management, which is incompatible with ease of use.

Richly illustrated editions of the periodical **Quarto** on Adelheid Duvanel (1936–1996) and Patricia Highsmith (1921–1995) were released, which were very well received and presented at soirées. The anthology *Bewegte Literaturgeschichte. Autorschaft, Text und Archiv im Porträtfilm*, about the portrayal of authors through film, came out at the end of the year. It casts light on the largely unresearched, intermedial connections in the collection.

User services

There were 896 users of the SLA reading room (2023: 1,528). The number of information retrievals was 3,857 (2023: 4,282). A total of 949 holdings were consulted (2023: 1,623).

Networking

The SLA participated in many cooperative ventures, which addressed a broad range of people: the Zentrum Paul Klee museum displayed photos, drawings and typescripts from the works of Blaise Cendrars (1887–1961) in the *Brasil! Brasil!* exhibition. Four Italian-speaking associations in the Bern area met at the SLA soirées in Villa Morillon. There was a conference on mobility in exile in cooperation with the association for exile research known as “Gesellschaft für Exilforschung”, which provided insights into many of the SLA’s holdings.

There were two thematic workshops as part of the research project on the Jonas Fränkel holding in cooperation with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and Walter Benjamin Kolleg from the University of Bern. The trilateral SNSF project *Lectures Jean Bollack* with the University of Fribourg and the University of Osnabrück was concluded successfully.



Swiss National Sound Archives



The Swiss National Sound Archives acquired significant collections in 2024, including those of Hansueli von Allmen and Rudolf von Tobel. The recordings preserved in the National Sound Archives continued to attract a lot of interest from the public. The database had about 528,000 hits in the reporting year.

Collection

The National Sound Archives acquired 1,075 new audio carriers in 2024 (2023: 1,020) and added 7,043 new bibliographic records to the catalogue (2023: 5,467). The acquisition of the holding *Schweizerisches Cabaret- Chanson- Mimen- und Mundartrock-Archiv*, compiled by the patron of the arts and politician **Hansueli von Allmen** from Thun since 1972, which documents the history of Swiss cabaret in the four national languages merits special mention. A further noteworthy acquisition was the collection of Bernese cellist **Rudolf von Tobel**.



Hansueli von Allmen

Materials from the archive

Outreach

The Swiss National Sound Archives loaned out its works through a range of collaborations during the reporting year. For example, works went out to Sils Museum for the *Sun leivra* exhibition and to La Rada exhibition centre in Locarno for the **Sound echoes, listening spaces** exhibition.



Sound echoes, listening spaces

Sound artist Laurent Güdel taking recordings for the exhibition



Rudolf von Tobel

Materials from the archive

Moreover, the National Sound Archives provided audio documents for various television and radio productions, including for the programme *Paganini* by Swiss Italian-language broadcaster RSI Radiotelevisione svizzera, the programmes *Kulturplatz* and *Passage* by German-language broadcaster SRF Schweizer Radio und Fernseh-



Hans Kennel
Jazz musician



Gertrude Wilker
Writer

en, for the news report *Nationalphonotheek, das klingende Gedächtnis der Schweiz* and finally for the Pro-Tschiertschen-Praden association in Chur for its production of the CD *Kapelle Brüesch 1929–1931*.

On 23 October 2024, the National Sound Archives opened its doors for an afternoon to mark the UNESCO World Day for Audiovisual Heritage. There was a series of guided tours of the Swiss National Sound Archives on offer at the event, which attracted many people. Finally, the National Sound Archives participated in the congress on audiovisual heritage in the cantons organised by Memoriav on 26 November 2024 *Das audiovisuelle Erbe in den Kantonen*.

In 2024, the Swiss National Sound Archives published various contributions to some of its most important holdings on its website. There were, for example, contributions about Basel pianist and composer George Gruntz (1932–2013),

classical conductor Josef Krips (1902–1974) and Armin Jordan (1932–2006) as well as Schwyz jazz musician **Hans Kennel** (1939–2021).

The Swiss National Sound Archives also presented the sound collections of various Swiss cultural personalities on its website, such as Solothurn writer **Gertrud Wilker** (1924–1984), Ticino writer Piero Bianconi (1899–1984) and the *König des Ländler*, Arth musician Kasi Geisser (1899–1943).

Finally, the Swiss National Sound Archives published brief videoclips in the *La macchina sonora del mese* section on its YouTube channel. They show historical audiovisual devices from the Swiss National Sound Archives' collection.

User services

Public interest in the National Sound Archives' collection remains very high: in the region of 528,000 database requests were recorded in 2024 (2023: 850,000). There are audiovisual workstations for accessing the National Sound Archives' database in 57 institutions. A total of 239,739 audiovisual documents were consulted during the reporting year (2023: 154,207). The database was expanded by 7,280 hours

of digitised audio material (2023: 5,605) and 487 hours of video material (2023: 492).

Networking

The Swiss National Sound Archives strengthened its national and international networks during the reporting year by participating in various conferences and congresses. In June, it delivered the online talk **VisualAudio: saving the sound of broken records**, organised by Zentralbibliothek Zürich, AILIS (Association of International Librarians and Information Specialists) and the Scientific Information Service of CERN. In September, it was represented at the annual conference of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) in Valencia. In October, National Sound Archives' staff were also at the annual conference of the Audio Engineering Society (AES) in New York and the *International Seminar on Processing and Preservation of Historical Audiovisual Archive* in Nanning and Shanghai. And in November, the National Sound Archives presented the workshop *Archivage numérique avec docuteam cosmos à la Bibliothèque nationale suisse* at the docuteam Community Day in Lausanne. Audiovisual experts from all over the world attended the different conferences.



VisualAudio: saving the sound of broken records

Technology to record damaged records



Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel

Exhibitions establishing connections between Friedrich Dürrenmatt and other artists of his time and the modern era, the mounting of works by Ruth Dürrenmatt, items on loan to the Musée d'Art moderne de Paris, multidisciplinary events and numerous partnerships: the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel (CDN) had a successful 2024, both in terms of the programme and cultural outreach as well as of media resonance and visitor numbers.



Dürrenmatt, Hesse, Rilke, and Wine
A look at the temporary exhibition



Friedrich Dürrenmatt – Atomic visions
A look at the temporary exhibition

Outreach

The year featured three exhibitions. **Dürrenmatt, Hesse, Rilke, and Wine** demonstrated the role played by wine and its cultivation for the three artists and writers. **Friedrich Dürrenmatt – Animal worlds** examined the relationships between people and animals in Dürrenmatt's art and literary work; works by Ugo Rondinone and Christine Sefolsha were included in the exhibition. Then there was the **Friedrich Dürrenmatt – Atomic visions** exhibition, which examined Dürrenmatt's perception of nuclear weapons by focusing on the topicality of his thought and showing works by contemporary artists such as Vanessa Billy, Christine Boillat, Miriam Cahn, Alain Huck and Gilles Rotzetter. The last two exhibitions included a CDN cahier, a podcast episode and virtual exhibition tour.

The CDN celebrated the mounting of Ruth Dürrenmatt's *Bienenwelt* paintings. The paintings on wooden panels were originally



Friedrich Dürrenmatt – Animal worlds
A look at the temporary exhibition

made for the bee house on the path between the CDN and the Botanical Garden and are now on permanent display in the museum. The CDN also issued a cahier to mark the occasion.

Works by Friedrich Dürrenmatt were also loaned out to the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris for the *Atomic age* exhibition.

The CDN added new tour formats in 2024: for example, tours with a view behind the scenes at the museum and one wearing a blindfold were on offer. **Le CDN en famille**, which offers a tour and workshop for children once a month, was continued, enabling new groups to visit the CDN. A museum guide in plain language (French/FALC) was also issued.

Cultural outreach involving school pupils aged 5 to 18 was expanded, mainly via partnerships with theatres. This enabled the organisation of discussions in the theatres throughout three of the country's linguistic regions.



Friedrich Dürrenmatt – Animal worlds
Vernissage of the temporary exhibition

As a multidisciplinary cultural centre, the CDN's programme has repeatedly provided a platform to various forms of artistic presentation: music, with a concert by the *Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain (NEC)* in connection with the *Animal worlds* exhibition, a text by Dürrenmatt put to music by the musician Trummer for the *Atomic visions* exhibition, a jazz concert by the collective *ARBRE* on the national holiday and a concert by *Jardins Musicaux*; literature, with a text written for the CDN by Anne-Sophie Subilia, a reading of texts in cooperation with literary movement *Lundis des mots* and a discussion about the book *Valérie Favre – Malerei*; cinema with the screening of the film *Half-Life in Fukushima*, followed by a *Salon Dürrenmatt*; theatre through video extracts or photographs presented in the exhibitions.



Le CDN en famille
With workshops and tours for children

In 2024, the CDN upgraded its exhibition rooms and converted some of the lighting to energy-saving LED bulbs.

Following its nomination for the *EMYA – European Museum of the Year Award* at the end of the prior year, the CDN was awarded the *Prix Lignum* in 2024. The CDN received the prize for converting the Dürrenmatt swimming pool into a stage for performing arts and for fitting out a room for cultural outreach in what used to be his workshop.



Neuchâtel – Berlin

Presentation day for the exchange project

The CDN team was also able to begin preparing for the museum's 25-year anniversary celebrations, which will be held in 2025.

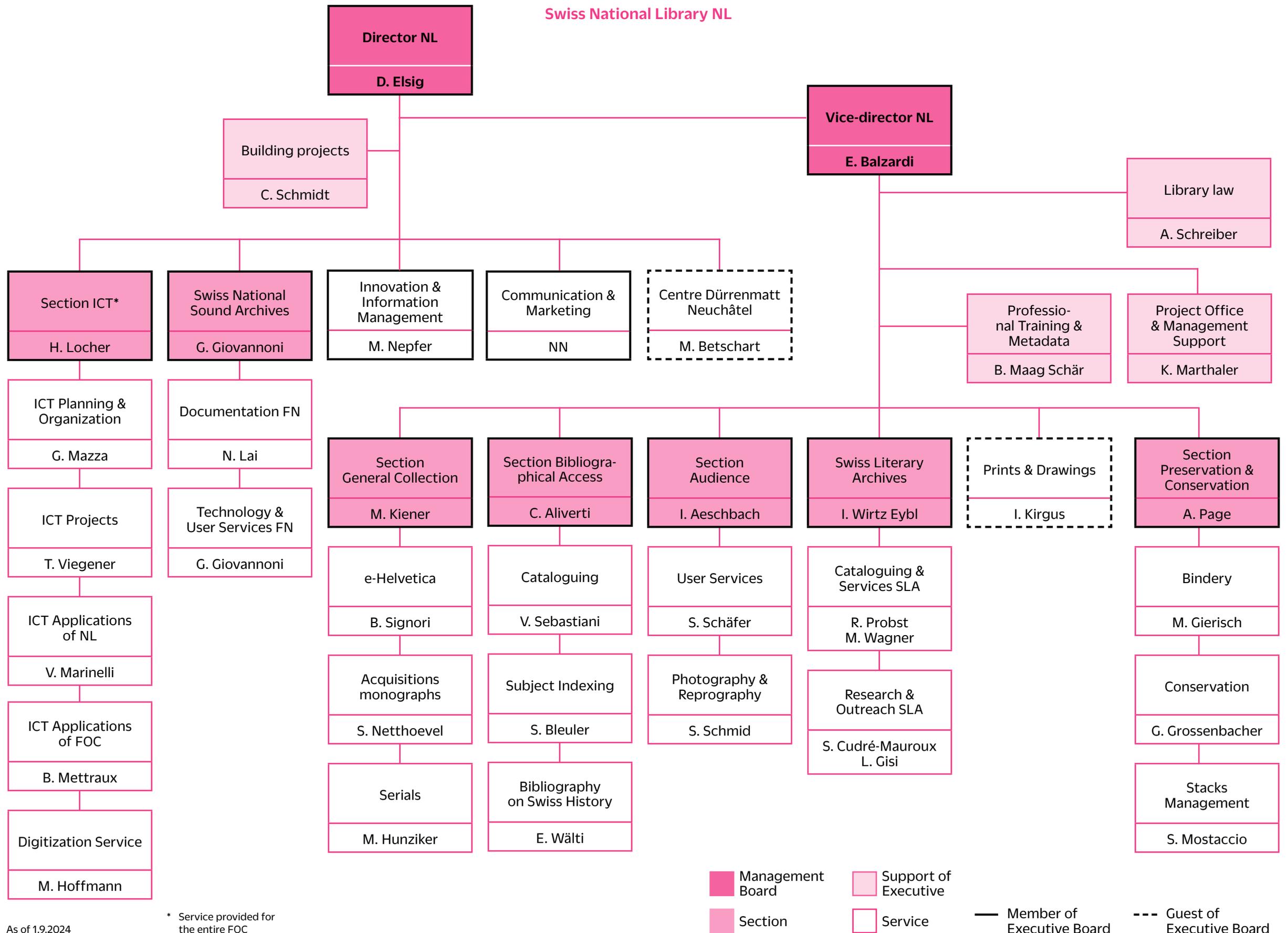
User services

The CDN welcomed 16,296 visitors in 2024 (2023: 14,517), which is a very good utilisation rate.

Over the year, the CDN organised 67 public events (2023: 71), 200 guided group tours (2023: 178) and 55 school workshops (2023: 44).

Networking

The *Dürrenmatt, Hesse, Rilke, and Wine* exhibition initiated by the CDN was realised in cooperation with Museo Hermann Hesse in Montagnola, the Rilke Foundation in Sierre and the Wine Museum in Sierre and Salgesch. In 2024, the CDN continued its exchange project with Berlin University of the Arts (**Neuchâtel – Berlin**), the foundation WhiteSpaceBlackBox and the Académie de Meuron. The museum also continued its cooperation with partners from the region, the Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain (NEC), the Jardins Musicaux, the Association Danse Neuchâtel (ADN) and Lundis des Mots. In addition, the CDN launched a partnership with Step2blind offering blindfold tours and participated for the first time in the *Let's Doc!* film festival, which takes place throughout Western Switzerland.



* Service provided for the entire FOC

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26 Middle: Schweizerische
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27 Left: Gary Soskin
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31 Bottom: Alessandra Bobbia

Captions cover

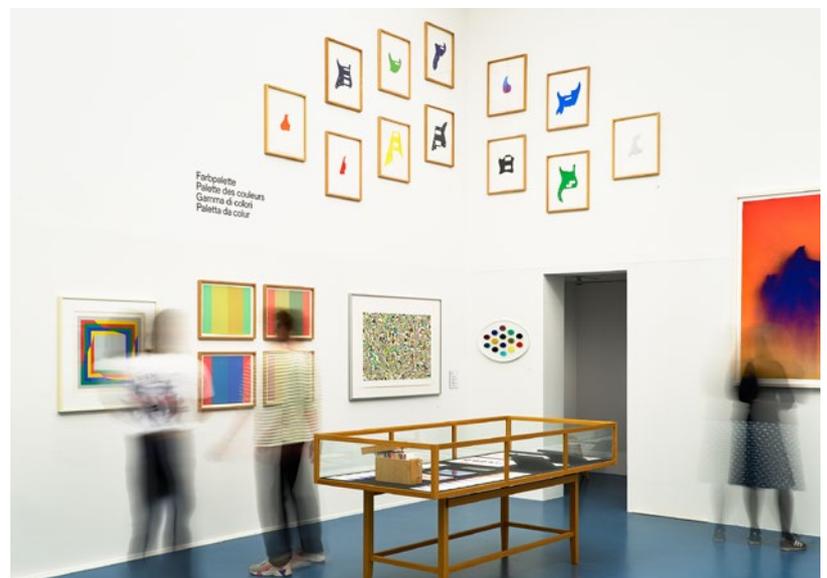
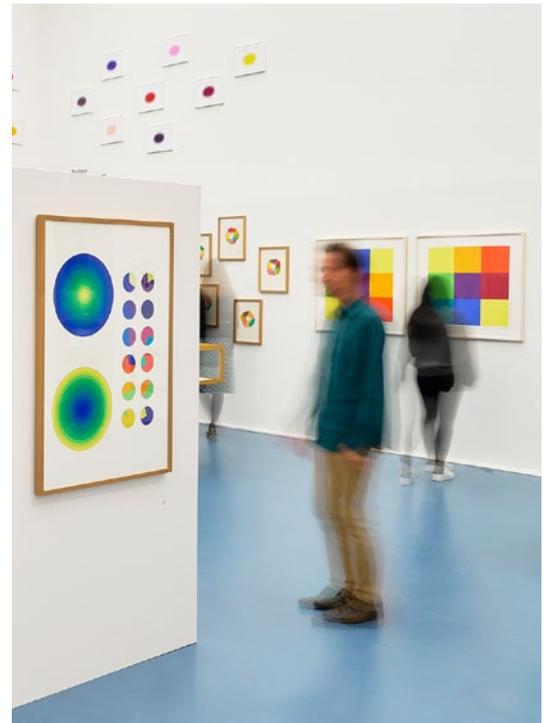
Top left: Museum
 night in the Swiss
 National Library

Top right: The
 sound studios of
 the Swiss National
 Sound Archives

Bottom: Izidora I
 LETHE at the pro-
 duction of the work
blow // /



Colour Space



Colour Space

In the *Colour Space* exhibition, the National Library displayed printed works from Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik) and the Prints and Drawings Department from 9 November 2024 to 24 January 2025. The works displayed reflected different positions of artists and printers in their approach to colour as a defining and formative element of their work. *Colour Space* also offered a sensory experience from viewing contrasting types of printed work.