

Poland

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY IN WARSAW



Director: Michal Jagiello

Address: al. Niepodleglosci 213, 02-086 Warsaw, Poland

Phone: (+48-22)825-9153, Fax: (+48-22)825-5251

E-mail: bndyrekt@bn.org.pl

General e-mail: biblnar@bn.org.pl

Web Site URL: <http://www.bn.org.pl>

Online databases: <http://alpha.bn.org.pl> (NLP OPAC)

<telnet://alpha.bn.org.pl> (NLP OPAC; login: library)

<http://mak.bn.org.pl/wykaz.htm> (union catalogs, bibliographic and reference databases)

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MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

Since 2000 an important factor influencing the National Library management system, as well as of the other cultural institutions in Poland, has been the change of financial regulations. For the very first time the National Library has been more flexible in how to use the allocated budget. >From now on the National Library can independently formulate its employment needs and the percentage of the budget to be allocated for salaries. Due to these changes the National Library, together with trade unions and professional organizations, fixed the rules of staff salaries. Previously all rules governing the employment (the number of posts, limits in wages, their components, budgetary allocation for salaries) were strictly determined by relevant government regulations and laws.

On July 6, 2000 the Minister of Culture and National Heritage amended the Statute of the National Library (issued in 1998). Main changes covered the organizational structure of the National Library at the divisions' level. The National Library is managed by the director, three deputy directors (responsible for library operations, for research, and for administrative and technical affairs), and chief accountant.

This vertical management scheme is supported by horizontal task groups being created ad hoc to solve certain problems or to maintain multifunctional procedures, as well as by the work of coordinators (IT, and the cooperation with public libraries).

General operations are supported and advised by the Library Board, consisting of the Library senior managerial personnel, members of professional organizations and trade unions. Research work of the National Library is assisted with the Scientific Council, consisting of the research staff of the National Library and the eminent representatives of other libraries, archives, museums, and scientific institutions.

FUNDING

Year 2000 and 2001 have been difficult for institutions of the public sector in Poland. At the end of 2000 the National Library budget was cut by 5 per cent, in relation to the allocation planned for that quarter. Similar cuts have also been foreseen for 2001. This situation demanded the implementation of the economical program, covering - among others - restrictions in purchases, employment, and investments.

The budget allocated in 2000 for Library operations was zloty 38,171,000 (ca. 10,000,000 EURO); for investments - zloty 400,000 (ca. 105,000 EURO), and the income from charged services (i.e., publications, databases, other services) - zloty 2,858,000 (ca. 752,000 EURO). Personnel expenses consume nearly 70 per cent of the whole budget, that consists of: the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage allocations for statutory tasks, subsidies for special tasks (e.g., exhibits, events, automation); own income of the Library; donations and grants.

BUILDINGS

In 2000 the National Library completed the construction of the new seat. Major investments included the arrangement of the new complex of buildings environs, and the adaptation of interiors housing chemical and biological laboratories of the Department of Conservation of Library Collections (the purchase and the installation of collections' disinfection system).

At the same time the National Library special task group has begun to prepare functional requirements and the project of the enhancement of the new complex of buildings in order to enlarge stacks capacity, to house National Library collections (present stacks' capacity was scheduled for 5 million volumes, and shall be reached in a few years). Functional concept of this project covers also the move of special collections and their offices to the new seat (presently located in the monumental Palace of the Republic).

In 2000 several important investments were accomplished. Special attention was drawn to the improvement of the collections' and property security. The electronic safety system of the building was enhanced, and reference collections were protected with magnetic detection strips.

Priority issues included the equipment for cartographic collections' stacks, sound recordings and audiovisual documents reading room, the purchase and the installation of the disinfection system, and of computers.

LEGISLATION

In 2000 the National Library, with the assistance of the Polish Librarians' Association, analyzed selected legal regulations relating to library operations and the status of libraries in Poland. As the result of these endeavors the proposal of the amendment to Library Law - passed in 1997 - was submitted, and also the need to change some executive regulations of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, in relation to the National Reserve of Library Collections.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The following two modules of the integrated library system INNOPAC were fully implemented (acquisitions and serials control) and the implementation of the circulation module had begun. New types of documents (serials, documents of social life, sheet music, electronic and audiovisual documents) have been cataloged within the INNOPAC system.

Additions to the database in 2000 reached the number of 70,000 bibliographic records, and by the end of 2000 the database counted 395,587 bibliographic records (on August, 31st, 2001 - 431,172 records). Due to the lack of special funds the retrospective conversion of the National Library collections' catalogs and earlier annuals of the national bibliography is limited and accomplished only with own means of the National Library.

The National Library has continued to tidy and complement authority files used within the database, as well as has concentrated on the development of the National Library subject headings list, used for the processing of different types of documents (sheet music, electronic and audiovisual documents, serials, etc.).

The National Library Web Site was considerably enriched in 2000, providing several new services and information sources in Polish and in English. The National Library Web Site and databases are easy to reach via many important domestic and international Internet portals worldwide. Since July 2001 the electronic version of the professional serial "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Narodowej" [National Library Information Bulletin] in pdf format is also accessible from the National Library Web Site.

The National Library participated in a nationwide NUKat shared cataloging project (National Union Catalog of Research Libraries), realized at the Warsaw University Library. This project has entered its final stage of the implementation.

In 2001 the National Library joined with its INNOPAC catalog database the experimental virtual catalog of 56 Polish and 18 foreign libraries - KaRo (Distributed Catalog of Polish Libraries - <http://karo.umk.pl/Karo>) - accessible via Z39.50 server of the Torun University Library.

HANDLING OF ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS AND FORMATS

In 2000 the National Library began to catalog (in the INNOPAC system, and in the USMARC format) legal deposit copies of electronic documents on CD-ROM, following the national standard for processing of electronic documents (PN-N-01152-13 Opis bibliograficzny. Dokumenty elektroniczne - Bibliographic description. Electronic documents).

By the regulations of the Legal Deposit Law - as amended in 1996 - publishers should deposit two copies of electronic documents at the National Library. However, this duty is not fully performed, resulting in substantial gaps in the coverage of this type of documents in the National Library holdings. Systematic counselling of electronic documents' publishers - undertaken in 1999 - was intensified in 2000, with moderate efficiency. Cataloging of Polish network publications is scheduled for 2002.

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

The National Library was not able to pursue the program of collections' digitalization (texts and images), as well as to introduce other digital services (e.g., electronic document delivery), due to shortages in its budgetary means and because of no special funds at disposal for this kind of activity in Poland.

LEGAL DEPOSIT OF MATERIALS

The majority of publishers in Poland have undertaken in 2000 certain actions to limit the number of legal deposit libraries. The Legal Deposit Law of 1996 entitles two libraries in Poland - the National Library in Warsaw, and the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow - to receive each of them two legal deposit copies of all publication produced in Poland, including electronic and AV documents. Other legal deposit libraries are designated by the regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. Thanks to nationwide monitoring and counselling the National Library's 2000 acquisitions of legal deposit copies was more complete, though not as expected. There are still many publications - especially electronic and AV documents, but also those published by regional or not professional publishers - that do not reach the National Library.

ACQUISITIONS & COLLECTIONS

Financial means allocated for the purchase of foreign and of Polish older antiquarian publications - aiming at filling in gaps in the National Library collections - were not sufficient in 2000. We had also encountered a new nationwide issue, not covered by any legal regulation, namely - the reprivatization of a part of manorial and monastery collections that had been deposited and preserved in Polish libraries since 1945, but without any proprietary rights, due to the nationalization of estates after the second world war. The ongoing reprivatize actions require that the most valuable national collections have to be purchased, in spite of the fact of being preserved at the National Library as deposits for 55 years. However, there was also a positive phenomenon observed in 2000 - the interest of private sponsors (banks, mass media, enterprises, etc.) in purchasing unique artefacts for the National Library.

The collections of the National Library increased in 2000 by 133,595 units (in 1999 - 134,088 units), among them were 48,234 volumes of monographs, 6,784 volumes of serials, 50,176 documents of social life, 2,690 sound recordings and audio-visual documents, 669 maps and atlases, 414 sheet music, 490 electronic documents and 194 graphic documents. As of December 31, 2000 the National Library collections (excluding duplicate material) included: publications published since 1801 - 2,077,483 vols of monographs, 722,366 vols of serials, 1,795,941 vols of documents of social life, 164,299 vols of library and information science collection. Special collections encompassed 25,304 units of manuscripts, 160,871 vols of early printed books (pre-1801), 106,481 units of printed music, 52,757 units of sound recordings, 383,329 units of graphics and engravings, 80,226 units of cartographic documents, 2,535 units of electronic documents, 213,760 units of microforms, and 90,493 units of negatives of graphics and engravings.

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION

After several years of endeavors and preparations, own system of collections' disinfection became operational. Thanks to it the National Library can pursue disinfection and delousing of the collections with the vacuum-compress method with the mixture of ethylene oxide (Rotanox). The disinfection process is automated and completely harmless to the staff performing this task, and to the collections' users.

In 2000 the realization of the long-term government program "Acid Paper" has begun. It aims at the creation of several centers in Polish libraries and archives equipped with relevant modern fittings for the deacidification and strengthening of books, serials and archival matter printed on acid, brittle paper. The other goal of the program is to accelerate microfilming and digitization of threatened collections. In 2000 the program encompassed preliminary training, the organization of the Laboratory to carry out the research in the field of paper durability, and the preparations to carry out research in the field of the state of preservation of library and archival resources.

In 2000 the National Library continued the Polish-German project of microfilming early printed books from Polish-German cultural borderlands in the collections of Polish libraries, financed by the Foundation for the Polish-German Cooperation and Robert Bosch Stiftung. Also the cooperation with the Jewish University and National Library in Jerusalem, relating to the exchange of serials' microfilm copies, was continued.

SERVICES TO READERS

In 2000 a new Reading Room of Documents of Social Life was opened, and the Reading Room of Sound Recordings and audiovisual Documents was furnished with modern equipment.

In 2001 the National Library opened in its new seat the Cartographic Reading Room, after the move from the Palace of the Republic.

In 2000 the National Library provided its 197,712 users in main reading rooms in the new seat with 659,826 titles of monographs and serials, in 783,154 volumes. Smaller number of visitors in the National Library reading rooms (in 1999 - 211,641 users) resulted in the first place from the opening of the new seat of the University Library in Warsaw. Among readers using NL 19th and 20th century collections in its reading rooms 70.4 per cent were students and collegians.

CULTURAL EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLISHING

Similarly to previous years the National Library organized many important cultural and promotional events. Within the series of "Publishers' Parlors" 8 meetings took place promoting Polish publishing offices; and within the series of "Writers' Parlors" - the National Library hosted 17 writers.

In 2000 the National Library organized 13 exhibits, a few of which were of international character. Among them the most significant ones were: "Wiek Wata" (Wat's century), "Ukraina - Polska: w strone dialogu" (Ukraine - Poland: towards the dialogue) - within the series "Nasi sasiedzi - nowe spojrzenie" (Our neighbors - new outlook); "Zachowac dzwiek" (To preserve the sound), "Tworcy konca wieku" (Artists of the turn of the century), "Dziela Wladyslawa Reymonta w zbiorach Biblioteki Narodowej" (Works by Wladyslaw Reymont in the National Library collections).

A few exhibits were organized in the cooperation with foreign partners, as "Artyzm pisma hebrajskiego" (The art of Hebrew alphabet), "Calderon de la Barca i hiszpanski zloty wiek" (Calderon de la Barca and the Spanish golden century), "Brazylia - Polska; daleko lecz blisko" (Brasil - Poland: far away, though closeby), "Z Dania na Ty" (Familiar with Denmark).

The National Library took also part in exhibitions organized outside the National Library premises, among others in Vilnius (the exhibit devoted to three literary Nobel prize winners: Wislawa Szymborska, Czeslaw Milosz and Gunter Grass).

During 52nd International Book Fair in Frankfurt, 17-23 October, 2000, two exhibits were presented: - "Trzy pokolenia polskich artystow komiksowych" (Three generations of Polish comics artists) - which was also exhibited twice in France (in 1998 and in 2000); and - "Biblioteki polskie 2000" (Polish libraries 2000) - large-scale illustrations with text in German and English, promoting 8 Polish libraries through their collections and services.

The publication in Polish and English, after 5 years of research and editing endeavors, of the collective work entitled *Nad zloto drozsze. Skarby Biblioteki Narodowej/More Precious than Gold. Treasures of the National Library* caused a stir. It presents 105 the most valuable and the most beautiful artefact objects of Polish and European culture preserved in the collections of the National Library in Warsaw.

In 2000 the National Library published 22 titles of serials, 30 titles of monographic publications were published, as well as over 216 various leaflets.

LIBRARY COOPERATION

(see also **Information Technology, Preservation & Conservation, and Cultural Events, Exhibitions and Publishing**)

The National Library focuses the majority of issues linked with Polish library affairs. The National Library director presides the efforts of the National Library Council [Krajowa Rada Biblioteczna] and the Council of the Affairs of the National Reserve of Library Collections [Rada do Spraw Narodowego Zasobu Bibliotecznego]. And so, the National Library organized many business meetings encountering such topics, as the state of public libraries after the administrative reform of the State; library collections' security issues; legal, organizational and financial aspects of the national literary heritage reprivatization; the National Reserve of Library Collections; the amendment of the Library Law; library budgets.

The National Library is a member of many international organizations: the IFLA, CENL, ASLIB, IAML, IASA, LIBER, AIB, ISSN, ISBN, IRA.

It is worth mentioning that in 2000 the National Library participated in 52nd International Book Fair in Frankfurt am Main, as a honorary guest. For the first time Polish libraries were exposed to Frankfurt audience in the International Booksellers' and Librarians' Centre. The National Library - with the assistance of the Jagiellonian Library, Silesian Library, Warsaw University Library, Nicolas Copernicus Library in Torun, University Library in Bialystok, Pommerania Library in Szczecin, and Cieszyn Library - prepared the exhibition "Polish Libraries 2000", presenting editorial and publishing achievements of these libraries in the nineties.

[ORGANIZATION CHART](#)