

## German National Library

### Annual Report 2012

2012 was the year of 100 celebrations: the year when the German National Library marked its centenary with 100 events. Major occasions such as the opening of the new permanent exhibition of the German Museum of Books and Writing, the official ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary or the presentation of a commemorative coin and stamp were all covered extensively by the media. New publications such as the four issues of the HUNDERT anniversary magazine and the online "Wir sind ein Jahrgang!" campaign were well received and garnered much praise. Exhibitions, readings, concerts, guided tours and open days attracted large numbers of interested visitors. All in all 2012 was a packed and auspicious anniversary year which was greatly enjoyed both by our guests and us.

But aside from the celebrations we also accomplished a great deal in our main sphere of activity. Around 860,000 media units were added to our stocks. The publications were catalogued and made available to roughly 217,000 users in the reading rooms. The introduction of new technology allowed us to offer approximately 120,000 music publications for direct use at the work stations in the reading rooms simply by clicking on them in the catalogue. With regard to the collection and processing of electronic publications, key areas of work included the e-paper editions of daily newspapers, online publications, web harvesting and automated cataloguing methods. Our catalogue data has been enriched with more than 870,000 digitised and indexed tables of contents. Via our data services we provide all authority data and the vast majority of our bibliographic data for use in the public domain (CC0). We supported and expedited two significant developments in the German-speaking library system by launching the Integrated Authority File GND and deciding to introduce the Resource Description and Access (RDA) standard. We were involved in 60 research and library service development projects, and we continued our work to ensure the long-term preservation of our holdings in the form of mass deacidification, the digitisation of damaged media, the migration of audio CDs and the planning of further preventive stock preservation measures.

During the centenary year of the German National Library many were reminded that the library has an astonishingly consistent history of collecting, cataloguing, archiving publications and documents and making them accessible to the public throughout all the major political events and upheavals. The mandate and therefore also the objectives of the German National Library have of course changed repeatedly but these were adjustments of an evolutionary nature to new – above all technical – realities and also expansions such as the addition of sound recordings in the 1970s and online publications in 2006. The priority throughout has been on continuity and consistency.

Although there can be no doubt that this tradition will continue in the coming years and that the mandate given to the library upon its founding remains as relevant as ever today, a revolutionary new element has recently emerged. It is becoming increasingly evident that the scope of the works we collect needs to be analysed and reconsidered, allowing informed decisions to be made on whether new types of media should be incorporated or not. Many types of publication are now being issued which are not analogous to any known existing media forms and the comparability of which is not evident at first – or even second - glance. The digital revolution is giving rise to more than just electronic books, journals, newspapers, digital sheet music and music files. The Internet is a dynamic medium and it increasingly contains elements which are oriented towards interacting or transacting with a designated community. In the future, the services which encourage their users to interact with them will enjoy the greatest success.

In the foreseeable future we will know how to handle digital media which are issued as equivalents in some form to printed media or other carriers. This will allow us to concentrate on the new and complex tasks which also form part of our collection mandate. If we wish to continue being able to fulfil this task successfully, we will have to keep pace with a publication market which is moving towards transaction- and interaction-driven media products. Naturally we must not – and have no desire to – regard these new aspects from an ivory tower, rather we must approach them in collaboration with the publishers, providers and distributors of such publications and also with other institutions sharing a similar brief to ours. The new challenges require not only vigilance, intellectual rigour, creativity and technical innovation, but also a reassessment of the priorities involved in processing the media which we have already been handling for 100 years now. In order to handle such additional tasks, in the best case scenario with no decrease in staffing resources, we will need to carefully balance all the different work areas. A dedicated strategy process was drawn up in 2012. Collection, cataloguing, use and stock preservation are the core areas of the library and its related specialist departments. Our intention is to formulate strategic priorities for these areas, while ensuring that the focus lies on the employees as the fifth core area. They are the most important factor which decides the success or otherwise of our work. In addition, the Information Technology and Central Administration service departments, the cultural education work in the German Museum of Books and Writing and in the German Exile Archive, as well as all areas of PR, communication and marketing need to be taken into consideration in the planning.

In 2013 the German National Library is presenting a strategic plan containing the objectives and implementation plans for the 2013 to 2016 period. Each of the four core library task areas has to cope with the traditional challenge of bulk processing, but they are now also having to face dealing with the pressing new topics. In each task area it will therefore be crucial to set priorities between bulk and routine business on the one hand, and development and change management and innovation on the other hand, and to have these priorities monitored by the service departments. At the time of publication of the present annual report, the final plans were being drawn up and initial targets agreed. Subsequent annual reports will report on the implementation of our strategic priorities.

The present annual report, however, already announces the arrival of further issues which will need to be addressed in the coming years: the newly founded "Arts in Exile" network and the digitisation campaign – both initiatives of Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media Bernd Neumann; the restructuring of our

exhibition space in Frankfurt, the changeover of the libraries in the German-speaking countries to the new Resource Description and Access (RDA) cataloguing code and much more. We will be using all existing, and also some new, channels to report on this: printed publications such as our *Dialog mit Bibliotheken*, exhibition catalogues, the new Newsletter or Facebook and Twitter, talks at conferences or our new virtual exhibitions, at trade fairs and other events. Stay in touch and help us to remain on course in these fast-moving and exciting times and to pursue goals which are relevant for the knowledge society.

**Report of the Collection division** The division is responsible for building up all the collections of the German National Library. A further 860,000 media units were added to the collections in 2012, taking the total to just under 28 million publications. The number of online publication deposits grew especially rapidly. 700 new producers of online publications were registered in 2012, causing the number of depositors of this type of medium to rise to just under 3,200 by the end of the year. A new automatic mass processing interface has been set up for the automatic deposit of online publications. An average of 8,000 new e-paper editions were added each month last year. The area of web harvesting has also been developed.

**Report of the Cataloguing division** The core activity of this division is the bibliographic indexing of media publications. Roughly 188,500 volumes were descriptively catalogued in 2012. All publications were allocated to DDC subject categories, and DDC notations and/or subject headings were issued to roughly 98,000 works. In mid-April the Integrated Authority File (GND) went into routine operation on the basis of a uniform format and uniform RDA-based classification rules. In May the Committee for Library Standards resolved to introduce the international Resource Description and Access (RDA) cataloguing code in all the networks and institutions, and a corresponding working group was appointed. In November the German National Library published the German translation of the RDA code text on its website.

**Report of the Library Use division** The division provides all the services required for facilitating comprehensive use of the media and all related information. In 2012 a total of 217,000 visitors used 631,000 media units which were made available in the reading rooms in Leipzig and Frankfurt. A wide range of media can now be accessed in any of the library's reading rooms in Frankfurt and Leipzig. There has been a considerable increase in the number of digital publications being used: 7,500 full texts were accessed daily in 2011, whereas this figure rose to over 12,000 in 2012. In the field of digital services, roughly 90 percent of the bibliographic and authority data was available for use free of charge under creative commons conditions.

**Report of the Preservation division** This division is charged with ensuring the long-term preservation and usability of the media units. Approximately 100,000 volumes were deacidified as part of the conservation activities in 2012. In the field of risk management, tasks included a systematic assessment of the stacks in Leipzig. Long-term digital preservation: just under 500,000 pages of books were digitised in 2012 as part of the two-year "Digitisation of damaged book media" project. The audio CD migration project also shifted to routine operation. By the end of 2012 roughly 120,000 CDs had been migrated to a secure mass storage environment where they are made available electronically for use and permanently preserved.

**Report of the Information Technology department** The department provides services for the library's staff members and users. Of prime importance in 2012 was stabilisation of the infrastructure and the systems running on it. Work was started on expanding the data centre's capacities, for example. Organisationally, the operational and service departments of both sites were integrated more closely. With regard to the databases, the work client of the central bibliographic system was switched over to a new version. The system was migrated to a new technical platform as part of the introduction of the Integrated Authority File GND. And finally, the department also optimised its online publications workflow.

**Report of Central Administration** Central Administration managed a budget of roughly EUR 47 million in 2012. In addition, roughly one million euros of external national and international funding was invoiced in support of projects. The personnel department processed roughly 1,400 applications and carried out 234 interviews before recruiting 62 new employees, many of whom were taken on for particular projects. In addition, 37 young people were accepted onto traineeship programmes in the fields of media & information services and bookbinding, representing a training ratio of 8.47 percent. With regard to sustainable business practices, the department implemented a number of energy-saving measures. These included the complete replacement of roughly 2,900 lamps in the Leipzig and Frankfurt buildings.

### **Highlights**

**The new permanent exhibition of the German Museum of Books and Writing** in Leipzig was opened at an official ceremony held on 13 March 2012. The opening marked the start of the celebrations commemorating the centenary of the founding of the German National Library. The exhibition entitled "Signs - Books - Networks: From Cuneiform to Binary Code" gives a brief history of human media focusing on three media innovations - the invention of handwriting, book printing with movable characters and digital online worlds. Starting the story in early history and bringing it right up to the modern day, the exhibition whets visitors' appetite for the history of media and encourages them to consider the future of media in our society. Roughly 26,000 people visited the exhibition in 2012 - many more than had been expected.

**Centenary of the German National Library** On 2 October 2012 the German National Library staged a major ceremony in the large reading room of the original historical building in Leipzig on the eve of centenary. One of the official speeches was given by the German Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs, Bernd Neumann, who seized the opportunity to remind the audience of the founding of the library on 3 October 1912 and the eventful history of the institution, and to allude to the challenges which the changing media society is posing in a digitised world. Despite all the historical upheavals, the German National Library has succeeded in embodying continuity. For 100 years now it has preserved the scientific and cultural heritage of Germany, collecting the relevant works as detailed in its mandate, archiving and protecting them and making them available to all interested parties. Yet this continuity has also been characterised by constant change. The German National Library has demonstrated its capacity for institutional development in its successful integration of the German Museum of Books and Writing, in the founding of the German Music Archive and in the establishment of the exile collections. Its willingness to change is also evident in its welcoming approach to new methods and technologies. The fact that technological change represents not only an opportunity but also a challenge to the German National Library has been evident to an

unprecedented extent since 2006. In that year the government made a change to the law, expanding the collection mandate to include online publications. The digital revolution is confronting the German National Library in particular and libraries in general with many new issues which affect all aspects of their work. The German National Library shouldering its responsibilities in this area, too. In close collaboration with other libraries and related institutions it is working intensively on finding solutions on many levels. This self-imposed obligation to carry out its mandate in mutual agreement and reciprocal collaboration with its various partners represents a common thread running through the history of the German National Library. It finds expression in the numerous working groups, project partnerships, bodies and networks in which it collaborates both nationally and internationally with the aims of facilitating the transfer of knowledge and of taking libraries into the digital age.