

CENL 1999

## **Sweden, annual report for the CENL 1999**

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In this short report I have chosen to cover the most important events in the library's life of 1999.

#### *Management*

The Royal Library, national library of Sweden (KB), made an evaluation of its external services in 1998. A report was published 1999. The result of this survey gave us some very interesting information. A majority of our visitors were men (60%) and as much as 90% also came from either the city of Stockholm or its close suburbs. We also found out that 15% of the visitors used the library for the first time, and this information was really new for us. We had expected a much lower figure. An other interesting result was that newcomers spent 56 minutes in the library and those who visited the library each day spent 3 hours and 16 minutes.

We have made some changes of the organisation as a consequence of the survey. Most significant are perhaps changes in the information desk and a stronger priority of different kinds of user education. A service which hitherto has been provided very poorly.

Together with the Board of the library the overall vision-statements were revised. The idea is that we every second year should look upon strategies and test however they correspond with the realities under which we are working. To summarise this work 1999, we may conclude saying that the user is put in the very forefront. The new document stresses the importance of the service to them.

#### *Handling of electronic publications etc.*

2. The new legal-deposit law is still not yet accepted by the parliament. The so called Electronic-Legal-Deposit-Investigation, *E-pliktutredningen*, which presented its proposals in the autumn 1998, is still waiting for a reaction by the Government. However, in the mean-time the NL has got some extra funding to be able to collect and store the electronic material captured from the Swedish part of Internet. This work started in 1996, *Kulturarw3*, and so far (end 1999) six different harvestings has been made with the result that a total of 36 Million web-pages are stored in the computers. 1999 we gave high priority to the search functions, and it is now possible to find material from all six harvestings and you can follow and analyse the development of different home-pages. But we are not yet allowed to present the information for the public.

3. The re-built library opened in 1997. Due to a favourable economic situation the NL could use a huge sum of extra fundings 1997-99, which have been saved during

the years of reconstruction, for development purposes This means that we today have a high technological standard, that a lot of IT-projects has been undertaken, and that the digitalisation of our collection has started in an ambitious way. We also have been able to staff all our new reading-rooms and the exhibitions activities has been extensive. We are now living under poorer conditions. There are no real cuts – but the ordinary budget has not been revised since 1997 and the savings are gone. What we have done to bring down the expencies, is that we have made some changes in the temporary staff, some 25 persons have left the library. The investment-programme in technology is also modified. These changes will hopefully lead to a balanced budget 2001.

### *Information technology and networks*

7. The integrated library system Aleph was introduced in April. Until the end of the year a massive work has been invested to make sure the system will function well. The system has fundamentally changed the working-conditions for most of our staff and certainly for all our users. Local loans in a NL are problematic and the solutions we have chosen are still undergoing development. But the users are satisfied – they can now order their books etc from their home-computers – and the public access to the NL has really increased. An average day some 6 500 persons visits our home-page searching for information about the KB.

The LIBRIS-system is also undergoing changes. As several other NL, we have experienced that a system for a modern union catalogue (for a region or for a country), doesn't really exist on the market. The contract with the company Dynix GMBH for a Horizon delivery signed in 1998, has not been fulfilled and so far, we have not seen the end of this story. The web-version of LIBRIS has aprox. 120 000 vistors each day and is probably the most used public database in the country.

In February we made a very dramatic decision. We decided to run most of our computersystems, economic and administrative systems as well as information systems such as Aleph, Libris etc, in our own organisation. This meant that we had to develop our competence in maintenance of both the hardware and the software and that we also must build a sophisticated computer-hall in the library. A project was set up and by the end of the year the organisation was settled and formed and the computer-hall was ready to store the equipment at the cost of approximately 1.100000 ECU. The main reason for this development was of course to save money. Our maintenance costs of all our IT-investments had risen too much and we now hope to control them better.

### *Legal deposit*

9. I mentioned above that we still are waiting for a new legal deposit law. The report *E-plikturedningen* (1998) draw up the new lines for the law but the government has so far not reacted with a formal proposal.

### *Cultural events*

The Swedish novelist, August Strindberg (1849-1912), celebrated his 150<sup>th</sup> birthday during 1999 and a large exhibition was shown to celebrate his memory. A beautiful volume in which most of his different talents were analysed, was published, *August Strindberg: diktare och mångfrestare*, ed. by Margareta Brundin. Both the exhibition and the book was reviewed and commentated in the daily newspapers and on TV.