

Annual Report 2024

of the President

at the occasion of the 117th Ordinary Assembly of Delegates
29. March 2025 in St. Gallen

Introduction

When I took over as president of PHOTOSUISSE, nobody told me that I was also in charge of the complaints office. However, over time I have realised that this is an important task of the president. As the committee, we want to respond to the wishes of our members as far as possible. To do this, it is important to know these. I would therefore ask you to continue to let us know if anything has gone wrong or if there is anything we could improve. If need be, you might also unload a little frustration.

For example, we have realised that various circumstances that have been handled in a certain way for years are not necessarily self-evident for everyone. Here, constructive communication on our part helps to explain things better. However, it must be recognised that the PHOTOSUISSE committee cannot simply decide on everything. Important decisions usually have to be taken at the Assembly of Delegates (AD), especially if they concern the statutes or the organisation of the competition, for example. The decisions taken at the AD are then also binding for the committee.

With this in mind, I remain at your disposition for comments and requests. If anything is unclear, please feel free to ask. If you have any suggestions for improvement, we will be happy to hear them. I only have one favour to ask: please be a little patient.

Assembly of Delegates 2024

Last year, our Assembly of Delegates took place in Olten. In addition to the standard agenda items, two main topics were discussed at the 2024 AD, for which the committee was asked to submit proposals for the 2025 AD.

On the one hand, this concerned an additional 'mobile phone photos' competition, which should take place in parallel to the annual competition in those years where the Nature Trophy competition does not take place. The aim of this competition is to get younger members interested in photography and therefore also in PHOTOSUISSE. In the discussion at the AD, it was finally proposed not to focus on the 'mobile phone' as the medium, but to hold a general youth competition instead, with an age limit of up to around 22 years (as with FIAP). The AD instructed the committee to draw up regulations for the 2025 AD.

The second main topic of the 2024 AD concerned the financial loss in the 2023 annual accounts, which was mainly due to the photo book, which had more pages than in previous years and was therefore considerably more expensive than planned. Various options were discussed. In the end, the AD adjusted the budget to keep the loss for 2024 within limits. The committee then had a closer look at the topic of the photo book (see more on this in the 'Competitions and photo book' section).

With regard to the competition regulations, it was decided that, for organisational reasons, new members who wish to take part in the competition must be registered as members of PHOTOSUISSE by 31 May of the current year. This facilitates the automatic comparison of eligible members from the membership database with the

competition database. This also prevents individual late registrations, which would then have to be entered manually in both databases. The corresponding clause was specified in the competition announcement for the 2024 competition.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Foto-Club Appenzellerland, the association is proposing to hold the 2025 AD in the Appenzellerland.

Rallye Romand and Digicup

The Rallye Romand 2024 took place on 13 May in Fribourg. The event was organised by the Photoclub Fribourg in collaboration with PHOTOSUISSE. A total of 56 photographers submitted photos on the five themes of 'Reflets urbains', 'Charmes de l'ancien', 'En marche !', 'Opposé(e)s' and 'Libre'. As in the previous year, it was possible to register for the rally and to upload the images via our 'rallyeromand.ch' platform. The winner of the Rallye Romand 2024 was Simona Di Cesare, followed by Benjamin Délèze (Photoclub Déclic Saxon) and Daniel Calabrese (Photoclub Gland). A big thank you to the Photoclub Fribourg for the excellent organisation of the event. The Rallye Romand 2025 will take place on 17 May and will be organised by the Photoclub Moutier in collaboration with PHOTOSUISSE.

On 5 October 2024, the Digicup took place in Solothurn for the first time in the new format as a one-day event. The Fotoklub Solothurn organised the event with the support of PHOTOSUISSE. We created the domain 'digicup.ch', which can be used to register and upload images. For this first edition, 58 participants submitted pictures on the themes 'Architektur', 'In den Gassen', 'An der Aare', 'Schwarz-Weiss' and 'Frei' (free theme). Barbara Huwiler, Anouk Ruffieux and Jean-Marc Ayer acted as jurors. Natascha Meier from Fotoklub Solothurn won, followed by Alexandra Schmid (Fotoclub Münsingen) and Bruno Kneubühler. We would like to thank the Fotoklub Solothurn for their commitment and excellent organisation. The next Digicup will take place on 11 October 2025 in Rapperswil-Jona.

We hope that the Rallye Romand and the Digicup will establish themselves as parallel events in both French-speaking and German-speaking Switzerland, allowing participants from different parts of the country to regularly look across the Röstigraben. Nicole Richli Meystre is passionate about coordinating with the local clubs and Theo Sommerhalder enjoys providing the IT infrastructure that makes these events possible.

Competitions and photo book

The judging weekend for this year's colour and black and white competitions was held on the weekend of 28/29 September in Oftringen. The Nature Trophy competition took also place this year. The pictures were judged by Barbara Beglinger (CH), Irene Ehrenreich (A), Stefan Stuppig (A) and Wolf Peter Steinheisser (D), with three judges taking turns to evaluate each category. Konrad Schlegge (Münsingen Photo Club) took part in the judging as observer.

With almost 2000 (1954) pictures and portfolios submitted, we had a record participation in this year's competition. A total of 23 clubs and 13 individual members took part. The jury was stricter this year, which is why the quota of accepted pictures tended to be at the lower end of the possible range. As last year, Heinrich Kessler (from AARSO Fotoklub Zofingen) finished the competition as the best all-round photographer, and the AARSO Fotoklub Zofingen once again won the club classification. All the results of the competition can be viewed on our website and, as always, further details on the judging process can be found in the observer's report.

Due to the deficit in the 2023 annual accounts, which, as mentioned before, was mainly due to the unexpectedly high costs of the photo book, we obtained alternative offers from various printing companies (as was also proposed at the AD). This was a favourable moment, as our three-year contract with ZT Medien AG (now merkur medien ag) had expired and had to be renegotiated. Chris Brunner took excellent care of this. We compared the new offer for the printing of 600 photo books (384 pages with annual cards, packaging and shipping) from merkur medien ag with offers from Multicolor Print AG in Baar, Druckerei Roos in Moutier and Brüggl Medien in Romanshorn. The most favourable overall offer from merkur medien ag was just over CHF 25000, while the most expensive offer came from Brüggl Medien at over CHF 36000. All printing companies

have different advantages and disadvantages, which is why a direct comparison of the offers was not easy. For example, there were major differences in the production of the prepresses. As merkur medien ag was not more expensive than other printers, but already knows the book and Zofingen is also logistically easiest for us, we decided not to change printers.

We also noticed that the layout of the 2023 photo book was relatively generous. Only a single image was printed on many pages. Although this is certainly to everyone's liking, printing an average of two images per page can save considerable printing costs, while accepting the same total number of images. We have therefore suggested that, where possible from a design point of view, several images per page should be included as standard in the layout.

Unfortunately, there were an unusually large number of errors of various kinds (incorrect image assignments, incorrect assignment of authors and clubs, numerous spelling mistakes, duplicate images, etc.) on the print proofs of the 2024 photo book, which caused our competition organiser Chris Brunner and I to spend a lot of effort to correct mistakes. Despite extensive corrections, unfortunately not all errors were found and we apologise to all those affected. It will be necessary to clarify with merkur medien ag how this can be improved next year. As usual, the 2024 photo book was sent to members before Christmas.

Once again this year, several members have been honoured with a long-term distinction at their request. Laura Kost (AARSO Fotoklub Zofingen), Laszlo Toth (Photo-Club CERN), Gian-Piero Pampuri (Foto Club Lugano) and Peter Bihl (Photographische Gesellschaft Winterthur) were honoured with 1 Star, Daniel Calabrese (Photoclub Gland) was awarded 2 Stars and Andrea Musso (Photo-Club CERN) achieved the Artist award. Gabriela Pavanello (AARSO Fotoklub Zofingen) achieved the two levels 1 Star and 2 Stars. Ernst Fretz (AARSO Photo Club Zofingen) was honoured with his application for the levels 1 Star, 2 Stars, 3 Stars, Artist and Excellent Artist at the same time. Heinrich Kessler achieved the Master Bronze level. Some of the award winners were already able to receive their awards at the award ceremony in May 2024, while the others will be invited to do so in 2025. Congratulations to all award winners! The long-term awards will be published on our website in the 'Hall of Fame'.

Photo Münsingen & PHOTOSUISSE Award ceremony

In 2024, once more, we were represented with our own stand at Photo Münsingen. As in the previous year, we were housed in the Kultur Traube. The space suited our needs, as we were able to exhibit both the slide show with the best and award-winning images from the 2023 competition and 12 printed images on display walls. As printed images, we presented a selection of the best landscape images from previous PHOTOSUISSE competitions. In the same room, we were also able to hold the award ceremony for the winners of the PHOTOSUISSE 2023 competitions and the long-term distinctions. To our delight, most of the invited award winners attended the award ceremony on Saturday 11 May 2024 at 11 am. and the subsequent aperitif. Unfortunately, the Traubensaal is a little out of the way on the edge of Photo Münsingen, which is why only a few visitors came outside of the award ceremony. The fact that the hall was not indicated on the map in the Photo Münsingen brochure was certainly an oversight, but unfortunately wasn't helpful either.

The award ceremony for the winners of the 2024 competition will again take place at Photo Münsingen. The winners will receive an invitation in due time. We have planned the date for Saturday 31 May at 11 am.

FIAP

Miriam Bennouna has taken on her new role as FIAP representative on the PHOTOSUISSE committee. In the meantime, she has familiarised herself with the processes involved in applying for FIAP awards and has worked with great commitment on the upcoming dossiers. In addition, the instructions for applying for FIAP awards, which can be downloaded from our website, have been completely revised. The instructions have also been translated into the various languages and are now available in German, French, Italian and English. We have also published a list of our members who have received FIAP awards since 2009 on our website. In future, we would also like to publish some selected FIAP events on our website for interested parties.

Several of our members have received FIAP awards in 2024. Andreas Herrmann received an AFIAP award, Antoine Weis, Elisabeth Aemmer and Peter Aemmer were honoured with an EFIAP/b award. Congratulations to our award winners on their honours!

Committee news

Marion Höfler, our responsible for finances, has informed us that she wishes to step down from her position. Marion has conscientiously looked after PHOTOSUISSE's finances for many years, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her most sincerely for her commitment over this long period. Anna Chrul from the Photo-Club CERN candidates to take over the position.

This year we experienced some technical problems with the transmission of messages via our website. Among other things, this also affected the registration and deregistration of members. Once the error had been rectified, we decided to return membership administration to the committee. Christian Bosshard has agreed to take on this role. Membership administration is important for the management of our finances, as well as for the organisation of the PHOTOSUISSE competition and the annual mailing of the photo book. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Iris Meier, who has taken over membership administration for us in recent years (in coordination with Marion Höfler) and was particularly helpful with the introduction of our new membership database. A big thank you also to Christian, who has now familiarised himself well with the new system.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to all those who were affected by our technical problems. Above all, we regret that it took us some time to realise the technical error. Our sincere thanks go to Theo Sommerhalder, our media and IT manager, who rectified the error.

Nicole Richli Meystre, together with Theo Sommerhalder, has worked hard to establish the Rallye Romand (in French-speaking Switzerland) and the Digicup (in German-speaking Switzerland) as one-day photo events. As the coordination of these events, which are organised by PHOTOSUISSE in cooperation with local photo clubs, requires a certain amount of work, we believe it makes sense to assign this role to an official position in the committee. Nicole will then continue to fulfil this role in an official capacity.

Expositions and other activities

In 2024, we were also able to visit various photo exhibitions organised by our member clubs or individual members. We are happy to continue to advertise these on our website on request.

We have been asked whether PHOTOSUISSE would be prepared to co-organise an 'Alpencircuit' under FIAP patronage. This circuit would be independent of the salons and circuits already organised by Radojko Zivadinovic (New Camera Club) with the participation of PHOTOSUISSE. In addition to Switzerland, the associations from Germany, Austria and Liechtenstein are also involved. As an Alpencircuit makes no sense without a Swiss contribution, we have agreed to co-organise this event. The costs for the organisation and the prizes (medals) to be awarded are usually financed by the participation fees. Until an exact budget has been established, it has been suggested that the profit/loss be shared equally. The German association has agreed to make its platform available for submitting and judging the images for the first edition of the circuit. Elisabeth and Peter Aemmer are prepared to support PHOTOSUISSE in organising the event.

Outlook

The PHOTOSUISSE competition and the resulting photo book remain our most important annual event. In the meantime, both have established themselves as a reference for the Swiss photography scene and continue to be very popular with our members, as evidenced by the increasing participation in the competition.

With the Rallye Romand and the Digicup, we also endeavour to offer other regular events that are primarily intended to facilitate exchanges between photographers from different regions.



We will also be represented at Photo Münsingen again in 2025. We hope to be highly visible there so that we can continue to expand our network. Don't hesitate to get in touch with us and let us know your comments and possible improvements.

Arzier - Le Muids, 05.01.2025

Andreas Herrmann, President