

National and University Library Ljubljana, Slovenia - Annual Report 1994

The National and University Library (NUL) was established in 1774. The Library's collection comprises some 2 million volumes of printed books and periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, incunabula, cartographic and pictorial materials, music scores, government and official publications, etc.

Library in politics

Changes in political and social system in the area which former Yugoslavia used to include have had impact on the way national libraries operate. Till 1991 national libraries were sending to and receiving from each other copies of their national imprints (on the basis of the legal deposit mechanism). The profession had agreed uniform cataloguing and classification practices.

Slovenia became an independent country in 1991. Since that time NUL has been receiving legal deposit copies, covering imprints published in Slovenia only.

Financial support for National and University Library is provided mainly by the Ministry of Culture.

Legislation

The new Library Bill will bring about some novelties, concerning mainly involvement of computer and information centers in the library and information system.

NUL has provided a draft of the new Legal Deposit Act. The Act will probably impose a radical change in the number of copies to be deposited (5 copies instead of 16). Till nowadays all regional (parent) libraries and the two Slovenian Academic Libraries in Trieste and Klagenfurt are intitled to receive legal deposit copies.

The new building

National and University Library has been striving for many decades to solve out acute room problems. The old building was initially intended to house 230,000 volumes, but now we are close to 2 million.

In order to solve the problem a new project has been put forward and investment of about 100 million DEM will be needed to complete it. The Government and the municipal authorities will release this amount within a five-year time according to the law which was passed in 1994.

Automation

NUL has updated the Slovenian National Bibliography within COBIB database (which was started in 1988) with 3620 monograph records, 276 new serial titles and 23,538 articles. The annual increase of inputs in the local database (reaching the total number of 250,000) is 39,000 records of all types. NUL has made considerable efforts in organising supervision of correctness and consistency of records in COBIB database.

A demo version of CD-ROM of the Slovenian National Bibliography containing monographs 1989-1995 has been issued.

Project for the retrospective conversion of various card catalogues has been put to action. Project objectives are to convert existing traditional card catalogues of NUL to machine-readable format and to convert the Slovenian Retrospective Bibliography (card files and

printed bibliographies) to appropriate databases, structured in UNIMARC/B format, making thus inventories of Slovenian cultural heritage electronically available for word-wide scholarly exchange of information.

Training course for end users were introduced to maximize the use of local and networked (client/server) OPACs and Internet information tools, as well as continuing education to enable library professionals all over Slovenia to catalogue and search data in the COBISS/COBIB system involving numerous introductory and advanced training courses.

Conservation and preservation of the collections

The Ministry of Culture allocates special funds for preservation, conservation and microfilming purposes. Since those funds are far from sufficient (6 million SIT = 75,000 DEM), a special action involving sponsors was started several years ago under the name Adopt a Book. Bodies acting as sponsors for endangered rare books and manuscripts help overcome the deficiency in Government funding.

Public relations

There is no special Public Relations Department within NUL at all.

Despite this fact communication with targeted audience was fairly good. As 1994 represented a milestone in passing legislation, related to the new construction, there was a strong need to make the project familiar to the public. To achieve that the Library published several articles in the main Slovenian daily newspaper. Problems and issues encountered by the new building were represented in a special TV broadcast and 20-minute video was produced, centered upon acute room problem and the new construction.

NUL prepared 9 expositions, concentrated on specific topics and based on its own holdings. Exposition of the 12th century Sticna monastery manuscripts was organized in co-operation with the Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek.

In this period 6 press conferences were given, following the publication of 6 facsimile and ex-libris editions, based on originals held at NUL.

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