

PRESS RELEASE – 17TH JUNE 2013

WIKIPEDIA IN JAIL

Wikipedia for prisoners – an unexpected partnership between the swiss prison of Bellevue and Wikimedia CH

Since March 2013, prisoners who request can have an access to Wikipedia offline. The idea is to stimulate or to support the interest for education of prisoners who were, for a large majority, condemned to long-time sentences.

After three months of pilot phasis, the project is successful : Among the 36 prisoners of the Bellevue's prison in Gorgier, 18 possess or rent a computer. All of them requested the upload of Wikipedia offline on their PC. For security reasons, swiss prisoners have a very restricted access to internet.

The feed-backs are unanimously positive : they reveal that Wikipedia is seen as an improvement of the education and/or information activities in jail.

The follow-up of the project aims to use Wikipedia in the training program of the prisoners : use of Wikipedia in the classes, organization of general culture contests, even train new Wikipedia editors. The goal is also to extend the project to other swiss prisons and to detention centers for minors.

The partnership between Wikimedia CH and the direction of the prison aims to be durable : Wikimedia CH installed the Kiwix files and trained the IT team of the prison, who can now upload the software for every new prisoner who requests.

For several years, [Wikimedia CH](http://www.wikimedia.ch) supports [Kiwix](http://www.kiwix.org) project (<http://www.kiwix.org>), a software that gives an access to Wikipedia offline on a PC or now even on smartphones.



GOOD TO KNOW

Wikipédia, the 5th website in the world

- Wikipedia exists in almost 300 languages, and in the 4 swiss ones.
- More than 470 millions visit per month
- More than 4.2 millions article in English
- No ad, an encyclopaedia written by volunteers and financed by donations,

In Switzerland, Wikimedia CH

The association Wikimedia CH exists since 2006 and includes contributors to Wikimedia projects as Wikipedia, Wikimedia Commons, Wiktionary and many other knowledge-related projects. It is recognized as a local partner by the Wikimedia Foundation.

It is however an entity financially and legally independent, leading collaborations with Swiss cultural actors. It was recognized an association of public utility since 2007.

Etablissement d'exécution de peines Bellevue

For prisoners sentenced to deprivation of liberty or a therapeutic measure. The building, actually renovated, currently 36 detainees (normally 65). The aim is to prepare them for a return to the free life through resocialization, education and other work that aim to prevent recidivism.

More informations and contacts

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