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Swiss Federal Archives SFA

Swiss Federal Archives Strategy 2026–2030

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Imprint

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Introduction

The decisions taken by the federal government directly affect the administration, the public in general and Swiss residents in particular. With this in mind, and adopting a customer-oriented approach, the Swiss Federal Archives (SFA) therefore ensure that the actions of government remain visible, accessible and traceable both now and in future. In this way, they create transparency, strengthen trust in the rule of law, and provide the basis for enlightened and factually based public debate.

Over recent years, the SFA have made substantial progress with their strategy for 2021–2025, improving digital access, modernising central archive systems and stepping up collaboration within the Federal Administration. Successful implementation of the "digital first" principle, through the "digitisation on demand" strategy, will be systematically continued. These successes lay the groundwork for the new 2026–2030 strategy. The SFA are building on their achievements and raising their services to the next level, ensuring that in an age of data rooms and artificial intelligence, the actions of government remain traceable, verifiable and accessible over the long term in a way that is reliable, secure and open, thus specifically countering disinformation.

The SFA's strategy for the years 2026–2030 is consistently focused on the future. In **Action Area 1 "Data centricity for a future-proof archive"**, the SFA identify data as the central resource of their work. They develop an integrated system of data management, strengthen interoperability and guarantee the long-term usability of relevant federal government information. The aim is to structure information sustainably from the moment it is created, and prepare it digitally so that it remains comprehensible and accessible in future.

Further development can only be achieved through close collaboration. In **Action Area 2 "Value creation through cooperation"**, the SFA expand their role in the design of data governance, management and harmonisation within the Federal Administration. National and international partnerships, shared infrastructure, open-source solutions and standardised processes give rise to synergies that increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Reflecting the growth in data volumes and increased usage, **Action Area 3 "Optimisation and automation"** prioritises innovative technologies. The SFA will automate archiving processes, make targeted use of new technologies to reduce workloads, optimise digital access and work with partners to build a new, fully automated repository for analogue archive records. This means developing future-proof solutions for managing increasing volumes of information, growing complexity and the rapid pace of change.

That change also impacts the organisation itself. In **Action Area 4 "Further development of the organisation"**, the SFA reinforce their participatory, open and resilient corporate culture. They promote cross-organisational collaboration, good leadership, health management and the targeted development of staff members' skills. At the same time, the SFA position themselves as an attractive, forward-looking employer and further expand their socially impactful inclusion model.

Mission and vision 2030

Mission

The SFA aim to document the actions of government and provide the most open access possible to information relating to the federal government.

The SFA will archive all information that is relevant to government policy.

The SFA will remain the guarantor of the security and protection of information.

Vision: transparency creates trust – collaboration creates impact

In an era of algorithms and artificial intelligence, the SFA will continue to ensure that, from the time when data are created in politics and the administration, the decisions of the federal government are visible, traceable, accessible and verifiable. National and international cooperation combined with open, shared standards will add value for the administration and the public, creating the basis for an enlightened society, the rule of law and a strong democracy.

Action areas and objectives

The 2026–2030 strategy is divided into four action areas. The statements introducing each action area explain its main emphasis. They are followed by the specific objectives.

1. Data centricity for a future-proof archive

In the digital age, data are the central resource for the SFA's work. To fulfil their role as a future-oriented archive, the SFA will direct their strategies, structures and processes consistently towards data. This action area addresses the need for holistic data management. Its aim is to secure the long-term integrity, usability and interoperability of relevant federal government data and to simplify the system landscape. To this end, the SFA will play an active role in shaping the legal and strategic framework. Given the structural challenge of continually rising data volumes and limited resources, the SFA will thus lay the foundations for responsible, future-proof archiving.

Objectives:

The Swiss Federal Archives will

1.1 ... strengthen their holistic data management, so that federal government data remain available, traceable, accessible and usable over the long term. At the same time, they will safeguard the integrity, interpretability and interoperability of the data.

1.2 ... systematically develop their enterprise architecture in order to reduce the complexity of the system landscape, exploit synergies and increase operational efficiency.

1.3 ... ensure that in future, digital archive records are catalogued and accessible not only as a dossier, but also at individual document level.

1.4 ... bring their influence to bear on relevant developments in law and strategy from the federal government, in order to guarantee archiving of information relating to the Federal Administration and prevent gaps in preservation from opening up in future.

1.5 ... establish the basis for the implementation of new legal frameworks, especially the Information Security Act and Data Protection Act, in the archiving context.

1.6 ... systematically, strategically and with foresight, review the implementation of their tasks against a backdrop of exponentially growing data volumes and sharply rising usage. They will highlight the structural challenges and risks of substantial obstacles to the performance of their tasks.

2. Value creation through cooperation

The Swiss Federal Archives will strengthen their role as a central partner institution within the federal government's data governance. Through targeted national and international cooperations, they will add value for the administration and society, relying on synergies and resource optimisation. The basis for this cooperative approach is a funding and service model that ensures the long-term viability of shared solutions. Close collaboration with the Federal Chancellery and data-intensive federal offices will enable needs-oriented and user-friendly archiving.

Objectives:

The Swiss Federal Archives will

2.1 ... extend their influence in the design of data governance, management and harmonisation within the federal government. In so doing, they will add value to data already active in the Federal Administration and integrate their legal mandate as leanly and sustainably as possible.

2.2 ... strengthen national and international collaboration with selected partner institutions, with the aim of developing synergies, optimising resources and developing and/or operating shared infrastructures and standard solutions.

2.3 ... continue their close collaboration with the Federal Chancellery, with the aim of simplifying and optimising information management and archiving as well as other areas within the Federal Administration.

2.4 … add value for the Federal Administration by collaboratively operating the linked data infrastructure for the public administration and establishing a new funding and service model for this purpose.

2.5 ... work with the federal offices that have extensive data holdings to develop solutions for archiving data that are in constant use by the administration and the public.

3. Optimisation and automation

Given the sharply growing volumes of data and increasing usage, the SFA will develop innovative, customer-oriented and efficient solutions for their core tasks, focusing in particular on the automation of core processes, the targeted use of artificial intelligence, and modernisation of the system landscape. In addition to building a new, fully automated repository for analogue archive records and further developing digital access, the SFA will safeguard the long-term performance of their tasks against a backdrop of growing complexity, in a way that is sustainable, effective and future-oriented.

Objectives:

The Swiss Federal Archives will

3.1 ... integrate the principles of archiving by design at the data-producing units when developing new systems, and ensure their systematic implementation. This will mean that all government-related information is sustainably and transparently structured from the moment of its creation, which is necessary for its active exploitation, archiving and later use.

3.2 ... work consistently to simplify and automate their business processes and services in order to further improve efficiency.

3.3 ... operate stable and powerful core systems to fulfil their tasks, develop them further and align them with the enterprise architecture. They will employ open-source solutions where it is possible and prudent to do so.

3.4 … make targeted use of artificial intelligence throughout the archiving process to complement human expertise, manage resources and sustainably enhance efficiency in the structuring of data, research and analyses.

3.5 ... work with the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL) to build the new repository needed to archive analogue original documents of the federal government by 2030. They will secure the resources needed, design and develop the operation of the new, fully automated repository, complete the transfer of analogue archive records and integrate the new repository into their own business processes.

3.6 ... ensure that classified information is digitally archived in accordance with the new legal requirements and make security adjustments to systems and processes in order to meet the enhanced demands regarding information protection.

3.7 .... complete the project to end paper submissions in the Federal Administration.

4. Further development of the organisation

To ensure their future viability, the SFA will continue to orient their organisation systematically towards openness, innovation and resilience. They will strengthen internal collaboration, leadership quality and staff development, while at the same time positioning themselves as a modern employer offering attractive conditions and social responsibility.

Objectives:

The Swiss Federal Archives will

4.1 ... promote their open, transparent and participatory corporate culture and cross-organisational cooperation. They will secure and promote good conditions as an employer. Flexible working conditions will be guided by, and balanced with, operational requirements.

4.2 ... intensify their knowledge and skills management and promote the further development of their employees' capabilities and qualifications.

4.3 ... enhance health management and encourage staff to strengthen their personal resource management and resilience.

4.4 ... further develop management at executive board level, enhance the role, acceptance of responsibility and empowerment of middle and lower management, and of deputisation and management support. This will free up resource capacity for strategic management and oversight of innovation projects over the long term.

4.5 ... increase their visibility as a forward-looking, dynamic employer.

4.6 ... maintain their model of integration and inclusion for people with special needs when fulfilling their digitisation tasks.

4.7 ... secure the allocation of additional resources to manage the structural gap between those available and

- structural growth in digital and analogue archive records
- pressure to innovate in the context of technological change
- rising IT operating costs
- new legal requirements on information and data protection
- sharply growing demand in usage.

Despite improvements in productivity and efficiency over the last two strategy periods, the expansion of resources is essential to the SFA's continuing ability to perform their tasks in future.