

Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of the Netherlands

Annual report 1998 to the Foundation CENL

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The Netherlands

Statistics KB 1998	
Budget	NLG 45,9 million (1 NLG = 0,5 USD)
Personnel costs	NLG 22,9 million (=50%)
Acquisition costs	NLG 3,8 million (= 8%)
Staff	242 establishment posts
Holdings	3 million items (incl. 2.2 million books)
New acquisitions	46,800 books
Deposit collection	16,600 books
Research collection	
Current periodicals	11,400 periodicals
Deposit collection	4,100 periodicals
Research collection	
Library use	
Registered users	10,600
Day passes issued	4,350
Visits	61,700
Fulfilled requests for documents	286,000
KB website	1,403,000

Koninklijke Bibliotheek 1798-1998

In August Her Majesty Queen Beatrix attended the opening of the exhibition *The Wonderful Alphabet* in Amsterdam on the occasion of the KB's bicentennial. Never before had the KB generated so much publicity in the Netherlands or indeed abroad. Without the daring exhibition design for the largest book exhibition ever shown in the Netherlands, we would not have had such media attention and so many visitors. In two months' time it attracted a total of 65,722 visitors: twice as many as expected. The majority came from the Netherlands but a vast number of visitors also came from abroad, including 3,000 delegates of the annual IFLA

conference. Dutch entrepreneur Paul Fentener van Vlissingen presented the KB with a unique richly illuminated Book of Hours. This masterpiece is a very important acquisition for the KB, which owns the largest collection of illuminated mediaeval manuscripts in the Netherlands. For the bicentennial a number of special publications were issued, including a book on the history of the library.

Management of the library

A regular review of the national library is a statutory obligation. In 1998 the KB was evaluated by a committee of independent experts: from the academic world, the IT sector and the international library community. As part of the self-evaluation KB commissioned an information technology audit by an information technology consultant. The committee concluded that the KB is on the right track and functioning well. Its tasks and functions are clearly defined. The key issues of its twofold mission are evident: professional care for the national cultural heritage, participating in the national scholarly information infrastructure and furthering its development. The quality of its work gives the KB a strong market position and raises much respect, nationally as well as internationally. The KB rightly decided to follow a two-track policy: innovation where possible and continuity where needed. In its policy plans the specific goals in both tracks are well chosen. They are of a highly innovative character and also do justice to traditional tasks. The KB supports and stimulates the development of national and international library services in a unique way through research and experiments. Its research profile offers prospects for a long-term market share.

The committee made recommendations to improve user-friendliness of the search and retrieval systems and to strengthen user-orientation based on a marketing strategy. The committee also noticed that the permanent government grant is insufficient to finance new operational tasks in addition to existing tasks such as collection building. Following the recommendations to strengthen user-orientation a two-year marketing plan was started.

The main documents for library management are the annual operational plans and the management reports, which the division heads submit three times a year. The management reports mainly deal with the progress and bottlenecks in the production of services. A project management team is responsible for the planning and control of all projects. The financial management of projects is independent from budgets for exploitation, capital investment and housing. The budget for research and development is NLG 3.5 million.

Strategic plan 1998-2001

A new strategic plan for the years 1998-2001 has been drawn up. For these years the KB will follow the policy lines, which were set out in 1996 when the strategic plan 1996-1997 was issued. New activities will focus on three topics:

- Deposit collection of Dutch Electronic Publications

The experimental situation has to move on to an operational service. For 1998, the government provided NLG 800,000 from a fund dedicated to new services on the Information Superhighway. In the years to come some NLG 1,000,000 per annum would be needed.

- Digitisation and preservation

Parts of the collection will be digitised and made available through the KB Website.

- Strengthening library services for the humanities

Six university libraries agreed to KB's proposal for a national plan for additional funding of library services in the field of the humanities (see below under *Acquisitions*).

Finance and funding

The increase of personnel costs per annum is not entirely reimbursed by the Government (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science). Therefore, a cutback in expenditure is necessary amounting to some 5% of the total personnel budget (=12 establishment posts) in the next four years. In 1998 a reduction of 3 posts was achieved.

It has already been noticed that additional funding is needed for the deposit collection of electronic publications to be transformed from an experimental project into an operational service.

IT and new technology

The issues of the IT strategic plan 1997-1999 are consolidation of the office automation, innovation to improve services to the public, and development and maintenance of a technical infrastructure to support innovative projects.

Office automation

The migration of all workstations from DOS to Windows NT progressed smoothly. The process included training courses for all employees. Measures were taken to enhance the security of the network (firewalls) and to prepare for the millennium problem. A new system for financial control has been installed.

Services to the public

IBM Digital Library has been installed for searching and retrieving the electronic journals in the deposit collection.

Innovation

For the innovation of the workstations a project plan was made aiming at the implementation of user profiles, digital payment systems, and greater functionality for remote access. Software is being developed to provide access to cd-roms via web pages.

Deposit collection of electronic publications

Based on an agreement with the Dutch Publishers Association the KB received some 1,000 off-line publications. The KB has bilateral contracts with three large publishing companies for the deposit of seven hundred electronic journals and government publications in electronic form. Discussions with the Publishers Association were started to come to a general agreement for the deposit of all kinds of electronic publications (off-line and on-line).

Academic dissertations in electronic form will also be acquired for the deposit collection.

IBM Digital Library software is used for search and retrieval. A second system has been installed for developing and testing new functions such as safeguarding the integrity and long-term availability of electronic publications.

The KB is a co-ordinating partner in the European Nedlib project, which started in January 1998 with the aim of building the basic infrastructure for a Networked European Deposit Library. An inventory of technical requirements has been made and a first model for the architecture of the system has been developed. The KB is also participating in the Biblink and Desire projects.

Acquisitions

In recent years several reports were issued on gaps in the humanities collections in Dutch university libraries because of sharply declining purchasing power. As a follow-up to these reports the national Steering Committee for Innovation in Scientific Information Provision asked the KB to draw up a plan for additional funding of six university libraries with large humanities collections and the KB itself. Key element in the plan, which has solicited many positive reactions, is a division of acquisition responsibilities among the seven libraries involved. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research provided NLG 5 million for additional acquisitions in 1998 and 1999 on condition that the funds would be spent according to the recommendations in the plan. The KB received NLG 500,000 to strengthen its own humanities collections. The KB has also been asked to report on the results of the project.

Conservation and preservation

In 1997, a national programme for the preservation of library materials was launched, called *Metamorfoze*. The programme is an initiative of the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and is co-ordinated by the KB's National Preservation Office. Libraries in the Netherlands are themselves responsible for the preservation of their collections, but a considerable part of the costs is subsidised by the Ministry through the *Metamorfoze* programme. The programme focuses on the preservation of manuscripts, books, newspapers and periodicals of Dutch origin, from the 1840-1950 period. The programme provides for a threefold approach: literary collections, preservation of Dutch Book Production, and microfilming of Dutch newspapers. In 1998 more than 30 projects for the conservation of literary collections were started with a total subsidy of NLG 2 million. In view of the preservation of Dutch Book Production all monographs that were published in the Netherlands between 1870 until 1899 will be put on microfilm.

Role in the national information infrastructure

The management of the Dutch Union Catalogue and Interlibrary Loan system is a joint responsibility of the KB and Pica, Centre for Library Automation. The KB supervises the quality of the database and co-ordinates interlibrary loan.

As an experiment the KB offers users of the Delft Technical University Library access to 30 Elsevier Science journals, which are stored on the KB computer as part of the deposit collection of electronic publications. The university library pays a subscription to the publisher and a relatively small fee for this service to the KB.

The KB manages the Internet guide *NL menu* for Surfnet, the network service for higher education and research institutions in the Netherlands. *NL menu* provides more than 15,000 links to Dutch web services divided over 375 categories and some 3,000 web pages. The KB is responsible for the content and the design of the guide.

Library co-operation

National co-operation

The KB participates in the national Steering Committee for Innovation in Scientific Information Provision. The participating institutions, including all universities, provided 50% of the Committee's total budget in 1998 (NLG 4 million). The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science provided the other 50%. These funds enabled the Committee to commission a number of innovative projects in university libraries and the KB (e.g. in the field of metadata and the integrity of digital publications).

The KB co-ordinates national co-operation in the field of collection building and subject indexing. The KB is also co-ordinating partner in the Dutch Electronic Subject Service, a national project for cataloguing and indexing internet resources.

International co-operation

KB's Director General chairs the Foundation CENL (Conference of European National Librarians) and the KB also provides its secretariat. Important issues are standards for search and retrieval (Z39.50), metadata (URN's), performance indicators and Internet Information gateways. The KB also provides the editor for Gabriel, CENL's Internet guide. The KB is participating in the CoBRA Forum and chairs one of its task groups. The CoBRA Forum has been set up to formulate project proposals for the European Commission. At CENL's annual meeting in October it was decided that CoBRA would be a permanent committee of CENL and that it would consider all kinds of projects considered important to CENL. The KB is a co-ordinating partner in the Nedlib project and is participating in several other European projects.

The Director General is vice-chair of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL). The KB hosted the CDNL annual meeting in Amsterdam, which was held during the IFLA conference in August.

The co-operation with the British Library focused on the digitisation of images in famous atlases in the BL and the KB. The results were shown at the exhibition in Amsterdam and can still be found at the KB website.

The KB provides the secretariat for a Dutch-Flemish committee for co-operation in the field of libraries and documentation. The committee published a strategic plan for the period 1998-2002.

Building and plant

The auditorium and foyer have been thoroughly renovated, including the audio-visual facilities. A new system for climate control in public areas, stacks and offices has been installed. The system provides information on the use of energy, which was 5% less in 1998 than in the year before. A plan was made for the expansion of the stack rooms, which should be built adjacent to the present building.