

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL (BN)

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF PORTUGAL 1997/1998

Annual Report to the

CENL - Conference of European National Libraries

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Collections (31 Dec. 1997):

Books	2.303.996 volumes
	822.610 titles
Serials	326.683 volumes
Manuscripts	74.006 items
Microforms	c. 14.000 units

Cartographic materials	12.509 items
Graphics	67.575 items
Music	23.822 items
Other (incl. audio-visual)	c. 1.600 items
Number of readers	64.411
Number of items consulted	376.071
Interlending and document supply	1.212
Staff	270
Budget KPTE	1.581.800

CENL REPORT 1997

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL - PORTUGAL

1. Major innovations / Major achievements

1.1. New organic law

The National Library of Portugal has recuperated its role as an independent institution directly under the Ministry of Culture during 1997. The existing Instituto da Biblioteca Nacional e do Livro, former by the merger of the National Library and the Portuguese Institute for the Book and Reading in 1992, ceased therefore to exist.

As a result, there is a new organic law for the National Library which is more adjusted to the role and mission of such an institution in the present and in the years to come. The major internal changes have to do with the setting of new services and/or the reorganisation of existing ones, through the creation of a Department for Acquisitions, Bibliographic Processing and Preservation and Conservation, a Department for Collections and Access, a Department for Innovation and Development and a Department for Cultural and Scientific Activities.

1.2. Promoting the cultural mission of the National Library

Regarding the external changes, the strategical planning consisted in opening up the library for closer co-operation with other cultural institutions especially research centres in order to promote awareness and stimulate investigation on the existing collections of the National Library.

In consequence, the National Library subscribed protocols with Research Foundations and Institutions and established a Program for Research Scholarships, for foreign investigators which resulted in the attribution of twenty grants during 1997.

Strengthening co-operation with other institutions also meant placing as promoter of librarianship development and planning in a protocol with the Ministry of Education to support a network for School Libraries was signed. The network is being established and its technological developments are made in accordance with the National Library standards and informatic products as has happened already with the Public Libraries Network.

Also during 1997 and following the Green Book for Information Society, the National Library is co-ordinating a National Task Group for Digital Libraries Programming. Lastly, the efforts to stimulate the making of new products, in co-operation with specialised libraries and research centres resulted in the first CD-ROM for Social Sciences and Humanities literature published in Portugal, in the last 10 years and in a protocol to produce one for Health Sciences in 1998.

1.3. Promotion of the National Library

In trying to promote the National Library's image, 1997 represented a year of change:

- The National Library Journal was totally changed (inform and content) and is now called Leituras. It is organised in thematical issues, twice a year and every issue is proceeded by a Conference where the theme is presented in several features and debated, the results being the printed journal. A special edition for blind and visual handicapped will be issued in 1998.
- A free Newsletter began to be distributed every three months with information about the National Library.
- The National Library's Internet site was reviewed and new possibilities for searching and new types of information were included.
- Participation in special events, namely the Frankfurt Book Fair in which Portugal was the core theme, enhanced the visibility of the National Library.

2. Use of new technologies

2.1. Intranet / Internet

As a first phase of new technologies use the National Library has now full facilities for networking either internally, via an Intranet and externally with enhanced possibilities to access Internet from any point of the library. The network has ATM technology and around 500 location points.

The Intranet is establishing a new concept of management where everybody is connected and will visibly diminish bureaucracy and paper work. The Intranet is also an "Information Resource Centre" where staff can contribute with the "latest" news, create discussion lists and access a large number of information resources on CD-ROM and through Internet.

Internet access within the National Library was already possible but is now much easier for the users. They have limited access (only to some chosen databases and broadly to all national libraries) but it is free of charge.

PORBASE - the National Union Catalogue On-Line - is accessible in Internet since 1995. However, a new interface was developed in 1997 allowing a more user-friendly search and retrieval and around the clock, which was, indeed, one of the National Library's major concerns.

2.2. New Information System

The second phase of the application of new technologies at the National Library was to change the Library System - a GEAC 9000 - that existed since 1987. An international call for tender was issued during 1997 and the new system - Horizon - was chosen. During 1998 and 1999 there will be the switching from GEAC to Horizon, the migration of the database, now with near one million records and the step by step installation of the different modules: Acquisitions, Bibliographic Processing, Circulation and Loan, OPAC and Web OPAC, ILL as well as the implementation of new protocols like Z 39.50.

2.3. Digital Library Program

For the present times there is no national digitisation policy in Portugal. The Ministry of Culture has celebrated a protocol with the Ministry of Industry in order to promote initiatives of multimedia products with cultural content and objectives.

The National Library of Portugal launched a first digital project, named *The Virtual Library of Portuguese Authors* which aims at promoting Portuguese literature from the Middle-Ages until the 20th century, for a large audience, but especially for secondary and university students, scholars and researchers. A Demo CD-ROM was presented at the 1997 Frankfurt Book Fair and the final product - two CD-ROMs containing the more relevant works from twenty Portuguese authors - will be issued in June 1998.

The CDs include full text in Portuguese and in a translation (when available) scanned in OCR and, in image, the text from the original manuscript or from a first edition.

The texts can be combined and searched in different ways and the CDs contain also biographies, bibliographies, special presentation texts from renown researchers, images, video and audio whenever available and complementary.

3. The National Library building - work in progress

Although the National Library building is about 30 years old and made especially to fulfil its functionalities, still in the last 10 years there have been need for adjustments, first with informatics and in 1996/1997 to remodelate the concept of access, in one part and to update some services, like the Preservation and Conservation Department and Microfilm Laboratories, on the other part.

A strategic planning for amplification of the stores (not yet endangered but needing a medium-term commitment for expansion) will be submitted for approval as well as a new design for the main reading room and serials reading room. Small adjustments such as recreating new spaces for offices including working groups and facilities for disabled users are now in progress.

4. Legal deposit of materials

During 1997 a working party was settled to study and propose a new legal deposit law. Problems like the number of issues to deposit (now 14) and the inclusion of electronic publications will be addressed. The new law is expected for 1998. The National Librarian is a member of the working party nominated by the Ministry of Culture.

5. Acquisitions and Collection Development

As a result of the strategy to widen access to information, 1997 was a very rewarding year in what concerns Acquisitions.

Retrospectively, there was an important number of actions which made possible the acquisition of rare books and manuscripts which complete the national bibliographic heritage.

Currently, a large investment was made to acquire national bibliographies and thematic CD-ROMs, 22 to be available on the Intranet, for readers and for staff and 6 to be accessible in stand-alone.

Another strategic goal to be pursued during the next years consists on updating the Reference Collections. 1997 represented a start with the open-shelf collection at the New Readers Access Room and with a large reference collection to the Music Department.

6. Preservation and Conservation

During 1997 the National Library initiated a medium and long term Preservation Program, consisting of three major projects: for Stores Cleaning (on a systematic way), for Books Cleaning and for Books Boxing. P&C Program also launched the first International Call for proposals on Current Book Binding. All these lines of action will proceed as well as the Microfilming Project.

7. Library co-operation

The National Library co-operated in three national projects, Fontes Cartográficas Portuguesas dos séculos XIX e XX: as Instituições e os Mapas (Inventory of Cartographic Materials), Guia de Fontes para a História do Livro (Portuguese Contribution for the History of the Book) and Livros Portugueses: Ciências Sociais e Humanas (Portuguese Books on Social Sciences and Humanities).

Under EC - DGXIII-E, the National Library is a member of CoBRA+ and partner in project Author - Compatibility of Author's Authority Files.

During 1997, the National Library also co-operated on the G7 project Bibliotheca Universalis.

Membership on IFLA, Liber, ABINIA, FID, ECPA and CENL is also intended as a form of active library co-operation.