

Say NO to the loss of books in human and social sciences

Dear Sir/Madam,

A recent decision by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is jeopardizing the publication of science books.

Critical publishing funding, which ensures quality scientific publications, is being **reduced by 20%**. But what's more, **stricter eligibility criteria are also being introduced**. From 2027, books that do not result directly from a qualification thesis (doctoral or habilitation) or from an SNSF research project will simply no longer be funded.

While tens of millions of francs are spent annually on fees to large foreign publishing houses as part of the "Read and Publish" agreements to guarantee the publication of and access to articles concerning the exact sciences, the SNSF has made the decision to reduce the funding allocated to publications in the human and social sciences, even though it represents **less than 1%** of the SNSF budget. It thereby jeopardizes the publication of scientific books in the human and social sciences and places them at a disadvantage compared with the exact sciences.

We believe that the SNSF's decision does not take into account the needs and forms of knowledge production in human and social sciences. Books are not obsolete; they are a **fundamental means of communication**. They enable the structured and cumulative advancement of knowledge. Unlike scientific articles, they allow the demonstration of complex arguments, provide in-depth analyses or research and establish connections between extensive corpuses. Books also enable authors to reach audiences beyond simply the academic. By contributing to the circulation of ideas within the democratic space and to the emergence of open and lively public debate, books play a mediating role between research and society. Undermining this format not only restricts the conditions for the production of knowledge, it limits its circulation and appropriation by the public.

In direct opposition to the Open Access Strategy pursued by the SNSF since 2017, this unilateral reform will seriously weaken the disciplines of the human and social sciences (anthropology, history, languages and literature, political science, sociology, religious

studies, social work, pedagogy, philosophy, psychology, architecture, etc.) and have major repercussions:

- **Swiss publishing houses** will no longer be able to publish these titles, creating an existential threat for publishers specialized in the humanities and social sciences.
- **Researchers** will have far fewer avenues for publication, to the detriment of their career and the quality of the studies.
- In the absence of alternatives, **the Swiss research landscape** will have to rely more heavily on large international groups, with higher costs and a loss of control of the circulation of knowledge.
- **The public** will lose open access to scientific research funded through their taxes.

Today Swiss scientific publishing houses are launching a petition in support of human and social science publications to:

- Guarantee **open and long-term access** to research results
- Maintain **fair publishing conditions** for human and social sciences
- Preserve Swiss **scientific and editorial sovereignty**
- Ensure the funding of monographs and joint publications by Swiss researchers, **without reducing the scope of eligibility**

Every signature counts. Your action helps ensure that the voice of the scientific community, its partners and the public is heard.

We sincerely thank you for your support.

Petition link : [urlr.me/HRWy78](https://www.petition.ch/petitions/HRWy78)

<https://www.schweizerverlage.ch/>

www.editeurssuisses.ch

<https://www.livresuisse.ch/>