

Protection of Cultural Property: A Shared Responsibility

This fourth edition of the Swiss Protection of Cultural Property Inventory (PCP Inventory) once again offers a clearly arranged listing of objects of national and regional importance that brings together the most important monuments, archaeological sites and holdings of museums, libraries and archives in a single publication. Pursuant to the Federal Act on the Protection of Cultural Property, the inventory was revised in cooperation with the cantons and the Federal Commission for the Protection of Cultural Property and approved by the Federal Council on 13 October 2021 and is now being published in the present document by the Federal Office of Civil Protection (FOCP). In the future, the cantonal lists will be updated once a year on the FOCP website.

Protection of cultural property, like civil protection, is a shared responsibility that must be fulfilled at all levels – federal, cantonal and municipal – in a cross-cutting approach. The revised PCP Inventory provides an important and reliable information base for planning and fulfilling these tasks. It enables first-responder organisations to rapidly localise the most important cultural properties in order to reach the respective sites quickly and efficiently in the event of damage. Accordingly, it is not only used in case of emergencies, but also for joint exercises where, for example, the police and civil protection services prepare to rescue cultural property in a timely manner as well.

The FOCP also carries out its responsibility for cultural property with the compilation of the PCP Inventory – for example, by building protective spaces for cultural goods or by providing training to a broad range of entities. Maintaining broad networks at the federal and cantonal levels is also important for PCP. In our own Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, contacts must be maintained with the military authorities who have to respect cultural property during armed conflicts. Topics of relevance to cultural matters and questions of international humanitarian law are managed jointly with the responsible authorities in the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA) and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) as well as in meetings with international or-

ganisations such as UNESCO or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The presentation of objects of national importance in the geoportal of the Federal Administration, which is maintained by the Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo), provides easy access to the country's most important cultural property – accordingly, the information is very frequently accessed on the internet. Because this material can be combined with other datasets, the PCP layer is of great value for other subject areas and applications as well. In this way, awareness of PCP issues can be raised among large segments of the population, and the topic can also be introduced in schools.