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Confédération suisse  
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Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

**Swiss Federal Archives SFA**

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# — ***Swiss Archives User Guide***

Archive database of the Swiss Federal Archives

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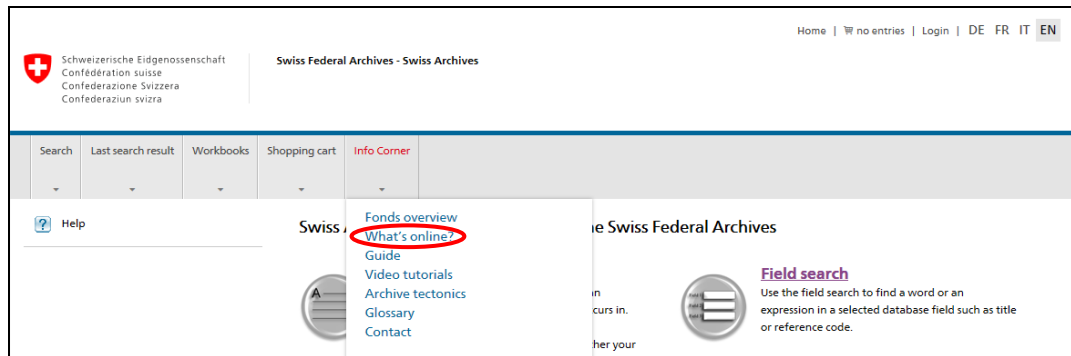
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# 1 Introduction

The online archive database of the Swiss Federal Archives (SFA) at [www.swiss-archives.ch](http://www.swiss-archives.ch) can be used to search at any time and from any location for archive materials that have been electronically indexed and made publicly available down to dossier level. Dossiers can be ordered for consultation in the reading rooms and requests to consult documents can be submitted.

Information on closure periods under the Swiss Federal Act on Archiving (ArchA, SR 152.1), requests to consult records and reading room opening times can be found on the SFA website ([www.bar.admin.ch](http://www.bar.admin.ch)).

An overview of the searchable sub-fonds can be found in the Info Corner under “What’s online?”



As a general rule, dossier titles that are indexed by people’s names and contain sensitive personal data or personality profiles and are still within the closure period cannot be searched online. These dossiers are shown in the detail view at series level with a summary note.

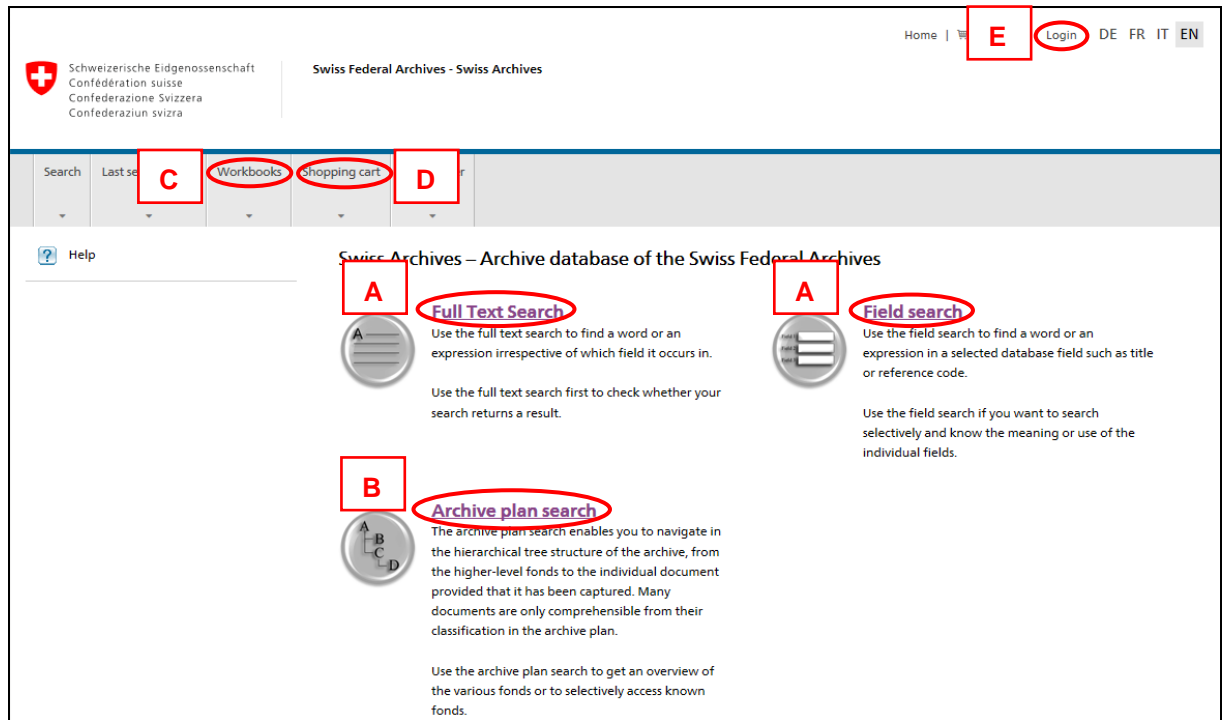
**Local Please note:**

*Local Swiss Archives*, which may be accessed only in the SFA’s reading rooms, contains all dossiers.

## 1.1 Functions

The start page offers five main functions:

- **A: Search** full-text or field search
- **B: Navigate** archive plan search
- **C: Save** workbooks (save selected search results)
- **D: Order** shopping cart
- **E: Login** log in to your user account



## 1.2 Sign up

You need a personal user account to take advantage of the full online search functionality. You can sign up for a new account under the “Login” link.

Signing up is free and does not result in any obligation. Your password is stored in encrypted form and cannot be seen even by SFA staff.

You can start using the workbooks function immediately after signing up, but you can only use the shopping cart function once your account has been activated. You will be notified at the e-mail address you provided as soon as your account is activated.

### **! Please note:**

Activation is only possible during SFA office hours. It normally takes 30 minutes.

## 2 Search

You have two options to search for specific terms: full-text search and field search.

### **! Please note:**

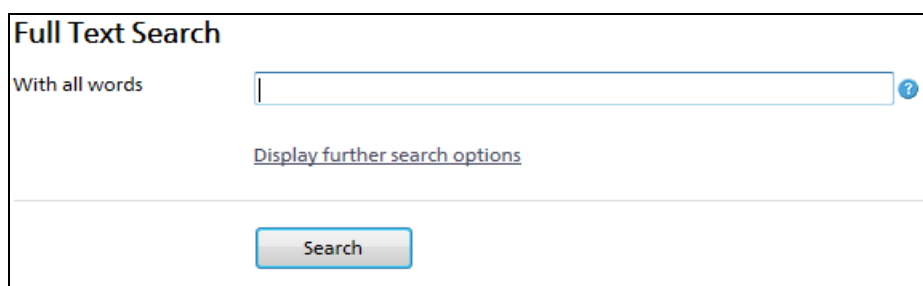
In both full-text and field searches, only the metadata of fonds, sub-fonds, series and dossiers are searched, not the dossier contents. Metadata are title/description of contents, reference code, additional component, file reference, and previous file reference.

### **CH-SFA:**

The online search does not recognise the CH-SFA, CH-BAR or CH-AFS prefixes. This means that no results will be found even if the reference code is entered correctly. The prefix must therefore be omitted when entering the reference code and in citations.

### 2.1 Full-text search

A **full-text search** can be used to search for one or more terms **in all fields** of the metadata.



Full Text Search

With all words

[Display further search options](#)

The search can be refined by clicking on “Display further search options”:

“With all words”:	All search terms appear, irrespective of their position in the field.
“With exact phrase”:	All search terms appear in the order entered.
“With one of the words”:	At least one of the search terms appears.
“Without the words”:	None of the search terms appears.
“Words which sound similar”:	A search for <i>Meier</i> , for example, also finds <i>Meyer</i> .
“Take word variants into account”:	Variants of the search terms with different prefixes and suffixes are also taken into account. A search for <i>Kunst</i> also finds <i>Kunsthau</i> s and <i>Kunststoff</i> .

The time period to be searched and the level of description (e.g. series, dossier etc.) can also be set here.

### Full Text Search

With all words

with exact phrase

with one of the words

without the words

Words which sound similar (soundex)

Take word variants into account (root)

Highlight matches

**Restrict search to:**

Search Range

**Time Period** to  to

Type of archival material

Images available online

**Level(s) of Description**

**Display options:**

Results per page

## 2.2 Field search

A **field search** can be used to search for terms **in selected fields** (the fields you can select are title, reference code, additional component, file reference and previous file reference).

Terms can be searched for in up to three fields at once, and their position can be specified in each field. The fields can also be combined using the logical operators AND, OR and NOT.

The same search restrictions are available as for a full-text search.

### Field search

starts with  AND

starts with  AND

starts with

**Restrict search to:**

Search Range

Time Period from  to

Type of archival material

Images available online

Level(s) of Description

**Display options:**

Sorting  on

Results per page

### 3 Navigate

An **archive plan search** allows you to navigate your way through the classification system using a hierarchical tree structure. This allows you to drill down from a fonds to an individual dossier.

Branches are opened by clicking on the plus symbol and closed by clicking on the minus symbol.

Selected items can be displayed in the detail view either by clicking on “Display selected units of description in the Detail View” or by double-clicking on them.

Click on “Reduce view to selected unit of description” to reduce the view to the selected branch. Any subsequent full-text or field search is then restricted to the reduced view until the restriction is removed.

➔ **Tip:**  
The recommended starting point for navigating through the sub-fonds of the Federal State since 1848 (Main Department “E”) is the **fonds overview**.  
  
This can be accessed via the Info Corner. All fonds of the Federal State since 1848 are ordered by topic in the fonds overview.  
  
Click on a sub-fonds to open the detail view. From here, you can switch to the archive plan (tree structure) and navigate through the classification system of the selected fonds or sub-fonds.

## 4 Search results

### 4.1 List of results





The results of your search are listed under List of Results. The list comprises the following columns:

1. Checkbox
2. Shopping cart symbol (item can be ordered)
3. Title/Contents:  
1<sup>st</sup> line: title (as a hyperlink).  
2<sup>nd</sup> line: description of contents (where available)
4. Time period
5. Level (e.g. dossier, series)
6. Reference Code
7. Crosshair symbol (locate in archive plan)  
Click on the symbol to switch to the archive plan view. The item is marked in the archive plan. This allows you, for example, to search for further dossiers in the same series.  
If you hold the cursor over the symbol, the archive plan view opens in a pop-up window. This allows you to see the item in context without leaving the list of results.
8. Score (relevance to the search term as a percentage)

**List of Results**









Only show units of description which can be ordered

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 0 recs 8. found

<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Title/Contents</u>	<u>Time period</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Reference Code</u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>Score</u> ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	 <b>Kulturabkommen</b>	1959 - 1959	Dossier	E2200.248-03#1978/68#68*		37
<input type="checkbox"/>	 <u>UNESCO-Kulturabkommen</u> : Echanges culturels Contents: Inhaltsangabe: USA Lake Success: UNESCO-Abkommen über zollfreien Austausch von Kultur und Information Sequenzbeschreibung: USA Lake Success: Rede Trygve Lie (* UNO-Generalsekretär) / Delegierte Abkommen unterzeichnend / Jean Frédéric Wagnière (*CH * Delegierter) / Lie Abkommen in der Hand haltend	12/15/1950	Dokument	J2.143#1996/386#453#5*		37

Click on the underlined column headings to sort the results in ascending or descending order.

Check the box to select an item. You can then process the selected items using the commands in the left-hand menu.

-  Switch to list view
-  Switch to image list
-  Switch to image overview
-  Search within the results
-  Display as PDF
-  Add marked items to shopping cart
-  Add selected items to workbook
-  Help



## 4.2 Detail view

Click on a title in the list of results to open the detail view. This shows all available metadata for the selected item.

- Switch to list view
- Switch to image list
- Switch to image overview
- Display as PDF
- Place in shopping cart
- Place in workbook
- Localize in archive plan
- Help

---

**Navigation**

- Go to the previous entry in the results list
- Go to the next entry in the results list
- For entry at previous level
- Go to the lower-level entry
- Go to the previous entry in the archive plan
- Go to the next entry in the archive plan

---

**E2804#1971/2#460\* Kultur-Abkommen, 1961-1962 (Dossier)**

**Archive plan context**

- CH-BAR#Unterlagen\* Gesamtbestand des schweizerischen Bundesarchivs (1798-) (1424-2007)
- F\* Archiv des Schweizerischen Bundesstaates ab 1848 (1848-2009)
- E10201\* Eidgenössisches politisches Departement (1896-1979) (1815-1990)
- E2804#17 Verschiedene Sachdossiers (Kategorien alphabetisch statt hierarchisch geordnet)
- E2804#170.10 Kultur [und Archiv]
- E2804#1971/2#459\* Film (1962)
- E2804#1971/2#460\* Kultur-Abkommen (1961-1962)**
- E2804#1971/2#461\* Kulturfragen (1962-1965)

**Information on identification**

Ref. code:	E2804#1971/2#460*
Title:	Kultur-Abkommen
Creation date(s):	1961 - 1962
Accessibility according to ArchA:	Freely accessible

**Information on related materials**

Aktenzeichen:	170.10
Früheres Aktenzeichen:	17.102

**Archival history**

Contains also:	Botschaft betreffend den Beitritt der Schweiz zum europäischen Kulturabkommen von 1954 (4.12.1961)
Unit of description - Accession (Link):	1971/00002 Bundesverwaltung (Bern) (1942-1968)

**Containers**

Number:	1
---------	---

**URL for this unit of description**

URL:	<a href="https://www.swiss-archives.ch/detail.aspx?ID=5409408">https://www.swiss-archives.ch/detail.aspx?ID=5409408</a>
------	---

### ! Please note:

Not all items of the same level as the selected dossier are shown under “Archive plan context”.

The entire archive plan can be viewed by clicking on “Localize in archive plan” in the left-hand menu.

## 5 Save

Workbooks allow you to save search results for later use. You can give each workbook a title and a description. You can create as many workbooks as you want. They will be stored until you delete them manually.

### ! Please note:

You need to log in to your personal user account to use workbooks.

Check the box to select one or more items.

Click on “Add selected items to workbook” to create a new workbook from these items or add them to an existing workbook.

Switch to list view

Switch to image list

Switch to image overview

Search within the results

Display as PDF

Add marked items to shopping cart

**Add selected items to workbook**

Help

**List of Results**

Only show units of description which can be ordered

30 records found

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title/Contents	Time period	Level	Reference Code	AP	Score
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Kulturabkommen</b>	1959 - 1959	Dossier	E2200.248-03#1978/68#68*		37
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Entwurf betr. <b>Kulturabkommen</b>	1960	Dossier	E3001B#1980/53#635*		37
<input type="checkbox"/>	UNESCO- <b>Kulturabkommen</b> : Echanges culturels	12/15/1950	Dokument	J2.143#1996/386#453#5*		37

Contents:

The titles of workbooks can be changed, and selected workbooks can be deleted or merged.

### **Local** Please note:

For legal reasons, the contents of workbooks are not synchronised between the publicly accessible database at [swiss-archives.ch](http://swiss-archives.ch) and the *Local Swiss Archives* database, which is only accessible locally on SFA premises.

## 6 Order

Dossiers must be ordered online. There are three different options:

- Order function (shopping cart)
- Additional field in the shopping cart
- Web form

### **!** Please note:

You need to log in to your personal user account to use the shopping cart.

### 6.1 Order function (shopping cart)

You can place an order from the list of results, the detail view or a workbook by clicking on “Add marked items to shopping cart”.

If the command is shown in grey, the selected items cannot be ordered online.

Items that can be ordered are marked with the shopping cart symbol in the list of results. Check the box to select one or more items. Now click on “Add marked items to shopping cart” to add them to your shopping cart. They remain saved in the shopping cart until you log out or end your session.

Search

Last search result

Workbooks

**Shopping cart**

Info Corner

Switch to list view

Switch to image list

Switch to image overview

Search within the results

Display as PDF

**Add marked items to shopping cart**

Add selected items to workbook

Help

**List of Results**

Only show units of description which can be ordered

30 records found

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title/Contents	Time period	Level	Reference Code	AP	Score
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Kulturabkommen</b>	1959 - 1959	Dossier	E2200.248-03#1978/68#68*		37
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Entwurf betr. <b>Kulturabkommen</b>	1960	Dossier	E3001B#1980/53#635*		37
<input type="checkbox"/>	UNESCO- <b>Kulturabkommen</b> : Echanges culturels	12/15/1950	Dokument	J2.143#1996/386#453#5*		37

Contents:

All of the items you have added are shown in the shopping cart. Check the box to select them. You can click on “Remove selected items from shopping cart” to delete all the selected items from your shopping cart.

Click on “Order for loan” to display all the items in the shopping cart on the order page (Details about loan).

**Shopping cart**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title/Contents	Time period	Level	Reference Code	AP
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kulturabkommen, Polen - Frankreich	1947-1947	Dossier	E2200.151-01#1970/178#1059*	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kulturabkommen	1959-1959	Dossier	E2200.248-03#1978/68#68*	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kulturabkommen der BRD mit Drittstaaten	1966-1974	Dossier	E2200.55A#1994/324#777*	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Entwurf betr. Kulturabkommen	1960	Dossier	E3001B#1980/53#635*	

Order items 1 - 4 of 4

Before sending your order, you must specify the date of loan and the type of delivery:

- Reading room loan
- Administration loan (only for administrative units wishing to view their own documents)
- Digital reproduction (fee payable)
- Request to consult records (see section 7)

You must indicate the nature of your work and accept the conditions of use. Now click on “Send order” to send your order.

**! Please note:**  
 The “Accessibility according to ArchA” field in the detail view (see section 4.2) shows whether a dossier is **freely accessible** or still subject to a **closure period**. In the latter case, a request to consult records must be submitted (see section 7). **Check required** indicates that accessibility must be clarified by the Federal Archives.

**Details about loan**

Please provide details of the loan. Note that certain units of description may not be available on the desired date, even though your order has been confirmed. Normally, a maximum of 12 containers can be supplied on each order date. Reproductions are normally supplied within 14 days, irrespective of the chosen issue date.

Date of loan \*

Delivery:

Nature of work \*

Comments (e.g. table number in reading room, date of authorisation to view records)

**Details**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Reference Code	Available	Expected return	Reserve	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kulturabkommen	E2200.248-03#1978/68#68*	Yes			

Number: 1 (open loan quota 99 of 99 items)

The box below can be used to add dossier reference code (e.g. E2001E#1980/83#3849\*). Any additional information on these items should be entered in the “Notes/comments” box.

Reference Code

Accept the Conditions of use

## 6.2 Additional field in the shopping cart

If an item cannot be ordered using the normal order function, you can use the additional “Reference Code” field in the shopping cart. You need to know the precise reference code of the dossier for this.

Remove selected items from shopping cart

Select all

Add undescribed archive items

Send order

### Details about loan

Please provide details of the loan. Note that certain units of description may not be available on the desired date, even though your order has been confirmed. Normally, a maximum of 12 containers can be supplied on each order date. Reproductions are normally supplied within 14 days, irrespective of the chosen issue date.

Date of loan \*

April 2015						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Delivery: Lesesaalausleihe

Nature of work \*: 01 Private Nachforschung

Comments (e.g. table number in reading room, date of authorisation to view records)

#### Details

Title	Reference Code	Available	Expected return	Reserve	Comments
No entries found.					

The box below can be used to add dossier reference code (e.g. E2001E#1980/83#3849\*). Any additional information on these items should be entered in the "Notes/comments" box.

Reference Code: E2001E#1980/83#3849\* Add

Accept the Conditions of use

In the additional field “Reference Code” you enter the precise reference code of the dossier (e.g. E2001E#1980/83#3849\*). Now click on “Add” to add the item to the list of requests under “Details”.

You can then order the item as described above.

## 6.3 Order form

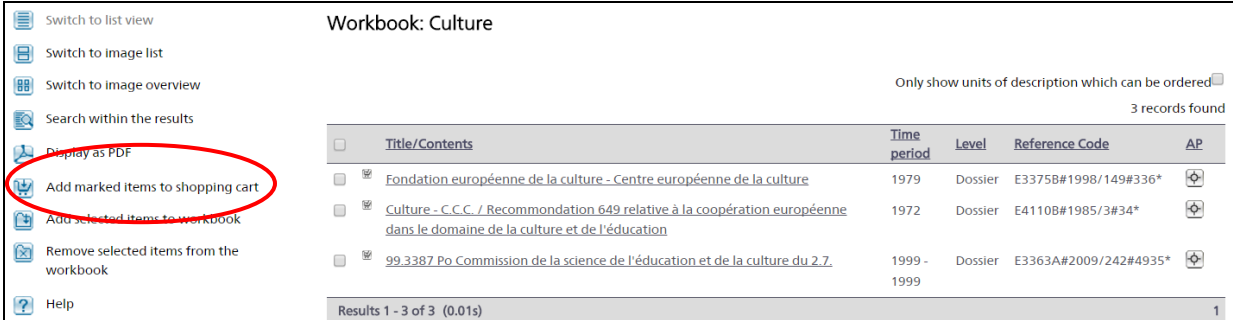
If a dossier is not described and is therefore not accessible in the local database, please use the order form.

You can find the order form on the SFA website [www.bar.admin.ch](http://www.bar.admin.ch) (Research > Ordering and consulting > Ordering documents > Using the [order form](#) (point 3 under “Submitting orders”).

## 7 Requests to consult records

Requests to consult records are normally submitted via Swiss Archives or Local Swiss Archives.

Search for the relevant documents and save them in a workbook. Once you have completed your search, you can use the order function to submit a request to consult records for the dossiers you have selected.



Workbook: Culture

Only show units of description which can be ordered

3 records found

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title/Contents	Time period	Level	Reference Code	AP
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Fondation européenne de la culture - Centre européenne de la culture</a>	1979	Dossier	E3375B#1998/149#336*	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Culture - C.C.C. / Recommandation 649 relative à la coopération européenne dans le domaine de la culture et de l'éducation</a>	1972	Dossier	E4110B#1985/3#34*	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">99.3387 Po Commission de la science de l'éducation et de la culture du 2.7.</a>	1999 - 1999	Dossier	E3363A#2009/242#4935*	

Results 1 - 3 of 3 (0.01s)

1

Switch to list view

Switch to image list

Switch to image overview

Search within the results

Display as PDF

**Add marked items to shopping cart**

Add selected items to workbook

Remove selected items from the workbook

Help

Select “Request to consult records” in the shopping cart under “Delivery”, complete the form and save it.

### Request to consult records

**Subject and period of research and reasons for viewing records (max. 2,000 characters)**

**Does the research relate to an individual (e.g. for a biography or article on someone's life and work)?**

Yes

No

**Do the documents relate to yourself?**

Yes (please send a copy of your identity card or passport to [einsichtsgesuch@bar.admin.ch](mailto:einsichtsgesuch@bar.admin.ch))

No

To consult records that are still subject to a closure period, you require authorisation, which you must apply for by submitting a request to the Federal Archives.

We will forward your request to the office responsible for processing. You will normally receive a decision within four to six weeks.

Please note that any authorisation issued is valid only for the person making the request.

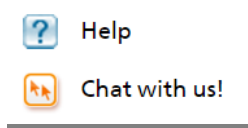
You must complete all the fields.

Then enter the nature of your work, accept the conditions of use and send by clicking on “Send order”.

Further information about requests to consult records can be found on the [Federal Archives website](#).

## 8 Live help and contact details

At certain times the Federal Archives offer live support via chat and co-browsing. To access this function, click on “Chat with us!” or on “Live assistance at the bottom right-hand edge of the page. These fields are only shown when live chat is available.



You do not need to download any software to use chat and co-browsing. Co-browsing merely allows the advisor to share the current browser view with you. The advisor will not have access to your computer or the data stored on it at any time.

Please do not reveal any personal information via chat/co-browsing, in particular sensitive personal data (see [Art. 3 of the Data Protection Act](#)).

General questions and feedback can either be sent using the contact form in the Info Corner or e-mailed directly to the Swiss Federal Archives at [bundesarchiv@bar.admin.ch](mailto:bundesarchiv@bar.admin.ch).

