

THE SLOVAK NATIONAL LIBRARY

(Slovenská národná knižnica)

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CONFERENCE

OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL LIBRARIES

2001 – 2002

Central address: Slovenská národná knižnica Námestie J. C. Hronského 1, 036 01 Martin Slovakia

WWW: www.snk.sk

E-mail: snk@snk.sk

Tel/Fax: 421/43/430 18 02

General Director: Doc. PhDr. Dušan Katuščák, PHD.

1. Management of the Library

Under the terms of Act No.183/2000, effective 1 July 2000, the Slovak National Library was established as an independent research institution. It was separated from the Matica slovenska, with whom it had been affiliated with since the latter's founding in 1863. The Slovak National Library is a state institution responsible to the Ministry of the Culture of the Slovak Republic. Since its establishment the National Library has:

- completed its reorganization;
- as of 1 June 2001 completed the restructuring its workforce;
- as of 1 April 2002 completed its structural reorganization;
- completed its accounting of finances and resources.

The single greatest concern of the Library's management was how to reinforce the view that the creation independent institution was a logical progression for Slovak intellectual development. Few would ever have considered the creation of a national library, separate from the Matica slovenska. And it was for this very reason that the Library's management sought to start off in the right path. The administration of the Slovak National Library management has chosen to follow the international model for national libraries. The dual mission of a national library is to provide general knowledge to the public at large while simultaneously creating conditions for preservation of a people's cultural heritage. These have been the dual goals of the Slovak National Library since it was formally established as an institution two years ago.

New trends are now visible. The most noticeable changes have been to make the library more "user friendly". The universal study room in the Slovak National Library in Martin was renovated and renamed "The Golden Thread."

Ceremonial events were occasionally held here. Its earlier sterility has been replaced by a sense of anticipation, where the world is just a click away on the Internet.

The library's second floor will be rearranged into a general reading room that will include a number of specialty "Libraries". These currently include a Microfilm Library and a Reference Library. The latter also provides access to an Electronic Resource Library. In 2001, an office was made available for the Information Center for the Council of Europe, where individuals can discuss the values of democracy and human rights.

An unfortunate reality prior to 2002, was that the Slovak National Library was not on par with Information Technology (IT). This was due primarily to the lack of funds and technology throughout Slovakia's library system. To these faults are added a lack of professional cooperation, inferior communications infrastructure, and poor coordination and utilization of existing electronic information resources. These were the problems specified in the Report on the Program of Electronization (putting Online) of Slovak Libraries, which was approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic in July 17, 2002 (Resolution number 801). This Electronization Program or "putting Online" is the new national strategy for libraries and as such, a guide for Slovakia's entire library system for the future. The government's basic objectives include:

1. Creation of an open information system of libraries in Slovakia with international links;
2. Expansion of library information services through telecommunications and computerization, providing free and unhindered access to domestic and foreign library resources;
3. Complement implementation of the new information technology in libraries with the development in Europe, as eEurope + initiative;
4. Ensure creation, storage, and access to the libraries' digital content;
5. Using digitalization to ensure integrated access to library holdings for the purpose of education, and in cooperation with European partners to prepare and realize the digitalization of culturally oriented material;
6. Introduce a cooperative system of catalogization , etc.

In the strategy to solve these issues and other objectives, the Slovak National Library acts as the focal point within the cooperative network, and serves as the coordinator of many information projects:

- A pilot project of the Virtual Library of Slovakia;
- Retro conversion of existing secondary records regarding documents from the 16th to the 20th century;
- Compilation of the Universal Catalogues of the Slovak Republic;
- Program Manager for library electronization in Slovakia;

To some, this may all be nothing more than a dream for the future. In reality, some of them are already completed, or near completion. For example, the initial phase of the retro conversion of the Slovak National bibliography for the years covering 1901-1975 (100,216 records) to OPACs is finished. Also, the need for a Universal Catalogue containing a completed database, the translation of tables, cooperation with foreign libraries, and many other issues has been established.

To date, the success of the Slovak National Library's independent existence can be seen in the satisfaction of professionals who approve of its current direction and its promise for future development. Such orientation was reinforced by the decision to expand educational possibilities by creating a new Department of Library and Information Science at Zilina University (Universita Zilinska). The department was created with the initiative of the SNL's management. Its first students began their studies in September 2002.

2. Handling of electronic publications and formats

The Slovak national bibliography produces a CD-ROM quarterly. The current number of bibliographic references within the national system transferred to CD-ROM is over 1 million, including books published since 1975, post-1978 articles, and special documents printed since 1981. Another 47,000 bibliographic references were added in 2001, and 27,859 in the first half of 2002. There is also a monthly microdisc distribution provided to libraries that cannot afford to buy CD ROMs.

The legal deposit is legally effective also for electronic documents but some of them have been purchased or acquired as an international exchange. An acquisition in 2001 was about 405 copies of CD ROMs, and of 140 CDs. The total CD holdings total 2 337 copies, and CD ROMs about 752.

3. FUNDING

The Ministry of Culture finances the basic activities of the Slovak National Library, and there have been no funding cuts. While the SNL was able to buy needed computers, software, and the like, money was lacking for existential needs such as rewiring buildings for the Internet access. These sources were lacking for a new book depository, and for the reconstruction and repair of SNL buildings.

Additional funds for various projects were obtained from grants given by the general state treasury, local entrepreneurs, and foreign foundations. The extra funds totaled ten percent of the SNL's budget. These have been applied primarily for retroconversion of Slovak books published in the 20th century (Mellon Foundation), and for publishing and cultural activities (Open Society Foundation), etc.

The percentage of the revenue earned was about 2% from the sales of books and CDs, and from various other services such as book restoration, literary museum admission fees, scanner and xerox copies, lending services, etc.

4. BUILDINGS

Although the Slovak National Library's main building in Martin is technically under its jurisdiction, property delimitation with the Matica slovenska is unfinished. For this reason, library staff rooms remain overcrowded.

Since there is little likelihood for the construction of a new facility for additional holdings, the possibility of adding more mobile bookshelves is under consideration. Round-the-clock protection of the main building has also been installed.

5. STAFFING MATTERS

A trade union representative has been appointed to the library's management, and participates in its deliberations. In July 2002, a new electronic time-keeping system was introduced.

Since April 2002, the Law on Public Service reclassified the staff as SNL employees, and redefined job responsibilities with a new pay structure.

To meet the needs of the staff development, the Slovak National Library succeeded in creating the new Department of Library and Information Science at Zilina University (Zilinska univerzita), which will create new opportunities in the development of information technologies.

6. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

A new strategy initiated by the Slovak government is for putting library online (Electronization). There are clearly stated objectives on having the library system become an important link in modern science, education, culture, and economics. The focus is to create a third generation-integrated system, known as Project KIS3G that ought to be completed within three years. The timeline is feasible and there are sufficient funds in the budget the next two years.

There is also the possibility of hiring IT specialists to coordinate the program of putting library online, serve as an online resource librarian, and other functions such as programmers, technicians, network specialists, etc.

In the context of going library online program, the national library is the primary coordinator and has the lead in other projects, that include:

- The pilot project compiling the Virtual library of Slovakia;
- Retro conversion of the secondary document references from the 16th to the 20th centuries;
- Coordination of union catalogues of the Slovak Republic.

Two of these projects have already been discussed. As for the union catalogue, the model and database structure were defined and the tables drawn up. The basic task was to install an upgrade of the new library software system, ALEPH 500, which provides access to documents online via OPAC, the readers' access to the module of lending via WEB site, and the standard WEB browser from the optional point connected to Internet.

The retro conversion was successfully completed. The current number of bibliographic references transferred to CD-ROM is over 1 million.

It is worth mentioning that various new investments have been completed, such as the radio Internet link with a speed of 256 kbt/s and the application of Citrix Metaframe technology within the SNL's information system. Of particular relevance are the new links that connect the main and the secondary SNL buildings, as well as e-mail and Internet access.

7. THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

On the initiative of the Minister of Culture, and in cooperation with Compaq, Inseco Zilina, Microsoft Slovakia, and the Slovak National Library, these entities will participate in completing the project of Virtual Library of Slovakia (VIKS) by the end of 2002. Access to VIKS will be through the SNL's website that will provide access to:

- A. primary digitized electronic resources (World Memory's Slovak program, serials, multimedia, archival documents, photographs, biographic works);
- B. secondary electronic resources (the SNL's digitized catalogue, the catalogue of Slovak libraries since 1830, the current national bibliography, the catalogue of the old and the rare printings before 1830, the retrospective national bibliography, Slovak regional bibliography).

VIKS will help coordinate SNL projects that include document protection, library services – micromedia digitization (Hybrid camera), protective

microfilming and lamination of the newspapers and magazines in Slovak Republic, and Project UNESCO on the World Memory – Slovakia). Regarding Hybrid camera, offers were made, but the recipient will not be announced until the end 2002.

8. LEGAL DEPOSIT OF MATERIALS

There were no changes in the legal deposit law. For the immediate future, closer cooperation will be arranged with the Association of Publishers in Slovakia.

The legal deposit has worked properly thus far because of the demands placed on the publishers to deliver missing documents that were registered in ISBN and ISMN national agency that is located in the national library.

9. ACQUISITION

The most significant indicator of the SNL's acquisition policy is the successful receipt of documents. In comparing the number of materials acquired in 2000 (15,642 units) and 2001 (20,829 units), one can expect continuation of this positive trend. It is also worth noting that the increase in expenditures for acquisition is significantly higher. The 2001 budget of 100,000 EUR is up from 2000's total of 80,000 EUR.

Notable acquisitions relating to national heritage

- R.P. Mathias Patri e Societe iesv Concionum Sylva Nova seu Auctiorium in Dominicas et Festa Totius Anni,...Coloniae Agrippinae, Sumptibus Viduae Ioannis Widenfeld (1663);
- Manuscripts of outstanding authors such as Bozena Slancikova-Timrava, Jan Kostra, Dusan Kuzel, and others;
- Music manuscripts of Slovak composers such as Ivan Hrusovsky, Ilja Zeljenka, Tibor Andrasovan;
- Documentaries, works of art, numismatic collections, period photographs, etc.

10. PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION

The Slovak National Library is the Republic's center for the restoration, preservation and conservation of historical and contemporary documents. The Government's program for the preservation, stabilization, and conservation of historical documents has been developed, and in July 2002, it was approved for five years, with the SNL as program coordinator. It is important to note here that deacidification of wooden material is critical technology to prevent its aging, and the abovementioned program will look for solutions on how to apply that program in the country's libraries.

The Department of Document Restoration and Preservation has long been an important part of the SNL. Its craftsmanship in restoring and preserving old documents was recognized by the International Committee of the 4th Bienale of Book Art, in Martin in 2001. The Committee dedicated a special award "for its unique contributions in the field book restoration". In January 2002, the Department's professionalism as a research center was accredited by the Accreditation Committee.

Major microfilm program:

The National Program of protective microfilming of the serials in the Slovak Republic.

Objectives:

-Preservation and release for public use of 23 important cultural and historical serials, within the years 2002-2006;

- Improvements of microfilming technology in Slovakia's public libraries;
- Participation in the European cooperative structure EROMM;

Three generations of microfilms have been produced so that:

- a) An archive negative microfilm exists for the purpose of long term archiving;
- b) A matrix negative exists for making copies for the public;
- c) Microfilm copies replace the need for handling original documents.

Archive microfilms have been stored at Diviaky Castle, under special climate controls, as part of the SNL's strategy in the event of some natural or man-made disaster.

11. SERVICES TO READERS

a) New developments in reader services/lending services

The Slovak National Library has completed the installation of the automated ALEPH300 system for its users. The system provides for all manner of loan transactions: reader registration; ordering and registration of loans, extensions, and loan reminders. These transactions can be done via Internet since the SNL's catalogue is now available on it. The Library's Automated loan system took five years to complete. Now, the preparation of transition to automated loan system ALEPH 500 has started in SNL.

b) Electronic Library Services

The Slovak National Library provides readers with access to in-house and external information sources via the Internet. The SNL is integrated into the eIFL Direct program - electronic information for libraries. This program offers services from EBSCO Publishing databases, which co-ordinates these services in Slovakia's libraries, and establishes the national consortium LibNet Direct Slovakia.

c) Charging for services, policy and changes

SNL loan services, International Loan Services (ILS) and free Internet access. Paid services of SNL:

- xeroxes of articles in ILS;
- ILBL (International Loan between Libraries) - 1 voucher IFLA per 1 item
- copies of articles in ILBL - 1 voucher IFLA per 1-30 pages
- search services - 100 Sk per 1 made search

SNL has combined its fees for ILS and ILBL in scholarly libraries in the Slovak Republic.

d) Major changes in use of the library

SNL services use electronic information sources via Internet, for searching in fulltext databases, for obtaining copies of articles in digital form. SNL has free use for electronic mail and writing texts in WORD or WordPad etc. to their users.

e) Major changes in admission rules

SNL has established a microfilm study room. This room provides access to periodicals on microfilm, thus preserving the originals for the future. The most important achievement for 2001 was the opening of a separate room for Internet use, which has increased public access to the Internet.

f) Document supply services

SNL is using electronic catalogues via Internet, for use of electronic loan requests from Slovak or foreign libraries, and obtaining copies of articles from foreign libraries in an electronic format via variously systems, such as JASON in ILS and ILBL.