

Poland

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY IN WARSAW

2004 – 2005 Annual Report for the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL)

MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

In September 2004 the Ministry of Culture endorsed the document entitled *The National Strategy for the Development of Culture in 2004-2013*¹, covering national programs for culture, among them an important one - "Promotion of Reading and Development of the Book Sector". In 2005 the National Library has been entrusted with a task to manage subprograms, namely: 1. "Improvement of the quality of library collections and increasing public accessibility of books", and 2. "Maintenance and development of the most important cultural magazines". In 2005 the National Library has undertaken the mission to prepare a strategic plan of the National Library development until 2013. The accomplishment of this task and the final edition of the document are scheduled for Autumn 2005.

In order to improve the National Library sector of modern information technologies, a new post has been created – modern information technologies coordinator, acting as director's proxy, and also new National Library Web Site team has been called upon.

FUNDING

The financial condition of the National Library in 2004 was – on the whole – stable, with the subsidy allocated by the Ministry of Culture of 54,000,000.00 Polish zlotys (some 13,500,000.00 Euro) for the statutory activity, and some 5,000,000 Polish zlotys (ca. 1,250,000.00 Euro) for various investments. The financial prognosis for 2005 is similar. The income of the National Library derived from the provision of services, sales of publications, databases and property, reached ca. 7 per cent of the budgetary subsidy in 2004. Personnel costs (salaries with derivatives) in 2004 absorbed over 70 per cent of the subsidy.

BUILDINGS

By the end of June 2005 all efforts encompassing projects of the National Library seat's extension – that had been launched in 2000 – were completed. The following documents were prepared: functional principles, project of architectural layout, technical documentation of the investment, and administrative, technical and geodetic surveys, documents and permits that are required in order to get the permission to proceed with the investment. In 2005 a special publication of informative character was prepared – *The Extension of the National Library Seat* – to promote the National Library mission and its office space needs in order to house its increasingly growing collections. This publication is addressed to and shall be distributed among scholars, scientists, men of culture, politics and business, in accordance with the National Library strategic objective for the coming years to locate potential sponsors and to raise funds and means to launch the investment.

With the investment subsidy of the Ministry of Culture a part of the Palace of the Republic (the historic seat of the National Library special collections) was renovated, and the construction of the annex to the Chemical and Microbiological Laboratory was completed to meet needs of mass deacidification.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. DIGITAL LIBRARY

In 2004 a new unit was created at the Division of Conservation of Library Collections – the Office of the Collections Digitalization, to accomplish the task of the program of the National Library collections' digitalization. Principles and criteria of documents' selection to be scanned were established, and also the digitized collections management system was established. Throughout the first year of this activity altogether some 170,000 scans of various types of documents: monographs, drawings, maps, manuscripts, serials, both from original copies and from microfilm copies, were taken. It is scheduled to create over 250,000 scans annually. A part of digitized collections shall be published in the Internet from the National Library web site.

In June 2005 functions, graphic layout and technology of the National Library web site have been changed, including the creation and publishing of digital collections of the National Library on the web. A part of these tasks were accomplished within the frames of TEL-ME-MOR Project.

¹ Résumé in English is available at the URL: <http://www.mk.gov.pl/website/document/?docId=215>

In order to better coordinate and accelerate the National Library performance in the sector of modern information technologies a special post has been created – modern information

monographs published after 1800	2,293,221 volumes
serials published after 1800	794,806 volumes
documents of social life published after 1800	2,024,436 volumes
library and information science special collection (items published after 1800)	191,026 volumes
manuscripts	26,273 units
early printed books (pre-1801)	161,472 volumes
printed music	114,164 units
sound recordings	73,659 units
graphics and engravings	403,732 units
cartographic documents (maps, atlases and globes)	110,164 units
electronic documents	6,656 units
microforms	235,434 units
negatives of graphics and engravings	96,633 units
In total	6,531,676 units

technologies coordinator, acting as director's proxy.

ACQUISITIONS & COLLECTIONS

The growth of the collections in 2004 was similar to the previous year, with a small tendency in growth, by 172,437 units included 124,588 legal deposit copies, 10,260 purchased items, 5,952 units acquired through exchange programs, and as gifts – 31,637 units.

By the end of 2004 the National Library's collections included:

In 2004 the National Library collections were enriched with two unknown F. Chopin's letters, a collection of music autographs of outstanding Polish contemporary composers donated by the archives of Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne [the Polish Music Publishers]. Of international character was the donation to the National Library collections of 260 reprints of plans and street guides of Polish cities from the collections of the donator – Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION

In 2004 the realization of the long-term government program "Acid paper" – launched in 2000 after having been approved by the Council of Ministers in 1999 - was continued. Its goal is to create several centers in Polish libraries and archives equipped with modern equipment for the de-acidification and strengthening of books, serials and archival matter printed on brittle, acidic

paper. The other goal of the program is to accelerate the process of microfilming and/or the digitization of threatened collections. The National Library coordinates this program.

In January 2003 the National Library was charged with a task to manage the accomplishment of the research project – as the result of the open bid – entitled *The Evaluation of the State of Preservation and the Complete Definition of Threats to 19th and 20th Century Collections in Polish Libraries*. In 2004 the National Library share in this task encompassed the evaluation of the state of preservation of the collections in the Silesian Library, in the State Archives of the Capital City of Warsaw and in the State Archives in Olsztyn. Also the National Library Chemical and Microbiological Laboratory building was modernized, enhanced and equipped with the new Neschen A.G. C-900 device to deacidify single sheets.

In 2005 the process of mass deacidification of sheet objects has been established and launched at the National Library. Further several investment undertakings have been carried on, preceding the purchase of additional appliances for mass deacidification. The National Library Laboratory shall serve collections' deacidification needs of its own holdings, and also of other institutions.

CULTURAL EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLISHING

During 2004-2005 the National Library organized many important cultural and promotional events. Within our series of "The Publisher's Parlor" numerous meetings took place promoting Polish publishing houses; and within our series of "The Writer's Parlor" – the National Library hosted 15 writers.

In the second half of 2004 the National Library organized many exhibitions: a few of which are worth mentioning: *Pro memoria. Warszawskie biblioteki naukowe w latach okupacji 1939-1945* [Pro memoria. Warsaw's Research Libraries during the Nazi Occupation 1939-1945], *Jedenaście arcydzieł literatury w filmach Andrzeja Wajdy* [Eleven Literary Masterpieces in Andrzej Wajda's Movies].

During first six months of 2005 the National Library presented 15 expositions, the most important of which are: *Czechia: far away or close by* within a series "Our Neighbors – New Perspective", *Andersen about Poland*, organized in the cooperation with Danish Institute of Culture on the occasion of the celebration of Andersen Year in Poland, *Cricot 2 Theater Center – Cricoteque* – exhibit devoted to an outstanding Polish artist Tadeusz Kantor, *Inspired by Jewish culture* – exhibition of artifacts (paintings, drawings, sculptures, jewelry) created by young artists from fine arts high schools, devoted to Jewish topics, *From Jan to Jan* – the Zamojski Estate Library,

showing vicissitudes of one of the oldest and the wealthiest Polish lordly libraries preserved as the imperishable deposit at the National Library from 1945. Many exhibitions were accompanied with scientific sessions, concerts, and promotional meetings.

Beginning with 2004, two conferences were organized at the National Library within the frames of Standing European Conference on Cultural Cooperation, the first under a banner “Europe’s limits. Is there any common European cultural space?” and the second one entitled “Tolerance in the Third Republic of Poland”. Both events attracted eminent representatives of science, culture and politics.

Several conferences and seminars arranged at the National Library bore national and international character. The most important one was the national conference organized in 2005 and devoted to “Digitalization of collections in Polish libraries”. The other conferences worth mentioning are: “Directions of research activity of the National Library and research libraries: perspectives of national and international cooperation”, scientific session devoted to 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Institute of the Book and Reading, and the seminary “The road leading to Okólnik”, prepared on the occasion of 160th anniversary of the foundation of one of the richest lordly libraries and to commemorate 60th anniversary of that library seat’s burn in 1944 with the irretrievable loss of the most precious relics of Warsaw libraries.

LIBRARY COOPERATION

An important event was for the National Library to enter in June 2005 into the cooperation within the NUKAT union catalog. The NUKAT shared cataloging system, launched in 2002, groups over 500 most important research libraries in Poland. Within a single database participating libraries create bibliographic and authority records of names, titles and subjects (including enhanced subject headings).

In 2005 the Minister of Culture entrusted the National Library with a task of purchasing with the central budgetary means new publications for Polish public libraries, which provided for closer cooperation with public library network.

Within the frames of “Acid Paper State Program” accomplishment, and the program of collections’ digitalization, the National Library developed grounds for the cooperation with other libraries in Poland, by, e.g., the provision of the report pertaining into issues of the cooperation in this field.

Recent years can be distinguished for intensive international contacts. In February 2005 the National Library – similarly to other national libraries from New Member States of the European Union – launched the cooperation within TEL-ME-MOR Project.

In 2005 the University in Halle arranged the exhibition – “Als Student in Halle – der Berhümte Polnische Geograph Eugen Romer 1871-1954” [As the student in Halle – famous Polish geographer Eugen Romer 1871-1954], devoted to Eugeniusz Romer, renowned Polish cartographer and geographer, based on the exposition displayed previously at the National Library. In 2005 the opening of the exhibition “Czechia: far away or close by?” was accompanied with Polish-Czech conference with the participation of representatives of the National Library in Prague, of the Institute-Monument of National Writing in Prague, and of the regional library in Karwin. In January 2005 the National Library hosted 5 staff members of the National Library of Lithuania. Of international character was also the opening of two exhibitions in April 2005, devoted to J. Ch. Andersen. Also in April the National Library arranged the meeting with Lithuanian novelists, on the occasion of the latest issue (2005 No ½) of “Literatura na Świecie” [Literature Around the World], devoted to Lithuanian literature. Also worth mentioning is Polish-German seminary entitled “Preservation of library collections out of concern for the safeguarding of common European heritage”, co-organized by Goethe Institute in Warsaw, with the participation of German experts in the field of collections’ conservation. The National Library reestablished contacts with the National Library of China, and hosted its delegation in 2004, with a plan to return a visit of Polish librarians in China in 2005.

Bi- and multilateral international cooperation bears fruits in shared research and editorial programs, exchange of expertise, experiences and exhibitions.