

**BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL (BN)**  
**NATIONAL LIBRARY OF PORTUGAL 1998/1999**  
**Annual Report to the**  
**CENL - CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL LIBRARIES**

**Director:** Prof. Doutor Carlos Reis

**Deputy Director:** Dra. Fernanda Maria Campos

**Address:** Campo Grande, 83  
1749-081 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL

**Tel.:** +351-1-7982021  
+351-1-7982022

**Fax:** +351-1-7982140

**email:** creis@bn.pt  
fcampos@bn.pt

**Collections (31 Dec. 1998):**

Books	2.400.000 volumes
.....	
Serials	330.000 volumes
.....	
Manuscripts	75.000 items
.....	
Microforms	c. 14.200 units
.....	
Cartographic materials	12.600 items
.....	
Graphics	68.000 items
.....	
Music	24.000 items
.....	
Other (incl. audio-visual)	c. 1.800 items
.....	
Number of readers	66.081
.....	
Number of items consulted	421.100
.....	

Interlending and document supply c. 2.000

Staff 310

.....  
Budget KPTE 17.040.076  
.....

## **1. Medium-term strategic planning (1998-2001)**

The main objectives of the National Library of Portugal's strategic planning can be summarised in three action lines:

### **1.1 Modernisation of the National Library**, emphasising

a) the national electronic infrastructure in a network environment consisting of bringing together the National Library with the University Libraries Network (RUBI), the School Libraries Network and the Public Libraries Network.

b) the local infrastructure which has already a very updated and modern Intranet service and which, in addition, must be prepared to offer new possibilities for quality based library services, better communication processing within the Library and especially the possibility of providing and handling full-text documents in a multimedia environment.

c) the adequacy of the building to new services and new demands from users and staff, already in progress for some years but aiming now to achieve a better conservation infrastructure in the stalls, the construction of new ones and the enhancement of facilities in the main reading room and in the serials reading room. Other smaller projects like a modern restaurant and a bookshop are also included.

d) the improved access to the collections with the help of information transfer via microfilming and digitisation.

e) the preservation and conservation program to ensure cleaning, maintenance, deacidification, binding and other preventive measures for existing collections.

In this process of modernisation, the National Library of Portugal will be developed as an "hybrid library" where available information and services to users can be given both on printed and on electronic media and to all sorts of users including those that do not need to visit the library but can have access to the information from their homes or working places.

**1.2 Opening of the National Library:** in this medium-term program, a special attention will be given to the relations between the National Library and the society it serves. An interactive and proactive attitude will be pursued in order to strength co-operation with other national institutions (especially other libraries, national archives and museums) with the aim of national preservation initiatives (in the field of microfilming and digitisation projects) and with international organisations, through project consortia, especially in the field of the new information technologies.

Focused on the digitisation of the national cultural heritage in one hand and on the harvesting and long term availability of electronic publications, the National Library aims, in three years time, to provide an integrated service to offer the users adequate facilities to access the information itself and not only the references to that information.

### **1.3 Renovating the relationship with the users**

The new facilities installed in the Reference Room in 1997 have greatly improved the image of the National Library in regard to its users. Access to electronic bibliographies and catalogues and to Internet available bibliographic resources are very attractive, especially to students, but a great pedagogic effort has been going on to make it useful to scholars and researchers in general by means of small lectures and courses on the use of new information tools.

On the other hand, retrospective conversion has proceeded (not as fast as it was intended) and the user has now more and more information on the holdings of the national Library. As the on-line catalogue functions also as Union Catalogue and is available 24 hours via Internet, the number of distant users has increased along with ILL requests and bibliographic information queries.

The request for photocopies, microfilms and photographs is always increasing as well because the more information you give to the user, the more documents he wants to peruse which, of course, puts a lot of pressure on the conservation of collections and raises problems wherever copyrights are concerned.

Renovating the relationship with the user means, therefore, a constant pedagogical effort in order to make the National Library mission and goals more and more understandable to the user. It also means, in the strategic plan, a strong commitment towards a better information to the user with a welcoming programme, specialised staff for public service in order to meet user needs including distant users.

## **2. Major Projects**

### **2.1 Amplification and renovation of the building**

Although with 30 years, the National Library building has to be constantly adjusted to new demands of services. During 1998-1999, the planning for amplification of the stacks building has been submitted to government appreciation. It is a requisite for collection development, not from immediate pressure but foreseen to be useful in five years. The new stacks will continue the existing building and in the new (and renewed) space there is a plan to install air conditioning facilities that will be adequated to long term conservation.

The serials reading room is to be transferred to a new facility placed near the main reading room thus easing the staff and providing a better interface for the user.

As an immediate output from this renovation project, 1998 saw the end of the developments needed for handicapped people and during 1999 it will be the entrance and surrounding garden, with a new restaurant for staff and users and a new bookshop to be installed.

The total costs of this project is KPTE 1.900.000.

## **2.2 Digitisation and multimedia access at the National Library**

The first task pursued during 1996 and 1997 was to integrate the National Library in an Intranet environment. The year of 1998 brought a new internal attitude towards the use of network facilities (with its pros and cons) and 1999 will see the installation of more information on the activities and the administrative procedures of the different services.

As a result of the National Library being the co-ordinator of the Task Group on Digital Libraries, a national conference on the subject took place at the National Library and a listserv was created to promote discussion and raise awareness. The Task Group also includes representatives from Archives and Museums, as well as from the University Libraries Network (RUBI) and the Public Libraries Network (RBP).

Multimedia access also means the creation of a new reading room which will allow readers to investigate in integrated collections of digitised contents, from printed to sound or video. This reading room will be available in the year 2000.

Digitisation has proceeded in accordance with the strategy defined for the pilot-project *Virtual Library of Portuguese Authors*. The first two CD-ROMs comprising the most relevant authors from medieval to contemporary ages were issued in June 1998 and more than 24 thousand copies were sold. The project was presented internationally, during a Conference at BNF (Paris) in 1998.

During the beginning of 1999, the National Library launched two other digital projects, not on CD-ROM but on Internet. The first one called *Almeida Garrett (1799-1999)* is the digitisation of the complete works of Garrett – a romantic portuguese novelist, poet, newspaperman and politician, growing each month with more information and allowing for people to interact by commenting or publishing their own views on Garrett and his works. The site has been very successful with thousands of visits, from Portugal and foreign countries.

The second one is called *25th April 1974 – from ephemera to history* and was created to record digitised ephemeral collections, from the National Library and from private collectors, on the subject of the 1974 revolution in Portugal. Ephemera – like pamphlets, leaflets, stickers, posters, etc. – are important testimonies of historical moments and the National Library has built a site on the revolution, also providing that information and also a chronology on the several steps of the revolutionary process.

Civil society is invited to donate or lend their ephemera collections on the subject in order to be digitised. The project is running until 2000, built according with chronological events and has been quite successful.

## **3. Financing and funding**

The National Library is funded by the Ministry of Culture. During this year, special care has been taken to study and implement coherent strategies regarding private fund raising, under specific existing legislation.

#### **4. Legal status and legal deposit of materials**

The proposal for a new Legal Deposit Law was not yet discussed during this year.

#### **5. Buildings and plant**

See point 1.

#### **6. Acquisitions and Collections Development**

The budget for acquisitions increased during 1999. The acquisition policy continues to focus on adding to the Portuguese collection, acquiring literary archives and building up a good reference collection either as a support to the special collections – and much was done last year in what concerns the Music reference collection, for example – or as an update to the general Reference and Main Reading Room collections.

The National Library has received a major donation of a private library with books referring to 16th and 17th century Portuguese history.

#### **7. Conservation/preservation of collections**

The three major projects that integrate the Preservation Program proceed as planning. Stores Cleaning gave priority to Reserved and Serials Stores, Books Cleaning accompanied Stores Cleaning and Books Boxing. Current Book Binding and the Serials Microfilming Project are proceeding with special investment budgets allocated and through international calls for tenders.

#### **8. Use of new technologies**

The installation of the new information system took place during 1998-1999. So far, the migration of the entire database – bibliographic, authorities and holdings – was done successfully and the Acquisitions, Cataloguing and also OPAC are available. Serials Control and web OPAC will follow soon.

Last year the last phase will take place with the installation of the Circulation Module and ILL.

Digitisation projects see 2.2.

#### **9. Cultural events at the National Library**

During the last three months of 1998 and the first half of 1999 a large number of cultural events took place at the National Library.

##### **Exhibitions**

- Music collections of the National Library (October)
- José Saramago (Nobel Prize of Literature 1998) (October)

- Virtual Library of Portuguese Authors (November)
- National Campaign *Save a Book from the National Library* (December – February)\*
- 1998 Acquisitions (January)
- Evocation of Maria de Lurdes Belchior, Vanda Ramos and Lima de Freitas (February)
- Evocation of Natália Correia (March)
- Portuguese bindings at the National Library (April)
- Illuminure in Portugal (April – June) \*

### **Conferences, seminars, round-tables**

- Digital Libraries (December 98)
- International Conference on Illuminated Manuscripts (April 99)
- International Workshop on Library Archives (June 99)

### **10. Library co-operation**

The National Library is member of IFLA, LIBER, ABINIA, FID, CENL, CoBRA +, CDNL, ECPA, CERL and UDC Consortium.

Participation in co-operative projects is, as always, very active, the most relevant being, within CoBRA +, the NEDLIB Project and within DG XIII-E the MALVINE Project. The National Library is also a member of the Bibliotheca Universalis Project.

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\* Large exhibitions.