



## ANNUAL REPORT TO CENL 2023

Country: **Serbia**  
Library: **National Library of Serbia**  
Director: **Vladimir Pištalo, PhD**  
Mailing address: **Skerliceva 1, 11000 Beograd**  
Telephone: **+381112434 091** Fax: **+381112451289**  
Web: **<https://nb.rs/>**  
E-mail: **nbs@nb.rs**

Full version of the report (in Serbian) is available at: <https://nb.rs/izvestaji-i-planovi-2/>

### **Mission**

The National Library of Serbia provides universal access to information by comprehensively collecting, cataloguing and making available the recorded knowledge from Serbia and other countries. The Library promotes multiculturalism and diversity of cultures and ideas. The National Library of Serbia supports true values in Serbian society, based on knowledge, culture, education, morality and tolerance.

### **Legal status**

The Library has been founded and financially supported by the Serbian Government and reports to the Ministry of Culture. The current Law on Libraries dates from 14 July 2011.

### **Management of the Library**

The National Library of Serbia management includes Governing Board, Director, Monitoring Board and four Deputy Directors.

### **Major achievements and general overview of activities**

#### Regular activities in collecting, processing, and preserving materials

Regular activities in collecting, processing, and preserving library and information materials and sources were carried out according to the planned schedule and usual procedures. Storage capacities in the depot were optimized again this year by redistributing parts of the collection to ensure space for the influx of current production.

Web archiving: selective collection of content from the national internet domain also continued successfully.

#### Revision of the Book Collection

The revision of the book collection followed the dynamics of previous years, with certain sections now fully processed, entered into the electronic database, and electronically scanned.



### Usage of Materials

The number of library users also followed usual trends (over 8,000 registered users, over 120,000 visits), with an increase in remote users. The number of services provided to users and the information corresponds to the number of user inquiries.

### Scientific Information

Work continued on the KoBSON programs - the Consortium of Serbian Libraries for Unified Acquisition and DOI Serbia - promoting scientific journals published in Serbia and their inclusion in international exchange.

### National project eScience

Successful cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation on the eScience project continued. In 2023, the OAI/PMH protocol was established for data retrieval from the COBISS.SR system into eScience, so all bibliographic records of interest to science in Serbia are automatically pulled.

### Protection of Materials

Efforts to protect old and rare library materials, both in the National Library of Serbia and other libraries, were carried out as prescribed by law and to the extent that met the needs (10,481 sheets of paper-based library materials, 248 units of non-book materials on paper, 72 bindings, 40 protective folders and boxes (acid-free)). The conservation team was also engaged throughout the year in protecting the materials of the Holy Monastery of Hilandar (Mount Athos, Greece)

### Arrangement of NLS Archival Materials

Throughout the year, archival materials about the National Library of Serbia were arranged, and guidelines for their use were defined, considering the high interest of researchers in this type of material in 2023, due to the organization of professional gatherings for which works requiring historical review were prepared.

### Digital Platform Virtual Library of Serbian Manuscripts and Acquisition of Digital Images of Serbian Manuscripts from Abroad

The creation of an appropriate digital platform is a prerequisite for adequately transferring the operations of the Archaeographic Department - including the creation of archaeographic descriptions - into the virtual world, as well as for collecting digital images of Cyrillic manuscripts in the country and Serbian ones abroad (based on which virtual libraries will be formed according to various criteria), accompanied by verified, scientifically based, and organized metadata and other texts.

The immediate goal of acquiring digital images of Serbian manuscripts from abroad is to continue the decades-long activity of providing quality working material for the needs of our



scientific community and the Department itself, while the long-term goal is to collect a critical mass of digitized materials to launch the Virtual Library of Serbian Manuscripts.

#### Centre for Mutual Cataloguing of the Republic of Serbia

In 2023, new fourth-generation COBISS software was installed: COBISS Cat and COBISS Lib. Seven new libraries were included in the COBISS.SR mutual cataloguing system, and five are currently in the process of inclusion. Currently, the COBISS.SR system connects 262 libraries and 1,532 librarians working in the system, which contains nearly 4,000,000 bibliographic records.

#### Digitization of Core Functions

In 2023, the work plan for all core functions was fully met. In addition to regular tasks, the Department for Core Functions this year checked the Central Library Register and aligned the data in the central register with the district registers of core libraries. This created the basis for the digitization of documentation from the Register.

#### Digital Collections

We highlight the collection of Old and Rare Books kept in Special Collections. So far, a total of 56 books have been digitized. A thematic collection "NLS Remembers" was created, dedicated to the publications of our institution. It contains four sub-collections (Books, Compositions dedicated to the opening of the NLS building, Serial Publications, and Photographs) and a total of 249 digital objects.

#### Cooperation with the National Library of Israel

This year was marked by massive digitization of Jewish periodicals in the National Library of Serbia, as part of cooperation with the National Library of Israel. In cooperation with the University Library "Svetozar Marković", the Matica Srpska Library, and the City Library of Subotica, 21,130 pages from 1,657 issues of Jewish periodicals published in the former Yugoslavia were digitized.

#### Librarian Education

Exceptional results were achieved in the field of continuous professional development. The continuous professional development programs of the National Library of Serbia were attended by 650 librarians from Serbia. A total of 16 COBISS courses were organized, attended by 198 participants.

#### Regional Meeting on Core Functions *BiblioVez-e*

The Department for Core Functions initiated the establishment of the professional meeting BiblioVez-e, which will henceforth be held every two years. The first meeting was held in April 2023 under the title "The Meaning and Duration of Core Functions in Librarianship: Common Foundations in the Region". The meeting was dedicated to the jubilee: seventy years



since the founding of the Library Center of the People's Republic of Serbia, which was the precursor of the Core Department in the National Library of Serbia.

#### COBISS Day

In 2023, the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Center for Mutual Cataloging in the COBISS bibliographic system, developed by the Institute of Information Sciences in Maribor (IZUM), was marked. On the last day of November, NLS and IZUM jointly organized COBISS Day and a conference, when librarians from all libraries in Serbia using this system gathered for the first time.

#### Application of Artificial Intelligence

The challenge reported by the National Library of Serbia through the GovTech programme of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, implemented by the Innovation Fund, was selected for resolution through the application of artificial intelligence. It involves correcting errors in optically recognized text in the Serbian language, a problem faced by all libraries involved in digitization and generating full text from digital images. Solving this problem will contribute to the development of language technologies for the Serbian language, and thus to digital humanities.

#### Serbian Authors in VIAF

The National Library of Serbia, together with the Matica Srpska Library and the University Library "Svetozar Marković", as well as all other libraries working in the COBISS bibliographic system, is building the normative database of personal names CONOR.RS. The next step is to include records from this database in the International Virtual Authority File (VIAF), so that accurate and relevant data about Serbian authors and their works are available to everyone with a click.

#### Innovation Laboratory for Working with Digital Cultural Heritage

Milena Dobрева McPherson and Sally Chambers held a workshop "Datafication in Libraries" for librarians and researchers at the National Library of Serbia in May 2023. It marked the launch of an innovative laboratory for working with digital cultural heritage at the National Library of Serbia.

#### Aggregator for Europeana

The Aggregator for Europeana at the Department for the Development of the Digital Library has two new partners with whom data aggregation agreements were signed during the year: the University Library "Svetozar Marković" (agreement signed in March) and the City Library of Belgrade (agreement signed in December).

#### Publications and Book Fairs



In 2023, the National Library of Serbia, as a publishing house, published periodical and monographic publications, both independently and as a co-publisher, i.e., in cooperation with other publishing houses, among which the books within the Collected Works of Vladan Desnica and the books of Milorad Pavić (History of Serbian Literature of the Baroque Period, History of Serbian Literature of Classicism, History of Serbian Literature of Pre-Romanticism) stand out.

In the first half of 2023, the National Library of Serbia exhibited its publishing production at the International Book Fair in Novi Sad, the International Book Fair in Leipzig, the International Book Fair in Banja Luka, the International Belgrade Book Fair, and the International Book Fair in Ljubljana.

### Exhibitions

In 2023, the following exhibitions were set up in the National Library of Serbia:

- "The World in Picture - Picture of the World" by the Institute for Studies of Culture and Christianity;
- "Half a Century of the National Library of Serbia Building: April 6, 1973 - April 6, 2023" by Mirjana Simoski and Dušan Zlokolica;
- "New Belgrade - 70 Years" by Dragan Milošević;
- "Songs of Wood - Woodcut Exhibition" by Gerhard Hermans;
- "Day of Slavic Literacy - Exhibition of Books by Macedonian Authors Translated into Serbian" by the organization Makedonijum;
- "Centenary of the Birth of Wisława Szymborska" by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Belgrade;
- "Cultural Routes in Serbia" by the Council of Europe;
- "Europe: 12 Maps, One Project" by the Embassy of Spain in Belgrade (in the frame of Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union);
- "Catalogs and Catalogers in Photographs" by the National Library of Serbia;
- "The Disappearing World - Photo Exhibition" by Marko Laković;
- "Manuscripts of the SPC Museum - Collection of Radoslav Grujić" by the SPC Museum.

Outside the premises of the National Library of Serbia, in 2023, an exhibition of paintings from the art collection of the National Library of Serbia titled "Painting the Temple of the Book" was set up in the Gallery of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

### Literary and Panel Programs and Events

In 2023, the National Library of Serbia hosted sixty literary and panel programs, events, and literary festivals with around a hundred guests from the country and abroad.

In 2023, record viewership and attendance of the national library's literary and panel programs were noted on the Library social networks, with a total of 200,000 video content views (in delayed viewing). The total number of physical attendees of the literary and panel programs was 6,000, and about 3,000 attended live online.



In 2023, traditional events were held in the presence of high-ranking officials, prominent professionals, and a large audience: "Day of the National Library of Serbia," "Remembrance of the Destruction of the National Library of Serbia in World War II," and the "Desanka Maksimović Foundation's Ceremonial Academy - Behind the Shield of Poetry," during which the exhibition "My World" was opened, marking 125 years since the birth of Desanka Maksimović and 30 years of the Desanka Maksimović Foundation.

As part of the "Presentations" program cycle, works by prominent artists and scientists from the country and abroad were showcased.

For the first time, literary *matinées* dedicated to Charles Simic, Dragoslav Mihailović, and Dubravka Ugrešić were held at the National Library of Serbia.

Cycle "Writer in the Library, Evenings at Kosančić"

The programs were initially dedicated to elementary school students and their parents, then to lovers of naive and marginal art and contemporary Serbian literature: Uroš Petrović, Dejan Aleksić, Dr. Ivana Bašević Antić, Danica Vukićević, Slobodan Vladušić, and Uglješa Šajtinac. Program activities within the Center for Slavic Cultures also continued.

#### International Cooperation

By participating in 15 professional organizations, the NLS confirmed its presence and good results in the field of international cooperation in library and information activities, thus contributing to the further development of the profession in Serbia: IFLA, OCLC, CENL, EBLIDA, LIBER, ISSN, ISBN, ISMN, ISAN, eIFL, IKARUS, UDK, IIPC, IMPACT, Francophone Digital Network (Le Réseau Francophone Numérique).

#### Awards

Awards were given: "Vladan Desnica," "Desanka Maksimović," "Meša Selimović," "Miloš Crnjanski," "Politikin Zabavnik," Special Award of the Association of Literary Translators of Serbia, "Stojan Novaković," "Janko Šafarik."

#### Infrastructure Works

Among the capital investments in infrastructure works, the NLS implemented solar panels and began the phased replacement of lighting in the depot with energy-saving bulbs, thereby promoting green agendas and sustainable environmental development.

### **Key Facts and Figures**

#### Acquisitions

Books: 31.802

Periodicals: 71.973

Non-book material: 6.637

e-legal deposit: 26.460 PDF files



НАРОДНА БИБЛИОТЕКА СРБИЈЕ  
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SERBIA

---

#### Users

8.138 Library members

260.540 accesses to KOBSON (Serbian Library Consortium for Coordinated Acquisition of Scientific Information) web site (kobson.nb.rs)

1.516.983 downloaded full text scientific articles/books through KOBSON

Social networks followers:

- Facebook: 17.314
- X: 3.626
- Instagram: 5.902
- LinkedIn: 499

#### Staff

235

#### Budget

7.6 M EUR