

The National Library of Warsaw - Annual Report for 1994

Size of the collection:

Books:

2.426.000 vols

Serials:

1.535.000

Vols Music: 101.000

Vols Manuscripts:

14.486 units

old prints:

159.200

Vols Graphic Prints:

300.000 units

Becoming gradually more stable, economic situation of the country has had the positive impact on the activity of the National Library, being financed with the Ministry of Culture and Art's allocation. Budgetary means enabled the BN to carry out the statutory duties, to keep the hitherto state of the employment, to increase purchases for the collection, and to continue the construction of the new site. The significant source of additional funds for proper duties have been grants and donations of non-State national and foreign institutions.

The BN relations with associates have also been significantly increased. The National Library, charged by the Ministry of Culture and Art, has undertaken to publish five cultural periodicals: *Dialog* (theater studies), *Literatura na _wiecie* (literary criticism), *Ruch Muzyczny* (music), *Twórczo__* (literature), *Nowe Ksi__ki* (reviews of more important books). Having at disposal new, important base of research and journalist basis, the BN has been developing multi-focused promotional activity through the organization of conferences, exhibitions, seminars, lectures. These constituted the forum of interdisciplinary meetings of various scientific and cultural circles.

Among new international contacts, one has to mention the cooperation of the BN with the Council of Europe.

The National Library has actively participated in the preparation of the following versions of the library law. The works on the amendments of the library law from 1968, carried on since 1990, have not been finished, yet. There are divergences of opinions among library and political circles as to the shape and the content of this law. Most likely the government project of the law may be submitted at the Parliament by the end of 1995.

The BN is painfully conscious of the lack of the amended version of the legal deposit regulation. The existing law does not cover the existence of free book market, and the BN cannot afford the enforcement of the law on legal deposit publications for the National Library.

Some substitute, with the positive impact on the growth of legal deposit copies coming to the BN, has been the regulation of the Minister of Finance that conditions "0" VAT tax, if the publisher lists ISSN or ISBN number on the publication. This, as well as the growth of book market in 1994, has resulted in 42 per cent growth of legal deposit copies acquired by the BN.

The construction of the new site of the National Library has been continued. The expected ending up of the whole investment has been scheduled for the turn of 1995. In 1994 the following big areas have been used, among them the second big reading room (humanistic), and the microform reading room, the Microfilm Collection Department, and Reprographic Department, have been given good premises, and better technical conditions in this activity. The gradual but ongoing improvement of rendering access to the collections of the BN, and the enlargement of other services of the Library, have resulted in, among others, the significant growth of the collection access and the number of readers.

The National Library has succeeded in getting the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant. In June 1994 the BN has been donated the grant to cover the costs linked with the purchase of the integrated library system, together with hardware, and to some extent with the costs of building the local area network. In October 1994 the BN has sent its Request for Proposal for the Integrated Library System to fourteen software vendors throughout the world, the document thoroughly and carefully prepared. Ten vendors have responded with serious offers, which have been carefully studied in details. The decision on the result of the selective process will be officially announced by the end of July, and we expect the implementation to take place in 1995 and 1996.

Among other activities in the automation field, intensified works on the creation of the online public access catalog (OPAC) of the BN's collections (all new additions are being inputted without delay), and the very first edition of the Polish national bibliography on CD-ROM are worth mentioning.

The BN has carried on many-sided activity as far as the conservation and preservation of the collections are concerned: the questionnaire on the state of preservation of Polish libraries' collections has been worked out, the national conference on collections' preservation problems has been organized. Polish media have included many programs, inspired by the BN, informing the society on the state of collections' threat. Hopefully, scientific and cultural elites in Poland have drawn their attention to these topics: The Association for Archival and Library Resources Preservation is under format registration.

As concerns conservatory practices, the National Library has gained additional, non-allocated financial means for the conservation of several most rare and precious relics of the literary output preserved at our collections.

Al. Niepodleg_o_ci 213

00-973 Warsaw 22, POB 36

Poland.

Fax (+48 22) 159-152

Email: biblmar@plearn.edu.pl

Director: Professor Adam Manikowski