



Päpstliche Schweizergarde
Garde Suisse Pontificale
Guardia Svizzera Pontificia
Guardia Svizra Papala

Annual report
Jahresbericht
Rapport annuel
Rapporto annuale





COVER PHOTO

Pope Leo XIV blesses the new Guard flag

With the new pontificate, the flag of the Pontifical Swiss Guard also changes. It was blessed on the occasion of the audience with the parents of the new guards on the eve of the swearing-in by Pope Leo XIV himself. It now bears his coat of arms in the uppermost left square.

Annual report

Jahresbericht

Rapport annuel

Rapporto annuale

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2025

Memorable, challenging, intense

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE PONTIFICAL SWISS GUARD, DEAR EX-GUARDS, DEAR FRIENDS OF THE GUARD

A memorable, challenging, and intense year is coming to an end. We started the Holy Year full of energy under the motto "Pilgrims of Hope." Pope Francis solemnly initiated this special year at the Christmas Mass on December 24th, 2024, with the opening of the Holy Door. We prepared ourselves mentally and professionally for an intensive year. However, the opposite ended up being more the case. Due to the deterioration of Pope Francis' health, many events with The Holy Father were cancelled or had to be carried out on a much smaller scale, as the eventual outcome we all feared drew closer.

The quiet beginning of the year changed dramatically after the death of Pope Francis on Easter Monday. In a final act on Easter Sunday, he gave the blessing *Urbi et Orbi* and greeted the pilgrims in St. Peter's Square with his last trip in the Popemobile. In this last public appearance, he also showed us how to serve with dedication until the very end. We miss him very much and thank him for the steadfast support and goodwill he always afforded the Pontifical Swiss Guard.

With the death and funeral of Pope Francis, the conclave, the election of Pope Leo XIV, and the first months of his pontificate, a particularly intensive period of service began for us, which lasted until the solemn closing of the Holy Door on January 6th, 2026. Without the tireless commitment of all guardsmen, the former guards and the numerous volunteers, this year would not have been possible.

The many overtime hours, the renunciation of free time and the short-term changes in duty demanded a lot of patience and flexibility from each of us. I thank everyone from the bottom of my heart for this extraordinary commitment. At a time when service is no longer taken for granted, the guards and volunteers have taken on a role model function. I congratulate everyone on their selfless commitment!

"Without the tireless commitment of all the guardsmen, the former guards and the numerous volunteers, this year would not have been possible."

With the election of Pope Leo XIV on May 8th, 2025, a new chapter in the history of the Church began. The Holy Father decided to revive the tradition of retreat in Castel Gandolfo. He spent his weekly short stays there in the summer, with some shorter visits to Villa Barberini. For us guardsmen, this brought new tasks and challenges, but at the same time a welcome change and a particularly valuable experience in service.

At the swearing-in ceremony on October 4th, we experienced a special honor: Pope Leo XIV personally participated in the ceremony – a presence that was last granted to the Guard in 1968 under Pope Paul VI.

There are also new innovations in the training of our guardsmen. The autumn recruit school was held for the first time over a period of three months. As a result, Italian lessons could be intensified, spiritual training deepened and recruits were better prepared overall. Due to the extremely positive feedback, the next basic training of the guards will also last for three months.

In addition, the year 2026 will be of particular interest due to the upcoming commemorative year “500 years of the Sacco di Roma” in 2027. We are already intensively involved in the preparations for this extraordinary event.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we are full of confidence. We thank Pope Leo XIV for the trust he has placed in us and promise to meet this trust with dedication. In the new year, too, we strive to live up to our motto *Acriter et fideliter* and trust in God’s help.

Colonel Christoph Graf
Commander of the Pontifical Swiss Guard



“At a time when service is no longer taken for granted, the guards and volunteers have taken on a role model function.”

Personnel matters



Personnel situation

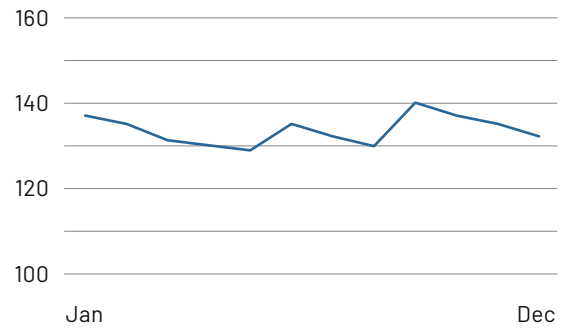
An exceptional year well mastered

The Holy Year and the change of pontificate demanded a lot more from the Swiss Guard than usual. However, the additional effort was well managed. Despite restrictions in leisure and private life, morale in the corps remained high during this extraordinary year.

The target number of 135 men was almost always reached throughout 2025. On average, there were 134 men, even more than in the previous year. The actual number fluctuated between 129 and 140 men. However, it should be noted that although the recruits are counted as part of this number, they can only be deployed operationally after completion of the recruit school.

29 guardsmen left the corps in 2025. 32 new recruits have joined and one non-commissioned officer has been reinstated in the corps. Among the resignations was Lieutenant Heinz Eggli, leader of the second squadron, who said goodbye after 22 years in the Guard. At the end of November, the head of media, Corporal Eliah Cinotti, left the corps and was replaced by Vice Corporal Claude Frei, who has been a member of the guard since 2020.

Development of the workforce in 2025



TEMPORARY WORKERS IN THE UNIFORMED SERVICE

Knowing that the Holy Year 2025 would bring additional missions and to reduce some of the burden on the troops, our governing body – the Secretariat of State – has approved the employment of temporary guards for the entire Holy Year. According to the regulations, these are usually only provided for in the case of understaffing. However, as in the Holy Year 2000 and in the extraordinary year 2015/16, we were also permitted to hire temporary staff in accordance with the special circumstances, even if the personnel count was already full. This deployment in uniform was reserved for former corps members no older than 35 years. From December 2024 to January 2026, a total of 15 ex-guards were deployed, usually for one to two months.

GROWTH OF FAMILIES

With four weddings, the number of married corps members increased to 28 in 2025. There was also an increase in the number of guard children, two in number. A family with two children left the guard, so that the group of children remained stable at 26 until the end of the year.

Capt Christian Kühne

33

new or re-entrants

29

departures

134

average crew strength



Col
Christoph Graf
Commander

Fr Kolumban
Chaplain



Lt Col
Loïc Rossier
Vice-Commander



MILITARY STAFF OF THE PONTIFICAL SWISS GUARD

Maj
Dominik Tännler
Head of Operations



Capt
Christian Kühne
Head of Personnel & Communication



Capt
Lorenz Keusch
Head of Logistics & IT



Sgt Maj
Guillaume Favre
Head of Training



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Lt
Simone Granata
Squadron I



Lt
[vacant]
Squadron II



Lt
Anton Kappler
Squadron III





A Swiss Guard in a blue and yellow uniform with a red plume helmet is talking to a young man in a black jacket. They are standing in front of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The guard is wearing a blue and yellow striped uniform with a red plume helmet and a brown belt. The young man is wearing a black jacket and glasses. The background shows the large dome and facade of St. Peter's Basilica under a clear blue sky. A large crowd of people is visible in the background, and a wooden fence is in the foreground.

Recruitment and public relations

Recruitment

A cautiously optimistic view of the future

The currently stable number of employees confirms the effectiveness of the measures implemented so far for recruiting young talent. In order to ensure this success in the long term, a consistent focus on recruiting young talent remains essential.

The framework conditions for personnel recruitment will remain complex in 2025. The ongoing shortage of skilled workers, demographic development, and changing expectations of younger generations continue to have a direct impact on our recruitment and require a consistently further developed recruitment strategy. In order to continue to attract suitable candidates and retain them in the long term, innovative, targeted group-specific, and continuously developed recruitment approaches are required.

“The interest in the tester tours is great and has increased continuously in recent years.”

YEAR-ROUND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

With entry dates in January, June and September, a continuous presence in the recruitment market is required. Our advertising and information measures are therefore planned and coordinated throughout the year. On January 1st, 2025, 11 new guardsmen were drafted, on June 1st there were 7, and on September 1st 14. The slightly lower number in the summer recruit school corresponds to the trend of recent years.

TESTER TOURS

The tester trips in April and October 2025 were fully booked with a total of 33 participants. These trips offered interested young people a direct insight into the everyday life and tasks of the Swiss Guard. The interest was great and has increased continuously in recent years. The trial trip for April 2026 was already fully booked in September 2025, and 10 participants had already registered for the one in October 2026 by the end of the year.

“The advertising measures are working. On six recruitment days in the year under review, we were already able to recruit 31 candidates for a future service.”



CAREER FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS

In 2025, we were once again present at 7 different career fairs and public events in Switzerland, including Martigny, St. Gallen, Lucerne, and Basel. The World Youth Day in Lugano, the monastery market in Zurich, and participation in the Foire du Valais in Martigny offered further platforms to introduce the Guard to a wider audience. This presence strengthens our visibility and supports long-term recruitment work.

Particularly noteworthy are the two special information days that the Swiss Guard has specifically organised. In addition to the event in autumn at the Guard Museum in Naters – already for the third time – a similar event also took place in Bellinzona for the first time.

LECTURES IN RECRUIT SCHOOLS

The Swiss Army continues to support us by enabling us to give lectures in recruit schools. In 2025, we were once again able to hold over 40 presentations throughout Switzerland. The positive response underlines the importance of this cooperation for our recruitment strategy.

The advertising measures are working. On six recruitment days in the year under review, we were already able to recruit 31 candidates for future service. On average, we need around 30 to 35 per year. This development confirms the path we are on and makes us confident for the future.

Bernhard Messmer

Head of Information and Recruitment Centre

33

recruits in 2025

6

recruitment days

31

candidates for future service

40

lectures at the Swiss Army



Public Relations

A sharp increase in media attention

The public perception of the Pontifical Swiss Guard in 2025 was mainly shaped by the events in the spring and the swearing-in at the beginning of October. In Switzerland, major media took this as an opportunity to report widely on the Swiss Guard.



During the months of April and May 2025, the Guard was extraordinarily present in the media due to the death of Pope Francis, the ensuing conclave, and the election of Pope Leo XIV. Particularly noteworthy are the two-part report on the Swiss Guard by Rome Reports (which was broadcast again in August on Swiss television SRF), the Schweizer Illustrierte with a report on the life of a family in the Guard, and the Coopzeitung, in which all three language editions reported in detail on training, service, and barracks life. A highlight in the reporting was also the Banda's appearance at the Basel Tattoo Parade in mid-July.

“In order to understand the Swiss Guard, it is also important to know how life works between the individual periods of service.”

By the end of June, as many mentions were registered in Swiss media as in the whole of 2024. In the 4th quarter, the media presence increased significantly again. This was primarily due to the extraordinary presence of the Holy Father at the swearing-in of the new guards at the beginning of October. Ultimately, the total number of entries for the whole of 2025 doubles compared to the previous year to around 4140 (2024: 2270).

PROFESSIONAL SECURITY CORPS

One of the focal points of communication is the presentation of guard service as an attractive, demanding, and responsible profession. The information

GUARDIA VIVA

GUARDIA VIVA was created in an effort to create synergies between the previous publications “Der Schweizergardist” by the Exgardisten and the organ of the Guard Foundation “Messaggero”, as well as to bring together foundations and the alumni association. The merger was also intended to reduce effort and costs and create a magazine that is also interesting to the wider public.

After the first edition in 2024, some adjustments were made. In mid-July, issue 1/25 came out with the core theme “Once a Guardsman – Always a Guardsman” and at the beginning of November, issue 2/25 followed, which mainly revolved around the new pontificate and the swearing-in ceremony on October 4th. Both received pleasingly positive feedback.

However, securing financing remains a major challenge. Together with the financial managers of the sponsoring organisations, various options were examined in order to achieve longer-term planning security. Thanks to the expansion of the sponsorship to include the “Friends of the Swiss Guard” and the support of the President of the Zentrum Garde, the two issues of the magazine could finally be released.

For the year 2026, financial assurances have been made by the sponsorship, which will enable the safe realization of all expenses, with the aim to increase these numbers.

that the Guard is a professional security corps and is trained accordingly is reflected in almost all media reports. In 2025, several major reports in large, wide-reaching, and high-circulation media, as well as several YouTube contributions, specifically addressed this topic. In addition, there were numerous interviews with guardsmen in regional media. This recognition shows that our strategy of providing more attention to training and security tasks is bearing fruit and may have further increased respect for the Swiss Guard and its reputation.

THE FAMILIES OF THE GUARD

In order to understand the Swiss Guard, it is also important to know how life works between the individual periods of service. The reports of Schweizer Illustrierte and Rome Reports therefore provided deeper insights into the life of the Guard.

The topic of families in the guard is also an opportunity to point out the inadequacies of the current barracks, which is not very suitable for families. The

interest draws more attention to the barracks foundation and its fundraising campaigns for the new building. The media office is working closely with the communications department of the Foundation for the Renovation of the Barracks.

MEDIA VISITS

On the eve of the swearing-in, the commander of the Swiss Guard invited the international media to a special media conference to present the new representative uniform for cadres; the so-called Mezza Gala. It was met with a great response.

This greater public awareness, in turn, generated an increased demand from the media for more attention to the barracks and the training of the recruits in

4,500

followers on LinkedIn

4,140

mentions in Swiss media

370,000

followers on Instagram



Ison. In principle, it is helpful if media professionals can experience for themselves what the Guard experience is really like; which is why visits made by media representatives to the Guard are welcomed. The media office in Rome does an excellent job here and is always open to the concerns of journalists, as far as the service allows. However, there were many limiting factors to contend with in 2025. On the one hand, due to the greater workload, it

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram continues to grow steadily. The Swiss Guard's account had over 370,000 followers at the end of 2025. The number of followers on LinkedIn has also continued to rise, currently to around 4500. The Guard's appearance on these channels is very professional and diverse, thanks to the young guardsmen, who are very familiar with social media and have put their know-how to the service of the guard.

Stefan Wyer

Head of Media and Liaison Office Switzerland

“A way must be found to meet the need for information on the one hand and the priority of training on the other.”

was not always possible to meet all media requests in the desired timeframe. On the other hand, the increasing number of media visits to Ticino had a somewhat negative impact on training activities over time. A better balance must be found to meet the need for information as well as prioritizing training.



Training and deployment



Expansion of Italian courses

Saving time with longer recruit training

In autumn 2025, the Pontifical Swiss Guard launched a pilot project to promote language skills. The duration of the recruit school was extended by one month from September to November on a trial basis. The goal was to allow more time to learn the Italian language without having to be on duty.

Italian is the working and everyday language of the Swiss Guard. As mastery of this language is crucial for integration, operational efficiency and quality of service, the Command has decided to put language instruction at the heart of recruit training.

FIRST EXPERIENCES

During the first and third months of the recruit school, a total of 139 hours of Italian lessons were given. At the end of this period, on average, about half of the recruits reached the A2 level, which is a very encouraging result.

“Italian is the working and everyday language of the Swiss Guard. Since mastery is crucial for the integration, operational efficiency and quality of the service.”

In the first two weeks, the focus of training was almost exclusively on Italian lessons. The concept envisaged individual or small group lessons. The recruits were given a lot of time for self-study, while other training modules and content were temporarily put on hold, in whole or in part. This approach was intended to provide them with optimal conditions to acquire the basics of the language right from the start. In the first few days, the recruits were told to expect a high academic workload, so they should take advantage of the waiting time between lessons.

The planning of individual or small group lessons, on the other hand, was challenging. If there are not enough teachers available, there is a risk that some recruits might fall behind with Italian lessons. In the long term, however, the recruits who are supported in individual lessons will benefit from it. Therefore, this approach is what will be pursued.



“The main challenge is the different levels of instruction and exactly how to optimize the use of Italian teachers.”

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EXPANSION

In cooperation with the teachers, it is also being considered to focus more on interactive lessons in the future. This style encourages the recruits to actively express themselves in Italian. This concept is to be implemented in the next class of recruits.

In addition, the possibility of integrating additional lessons is being examined in order to ensure a more accurate and structured monitoring of language progress thanks to qualified staff. The main challenge is managing different levels of instruction and exactly how to optimize the use of Italian teachers. Not only the recruits, but also the other guard members are to be taught. However, the more the recruits are divided into different groups based on levels of proficiency, the more lessons and teachers are needed. This division in turn, slows down the supervision of the guardsmen who take part in individual training.

FUTURE IMPACT

The three-month recruit school has concretely shown that the recruits were able to reach lesson 23 of level A2 thanks to the third month. This extra time can save about three and a half months of individual lessons per guardsman, which would otherwise need to take place parallel to their duty assignments.

3,750

teaching hours

11

graduates of the language
internship in Assisi

3

diplomas B2

24

diplomas A2

26

diplomas B1

This achievement may seem modest at first glance, but in reality it is very significant. This gain allows recruits to start their effective deployment with an already partially acquired level A2 level and ability to take the A2 and B1 exams about three months earlier than with language instruction limited to two months.

The long-term effects will be fully visible in about 18 months: the earlier completion of level B1 will reduce the number of students per class, allowing teachers to offer more targeted lessons, accompany motivated recruits more effectively, and develop advanced courses (B2, C1).

ADDITION OF ASSISI

In addition to these lessons, the voluntary language internship in Assisi, which is offered before joining the Pontifical Swiss Guard, has evolved significantly in 2025 with the participation of 11 recruits. The recruits who have taken advantage of this opportunity have a clear advantage and make faster progress in learning the Italian language. Assisi has proven to be a particularly effective complement to language teaching in the Vatican and is being further expanded.

Sgt Maj Guillaume Favre



25 years of training partnerships

The Pontifical Swiss Guard can count on the support of many organizations for its training, having been in partnerships with three of them for 25 years now.

Swiss Army

For 25 years, the Guard has maintained a close and structured cooperation with the Swiss Armed Forces, based on common values such as professionalism, discipline, and excellent training. The Armed Forces support the Guard in particular through the Command and Communication Training KFK in Lucerne. The cadres of the Guard receive the management and leadership training that is essential for the management of personnel and operational units. The Military Police offers the basic course for personal protection, followed by refresher courses at the Military Police Protecting Detachment and other courses in the Vatican that are specifically geared to the conditions there. This collaboration has been continuously strengthened over the years and testifies to the solid partnership between the Pontifical Swiss Guard and the Swiss Army in the service of security, training, and operational excellence.

Certificates and Diplomas 2025

SPI

- Leadership Course II: 4 participants
- Leadership Course I: 1 participant

VSSU

- Federal Security Specialist Certificate: 5 Guardsmen

Association of Swiss Security Service Companies VSSU

Guardsmen who have been in service for at least three years can complete the Professional Certificate of Security and Guarding (FSB) at the Association of Swiss Security Service Companies VSSU and obtain a Federal professional certificate. The Pontifical Swiss Guard has been a member of the association since 2000 and was involved in the development of the professional examination, which has existed since 2001. Since then, guardsmen have regularly taken part.

Swiss Police Institute SPI

The Pontifical Swiss Guard has also been associated with the Swiss Police Institute SPI in Neuchâtel for a quarter of a century. Originally, cadres of the Guard could take part in police officer courses. Today, the Guard regularly sends participants to the SPI leadership courses I and II, and other additional courses, for instructors. It is also planned to enable training as police security assistants for guardsmen who stay in Rome for five years or more. The Swiss Guard is currently working on the corresponding project in cooperation with the Ticino Cantonal Police.

Stefan Wyer

TRAINING PARTNERS

- Swiss Army, Command and Communication Training KFK (Leadership Courses, Communication)
- Swiss Army, Military Police MP (Personal Protection Training)
- Forze armate italiane, Esercito (Shooting)
- Forze armate italiane, Carabinieri (Shooting)
- Polizia Cantonale Ticino (Recruit School)
- Cantonal police forces of Lucerne and Valais (Trainer courses)
- Swiss Police Institute SPI (Leadership courses)
- Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (Leadership courses)
- Federal Office of Police fedpol (BOA)
- Association of Swiss Security Service Companies (VSSU)
- Protection & Rescue Zurich (Paramedic training)
- Università Roma III (Language training)
- Accademia di Assisi (Language training)

Operational Missions

A year that demanded much more

The year 2025 was undoubtedly one of the most intense years for the Pontifical Swiss Guard in recent history. The coinciding of the Holy Year and the change of pontificate brought with it an extraordinarily high strain on the Swiss Guard, which they mastered reliably.

With the beginning of the Holy Year on December 24th, 2024, the activities of the Jubilee started under the motto "Pilgrims of Hope". Since events were planned well ahead of time, the deployment and personnel planning could be prepared accordingly in advance. As a result of the deterioration of Pope Francis' health, there was a noticeable reduction in papal activities from February to April 2025. The start had been quiet.

With the death of Pope Francis on Easter Monday, April 21st, 2025, however, this changed abruptly. The subsequent vacancy of the See, which was to last 18 days until the installation of the successor on the Chair of Peter, as well as the preparation and implementation of the conclave, required an extraordinary organizational and personnel effort. In addition to regular service operations, all additional tasks associated with this phase had to be covered. In order to

ensure operational capability, all members of the Pontifical Swiss Guard who were on vacation at the time were recalled.

WAKE AND BURIAL

The existing security measures needed to be strengthened and supplemented by additional measures. For the wake from April 21st to 26th, a continuous 24-hour service was required, with eight guardsmen each on a 6-hour shift. This change resulted in a need for 160 men, with a total of 135 guardsmen, several guards had to report for duty twice. Additional security arrangements – as well as a formation of honour – were required for St. Peter's Square and St. Peter's Basilica when the late Pope was transferred from the Domus Sanctae Marthae to St. Peter's Basilica on April 23rd. The funeral ceremonies took place in St. Peter's Square on April 26th with over 180 official delegations participating and required close coordination with the competent Vat-

"The months after the papal election were characterized by a high density of operations."



960

man-hours for Pope Francis' wake

274

events with the presence of
the Swiss Guard

180

delegations at the installation
of Pope Leo XIV

ican and Italian security authorities. The entire corps of the Pontifical Swiss Guard was in action. Afterwards, Pope Francis was buried in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in a private setting, for which a special arrangement was planned.

PROTECTION OF THE CONCLAVE

It is one of the tasks of the Pontifical Swiss Guard to protect the College of Cardinals during the vacancy of the See. In the subsequent mourning period from April 27th to May 4th, the Novendiali Masses and the General Congregations of the Cardinals took place, which served to prepare the conclave. The conclave began on May 7th, 2025 with a mass in St. Peter's Basilica. That same afternoon, the cardinal electors entered the Sistine Chapel. On May 8th, 2025, Pope Leo XIV was elected. The solemn Mass of Initiation of Pope Leo XIV took place on May 18th in St. Peter's Square. For this occasion, the same comprehensive security measures were applied as at the funeral of Pope Francis. Here, too, around 180 delegations were present.

REACTIVATION OF THE SUMMER RESIDENCE

The months after the papal election were characterized by a high density of operations as a result of the

ongoing Holy Year. Pope Leo XIV spent a shortened summer break in his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo. In addition to regular service in the Vatican, the summer residence also needed to be guarded. The last time Castel Gandolfo was in active use was by Pope Benedict XVI, who stayed there in 2012.

In the months of October and November, there were so-called “double functions” on several days, in which protocol state visits and major events of the Holy Year followed each other in close succession. These deployment patterns led to a considerable additional burden on the staff.

INTENSIFIED EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

The Information and Documentation Centre is the link between the Guard and the institutions of the Vatican. Their task is to correctly process and forward information received and in a timely manner to ensure the guardsmen’s service runs smoothly.

“The Information and Documentation Centre is the link between the Guard and the institutions of the Vatican.”

Extraordinary services

with the Holy Father in the Vatican and the *Basilicae maiores*, the highest-ranking Roman Catholic churches:

- 49 Presidents
- 14 Prime Ministers
- 23 accreditations of new ambassadors
- 25 General Audiences in St. Peter’s Square
- 6 General Audiences in the Aula Paolo VI
- 5 group audiences in St. Peter’s Square
- 18 group audiences in the Aula Paolo VI
- 62 group audiences in the Anticamera (100–400 pers.)
- 16 Masses in the Basilica of St. Peter
- 7 Masses in St. Peter’s Square
- 4 Masses in the *Basilica maiores*
- 5 events in the *Basilica maiores*
- 63 special occasions
- 3 concerts
- 16 Jubilee Masses Audiences
- 4 Special Jubilee occasions

“The systematic processing of the information collected has contributed to the professionalization of our service.”



In the year under review, the exchange of information with direct superiors, dicasteries and other partners increased continuously. The systematic processing of the information collected has contributed to the professionalization of our service. The employees were informed at all times about relevant events in their areas of responsibility. During the vacancy of the See, the information center tripled its staffing to cope with the increased volume of information.

The Ordinary Jubilee Year ended with the closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on January 6th, 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany. By the end of the jubilee year, around 35 million pilgrims had made a pilgrimage to Rome. The Pontifical Swiss Guard was deployed for a total of 274 special events in 2025 (see box). However, these statistics do not take into account the different functions and responsibilities performed during the vacancy of the See and the conclave.

WIDELY VARYING LINEUPS

Extraordinary services include events that are separate from the ordinary operational service, which is why additional staff must be deployed. These contingents can vary greatly depending on the occasion and location of the special event. For example, for the accreditation of a new ambassador, 29 guards are needed.

This special deployment is covered by guardsmen who have already been assigned a regular service shift but are free at that time, as well as by the squad not currently in service.

Leo XIV's first trip abroad

With the Holy Father in the Middle East

Five months after his election, Pope Leo XIV embarked on his first trip abroad. It took him to a particularly sensitive region of world affairs: Turkey and Lebanon. The security situation in the Middle East was considered extremely volatile at the end of November. Negotiations on a long-term ceasefire in the Gaza Strip threatened to reach an impasse, and the conflict between Israel and Iran intensified. The situation in Syria also remained critical. But this first international trip was crucial for ecumenism, especially in the context of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which made it possible to consolidate Christian unity.

The three-day program was carefully planned; nothing could be left to chance. In the months after the papal election, the Swiss Guard had already made extensive preparations. The Holy Father was received first in Ankara by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and then in Beirut by President Josep Aoun.

In the two countries visited, the Holy Father gave a total of nine speeches and two homilies in eight different cities. Two important moments included visiting the remains of the sunken Basilica of Nicaea in Iznik and praying in the port of Beirut at the site of the dramatic explosion of 2020 that destroyed a large part of the Lebanese capital and left more than 220 dead and thousands seriously injured. The Holy Mass on the coast of Beirut, attended by more than 150,000 faithful, was the final highlight of the Holy Father's first Apostolic Journey.

During this international trip, the Pope was always accompanied and protected by the Vatican security teams, which are made up of the Pontifical Swiss Guard and the Gendarmerie Corps. It was necessary to find a balance between strict security measures and the need for the Holy Father to meet the faithful Christians and representatives of other religions freely. This balance was not easy to find in these sensitive countries, but these challenges are part of the Swiss Guard's daily life. It is their responsibility to ensure the protection of the Successor of Peter while enabling him to fully exercise his Petrine ministry by being close to the People of God.

Lt Col Loïc Rossier





Behind
the scenes

Kitchen and canteen

Moving back into the “Castelli”

In the Holy Year, as well as in connection with the associated major events, the vacancy of the Holy See in spring and the now regular stays of the Holy Father in Castel Gandolfo, the catering area was confronted with substantial additional requirements.

The Pontifical Swiss Guard’s canteen staff faced many challenges with changing personnel and higher demand from more events and visitors during the Holy Year. However, they were able to overcome these challenges with great commitment and dedication. The goal and mission of the canteen are primarily to provide food for the guardsmen. However, it oversees many internal events that cultivate community and uphold valuable traditions in the Guard.

CHALLENGE CASTEL GANDOLFO

The new Pope’s decision to stay in Castel Gandolfo again in the summer set numerous organizational measures in motion. These included, among other things, the canteen and kitchen’s reopening in the Pontifical Swiss Guard’s quarters in the “Castelli”. Under the corps logistic

manager and cafeteria manager’s supervision, it was possible to complete the necessary work in record time. It is particularly noteworthy that all temporary workers were volunteers.

The necessary measures had to be implemented efficiently and purposefully within a short time. In the kitchen area, the focus was on ergonomics and hygiene, with ecological sustainability also given due consideration. A large part of the existing inventory, including porcelain and high-quality chrome steel material, some of which has been in use for several decades, can still be used, supplemented with new, contemporary and energy-efficient equipment.

By July 4th, 2025, the troops could finally be accommodated and fed in appropriate and purposefully prepared premises. An experienced host couple, who had already been on duty in the barracks in Rome and spontaneously took on this additional assignment, ensured the kitchen and canteen’s successful operation during the Holy Father’s stay, which lasted about three weeks.

MORE TEMPORARY WORKERS IN 2025

The number of temporary workers who provided valuable support throughout the year increased by 35 percent compared to the previous year. The frequent staff changes in the canteen – sometimes

“It is particularly noteworthy that all temporary workers were volunteers.”

7,300

portions of breakfast

29,200

portions of lunch

14,500

portions of dinner

35

percent more temporary workers

225

hours of training

every two weeks – required a higher level of control and coordination in each case. This turnover made maintaining a consistently high standard very challenging, which made the commitment of the temporary workers who came for one or two months all the more valuable.

The high staff turnover means that the management of the canteen is confronted with an extraordinarily high responsibility in the training and induction of the staff. A total of 225 hours were spent on this.

CHANGE WITH THE ALBERTINE SISTERS

With great commitment, enthusiasm, and a pleasant pinch of humour, the five honourable Albertine sisters who run the guard kitchen make a significant contribution to a harmonious working day. In 2025, Sister Superior returned to Poland, where she will continue her services with the Order. Responsibility for the kitchen was recently handed over within the local community. In October, the sisters received a welcome reinforcement of staff, which noticeably enlivened the kitchen.

In 2025, the kitchen was also able to count on the valuable support of a total of 29 kitchen assistants. Their commitment is characterized by a lot of good will. Nevertheless, language hurdles represent a challenge that should not be underestimated. It can sometimes make it difficult to train assistants quickly enough to work effectively with the regular kitchen staff on a daily basis.



Guard Festivals 2025

JANUARY

22

Guard Jubilee (Foundation Day)

JUNE

25

Barbecue evening

AUGUST

01

Federal holiday (Brunch)

SEPTEMBER

13

Raclette evening

26

Barbecue Group 147 of the Guard Foundation

OCTOBER

05

Thanksgiving ceremony

11

Ticino evening (Friends of the Guard)

22

Mission Festival

NOVEMBER

11

Feast in honour of St. Martin, Patron saint of the guard

DECEMBER

06

Santa Claus evening

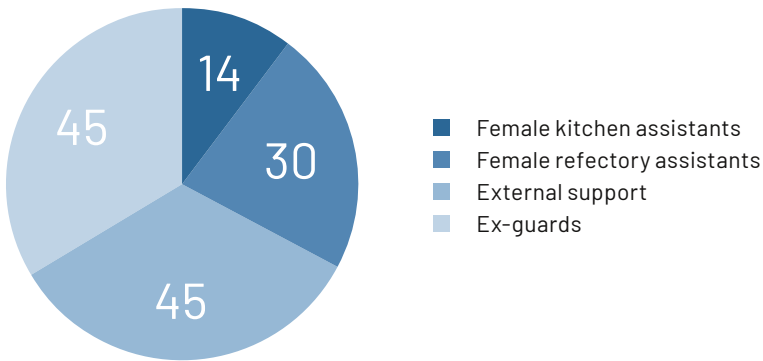
13

Jubilee of Armed Forces

25

Christmas Party

NUMBER OF KITCHEN AND REFECTORY ASSISTANTS



Nevertheless, thanks to the dynamic commitment of the temporary workers, it was once again possible in 2025 to grant all of the sisters vacation days at the same time. In July, they were able to travel together to Poland to hold their spiritual retreat and spend a well-deserved holiday.

THE GUARD'S INTERNAL FESTIVITIES

In 2025, twelve internal special events took place with a total of over 1500 guests. In addition, there were private events, as well as those of the individual squadrons. All these events and operations must be managed in addition to normal service operations. Depending on the need, volunteers reinforced the temporary staff. Fortunately, the corps also received donations in the form of various natural goods.

The Guard kitchen also hosted two wedding aperitifs in the Guard courtyard this year to celebrate the weddings of an active and a former Swiss guard. Another such event was planned, but could not be held due to the occurrence of the vacancy of the see.

Cpt Lorenz Keusch

“With great commitment, enthusiasm and a pleasant pinch of humour, the five Albertine sisters make a significant contribution to a harmonious working day.”



The Roman Summer

Every year, the Roman summer brings high temperatures of over 40 degrees Celsius, high humidity and UV readings up to level 8 (high). The data was collected by a specially set up measuring station at a duty station. Taking this into account, the posts rotate according to a fixed number of hours of service. For some time now, the Guard Command has ensured that the guards can also hydrate themselves sufficiently at the duty posts. Likewise, during services at masses and audiences in St. Peter's Square, the guardsmen on duty have the opportunity to eat in break rooms. Last summer, two tents were installed at the "Cancello Petriano" post as an additional measure to provide shade. The measures described have proven their worth and help to make service operations more bearable, even under the given climatic conditions.

The air conditioning system in the barracks has not been upgraded in some time. It is used to heat in the winter months and to dehumidify and cool the premises in summer. As a result, the system is in use for at least nine months per year. The maintenance work required due to the high stress increases accordingly. Unpleasant outages, especially during the warm summer months, have already occurred several times. However, the new barracks will take care of this issue and be equipped with modern air conditioning technology in line with current standards.

Capt Lorenz Keusch





The Armeria

Operational readiness guaranteed at all times

It stands to reason that the additional missions during the Holy Year had a major impact on the corps' material management. However, the Armeria was able to cope with the increased activity, with many thanks to the rapid succession plan for the vice-armiere.

Tasks of the Armeria (excerpt)

The post of Vice-Armiere had to be filled due to the resignation of the previous incumbent. Under the energetic and prudent leadership of the Armiere, however, the new vice-armiere quickly found his way around. He really had to, because there was no shortage of work.

For example, just over 20 percent more white gala gloves, cuffs and starched white collars for the gala and parade uniforms had to be cleaned. In addition, the uniforms wore out faster due to the higher frequency of operations and showed significantly higher wear. The number of uniforms cleaned has even increased by around 55 percent compared to the previous year. The bed linen cleaning has increased by 14 percent, due to the detachment in Castel Gandolfo, the slightly higher number of temporary staff in the kitchen, and cafeteria, and much more.

Compared to previous years, the material management workload was significantly higher, as numerous assignments took place outside normal working hours, including evening events, weekend and holiday assignments. The additional burden required not only more man-hours for cleaning and caring for the uniforms, but also more careful planning and coordination to ensure the availability of equipment when necessary. At the same time, short-term reorders and repairs had to be organized to ensure the smooth running of events of all kinds. The 95 white Morions currently available were handed out approximately 463 times at various occasions during the Jubilee.

In order to account for the increased load on the material and ensure the longevity of the uniforms, the Command ordered that the guards be given a second gala uniform if possible. This further helped maintain the operational readiness and uniform appearance of the Corps despite the extraordinary demands of the Holy Year.

Cpl Ivan Landrini

- Maintenance and repair of weapons of all kinds (historical and in service)
- Issue and cleaning of all equipment of the troops
- Inventory
- Overview of the need for textiles and accessories needed to make the uniforms
- Supervision of uniform repair and reproduction
- Preparation and maintenance of training materials (both in the barracks and outside)
- Preparation and follow-up of the material needed for the Holy Father's stays in Castel Gandolfo

55

percent more uniforms cleaned

20

percent more cleanings of gloves, cuffs and gala collars

14

percent increase in bed linen cleaning

463

times handed out the white Morions

Information Technology

Under the sign of gradual renewal

In 2025, the IT division continued to make an important contribution to the operational readiness, professionalism and public image of the Pontifical Swiss Guard, while laying the foundations for sustainable development in the coming years.



In terms of personnel, there were changes within the IT team in the past year. These shifts led to an adjustment of the internal organization and underlined the importance of a sustainable and robust IT structure design. The aim remains to ensure the continuity of operations in the long term, even in the event of personnel changes.

Operations were increasingly shaped by the age and structure of the existing hardware. Some of the workstation systems reached the end of their expected life cycle or had to be replaced due to technical limitations. This confirmed the path taken towards a gradual renewal of IT equipment in order to ensure stability and availability in the long term.

ARMAMENT AT THE POST

The conclave was a special event. In this context, a new tablet system was introduced at all duty posts. The parallel use of the previous devices as a fallback level proved to be useful and contributed to a high level of operational safety during this special deployment phase.

Later in the year, the IT department was also involved in the preparation and accompaniment of the Holy Father's stay in Castel Gandolfo. The IT and communication development of the site required was further expanded and adapted to meet operational requirements.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF EGSP

In 2025, the focus was also on further developing and consolidating the Guard's own eGSP software. Optimization potentials were identified, especially with regard to use with mobile devices and the technical stability of the underlying systems. These findings will be incorporated into the ongoing and planned further development of the application.

Hlb Dimitri Anderegg

"In connection with the conclave, a new tablet system was introduced at all duty posts."

eGSP – CENTRAL DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

eGSP is an internal corps software that centrally manages all service-relevant documents and information and can be accessed from any authorized device (computer, smartphone, tablet). This application was developed specifically according to the requirements of the Corps and has been successfully in use since 2021.

Visitors

An expected strong increase

As well as to the numerous official challenges, the Jubilee also brought with it a considerable additional effort regarding of visitors.

The continuous increase in visitor requests already began last year. Compared to the previous year, the number of visitors increased by 28 percent. In particular, Swiss confirmation and altar server groups and parish groups, as well as delegations from the police, military and private sector (companies and private groups), showed a growing interest in guided tours of the barracks.

POSTPONED DATES IN SPRING - HYPE IN SUMMER

While the months of January and February were comparatively quiet and had by far the lowest number of visits per year, the period from March to June was particularly intensive. During this period, a large number of guided tours were carried out. However, during the phase after the death of Pope Francis, which included the subsequent mourning period with funeral and the conclave, several of the Command's guided tours had to be cancelled. Thanks to flexible and short-term planning, numerous appointments could be postponed and successfully made up for at a later date.

28

percent more visitor groups

1,019

barracks visits

355

Chancellery visits

192

guided tours conducted by the Chancellery



Experience has shown that the summer months are somewhat quieter, but even during this time there was a continuing increase in interest in guided tours. At the end of July and beginning of August, delegations of Swiss youth groups from all parts of the country visited the Swiss Guard as part of World Youth Day. These delegations were very large. The German-speaking Swiss group alone comprised a total of 270 people. Accordingly, they were divided into smaller subgroups for the guided tours. August was quieter again, with smaller groups.

THE MORE INTENSIVE SERVICE SETS LIMITS

From mid-September to the end of November, the Guard experienced the most labor-intensive phase of the year, with up to six guided tours per day. During this time, the Chancellery faced considerable organizational challenges and was sometimes forced to cancel guided tours on short notice. The swearing-in ceremony, which was postponed until October, and the associated "lockdown" for external groups also had a noticeable effect on planning.

November and December were about the same, with fewer large groups and more small delegations. The year ended with a visit from the carol singer delegation from Missio Switzerland.

SUCCESS WITH FLEXIBILITY AND EXTERNAL SUPPORT

The Jubilee has impressively shown that visitor activity continues to be subject to very high demand. The support of numerous active guards is indispensable and makes a decisive contribution to the smooth running of the tours. Despite several challenging phases, the great interest of the groups was successfully met overall, with flexibility, commitment and the ability to improvise being of central importance.

At the same time, it should be noted that the Chancellery was very busy for weeks at times. Especially in the case of short-term changes in service, the spontaneous summoning of guards for guided tours was a great challenge. In 2025, the scheduling office received valuable support from three former guardsmen in the months of April, May and October. This relief was an enormous help and was crucial for the successful execution of all tours. Without their commitment, numerous visits could not have been realized.

VCpl Joël Imholz

Life in the Guard



Faith and community in the Swiss Guard

A year under special auspices

For the Pontifical Swiss Guard, the year 2025 was marked by the Holy Year and a turning point: the death of Pope Francis on April 21st, 2025, the days of mourning and farewell, the vacancy of the See and the conclave, as well as the election on May 8th and inauguration of Pope Leo XIV on May 18th, 2025.

The Holy Year brought millions of additional pilgrims to Rome, as well as a dense succession of liturgical celebrations, audiences, receptions and events. For law enforcement and security forces in and around the Vatican, it was a year of extraordinary strain. For many guardsmen, this meant overtime month after month, often including no days off for weeks, foregoing holidays, excursions and leisure time, allowing little time for their wives and children or girlfriends, sometimes little sleep, and hardly any rest. Under this high demand, the guards have reliably performed thousands of hours of faithful service – often exposed to the elements, in the middle of crowds and confronted with high expectations.

This is not a small matter!

This sacrifice was not just work; it was a precious service to life and to the Christian faith. It shows what Jesus means when he says that true greatness is shown in service (cf. Mk 9:35; 10:43f.).

STRONG IMPULSES FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

In 2025, the liturgical celebrations were also central moments in the spiritual life of the Guard: the regular services in the Guard Chapel; the Holy Masses on the occasion of the feast days of the Patron Saints of the Guard or the anniversary of the founding of the Pontifical Swiss Guard; but also numerous farewell and thanksgiving masses for Guardsmen who have finished their time of service.

The weeks surrounding the death of Pope Francis were particularly formative. It was a demanding, and at the same time, sacred time. In the midst of a world marked by crises and conflicts, the death of an old, sick, and frail person made millions around the globe reflect on the meaning of life and service, on faith, on humanity, and on death. Countless people watched

GRATITUDE AND RECOGNITION

The year 2025 has demanded a lot from the guardsmen. It was not so much a year of theoretical training as it was a year of challenge. It was not only a matter of faith, but also of concretely implementing and living Christian values such as dedication, willingness to serve, loyalty and reliability, appreciation and friendliness, patience, brotherhood and cohesion over weeks and months under high physical and psychological demand. The guards mastered this challenge with remarkable composure and assurance despite very demanding and even stressful circumstances. They have proven themselves to be responsible and resilient and have given an impressive testimony with their extraordinary dedication and commitment. For this, they deserve thanks and respect.



01

01 The transfer of the Holy Father Francis' remains to St. Peter's Basilica was an intense and moving moment. **02** Despite the postponement of the swearing-in, the Guard still held on to the wreath-laying ceremony in honour of the fallen during the Sack of Rome on May 6th. **03** The pilgrimage to Manoppello, Lanciano and Ortona organized by the chaplain, offered the guards a valuable time of prayer and fraternity.



02

03





04



05

04 The Canton of Uri was a guest at this year's swearing-in. **05** The Rorate Mass in December together with the residents of the Campo Santo Teutonico. **06** The highlight of the year was the presence of the new pontiff at the swearing-in ceremony.

06





the events from the outside. For the Guardsmen, it was an honor and privilege to be a part of this historic moment, right in the middle of it all.

Despite the high demands of service, valuable spiritual events could take place: the annual three-day retreat in Frascati; the seven-church pilgrimage through the city of Rome; the participation of a delegation in the International Military Pilgrimage in Lourdes; as well as a pilgrimage of the three squadrons and families to Manoppello (Volto Santo), Lancia (oldest recognized Eucharistic miracle) and Ortona (tomb of the Apostle Thomas).

“This sacrifice was not just work; it was a precious service to life and to the Christian faith.”

SCALING BACK FURTHER TRAINING

Due to the extraordinary service situation, some things had to be postponed in 2025. Monthly training and catechetical meetings could also only take place on a reduced basis or had to be temporarily suspended.

At the beginning of the year, it was possible to visit the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, which our esteemed Swiss Cardinal Kurt Koch has presided over as Prefect since 2010. In his usual modest, and at the same time sovereign manner, he knew how to make the multifaceted, complex and highly sensitive work of the dicastery accessible to the guardsmen in an understandable way; arousing curiosity and stimulating numerous questions. In addition, the three squadrons visited the Palazzo della Cancelleria and became acquainted with the three courts of the Catholic Church: the Apostolic Penitentiary, the Supreme Court of the Apostolic Signatura and the Court of the Roman Rota. This insight helped the guardsmen to better understand the church in its responsibility for justice, conscience, and mercy.

As a prelude to the Jubilee Year, all Guardsmen dealt in depth with the history and significance of the Holy Year, with the Jubilee grace – the plenary indulgence, – and with the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

DEEPENING THE FAITH WITH THE RECRUITS

As part of a pilot project, the recruits who joined on September 1st, 2025 were trained for the first time over a period of three months. The main goals were a more intensive introduction to the Italian language and a deepening of the Christian faith. In about thirty meetings and excursions, the recruits dealt with Jesus Christ, the Holy Scriptures, the sacraments (especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist), prayer, the rosary and Eucharistic adoration, among other things. They also studied the patron saints of the Guard: St. Sebastian, St. Martin and Brother Klaus, as well as St. John Paul II and St. Carlo Acutis, who was canonized on September 7th, 2025, and the history and significance of the Holy Year.

In addition, there were visits to important places of faith, including the Basilica of St. Peter, the tomb of St. Peter, the Apostolic Palace and the Papal Chapels, as well as the Guard's own chapel and the church of San Pellegrino. As part of the training with the Ticino Cantonal Police, a pilgrimage also took place to Sachseln and the Ranft – the places of work and veneration of the Guard's patron saint Brother Klaus. A special and edifying moment was once again the Holy Mass with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, in the chapel of the Secretariat of State. At the end of the training, a thanksgiving pilgrimage took the recruits to Subiaco and St. Paul Outside the Walls to get to know St. Benedict and these places of grace.

FAMILIES AS VALUABLE PILLARS

In 2025, the life of the Guards' families has visibly evolved through the marriage of three Guardsmen; this now includes 28 married couples and 26 children. Several family masses followed by lunch together strengthened the cohesion and enabled encounters and exchanges. We also recognized the occasion of the Jubilee celebration of families, children and grandparents, and that of police and security forces, as well as the end of school. For the first time, the wives of the guards were invited to two retreat days during Lent. A special highlight in November was the relaxing weekend in Tuscany, which took place again, thanks to the generous invitation of the Bertarelli Foundation, and was combined with a

“In addition, various joint activities enabled moments of enriching togetherness.”

visit to Siena. In addition, various joint activities enabled moments of enriching togetherness: St. Nicholas' visit to the families and in the barracks, Advent wreath decorating, and Christmas cookie baking.

It should also be mentioned that the families and friends supported the extraordinary deployment of the guards in 2025 with a lot of patience, renunciation and goodwill. For this, they are sincerely thanked.

Father Kolumban Reichlin



Financing



KASERNENSTIFTUNG
PÖPSTLICHE SCHWEIZERGARDE

The construction of the new barracks

A year of challenges and progress

2025 was marked by special events for the Vatican and thus for our construction project. The death of Pope Francis, the conclave and the inauguration of Pope Leo XIV had a noticeable influence on the course of the project.

Despite these exceptional conditions, the work was able to continue uninterrupted thanks to the close co-operation between the architectural firm Durisch + Nolli and the specialist offices of Vatican City, albeit at a slower pace in some cases.

PROJECT STATUS DECEMBER 2025: CLOSE TO COMPLETION OF PLANNING

The plans for the new construction of the barracks and the renovation of the Passetto are nearing completion. Final decisions will be made in the coming weeks before the full dossier is submitted to UNESCO for final review. This progress marks a central milestone, as Vatican City is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

ARCHITECTURE: CONNECTING HISTORY AND THE PRESENT

One of the biggest challenges was to harmoniously integrate a contemporary building into the historically significant surroundings of the Vatican. At the request of the Holy See, the façade of the current

19th-century barracks, facing Italy, will be preserved and restored in its original colors. At the same time, a new, elegant façade facing the Cortile dell'Olmo will be built, which gives the building lightness and architectural clarity.

The newly designed courtyard of honour with the staggered memorial fountain and stronger integration of the Passetto di Borgo creates a high quality place. At the same time, the opening of the courtyard of honour, a historical axis – part of the old Via Francigena – can be restored, an aspect of great cultural and historical importance.

“One of the biggest challenges was to harmoniously integrate a contemporary building into the historically significant surroundings of the Vatican.”

NEW QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE GUARDS

Inside the barracks, modern and functional living spaces are being created: recruits will be accommodated in double rooms, halberdiers in single rooms. Unmarried, non-commissioned officers will be given one-room apartments and families will live in multi-room apartments. In November 2025, 26 children already belonged to the Guard community. The living concept is complemented by common rooms, sustainable ventilation without air conditioning and a clear, functional design of the rooms.

OUTLOOK: APPROVAL AND BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

In the coming weeks, the project will be submitted to UNESCO for final approval. At the same time, the foundation is preparing a new budget. Construction prices in Rome have risen by around 35% since 2022; in addition, important project adjustments, such as the preservation of the historic façade, building consolidation, sewerage, ventilation and dehumidification systems, led to additional costs. The Barracks Foundation will update the financial planning accordingly.



“The new construction of the barracks is an expression of gratitude to an institution that is at the service of the Holy Father day after day.”

The new construction of the barracks is much more than a construction project. It is an expression of gratitude to an institution that is at the service of the Holy Father day after day and a strong sign of the bond between Switzerland and the Vatican.

With the upcoming UNESCO decision, the realization is now within reach. Together with our partners and sponsors, we will successfully take this decisive step.

EVERY DONATION HELPS - TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GUARD.

In this way, we ensure that the Swiss Guard can continue to live and work in a dignified environment for future generations, as a visible sign of Swiss presence in the heart of Christianity.

Jean-Pierre Roth, President of the Barracks Foundation
Susanne Hostettler-Birrer, Head of Office

Souvenirs from the Guard Shop

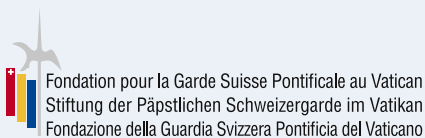
The popularity of the Pontifical Swiss Guard is also reflected in the great demand for its souvenir items, whether as a souvenir of a trip to Rome or as a sign of solidarity with the Corps. The activity originated over 40 years ago, at that time under the name “Mission Shop”, because the proceeds were used to support charitable projects. This mission remains the same, with contributions also supporting the Guard Foundation and helping to co-finance community activities, excursions and pilgrimages of the Guard.

The range of items offered reflect Swiss Guard values such as quality and tradition. In addition to classics such as watches and pocket knives, other popular offerings include clothing, handicraft products, small souvenirs, literature, and the popular guard wines.

In addition to the Guards Quarters, the items are also sold in the Vatican Museums, the souvenir shops of the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul Outside the Walls, and on the Swiss Guard website.

Lt Stefan Zahner





FOUNDATION OF THE PONTIFICAL SWISS GUARD IN THE VATICAN

Continued goodwill of patrons and donors

Last year, the Foundation received over 1 million Swiss francs from its patrons and donors. An endowment, generous individual donations, and certain contributions promised for several years contributed to great results. The Foundation has spent around 800,000 Swiss francs on projects of the Pontifical Swiss Guard in the Vatican and expenses within the framework of the Foundation’s purpose.

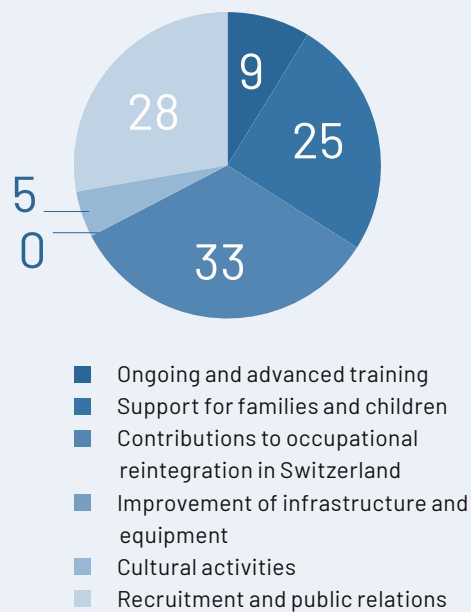
In 2025, the following areas were supported: education and training (9 percent), support for families and children (25 percent), contributions to professional reintegration in Switzerland (33 percent), improvement of infrastructure and equipment (0 percent), cultural activities (5 percent) and recruitment and public relations (28 percent).

The Guard Foundation has a robust balance sheet, which allows it to generously support the long-term concerns and projects of the Guard in the coming years. A significant contribution to the good donation income was made by the various large and small donors as well as the patrons’ circle “Gruppe 147”. Its members commit themselves to paying an amount of at least 3000 francs per year over five years – or a corresponding one-off amount of 15,000 francs. By the end of 2025, a total of 126 members had been recruited.

On behalf of the Foundation and the Guard, we thank all donors, large and small, for their contributions. Thanks to you, it is possible to continue to inspire young Swiss to serve in the Vatican and to maintain the more than 500-year-old tradition.

Dr. Martin Dubach, Treasurer

PROJECT PRIORITIES IN 2025
% of the total amount



“The Guard Foundation has a robust balance sheet, which allows it to generously support the long-term concerns and projects of the Guard in the coming years.”



IMPRINT

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