

CENL 2000

Sweden. Annual report for the CENL 2000

Dr. Tomas Lidman, National librarian

In this report I cover main events in the life of the Royal library, National library of Sweden (KB), 2000.

Management

In September the 22nd the Government's bill for the next four years R&D came *Forskning och förnyelse (prop. 2000/01:3)*. This is a very important document for all the institutions in the country working in the sector of higher education such as universities, research institutions, academies etc. Scientific information plays an important role in the bill and more than five pages (out of a total of 200) were dealing with the National library and scientific libraries. The importance of libraries were heavily stressed. What was especially urgent for the Government to comment, was the positive development of the national system LIBRIS, run by the National library, which today includes almost 200 libraries, and has some days a search frequency of more than 120 000. The Government said it will strongly support the future development of the system.

Another important task the National library bear, mentioned in the bill, is to co-ordinate the library-contracts with the publishers of electronic journals. The importance of this duty has increased through the years and the Government decided to subsidize the uphandling for the year 2000 with 15 Million SKR (1,65 M.ECU). For 2001 the subsidize will be 6,5 Million SKR (0,75 M.ECU).

The Government also expressed it's satisfaction with the library's handling of new electronic media and commented the modernisation KB had undergone since the inauguration of the new building in 1997.

Handling of electronic publications

In the above mentioned bill the very much longed-for new legal deposit law for electronic publications was discussed. The Government stated that we have to wait until the new EU-directives concerning copy-write is given, before a new law can be passed. Assisted by sophisticated lawyers and advisors, the library's policy to capture the Swedish part of the web was finally accepted. However, we are still not allowed to show anything and the information, which today exceeds more than 24 million html-pages, rests peacefully in our computers.

Funding

All in all, the Government bill ended in a proposal that the budget for the National library should be strengthened with 25 million SKR (2,8 M.ECU) per year from 2001. This was a very positive message and meant that the activity next year will be more normal.

The fiscal year of 2000 has been a difficult one. Due to rising costs for rents and maintenance of the building the budget for 2000 was inadequate. The investment rate in new equipment fell dramatically and some very urgent projects had to be postponed. The new situation with the clear support by the government stabilised the situation.

Information technology and networks

The modernisation of the nationwide LIBRIS-system is still not finished. In the report to CENL 1999 I mentioned that KB signed a contract with *Dynix GMBH* for a delivery of the *Horizon* system late 1999. Until september 2000 nothing had happened and KB decided to break up the contract. At the beginning of 2001 a new bid was sent out. A new system can not be working before the end of 2001. The delay causes a lot of problems for the whole library community in Sweden and it is also very costly for KB.

The digital library

Together with national institutions such as the National Archive, the National Museum and the Central Board of National Antiquities, KB is running a very ambitious project which aim is to establish a common platform for digitisation of all kinds of material. The project starts really from the beginning and tries to avoid all the mistakes done through the years. The ideology behind has met much understanding and fundrising for the project has therefore not been too difficult. It is a two-years work and contacts with other European cultural institutions are vital.

Apart from that, the library has given priority to digitise old manuscripts, posters and Swedish material before 1700. Together with Scandinavian national libraries KB digitise old newspapers.

Cultural events

The most observed exhibition through the last 25 years was presented in the beginning of the year. It was an overview of the 20th century's Swedish posters called *I blickfånget* (In the Catch of the Eye). The publicity was overwhelming. It was reviewed in the largest daily newspapers and also presented in different TV-channels. The scenography was unusual for KB. The seperate posters were not really commented. It was up to the viewer to get information about the content. He could have some advice by the way the material was organised. For example, a new poster trying to convince a person to by a certain kind of coffee, was presented

together with an old one doing the same, and the impression you got was rather surprising. A beautiful catalogue was also published. It is now on tour to different places in the country.

Between March and May KB observed the new translation of the Bible with an exhibition and during autumn we had a large exhibition of children's books. The publisher *B. Wahlström* celebrated the fact that from the start in the beginning of 1900 up to 2000 they had published more than 2500 books for children and young adults. This exhibition also got a lot of good publicity and had a rather imposing number of visitors.

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