

Switzerland



Responding institution:

National Library of Switzerland

This is the third response of Switzerland to the World Report. The library numbers include 128 public libraries (per suburbs or areas of 10 000 inhabitants), 14 university libraries, 222 libraries of university networks, 47 libraries of specialised high school networks and 28 specialised libraries, funded by the government. The respondent cautions that exact figures are not available. These figures do not correspond with the 2005 report with its 150 public and 140 research libraries. (Changes in the collection of the statistics make comparison difficult. The official bureau for library statistics in Switzerland is <http://www.bfs.admin.ch>.)

More than 80% of both the university libraries and the government-funded research libraries provide Internet access to users, whereas 61-80% of public libraries and 41-60% of school libraries do so. The extent of access in public libraries has remained the same and it is not clear whether access in research libraries has improved. The decentralised, federal structure of Switzerland makes it difficult to obtain the right information.

A great deal of local content is available on the Internet and much of the information on the Internet is accessible in the local languages. The availability of free Internet access in libraries does not depend on the type of library, but on local regulations. Many libraries offer access free of charge, but not all. (The 2005

World Report indicated that Internet access was free only in research libraries.) In the past two years, no specific funding has been set aside by the government to improve free Internet access.

The position on selected filtering of information on library terminals has not changed and selected use of filtering software, mainly to protect children, has been indicated.

No anti-terror legislation has been passed and no incidents of violation of intellectual freedom have been reported during the last two years.

As the areas of special need are not the domain of Swiss libraries, literacy programmes for women and awareness campaigns about HIV/Aids are the responsibility of other organisations.

A code of ethics for librarians exists. Regarding the adoption of the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the Glasgow Declaration, the 2005 World Report is contradicted. The 2007 response supports that of the 2003 World Report, stating that neither document has been adopted. Plans to adopt them are always in discussion due to the differences in the structures of libraries (national, canton and local). There is no central office for libraries that decides what the libraries have to adopt or implement. The library association is working on a fusion between libraries and documentation centres. The discussion is planned for 2008.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been adopted in the past

two years and the respondent feels that neither the adoption of such legislation nor the keeping of user records would have an effect on users' data privacy, if done in a limited and controlled way. In Switzerland such a task would be performed by authorised officials and would be subjected to consultation with the concerned parties to prevent invasion of users' privacy. The respondent has also indicated that keeping user records is confined to the private sphere and if privacy is violated, the result would be significant.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

No incidents of violation of intellectual freedom have been reported during the last two years. Legislation on public information and access to documents came into effect in Geneva in March 2002. The legislation aims to make information on public community activities more transparent, notably by the recognition of an individual's right of access to documentation (http://www.geneve.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_A2_08.html). The strategy of the Federal Council with regard to an information society can be seen at <http://www.bakom.ch/themen/infosociety/00695/index.html?lang=fr>.

IFEX, however, reports on various violations of freedom of speech in Switzerland during the past two years (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content>). The 2006 Worldwide Press Freedom Index indicates that Switzerland has slipped seven places on the index mainly due to the prosecution of two media outlets under article 293 of the Criminal Code that punishes "publication of secret official debates" (http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/cm2006_eu-3.pdf).

HIV/Aids awareness

Until December 2003, an information centre on HIV/Aids education (Sida Info Doc Suisse) existed to provide information on Aids. The task of this centre is

now carried out by other organisations, such as Swiss Aid against Aids (<http://www.aids.ch/f/index.php>). Similarly, the task to educate illiterates about HIV/Aids is executed by specialised organisations in this field.

Women and freedom of access to information

In Switzerland, literacy programmes for women are not the mandate of libraries but of other institutions, such as L'Association AIDA (for literacy, integration and German courses for foreigners). There are also specialised resource centres for women issues and gender equality, such as the Federal Office of Equality (<http://www.equality-office.ch/f/bibliothek.htm>) and Library Filigrane (http://www.f-information.org/filigrane/filidyn/art.php3?id_article=1).

IFLA Internet Manifesto

Contrary to the 2005 response, the IFLA Internet Manifesto has not yet been adopted. The respondent has indicated that this will be discussed with the new library and documentation association in 2008.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has also not yet been adopted (contrary to the 2005 response) and will be discussed with the new library and documentation association in 2008.

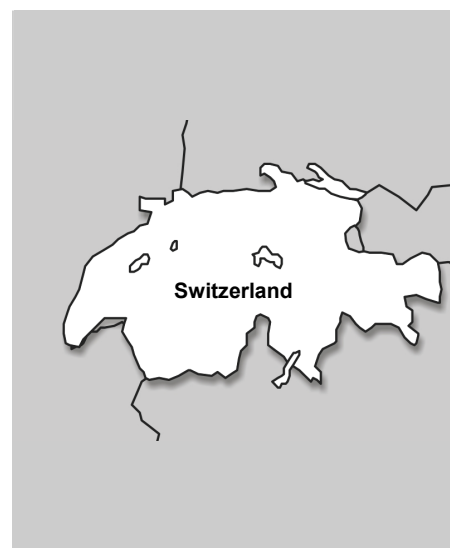
Ethics

A code of ethics was established by the library association (BBS), which defines the obligations and rights of all librarians. The code was established for individual professionals and not for institutions. It is available at http://www.bbs.ch/xm1_1/Internet/fr/application/d53/f68.cfm and at <http://www.agbd.bbs.ch/code.htm>.

Main indicators

Country name:	Switzerland
Population:	7 554 661 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	German (official) 63.7%, French (official) 20.4%, Italian (official) 6.5%, Serbo-Croatian 1.5%, Albanian 1.3%, Portuguese 1.2%, Spanish 1.1%, English 1%, Romansch 0.5%, other 2.8% (2000 census). (German, French, Italian and Romansch are all national languages, but only the first three are official.)
Literacy:	99%
Literacy reported by respondent:	99%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.



Libraries and Internet access

Switzerland contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2003. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	128 (city libraries: suburbs/areas of 10 000 inhabitants) (2005: 150)
Estimated number of school libraries:	47 libraries of specialised high school networks
Estimated number of university libraries:	14; 222 libraries of university networks
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	28 specialised libraries
Source of these numbers:	2006 statistics on libraries (data of 2005)

Internet access

Population online**:	5 097 822 users as of Feb. 2007 (67.8%) (2005: 64.7%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80% (2005: 61-80%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very much
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2005: Yes, to a certain degree to protect children and safeguard public morality)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – for the protection of children (2005: Yes, to a certain degree)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Many libraries offer free access, but not all (2005: Yes, in research libraries only)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	No (2005: No)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.Internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.