

Swiss National Museum.

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MEDIA TEXT (short)

The number of visitors to the various establishments of the Swiss National Museum (SNM) grew significantly once again in 2009 – by 20%. With the conversion of the Museum Group into a new legal form, an important project was successfully completed in 2009.

The Swiss National Museum (formerly: Schweizerische Landesmuseen) recorded a marked rise in visitor numbers in 2009: Compared to the already very successful previous year, the Museum Group attracted 20 per cent more visitors to its institutions. This represents an increase from 235,513 in 2008 to 282,798 in 2009.

With the entry into force of the Federal Museums and Collections Act, the museum institutions were given a new name, a new structure and a new legal form as of 1 January 2010: The Swiss National Museum is now a public law institution in the '3rd circle' of the Federal administration, a concept that formally defines its areas of autonomy and responsibilities. It includes three museums focused on cultural history – the National Museum Zurich, the Château de Prangins and Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schwyz – as well as the associated Collections Centre in Affoltern am Albis.

There is only space here to mention three exhibitions that will form part of the extensive programme for 2010:

«Zauber Berge. Switzerland as energy centre and sanatorium» at the National Museum Zurich will explore the creation of Switzerland's image as a 'health destination', from Monte Verità in Ascona, via the 'Vital Force' sanatorium opened by Max Bircher-Benner on Zurichberg and the 'Waldsanatorium' in Davos, to the high altitude clinics in Leysin.

«Promenade of the Enlightenment» at the French-Swiss base of the Swiss National Museum, the Château de Prangins, will present a cultural exploration in the park, with more than twenty information plates about the history of the place.

«Traditional Swiss costumes on the catwalk» at the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz will pick out old, traditional crafts as the central theme and explore the extent to which young designers are inspired by the national dress and tradition.

2010 will be a decisive year for the future of the National Museum of Zurich. In June, a public referendum will take place in which the city's population will give their view about

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the planned museum extension. According to the town council, the new building would allow an 'attractive and contemporary museum operation' and make a major contribution to establishing Zurich as a desirable museum city

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