



National Library of the Czech Republic

Libraries and Librarianship in the Czech Republic

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National Library of the Czech Republic



Libraries and
Librarianship
in the Czech
Republic



Historical Introduction

Libraries in the Czech Republic have a rich history. Their beginnings date as far back as the 9th century when collections of Old Slavonic books from Great Moravia came into being. Since the 10th century, there have been collections in the Prague Bishopric comprising of religious books – Psalters, hymn books, Bibles, prayer books, and later on also chronicles and legends about the lives of saints. Similar collections of books existed from the 11th century at the oldest monasteries established at that time mainly by the Benedictines. Very precious illuminated manuscripts appeared also at the court of the Czech princes at the time, often representing a part of the royal treasures. One example of this is the King Vratislav II Coronation Book of Gospels, known also as the Vysehradsky Codex dating from 1086. The monastery libraries of the late Middle Ages contained primarily documents of a religious character made at scriptoria or scribes' workshops. At the same time, however, the first books on secular motives emerged and the first secular libraries were established. Municipal scriptoria started "producing" the first ledgers, property books, debtor books, and law books.


With the founding of Charles University in Prague in 1348, the county's first university library was established, bringing about a real breakthrough in the development of libraries.

In addition to religious books, it also began to collect books from the most varied areas of knowledge – law, medicine, astronomy, natural science, geography, chronicles, etc.

From the 16th century onwards, there was also a more systematic establishment of library collections at castles.



TIRSCH, Ignác. *Codex pictorius mexicanus*, NK ČR



The aristocrats' libraries were predominantly secular, being concerned with travel, only later on, especially in the 17th century, there was an increase in books on the natural sciences, law, politics and astrology.

The development of libraries in the Czech lands after the invention of the printing press was fundamentally affected by the Hussite wars, and later on especially by the Thirty Years' War. Even the Royal Library at the Prague Castle began to stagnate. Subsequent progress was linked to the development of private libraries (especially those which belonged to the nobility, and later those of the leading figures of culture and the intelligentsia), the development of public libraries (society, municipality, and local libraries), and semi-public libraries (school and parish libraries, lending libraries, and reading rooms).

In response to the entrepreneurial activities of the nobility in agriculture and industry, the aristocratic collections developed into specialised libraries containing literature on agriculture, law, and trade. From the 17th and particularly the 18th century, influenced by the enlightenment, there was a growth of natural science collections. In some cases, even lists of books were emerging, and the administration of collections was entrusted to authorised professionals – librarians.

From the end of the 18th century on, public reading rooms began to appear in the Czech lands; in the first half of the 19th century, municipal public libraries were being founded by local reading societies. Owing to the increasing number of printed books and to the growth of

public literacy, books became a cultural necessity for a significant portion of the population. The increase in the number of public libraries in towns and smaller municipalities was proof of the development of reading culture in the Czech lands.

By the end of the 19th century, no society would be without its own larger or smaller library, usually housed at its own premises. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the first libraries appeared also at the offices of state administration and local government with stock of juridical, administrative, and financial literature.

The collections of large specialized and scientific libraries also expanded rapidly, some of them already subsidized by the state administration or local government (University Library, National Museum Library, etc.). With the development of large public and specialized libraries, their administration and activities became increasingly highly specialized. The foundations of librarianship were being laid: the first manuals and textbooks on librarianship appeared and the first courses in librarianship were organised.

With the establishment of the independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, there was a further great upsurge of public libraries. In 1919 the Czechoslovak parliament passed its first library act, according to which each municipality was obliged to establish and operate a public library. The development of new branches of science and institutions saw an increase in the number of special and scientific libraries: numerous technical,

commercial, juridical, medical, agricultural, and statistical libraries were established.

The new big Parliament Library was established in Prague; librarianship became an official field of study. The scientific subject of "bibliology" was established and librarianship became a study subject at universities. Czech public libraries were destroyed to a considerable extent during the Nazi occupation of the Czech lands in the years 1939–1945. Books on anti-fascist, democratic, and progressive themes were removed from libraries. After the liberation of the country in 1945, public libraries began to develop once again. The Library Act of 1919 was re-introduced, allowing public libraries to replace as many discarded books as possible as well as buying new titles. The international inter-library loan service was developed. Secondary schools of librarianship were established and librarianship became an independent field of study at universities.

In 1959 a new Library Act was passed creating a unified library system. Pursuant to this Act, public administration became responsible for providing financial, material, and personnel support, but this of course was in keeping with the State's Communist ideology. Strict censorship, especially after 1970, led to the discarding of thousands of books whose authors were deemed to be incompatible with the regime. These books were collected and placed in so called special collections of selected scientific libraries. Further down-grading took place with significant restrictions on imports of foreign literature.

After the political and social changes in November 1989, Czech librarianship began to develop on a new democratic basis. Books previously withdrawn because of censorship were returned to library shelves; prohibited books were published in large numbers and found their way into library collections. Library services were extended so as to provide the public with open access to cultural values and information sources. The essential automation of library processes was accelerated.

The development of libraries in the Czech lands has always been an important indicator of the cultural level of the population. It is evident that libraries have always been a part of the nation's cultural life. The degree of their development shows the level of importance that societies during the various historical periods attributed (and continue to attribute) to culture and especially to libraries as its substantial part.





The Development of Libraries in the Recent Period in the Age of the Knowledge Society

Before 1989, Czech librarianship could be proud – and rightfully so – of the extensive network of both public and special libraries. Even in 1990, the Czech Republic – at that time within Czechoslovakia – had a total of 8,364 public libraries and their branches. This meant that there was a public library in practically every locality. There were 1,239 inhabitants per library and 5.7 books per inhabitant. In that year, the total number of books in public libraries was almost 60 million. Since the 1990s, Czech librarianship has gone through significant changes. Public libraries have largely come under local administration. In the early 1990s, the establishment and financing of public libraries was put under the voluntary care of local government (pursuant to Act No. 367/1990 Coll.). The still existing 1959 act on the unified system of libraries ceased to operate, though still officially valid. The hierarchically organised network of public libraries under this law ceased to exist. In 1991, the division of the country into regions was done away with along with the regional libraries. Until 2001, they as the “state scientific libraries” were managed and financed by the Ministry of Culture. District libraries were being gradually dissolved and transferred under local administration or amalgamated with other district facilities. This led to the gradual disintegration of the system of cooperation among libraries – dis-

trict and central systems in which libraries with professional librarians had provided highly professional assistance and specific services to small libraries that had been managed by volunteer librarians, thereby guaranteeing high quality library and information services to the public.

Since 1993, an unmanaged transformation has been taking place, dependent only on the understanding and “enlightenment” of district offices (which continued in effect until the end of 2001) and district offices, to see if any of the former district libraries could fulfil their regional and supra-local functions and to what extent. It was also evident that the number of library workers as well as the budgets of these “transformed” libraries continued to decrease simultaneously. The problem was not successfully solved until the new Library Act of 2001, which has the subsidization of regional functions and services by the state.

In 1990, the Czech Republic had, in addition to public libraries, more than 4,600 libraries of other kinds – school, university, medical, technical, and academic libraries. The transformation process has negatively impacted some of these libraries, although in the case of university libraries, the influence on development has been quite positive. The worst situation has come about in technical libraries

which have mostly been abolished since the privatisation of industrial concerns. Despite these problems, the development of libraries in the Czech Republic has been on the move. Many libraries now being administered by local offices have the best conditions to date for their readers and activities. Today, new or reconstructed buildings are also seen, as are other forms of financial and material subsidy by cities and other localities.

A new situation came about at the beginning of 2001 with the implementation of state administration and local government reform that had been long in the planning. The Czech Republic was divided into 14 regions – an act of decentralisation, granting important powers to them. The state scientific libraries were transferred under the regional administrations, while in those regions where such libraries did not exist, new regional libraries were established. At the beginning of 2002, the new Library Act was passed, helping to solve many of the above-stated issues.

Until 2004, the execution of regional functions of regional libraries was funded centrally by the Ministry of Culture. Since the stabilization of the regions in 2005, the execution of regional functions of libraries has been funded from regional budgets. The Ministry of Culture issued a guideline for its securing and coordination within the territory of the Czech Republic with the stipulation that the National Library of the CR is charged with state-wide coordination and assessment of regional functions.

The long-term objective is improving the quality and accessibility of public library and information services to citizens, whether it regards the library hours of operation, the collection offered and other information sources, Internet access or spatial arrangement of the library. A government guideline has defined the standard of services for libraries created by municipalities and regions within the territory of the CR, whose assessment takes place on the principle of benchmarking.

Thanks to the multiple-year Library Internetization Programme, whose objective was to enable libraries providing public library and information services pursuant to Act no. 257/2001 Coll. of 29 June 2001 on Libraries and Terms of Operating Public Library and Information Services (Library Act), as amended, and that are filed in the register Ministry of Culture, fulfilment of conditions set forth on them by this regulation, specifically the enabling of access to information on the Internet, around 4,500 libraries in the CR have been connected to the Internet and connection has been paid. The project is financed by funds from the state budget, with additional co-participation of territorial, local government entities.

Its continuation is being prepared for the future up until 2015, with the purpose of providing the citizens of the CR, via the Internet, access to European cultural heritage, provided among others by the European Digital Library. The Czech Republic's accession to the European Union occurred on May 1, 2004, by which further opportunities opened up for financing the development of libraries (structural funds).

Library Legislation

The development of Czech public libraries in the 20th century was significantly influenced by two library acts.

The first – the General Public Libraries Act 430 of July 22, 1919 – was enormously progressive for its time both by European and world standards. The act was passed by the Czechoslovak Parliament, following the formation of the independent Czechoslovak Republic on October 28, 1918. It imposed an obligation on each of the political municipalities to set up a public library within one or two years, equipped with lending facilities, a reading room, and reference materials. In localities with national minorities, the local authorities were further obliged to establish either an independent minority library or at least a special minority department. The act also determined a minimum fee for maintaining and extending the libraries on a per capita basis. Based on the act, library boards endowed with significant authority were created, and in municipalities of over 10,000 inhabitants, the libraries had to be managed by professional librarians. Thanks to this first Czechoslovak act, a dense network of one public library per 813 inhabitants was created within the first decade of the existence of the Republic. By 1929, virtually every locality had its own public library.

The second – the Unified System of Libraries Act 53 of July, 1959 – approved by parliament during the period under the communist regime, was primarily focused on the strengthening of centralised control over libraries by the setting up of a unified system of libraries, comprising separate networks of libraries – public, school, scientific, university, medical, etc. Each network was headed by a main library that provided methodological assistance to “its libraries”. The State Library of the Czechoslovak Republic, presently the National Library, occupied a special position within the system, as did the Central Library Board. The idea of a unified system of libraries was never completely realised; nevertheless, this overtly “ideological” act significantly strengthened the practical cooperation of libraries of different types. It still remained valid for more than ten years after the political and social changes of November 1989.

On 29 June 2001, **Law No. 257/2001 Coll. of 29 June 2001 on Libraries and Terms of Operating Public Library and Information Services (Library Act)** was passed by the Czech Parliament.

This, **the third** act in the history of Czech librarianship, deals with the issue of public library and information

services, especially public libraries. It does not, however, exclude libraries of different kinds from joining the “system”, provided they offer services to the public. The earlier 1959 act on the unified system of libraries applied to all the libraries operating in what was then Czechoslovakia.

The new act determines the conditions under which a particular library can become a part of the “system of libraries” within the spirit of the act. There are two general points:

1. The operator of the library has to ensure **equal access for all** to public library and information services and other services provided by the library.
2. The operator has to enlist the library in the **register of libraries** kept by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.



The Ministry of Culture manages the register of libraries as a public access information system. At present, more than 6,000 libraries are registered. Many libraries that do not provide public services (e.g. most school libraries) or have not joined, are not a part of the system of libraries to which the library act applies.

Basic library services are all free of charge, Internet access, such as book and periodical lending, verbal information, Internet access and providing information from public sources. Libraries can, however, charge fees for other services.

Libraries covered by this act can obtain state benefits (e.g. in the form of targeted subsidies), and they enjoy an exclusive position as to other related laws and legislative standards (e.g. the copyright act, accounting act).

The library act is linked up with other regulations and recommendations which regulate certain areas of library activities such as inter-library loan services, rules for providing financial subsidies, and standards for providing public library services.

Special regulations also relate to submitting legal deposits. A nationwide legal deposit of all publications is kept by the National Library (2 copies), the Moravian Library in Brno, and The Research Library in Olomouc. Regional libraries receive legal deposit of nonperiodical publications only from those publishers that are located in their region. A compulsory nationwide legal deposit of periodicals is kept by the regional libraries and some specialized libraries.

The Role of the Ministry of Culture

<http://www.mkcr.cz/en>

The Section of Literature and Libraries fulfils the ministry's task as a central body of state administration for the area of literature, book culture, non-periodical print and librarianship:

- it fulfils the function of founder to three allowance organisations (National Library of the Czech Republic, The Moravian Library in Brno, and The K. E. Macan Library and Printing House for the Blind)
- it co-creates lawful legal amendments in the area of library science and literature, as well as legislation that is closely related and bound
- it co-authors guidelines and conceptual materials in the area of librarianship
- it cooperates with other state administrative bodies and local governments when ascertaining the optimum and functional development of librarianship, it assembles and updates data indicating the state of public libraries, mainly maintaining records of libraries pursuant to Sec 5, Act no. 257/2001 Coll. on Libraries and Terms of Operating Public Library and Information Services (Library Services Act)
- it secures activity of the Central Library Council as an advisory, coordination and initiating body of the

ministry for fundamental questions regarding library science

- it provides contacts with professional associations of librarians, writers and translators, and book publishers and distributors
- it organises the National Prize for Literature and the National Prize for Translated Work
- it takes part in organisation of the Prize for the Most Beautiful Czech Book of the Year, providing its link to the international competition "Most Beautiful Book in the World"
- it organises the Library of the Year Award
- it prepares and implements national and specialised book exhibits at book fairs both here and abroad, and cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in organising book exhibitions abroad
- it takes part in activities related to providing support for research and development in the area of libraries
- it prepares and secures financial support to projects in the area of literature and libraries within the framework of the programmes Public Information Services of Libraries, Czech Library (support for purchasing works of literature for libraries), Library

of the 21st Century, Support for Publishing Czech and Translated Literature, Support for Publishing Original Illustrated Creation for Children and Youth, Support for Publishing Literary Periodicals, Literary Events and Other Projects in the Area of Literature, and Support of Translations of Czech Literature Abroad

- it prepares new programmes and subsidy tender proceedings
- it performs public administration control of management of public funding provided from programmes and subsidy proceedings within its scope of operation
- it takes part in preparation of co-organised events in the area of literature, book culture and library science
- it secures operation of an Internet Czech Literature Portal
- it cooperates when securing tasks of the Ministry of Culture arising from the Czech Republic's membership in the European Union, UNESCO and other international organisations

The National Library of the Czech Republic (NL CR)



Financial Support to Library Development and Cooperation

The stability and development of the library system is provided by subsidy programmes that were gradually established in the second half of the 1990s by the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Informatics, Ministry of Health, and at the level of regional administration.

One of the principles of governing subsidy programmes appropriations is the obligation to abide by prescribed standards and to make results obtained in the implementation of projects available also to other libraries. Thanks to that principle, the use of Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2), the UNIMARC, or, rather MARC21 exchange formats, Z39.50 communication protocol and standards for digitizing and microfilming is now a matter of course in Czech libraries. The long-term emphasis on a consistent use of common standards has brought significant effects in mutual cooperation and sharing of information sources and services in recent years.

In 2000, the Czech government adopted a document “State Information Policies”, and prepared a number of programmes in support of exploiting information and communication technologies in all segments of the society. The programme “**Public information services of libraries**” (PISL) designed for libraries documented according to the Library Act, and for associations, whose main work involves library

and information activity and its support funded by the Ministry of Culture is divided into nine sub-programmes dealing with different areas where information technologies are being used in libraries.

- PISL1 of the Programme's Coordination Centre
- PISL2 Extramural training in information technologies for library staff
- PISL3 Establishment of public library information centres
- PISL4 Digital library and archives for library information services
- PISL5 National programme of retrospective conversion of Czech library catalogues
- PISL6 National programme of digitized access to rare documents – Memoriae Mundi Series Bohemica
- PISL7 National programme for microfilming and digital access to documents threatened by degradation of acidic paper – Kramerius
- PISL8 Digital information sources, Uniform Information Gateway and providing access to information sources in the form of multi-licenses
- PISL9 Union catalogue of the Czech Republic, system of national authorities

This programme was complemented by the “Internet for Libraries” project launched by the Ministry of Informatics in 2005. Its aim is to provide high-speed connection to the Internet for all public libraries. At present, 4,500 public libraries have an Internet connection thanks to this programme.

With its primary focus on the purchase of licences to electronic information sources, the programme “Information sources for research and development” of the Ministry of Education is absolutely important for the development of modern services in Czech libraries. This programme gave rise to a completely new type of inter-library cooperation because it supported the establishment and operation of a number of library consortia whose objective is a joint purchase and sharing of licences to electronic information sources. University libraries get their support from the “Universities development programme”.

The R&D programme “Cultural, Artistic and Scientific Knowledge Preservation, for Access and Retrieval”, declared for the years 2006–2011 and intended primarily for large libraries, is funded by the Ministry of Culture. Medical libraries may draw support from the programme “Public Information Services in Health Care” of the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Culture developed two programmes exclusively for public libraries: “Library of the 21st century” is a programme designed to support work with national minorities and integration of foreigners, general access of library services for handicapped citizens, cultural and public education activities, reading and readership and protection of the library fund from unfavourable influences of its environment.

The “**Czech library**” programme is designed to promote the acquisition of original Czech literary works by public libraries. The Ministry of Culture also pays royalties to authors for the lending of audio documents and books in libraries, and it pays bonuses to authors through the National Library of the Czech Republic for use of their works in libraries.

Regional administrations fund the “Auxiliary services programme for small public libraries”. A new impetus for the development of public libraries has come from programmes and funds of the European Union, and they may become even more important in the future. In the initial period, libraries use the funds mainly for the establishment and operation of premises with public access to the Internet, and for the building and reconstruction of libraries.



Libraries and their Organisation

The basic parameters of the system of Czech libraries are set down in the Library Act. The library system comprises:

- a) libraries set up by the Ministry of Culture – the National Library of the Czech Republic, the Moravian Library in Brno and the K. E. Macan Library and Printing House for the Blind;
- b) regional libraries set up by regional governments;
- c) public libraries set up by relevant municipal bodies;
- d) special libraries set up by various institutes.

The centre of the library system is the National Library of the Czech Republic. In the description of their organisation, the libraries will be divided into the following categories:

- *National Library of the Czech Republic*
- *Regional libraries*
- *Public libraries*
- *Special libraries*

System of Libraries of the Czech Republic

Total public libraries including	5,518
The National Library of the CR	1
Moravian Library in Brno	1
Regional libraries	13
Health facilities	122
University libraries	121
School libraries	4,204
Academy of Science of the CR	62
Libraries of museums and galleries	252

The National Library of the Czech Republic

<http://www.nkp.cz>

The National Library of the Czech Republic is the focal point of a library system within which it coordinates specialized, information, educational, analytical, research, standardization, methodological, and consultancy activities. It operates large nation-wide systems and databases such as the Union Catalogue and the Czech National Bibliography, and fulfils other central functions. It is responsible for the permanent preservation of documents published in the Czech Republic and for making them accessible.


The National Library plays an important part in shaping the national library system and in increasing its efficiency. It supports the development of libraries through analytical, methodological and consultancy activities, and processes performance and quality parameters of library activity. It takes part in the coordination of development programmes of libraries. The National Library reports to the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.

The founding of the library was linked to the establishment of Charles University in Prague in 1348 by the Czech King and Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, who donated books to it in 1370. This donation became the basis of college libraries which grew mainly thanks to the bequests and donations of Czech rulers, nobles, university masters and wealthy Prague burghers. When in 1556 Jesuits came

to the Czech lands, they built on the site of the former Dominican monastery of Saint Clement in Prague their Collegium Clementinum, establishing the Order's library there. After the Jesuit order was dissolved in 1773, the Clementinum Library and other Jesuit libraries in Bohemia devolved to the state. In 1777, Empress Maria Theresa (1740–1780) amalgamated the Jesuit and the university libraries founding the Public Royal and Imperial University Library.

The beginnings of the new library are linked with its first director, Karel Rafael Ungar (1744–1807), who began forming the National Library (*Bibliotheca nationalis*) of Czech and Slovak literature, including Czech studies in foreign languages. In 1781, Ungar succeeded in obtaining the first statute on legal deposit, valid throughout the Czech lands from 1807 onward. In 1935 the library was renamed National and University Library. In 1958 its name was changed to *State Library of the Czechoslovak Republic*, and it became the centre of the national library system.

Since 1989, a transformation process has been taking place. In 1990 the library's name was changed to The National Library of the Czech Republic. The position of the National Library as the centre of the public library system was defined in the new Libraries Act of 2001. With support from the Mellon Foundation, library automation using the ALEPH system was begun. Retrospective catalogue conversion is under way; a nationwide electronic Union Catalogue has been set up, and the Uniform Information Gateway portal has been made accessible. Since 2000, the Czech National Bibliography has been published in



electronic format only. Digitisation of rare collections is under way and a digital library and archive of Internet resources is being set up.

The National Library of the Czech Republic is involved in international activities, and is a member of IFLA, CENL, LIBER, CERL and other organisations. It is member of many international non-governmental organisations of which some are national or research library oriented, while others are specialised as e.g. TEI Consortium. Its specialists are members of other important bodies and committees in their personal capacity. The National Library took part in many international projects in the EU Framework Programmes; eContent(Plus), Culture 2000, and Eureka! Programmes. It has also had other projects, mostly related to UNESCO. Currently, running EU projects are: DPE, LiWa, TELplus, EDLnet, and ENRICH, while almost in each EU call for proposals, the National Library was and is applying or co-applying for further projects.

Library Holdings

The National Library administers a collection of more than six million items. Its rarest part is a collection of just under 14,000 manuscripts and almost 200,000 early books. The core of these collections dates back to the 1360, linked with the gradual growth of the colleges of Charles University in Prague. A part of the manuscript section of the National Library is a collection of oriental manuscripts comprising 750 volumes containing Turkish, Arabic, and

Persian manuscripts. The oldest of these dates back to 792 CE. Another interesting part of the National Library collection are the 460 Indian manuscripts written on palm fronds threaded with string.

A component of the National Library is the Slavonic Library housing a valuable collection of literature of the Slavonic nations and of specialized Slavonic studies literature. Among its 800,000 volumes is a rare collection of Old Russian early books, a unique and extensive collection of literature on Russian Revolutionary movements from the beginning of the 20th century, and on the activities of inter-war political exiles from the Soviet Union.

Two collections of the NL CR have been recorded in the UNESCO Memory of the World listing: 1) Collection of medieval manuscripts of the Czech Reformation, 2) collection of periodicals issued by Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian émigrés all over the world in 1818–1945.

Digitized Cultural Heritage

Two national digitisation programmes of libraries are under way in the Czech Republic today, plus other projects in individual institutions and other areas. It can be said that experience has mostly been acquired in the digitisation of rare and endangered library materials, such as manuscripts, old printed books, historical maps, newspapers and journals, old monographs, etc.

Libraries have managed to run large digitisation programmes that are able to annually support a considerable

number of projects. These programmes have their origins in the research and development activities of the National Library developed in cooperation with several smaller Czech software companies. AiP Beroun Ltd. has played the most important role in the digitisation of library materials. The cooperation started in 1992 with the first **UNESCO Memory of the World** digitisation pilot project. Today, the company and the National Library are equal and widely recognized partners operating the Manuscriptorium Digital Library (<http://www.manuscriptorium.eu>). Today it is the largest digital library of manuscripts in Europe and thanks to the EU ENRICH project, it is aggregating the content also from foreign institutions. By the end of 2008, the seamless access to mostly heterogeneous resources will have been provided to the digital data from more than 40 Czech collections, while around 30 foreign institutions have expressed their readiness to share their data as well (in many cases their data are in Manuscriptorium already).

Mostly for work in digitisation and for its international impact including recommendations and training courses, the National Library was awarded the UNESCO Jikji Memory of the World prize in 2005 as the first institution ever.

In addition to the digitisation of rare manuscripts and early books, a long-term archiving of online Internet publications has been launched. The archive of Czech web resources WebArchiv (<http://webarchiv.cz>) has been set up under the R&D project entitled "Registration and preservation of, and access to, Czech resources

available on the Internet". The project has been conducted since 2000 by the National Library in cooperation with the IT Centre and Faculty of Informatics of the Masaryk University in Brno, with financial support from the Ministry of Culture. The project has two main objectives: first, to catalogue online publications as a part of the national output and to integrate these records into the Czech National Bibliography database; second, to store these publications in a deposit system, in order to ensure long-term access to them.



The National Library of the CR (NL CR)

The second national digitisation programme is called **Kramerius** and it has been built partly on the experience acquired in Memoria. However, Kramerius is more specific: its goal is to safeguard and preserve acid paper library materials, especially newspapers, journals and brittle monographs. Its full-scale operation started in 2000, while routine digitisation under the Memoria project had already begun in 1996. The documents at risk are first filmed and then the microfilm is scanned¹. The role of microfilm is to preserve the original information, while the role of the digitalization is to make the information widely accessible. Kramerius is able to film about 1,000,000 pages of documents annually and to digitize up to 400,000 of them. It may have about 1.2 million or more pages in digital form already².

The Manuscriptorium Digital Library

<http://www.manuscriptorium.com>

The Kramerius Digital Library

<http://kramerius.nkp.cz>

¹ Under the research and development programme, a work facility was built from 1997 to 1999 for hybrid reformatting founded on the technology of scanning microfilms and a work facility for simple archiving of digital documents using a robotic audio-cassette library and disk field. In 2003, the technology was expanded to include a hybrid camera enabling microfilming and scanning during one compilation process.

² Digitalized documents are accessed through the application Kramerius, which currently contains five million image files. This grows annually by around one million pages of documents.

Basic National Library Statistics 2008

Total number of items	6,369,900
– of these manuscripts	18,554
– micrographic documents	20,127
– audio-visual documents	40,797
– electronic documents	5,984
Number of serials subscribed to	11,976
Number of open access items	70,775
Acquisition of physical volumes	95,368
Registered readers	30,935
Visitors to the library, total	676,456
Total number of loans	626,682
– of that loans of serials	37,907
Requests for inter-library services, total	22,895
– requests for loans	626,682
– of that those ordered internationally	6,763
Collective education and training events	246
Registered cases of information provided	148,098
Seminars, professional meetings, consultations	10,586
Publications	
– Books	23
– Periodicals	4
Number of study carrels	556
Number of computers for users	56
– of that with Internet connection	34
Library employees (consolidated number)	443

National Digital Library



Digitisation and Digital Preservation in the Czech Republic

The National Digital Library (in Czech 'Národní digitální knihovna') covers an important part of national cultural heritage, since – as demonstrated in the picture above – library documents are among cornerstones of the whole cultural context. The National Digital Library operates in the broader context of the Czech Digital Library.

The figure above illustrates the concept of the Czech Digital Library. Let us start in the middle of the diagram. The centre, or heart, of the whole system called the National Digital Library contains selected digital objects as the core national cultural heritage. These digital objects intended for long-term preservation are digitised analogue documents or born digital materials. They are produced within three large national projects funded by the Ministry of Culture.

Manuscriptorium (<http://www.manuscriptorium.com>) is a system for collecting and making accessible on the internet information on historical book resources, linked to a virtual library of digitised documents.




The **Kramerius** project (<http://kramerius.nkp.cz>) focuses on the preservation of and accessibility to “modern” periodicals, books and other documents in danger of acid paper degradation.

WebArchiv (<http://en.webarchiv.cz>) is a digital archive of Czech web resources that are collected with the aim of their long-term preservation.

Documents owned or produced by any Czech library, museum, archives or other institution can





be selected to be part of the National Digital Library. The digitisation, creation of metadata and preservation of these selected documents are funded by the Ministry of Culture.

Institutions with digital objects not selected for the National Digital Library will also be invited to deposit their data in the Central Digital Repository at their request, but additional funding will be required from other ministries (depending on the different subject areas), regions or institutions. Digital data are produced also by other institutions, but these institutions are not interested in depositing the data in the Central Repository. Digital data stored in local repositories built by such institutions and funded by various ministries, local authorities, individual institutions and corporations can be integrated under the umbrella of national, or international, portals and other integrating tools if those agencies adhere to agreed standards.

Several national grant projects made it possible for a digitisation projects to start in the early 1990s and for Czech website to begin to be archived in 2001. As we greatly respect international standards, all results can be easily integrated into miscellaneous portals (TEL, EURO-PEANA, etc.). Despite being a small country, the Czech Republic has earned worldwide recognition for its long tradition and remarkable results in the area of digital preservation.

The situation should improve dramatically very soon. The Czech Ministry of Culture and the Czech Government have accepted the National Digital Library as a strategic

priority and candidate for European funding under the umbrella of the Integrated Operational Programme – IOP (Smart Administration).

The National Library of the Czech Republic along with the Moravian Library in Brno have prepared an ambitious project with two main goals:

- **Acceleration of digitisation** (two digitisation centres in Prague and Brno, mass digitisation)
- **Long-term preservation of and access to digital objects** (a trusted Central Digital Repository located at two geographically-separated places: Prague and Brno).

The results of the project will be:

- Digitisation of the documents published in and since 1801: 540,000 documents, 137 million pages (1060 TB of raw digital data in one locality, 60 TB fast access for users)
- Digitisation of historical documents published until 1800: 20,000 documents, 9 million pages (50 TB of raw digital data in one locality, all fast access for users)
- WebArchive: harvesting and archiving of 5 billion files (221 TB of raw digital data in one locality, all fast access for users)
- Trusted digital repository (certified by internal as well as external audits)
- User-friendly and customised access to digital content for various users.

The total budget of the project should be 29 million EUR (85% from European funding and 15% from co-funding).

Regional Libraries



The regional library acts as coordinator to other libraries of its region and as a provider of expert advice, information, training, analytical and research services, methodological assistance and consultancy, and it cooperates in introducing new technologies. Regional libraries are recipients of legal deposit for the region, and they cooperate with the National Library of the Czech Republic in developing the Union Catalogue of the Czech Republic and processing the Czech National Bibliography. Regional libraries build and provide access to regional information databases, and coordinate the regional bibliographic system.

In cooperation with other big public libraries in its region, the regional library provides support services to public libraries in small localities, e.g. the acquisition and cataloguing of books, library staff training, IT maintenance, etc. It receives special subsidies for these purposes from its regional administration.

Central Bohemia Region Central Bohemia Research Library at Kladno

<http://www.svkkl.cz>



The Central Bohemia Research Library at Kladno is the largest library in the Central Bohemia Region, and fulfills the function of a regional scientific library with a universal collection.

It is housed in an historically listed building from the beginning of the 20th century, and in two adjacent buildings near the center of Kladno.

The library collection contains over 600,000 books, cartographic documents, audio carriers, CD ROMs and more than 50,000 volumes of newspapers, magazines and journals. It provides public library and information services to the citizens of Kladno and of all the Central Bohemia Region. It lends traditional and electronic documents, and provides information from various information sources. It provides publishing, exhibition and lecturing activities.



Central Bohemia Research Library at Kladno, photo Zdeněk Pospíšil

The library catalog is accessible on the Internet. It contains a database of regional literature containing records of articles and books relating to the Central Bohemia Region and records of older serials issued within the territory of the Central Bohemia Region. Along with the catalog, also accessible on the internet are files of authorities and Central Bohemia personalities, memorials and topography.

For its visitors, the library has available 32 workstations with free access to the Internet, and 1 with Internet access for the visually impaired. The library is partially accessible to the handicapped.

The library fulfills coordination and consultation tasks for libraries run by municipalities of the Central Bohemia

Region, for libraries of museums and galleries, archives, and school and medical libraries. Along with the commissioned libraries, it serves over 800 libraries run by municipalities.

The library cooperates with the libraries Wojewódzka Bibliotéka Publiczna in Opole, Poland; Malokarpatská knižnica in Pezinok, Slovakia; and Landes Bibliotheks Centrum Koblenz, Germany.

Prague Region Municipal Library of Prague

<http://www.mlp.cz>



The Municipal Library of Prague is the regional library for the Prague Region. It has served the public continuously since it was founded in 1891.

The Prague Municipal Library is a public general library with over 2 million items and 195,000 registered users who borrowed 6.8 million items in 2007. It has 1 Central library, 42 branch libraries and 3 mobile libraries, using their own automated electronic system Koniáš. The library has 2.2 millions of visitors annually, and another 380,000 visitors use the library through the Internet. In 2007 the library arranged more than 4,000 cultural and educational events for 120,000 visitors.

Websites of MLP visit annually more than 3.4 millions users.

MLP digitalizes unique parts of book collection, mainly rare and historical documents, “pragensia” (items about the city of Prague) and scores for their online using. The library also makes accessible electronic versions of periodicals and Czech and international databases, also on the Internet of the websites MLP.

It prepares comprehensive information about new books for libraries managed by municipal boroughs, catalogues new acquisitions and makes catalogue records for them and assists them in stock revision. It offers exchange of book sets to smaller libraries in order to enrich their holdings. It provides advisory and consultancy services to librarians from local libraries, and organises training courses for them with emphasis on information and communication technologies.

MLP cooperates with many libraries from metropolises of Europe and also from other continents. It is founder member of the Metropolitan Libraries Section of the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) whose annual meeting is arranged in 2008.

Municipal Library of Prague, photo K. Bermdorffová





South Bohemia Region The Research Library of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

<http://www.cbvk.cz>

The Research Library of South Bohemia in České Budějovice is a public library providing access to all types of Czech and foreign information resources. The library serves as a research library for the region of South Bohemia and the municipal library for the city of České Budějovice (19,000 registered users, 250,000 visitors and 900,000 loans per year).

The library is funded and governed by the Southbohemian regional authority.

The library provides complete services – lending, information, searches, reference and bibliographic services, access to electronic databases, public internet, copying, including services for handicapped people and training in modern information technologies for librarians.

The library collection (exceeding 1.2 million volumes) contains books, periodicals, maps, musical scores, sound and video recordings, electronic resources, graphics and small prints.

Very important is a collection of historical documents in the Department of Historical Archives (Zlatá Koruna Monastery) – more than 35,000 old prints, early printed books, manuscripts and old maps.

Publishing activity: bibliographies, edition of regional literature and electronic publication “Kohoutí kříž” (the Ger-

man literature of the Šumava region – <http://www.kohouti-kriz.org/>).

The library uses the library system Advanced Rapid Library.

Plzeň Region Plzeň Region Study and Research Library

<http://www.svkpl.cz>



It is a comprehensive library with approximately 1.6 million items, half of which are books and the other half special documents. It maintains an almost complete collection of domestic patent certificates, technical standards, CDs, video and audio cassettes and CD-ROMs. It is developing its collections with acquisitions of domestic and foreign literature in the fields of study taught at the universities of Plzeň and of traditional West Bohemian industries.

The library puts on cultural events, exhibitions, specialist lectures and workshops, and it cooperates with many cultural and educational institutes in Plzeň and the Plzeň region.

In its implementation of automation of library processes, the Library is using the ALEPH system. Its users have many databases and multimedia materials at their disposal in specialised reading rooms.

The following libraries are part of the State Research Library in Plzeň:

- Library for the Visually Impaired (Jagellon Street)
- Austrian Library
- German Library of the *Goethe-Institut* in a separate building (12, Square of the Republic, Plzeň).
- English Library



Karlovy Vary Region Karlovy Vary Regional Library

<http://www.knihovna.kvary.cz/>

KVRL has been located in a new building since 2005, which was built with support from EU funds. Users thus gained large areas for free selection of books, periodicals



Karlovy Vary Regional Library, photo V. Toman

and music media, for reading and study, for relaxation and free time. The library provides library services for the blind and cooperates with otherwise handicapped groups of citizens. This cooperation includes courses in Czech sign language for example. A point of interest of the library is the unique collection of literature on balneology. Readers may also select from the offer of electronic services; in this area, the library is an active member of the nationwide system. The library is an accredited training and testing center for ECDL (computer literacy). The library also includes the information center of the Karlovy Vary Region. Headquartered in the library is one of the British Centres supported by the British Council and also by the Eurocentrum.

Ústí nad Labem Region North Bohemian Research Library in Ústí nad Labem

<http://www.svkul.cz>



The North Bohemian Research Library at Ústí nad Labem, founded in 1945 is at present the largest library in the Ústecký Region as to its holdings, as well as services. It has been the recipient of regional legal deposits since 1979, and a producer of regional periodicals' article bibliography since the late 1960s (in electronic format since 1991). Its repository houses more than 740,000 books, paperbacks, bound periodicals,

standards, musical scores, gramophone records, compact disks, audio cassettes, diskettes, CD-ROMs and DVDs. In its acquisition policy, it has been focusing on encyclopaedias, dictionaries, geographical guidebooks and maps, and books on architecture, arts and the environment. The Library uses the Clavius automated system.



North Bohemian Research Library, photo Š. Tóth.

At its premises at 49 Velká hradební Street and its new wing built there in 1996 the library offers research library services, while public municipal library services are available on its premises at 3 W. Churchill Street and also at its seven branches in different parts of the city. The library also includes the Library for the Visually Impaired at Lesní cesta street. The library offers len-

ding, reference, and copy services. It offers exchange sets of books to smaller libraries in order to enrich their holdings. It provides advisory and consultancy services to librarians from local libraries, and organises training courses for them with emphasis on information and communication technologies. It organises a nationwide literary competition called Psaníčko for pupils every two years.

Liberec Region Research Library in Liberec

<http://www.kvkli.cz>

Bibliothek Liberec
Knihovna Liberec
Library Liberec

The Research Library in Liberec is a comprehensive public library that also functions as a research, municipal and regional library.

Its Library collections comprise the entire production since 1954 of: books, periodicals, standards, descriptions of inventions, maps, gramophone records, audio cassettes, microfiches, CDs and CD-ROMs. The Library uses the Advanced Rapid Library system for the automation of its library processes.

Special collections:

Germanica of the Czech Lands (Sudetica) – a unique collection of German literature associated with Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (part) by authors' domicile or by subject-matter and published in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Regional literature – documents relating to the Liberec region and the former administrative region of Northern Bohemia (encompassing the vicinity of the towns of Česká Lípa, Semily, and Jablonec nad Nisou).

Austriaca – a collection of Austrian literature (Austrian Library Department).

Glass and textile – documents relating to the traditional industries in northern Bohemia.



Hradec Králové Region Hradec Králové Research Library

<http://www.svkhk.cz>

The Research Library in Hradec Králové is a comprehensive library with special emphasis on the building of scientific and non-fiction literature collections. It provides the full scope of library services for the entire region. Originally a Municipal Study Library, it became the Study and Research Library on November 4, 1949. Its present collection of more than 1.2 million documents is available to over 6,900 registered users. The library has also about 4,000 early printed books (i.e. dating from 1500 to 1800). They are mostly of Czech or German origin, some were published in east Bohemia, mainly at Hradec Králové. All library activities have been automated, and local area optical fibre networks have been set up and interlinked. The Library uses the integrated library system ALEPH for the automation of its library processes, it provides international interlibrary loan and refer-

ence services and publishes a library journal “U nás”. A new library building was opened on September 25, 2008.

Pardubice Region Pardubice Regional Library

<http://www.knihovna-pardubice.cz>



The new Pardubice Regional library was established in 2002 as a successor to the former district library, which in turn succeeded the original public local library in Pardubice founded in 1897. The Pardubice Regional library is a comprehensive library, collecting and lending books, journals and magazines, newspapers, maps, printed music, audio recordings, e-documents and other forms of information. Its non-fiction collections contain a large number of classical information sources (books and files) as well as modern electronic sources (electronic databases, CD-ROMs, Internet, online databases). The Library uses the ALEPH platform for the automation of its library processes.

Vysočina Region Vysočina Regional Library at Havlíčkův Brod

<http://www.kkvysociny.cz>



The original public library was established here in 1894. The present-day of Vysočina Regional Library at Havlíčkův

Brod was inaugurated in 2002. It provides mainly lending and information services to its users. Its Leisure Time University offers life-long education opportunities. Apart from that, the Library organises many events aimed at making its activities widely known to the public. The Library also offers special services to users with disabilities. The Library has automated its library processes on the CLAVIUS system platform.



South Moravia Region The Moravian Library in Brno

<http://www.mzk.cz>

The Moravian Library consists of three traditional special public libraries, i.e. a University Library, Technical Library and Pedagogic Library. The Moravian Library is a comprehensive research library, specializing in social sciences, medicine, agriculture, technology and economics. It keeps extensive collections of manuscripts, early printed books, Moravia (i.e. literature associated with Moravia by the author's domicile or by subject), and, since the recipient of legal deposit copies, of complete domestic publisher production.

Its collection of 3.8 million volumes grow annually by 41,000 volumes, 4,000 of which are periodicals.

The Library uses the ALEPH system for the automation of its library processes, it provides international inter-library loan and reference services, and it publishes 10 booklists a year and the library journal DUHA (Rainbow). Acting through its Technical Centre, the Library provides

and procures library-specific supplies and furnishings, and also participates in organizing the „Czech Library“ project of the Ministry of Culture.

The construction of a new library building started in 1998 and was completed in 2001. The new premises have made it possible to merge the three constituent special libraries into a single research public library. The new library has three general reading rooms (social sciences, natural sciences and technical sciences) and four specialised reading rooms (for old books, periodicals, AV-media and commercial information). The Moravian Library also houses the English Library, Austrian Library, German Library and the American Library.

Olomouc Region The Research Library in Olomouc

<http://www.vkol.cz>



The Research Library in Olomouc is the second oldest and the third largest library of its type in the Czech Republic. It was founded in 1566 by the Jesuit Order and then brought into public ownership in the late 18th century. At present, the Library has the status of a regional library and, by virtue of its development, has become a comprehensive research library accessible to the general public.

Its collections comprise over 1.9 million volumes. The library keeps extensive historical collections (manuscripts, incunabula, early printed books) and is the recipient of legal deposit copies (since 1807 from Moravia and part of



The Research Library in Olomouc, photo Jaroslav Konečný

Silesia and from Slovakia from 1947 to 1992). The Library has had its legal deposit authorization for the whole country since 1996. Because over 50% of its users are students and professors of Palacký University in Olomouc, the Library focuses its acquisitions on the fields of study at the individual faculties (social, natural and medical sciences in particular) while retaining its comprehensive library character. Since the 1960s, the Library has been running international interlibrary loan and reference services, and it has been acting as the coordinator of the North Moravia Regional Bibliography and publisher of the quarterly journal Krok (Step).

The Research Library in Olomouc is a modern library with electronic data processing and automated circulation

on the Aleph system platform. Its users have access to internal and external databases and to the Internet.

Moravian-Silesian Region Moravian-Silesian Research Library in Ostrava, contributory organisation

<http://www.svkos.cz>



The Moravian-Silesian Research Library in Ostrava, contributory organisation (established in 1951) supports lifelong learning and satisfies cultural needs of inhabitants and visitors of the Moravian-Silesian Region. It provides information sources to support research, development and economical activities and contributes to the development of more than 400 libraries of the region.

The collections of the Moravian-Silesian Research Library in Ostrava, contributory organisation have recently reached 1 million volumes. The library offers professional literature, non-fiction, fiction, maps, newspapers, journals, music CDs, Czech technical standards, patents, etc. Since 2007, it has been building the special collection for the visually and hearing impaired and has been specialized in acquiring documents dealing with environmental hazard, pollution and protection (mainly as far as the foreign information sources are concerned).

There are many activities of the library which could be written about. Noteworthy are digitisation of valuable

regional documents, partnership with Goethe-Institut and organising educational courses and trainings for librarians of the region. The library is also the guarantor for permanent preserving, bibliographic processing and making available documents published in the Moravian-Silesian Region.

Since its foundation, the library has had to face premises problems. That is why the public tender for the urbanistic, architectural, technical and operational design of a new building was organized in 2004. The project created by Ladislav Kuba and Tomáš Pilař was honoured with the first prize and is prepared for its realization.



Zlín Region František Bartoš Regional Library at Zlín

<http://www.kfbz.cz>

Founded in 1905 as a public library, it became the Regional Library in 2002. The guarantor of the library is the Zlín Region and the City of Zlín takes a part in financing it. The library has been named after František Bartoš since 1996. František Bartoš was an important figure in Moravian education and culture, an organiser of scientific and national life in the latter half of the 19th century.

Besides general library holdings, the Library also houses a regional centre of library, bibliographic and in-

formation services for public libraries of the Zlín region. The Library offers traditional library services, as well as information services and consultancy. All of its operations are fully automated, using the KP-win system.

Public Libraries

There are over 5,500 public libraries operated by local authorities. They form the basic infrastructure for providing accessible library and information services to all the inhabitants of the Czech Republic. In the last few years, the number of readers and library visitors has been gradually increasing, and there has been a remarkable rise in the number of loans. Libraries are also being gradually equipped with computer technology and connected to the Internet. The automation of library processes and cataloguing is also progressing quickly. In addition to the libraries' traditional cultural and educational roles, there is also emphasis on information services. Many libraries are creating new types of services to be more accommodating to clients, including those of the business community. New forms of mutual cooperation are arising.

Most libraries have managed to take advantage of possibilities presented through information and communication technologies for developing library services, thereby gaining new clients. The trend of the last few years has been to combine the tasks of traditional libraries with other functions such as public access Internet, municipal information and tourism centres and local community services. Libra-

ries can also serve as a neutral venue for the meetings of various informal groups and community initiatives. It is clear that the only way forward is to systematically and actively support readership and to merge library activities with processes of school and life-long extracurricular education.

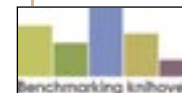
Very important for the development of public libraries are the regional libraries, which provide and organise support services for small libraries. These services involve 109 public libraries in larger towns that create cooperative systems at the level of the smaller regions. An important tool for evaluating the accessibility and quality of library services is the quality standard set forth by the Ministry of Culture in 2005. The standard sets the parameters of quantitative and qualitative indicators for the following areas of public library activity:

- library opening hours,
- development of library holdings and information sources,
- number of public access Internet stations,
- study carrels and spaces for library users,
- general principles of accessibility to the Public Information System of Libraries (VKIS).

The indicator values are set for eight size categories of local authorities. The objective of the standard is to improve the accessibility and quality of library and information services for library users. The standard makes it possible for libraries, their operators, the local authorities, regions and central bodies of state administration to compare and check the accessibility and quality of library services and system-

atically provide support for library development. The VKIS standard is a motivational tool and its indicators are employed in the provision and use of financial resources from the state budget for supporting the development of VKIS.

Benchmarking of Libraries



Since 2007 public libraries in the Czech Republic can launch the project “Benchmarking of Libraries”, which is managed by the Librarianship Institute of the National Library of the Czech Republic. Main goals of the project are:

- to enable to public libraries of different sizes analyzing their own performances through the benchmarking method to compare these performances with another libraries and to find the best ways of solutions for the future development
- to use effectively library statistical data which are available
- **conditions for library activities** – 12 indicators, e.g. volume of the library stock per 1,000 members of the population to be served, library user area in square metres per 1,000 members of the population to be served, number of internet stations per 1,000 members of the population to be served, number of opening hours for public weekly etc.

- **users and services** – 8 indicators, e.g. number of registered users – percentage of the population to be served, number of library visits per capita, turnover of the library stock, cultural and educational events per 1,000 members of the population to be served etc.
- **funding and efficiency** – 9 indicators, e.g. acquisition costs per capita, percentage of received subsidies, grants and own earnings in the total budget of a library from total earnings designed for its operation etc.

Performances and activity of libraries are followed with the help of 29 indicators, which are divided into three basic groups. To be able to compare acquired data, an independent database was established, enabling mutual comparison of performances of two libraries which are compared to minimal, average and maximal values reached in a certain size category of libraries according to the number of inhabitants. The database can be accessed only by participants of the project. Currently 100 public libraries of a different size take part in the project – county libraries, municipal libraries and libraries in small villages.

Special Libraries

An important part of the library system are the special libraries, offering to libraries coordination, specialisation, information, and educational, analytical, research, methodological and consultancy activities within their specialisation

(e.g. Library of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, State Technical Library, National Medical Library, The Institute of Agriculture Economics and Information, National Museum Library).

The Czech Academy of Sciences Library and libraries of the institutes of the Academy of Sciences

<http://www.knav.cz>



The ASL was founded in 1992 pursuant to Act no. 283/1992 Coll. as the direct successor of the Main Library of the Academy of Sciences (ML) established currently with the foundation of the Academy of Sciences of the Czechoslovak Republic on 17 November 1952. The original collection of ML was composed of the permanent collections of literature from the libraries of the Royal Czech Society of Science (1884), of Czech Academy of Science and Arts (1891) and of the Masaryk Academy of Work (1920). Thanks to this solid base the ML was the second most valuable library in Prague for its general science collection, and the third oldest scientific library. At present ASL administers more than 1.2 million volumes including archival documents, manuscripts, incunabula, and old prints.

The ASL coordinates the activities of the scientific information centers and ASCR libraries. According to its charter, its task is to operate library, information, digitisation and

reprography services for the institutes of the ASCR, universities and other library users in the area of science and research, providing and building an information infrastructure for research. It also processes rare historical holdings.

Today, the ASL provides services that are comparable to those of research libraries in the Czech Republic and abroad. It provides access to primary and secondary databases of the ASCR. As the largest library at the ASCR, the ASL is best placed to monitor trends and the latest standards in library and information science, and to provide the technical methodology for libraries of the ASCR institutes.

The centers of scientific information and libraries operate in 55 institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR) as specific departments whose task is to collect, process and disseminate scientific information. The total number of items in the holdings of the ASCR libraries exceeds 3.5 million. At present, serials as well as many other electronic information resources are mainly accessible in electronic databases.

The State Technical Library

<http://www.stk.cz/>

The State Technical Library (STL) is a public access research and technology library that is building up and administering a state subsidised holding of domestic and foreign literature and of other information sources in the area of technology and applied natural and social

sciences. The STL holding contains over 1.2 million volumes – including books, journals, newspapers, science dissertations, information about companies, electronic documents and other publications and texts in the field of technology and applied natural and social sciences related to technology. At present, the construction of a new STL building is under way, which will also serve the needs of the Czech Technical University and other technical schools and will be located on their campus.

The STL is also the seat of the Czech National Centre of the International Standard Serial Numbering (CNC ISSN), which allocates ISSN numbers and processes records for serial publications published in the Czech Republic. The ISSN system is an international register of serial publications (newspapers, journals, editions of technical and scientific books, etc.), collecting information necessary for their identification and for bibliographical checks, making its files available and also providing other services.

University Libraries

University libraries are a part of Czech universities, in which most of them have an historical tradition. Working conditions of university libraries in the past were influenced by the concept of university education, the publishing policy of the previous regime and certain isolation from modern democratic states. Fundamental changes that universities have undergone since 1989 enabled the

start of a new development era of university libraries, and appeared positively on their level.

Without any doubt, the most important development factor was the use of information technologies for providing services and support of education and research process of universities. In this regard, Czech university libraries today are comparable with university libraries abroad. Universities financially support permanent development of technical and technological infrastructures of their libraries. Other funding is gained by means of development projects of Czech and European subsidy programmes.

The quality and the scope of library collections have greatly improved, mainly from the aspect of accessibility to foreign literature. Despite the difficult financial situation of universities,



*Library of the university campus of Masaryk University in Brno,
photo Z. Náplava*

by increasing of acquisition funds the library collections are being gradually enriched. Thanks to government subsidies, through libraries, academic communities of universities have access to the most important worldwide information sources – scientific journals, digital libraries, citation databases, etc.


The situation regarding university library space has improved dramatically. Based on the capabilities of individual universities, areas in the majority of libraries have been expanded and remodeled. In the new areas, it was possible in significant measure to create free access to library collections, to increase the number of study rooms and expand their furnishings. The new space has created pleasant surroundings for library users, which integrate modern technologies with quiet zones for rest and the possibility of working in group study rooms.

University libraries take part in building of institutional repositories, which serve for archiving and access of the theses and dissertations and other publications created at universities. They thereby contribute to spreading results of the scientific research activities of their respective schools. Employees of university libraries are engaged in information education, and by various means, support the increase of information literacy of students. Education activities have a direct impact on the growing use of electronic information sources and on the increased interest in library services.

Employees of these libraries take part in technical and educational events, aimed at developing their technical knowledge, and familiarization with novelties in all areas

Public University Libraries – condition as of 31 DEC 2007

University	Expansion of stock per year	Library collection in total	Number of subscribed periodicals		Period open per week (in hrs.)	Number of loans	Amount of registr. users	Number of seats in study rooms	Number of volumes in free access collections
			Print	Electronic					
AMU v Praze	5,175	168,106	94	3	42	28,031	1,494	82	16,191
AVU v Praze	453	58,510	56	4	20	2,340	342	20	13,450
ČVUT v Praze	11,644	516,751	680	48	50	108,412	26,341	519	84,492
ČZU v Praze	8,416	155,182	256	861	60	36,416	14,546	156	331
JAMU v Brně	1,318	97,425	53	0	38	13,990	853	32	7,884
JU v Českých Budějovicích	20,719	436,659	896	25	70	137,939	12,599	241	72,424
MU v Brně	52,020	1,635,226	3,674	0	51	634,161	57,724	–	495,485
MZLU v Brně	11,484	395,548	721	120	76	62,805	7,956	377	30,320
OU v Ostravě	6,756	207,412	378	63	53	120,248	5,299	219	34,035
SU v Opavě	8,079	143,487	462	1,956	–	56,936	7,696	94	75,095
TU v Liberci	8,437	165,885	262	0	52.5	32,240	14,378	322	50,000
UHK Hradec Králové	5,777	304,518	325	2	66	234,816	10,559	136	100,750
UJEP v Ústí nad Labem	10,097	317,764	603	0	55	70,500	6,268	260	59,473
UK v Praze	74,178	4,513,231	5,257	20,000	65	574,798	98,572	2,149	673,686
UP v Olomouci	9,178	686,598	1,247	233	74	192,149	24,170	781	146,000
UPa Pardubice	7,878	194,442	385	12	60	110,977	7,815	310	89,495
UTB ve Zlíně	9,176	69,251	307	1,965	59	68,415	12,056	225	50,719
VFU Brno	3,291	123,984	266	2,500	55	14,545	1,500	330	22,848
VŠB-TU Ostrava	13,389	404,643	511	39	41.5	106,920	15,952	250	103,460
VŠE v Praze	10,240	480,827	577	69	61	150,455	12,947	373	42,531
VŠCHT v Praze	1,377	130,000	240	110	48	4,115	2,343	100	60,000
VŠP Jihlava	1,879	26,182	69	5	45	19,126	796	48	5,424
VŠTE v Českých Budějovicích	1,453	1,453	0	0	64	1,014	299	24	1,453
VŠUP v Praze	412	64,904	95	0	27.5	10,297	405	50	300
VUT v Brně	22,166	324,468	968	100	66	85,441	29,136	1,069	95,202
ZČU v Plzni	18,794	394,834	481	25	55	219,870	14,020	500	170,175



of library and information practice. They're advancing their language skills, which are also necessary in connection with regards to the growing mobility of foreign students in Czech universities. Employees of university libraries also take part in foreign conferences, and have the opportunity to visit partnership workplaces abroad, to gain experience and to compare it with their own results.

University libraries engage in national and international cooperation, and a number of libraries are members of technical and professional organisations. The aim of university libraries is to modify their activities in such a way that they become outstanding workplaces of support for the education and research process of the university, and achieve the quality that is comparable to university libraries in Europe and throughout the world.

Directory of university libraries

<http://platan.vc.cvut.cz/en/index>

Medical Libraries

Medical information science is one of applied information sciences and is defined as a science dealing with characterization, processing and usage of medical information. Scientific medical information, its processing and obtaining through advanced information technology is provided through a network of libraries and information centres. The scientific medical information system in the Czech Republic is a part of the National Health Informa-

tion System (NHIS), which collects, processes and provides required data files from health care institutions and information systems of other bodies in accordance with currently valid legislation.

Medical libraries taking place in the public information services in healthcare are established by: the Ministry of Healthcare, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry for Regional Development, the Ministry of Defence, private and ecclesiastic subjects, law and physical persons, non-profit organisations and other institutions.

At present library and information services are provided by 122 medical libraries and scientific information centres in the sphere of health service. Medical libraries have been founded in different types of institutions – teaching hospitals and medical faculties (integrated institutes), specialized medical centres, research and development institutes, sanitary preventive workplaces, balneologic institutes, nursing colleges and other special institutes.

Medical libraries cooperate in providing library and information services (national and international) for both the specialized and lay public, in the acquisition of information sources – both classic and electronic. In building subject Union Catalogues and a national medical bibliography they use the Czech version of the Medical Subject Headings thesaurus (MeSH). They organise learning activities and ensure the development of the communication and information technologies. Libraries gradually computerize library processes and implement library and other necessary standards.

National Medical Library

<http://www.nlk.cz>

The National Medical Library in Prague (NML) is part of the Czech public health information services and the national health information system. It is the largest library in the field of medical science and public health in the Czech Republic. The NML is a public, non-profit organisation under the administration of the Ministry of Healthcare of the Czech Republic. The NML was officially established in 1949 – it was transformed from the former Library of the Union of Czech Physicians dating back to 1841.



Medical Museum National Medical Library, photo D. Turecký

The main activities of the NML include:

- Purposeful acquisition, maintenance and access to primary and secondary collections by means of circulation, document delivery and via the Internet (<http://www.nlk.cz>);
- Maintenance of the complete collection of Czech medical and health publications;
- Development of a Union Catalogue of medical literature;
- Development of the integrated system Medvik (<http://www.medvik.cz>);
- Creation of the national medical and health bibliography;
- Translation of thesaurus Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) to Czech version;
- Lending and retrieval services, international and national interlibrary loan centre;
- Publishing activities;
- Advisory services, consultations;
- Organisation of learning courses for librarians and end-users;
- Conduct of functions by virtue of a national documentation centre of the World Health Organisation;
- Administration of the Healthcare Museum collections.

The National Medical Library and other medical libraries are principal investigators of several integrated research and development projects, with a particular focus on the optimization of the information infrastructure and resources for science, research and learning and cooperate with foreign partners, e.g. the

European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL).

Museum Libraries

The holdings of museum libraries contain a great wealth of literature and an enormous information potential. An important component of their holdings is regional literature, often not represented in any other libraries in the region. In addition to books, these libraries collect manuscripts, historical collections and other materials and documents – photographs, posters, master copies, exhibition and auction catalogues, etc. Libraries in the network of galleries and archives are of a similar nature.

In many respects, museum libraries find themselves in a worse position compared with other public libraries. They are not as yet equipped with information technology, and therefore cannot fulfill their potential. Abundant and often unique holdings are, as a result, not always adequately processed.

The National Museum Library

<http://www.nm.cz/knm>

The National Museum Library is seated in the main building of the National Museum. The history of this library began in 1818, as did that of the museum itself. This reference research library provides access to its holdings through its reading room. Its main department collects,

maintains and preserves library holdings, numbering over 1.6 million volumes. Since the beginning, the library has endeavoured to build a collection of Bohemian works, from manuscripts to contemporary printed materials, and to collect literature from all the domains represented at the National Museum.

A rare component of the holdings is the vast collection of 19th century Slavonic literature. The department of manuscripts and old prints is responsible for the library's rarest collections which include over 6,000 volumes of manu-



View of the exhibition of the Museum of Book in Žďár nad Sázavou, photo V. Šimek

scripts and a collection of incunabula and early books plus two palace libraries, the Nostický and the Kinský. There is also a preservation laboratory. The library administers a collection of Bohemian serials, i.e. newspapers, journals and other serials that are published at least twice a year anywhere in Bohemia, Moravia or Silesia; this also includes newspapers and journals in Latin, German, Polish, Hungarian, Ukrainian and other languages published in the Czech Republic.

The library also includes a special department for library holdings of stately homes in the Czech Republic.

There are 341 stately home libraries comprising a total of 1,672,000 volumes, of which there are 7,895 manuscripts, over 1,000 incunabula and about 15,000 early books from the 16th century. The oldest manuscript dates back to the 9th century. The languages of the literature in this collection are mostly Latin, French, German, Czech, English and Italian; to a lesser degree, there are also books in Hungarian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Polish, Russian and others.

Assembled here are even documents on the development of library culture, documenting the course of the origin of the Czech book, i.e. from primary correspondence of a publisher with a writer or typographer, through typesetting, editing and illustrative decoration, artistic book binding all the way to its actual promotion. Also preserved is the extensive collection exlibris and shopkeeper prints, whose scope is the largest of its kind in the CR.

The National Museum Library also operates the Museum of Books at the chateau in Žďár nad Sázavou. It is

a unique exhibition offering a look at the history of written communication – from ancient cultures, mediaeval manuscripts and early printed books, up to the present day.


The Institute of Agriculture Economies and Information

Libraries of Agriculture and Food Information

<http://www.uzei.cz>

The Agriculture and Food Library (ZPK) is a part of the Institute of Agriculture Economics and Information (ÚZEI). By the size of its collections (over 1 mil. volumes), it is the third largest agricultural library in the world. The history of the library began back in 1926, when the statute and library codes of the Central Slavic Agricultural Library and reading rooms of the Czechoslovak Agricultural Academy were adopted. Aside from purchasing new publications, the library in its early days took into its collections those from closed libraries of various village associations and agricultural organisations, so today the collections include preserved works from the 16th to the 19th century. The oldest book in the collection is the German publication *Kreütterbuch* by Hieronymus Bock, published in Strasbourg in 1556.

ZPK is the largest agricultural library in the CR. It is a center for field information resources, and the national



contact center of the International network of agricultural libraries AGLINET. For the Czech Republic, it fulfills the function of a deposit library for publications issued by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).

Loan services – online catalogue with advanced search. On the pages of the catalog provision of interlibrary services. Annually, over 600 titles of Czech and foreign technical agricultural and food magazines in paper form, and over 10,000 titles of electronic foreign magazines.

Reproduction services – supply of copies of contents of magazines (CC) and copies of articles in electronic form (DDS).

Access to Czech and foreign databases (CAB, FSTA, AGRIS, AGRICOLA etc.)

National center for creation of the Bibliography and creation of database AGRIS FAO.

IFIS (International Food Information Service) – cooperation upon creation of the international food bibliographic database FSTA.

Provision of research services – researching from electronic resources available in ZPK.

EUROFIR (European Food Information Network) – contact point for the European network for DB composition of foods.

Reference and consultation services – services Infopult serving to answer technical questions to both the lay and technical public.

Web services for agricultural and food industry – Web-site Agronavigator.

Function of Information Center for Food Safety (ICBP) – provides a complex information background of NGOs working and cooperating in the area of food safety.

Eleven scientific magazines ČAZV – lecture contributions by Czech and foreign authors (<http://www.cazv.cz>).

The summary of these unaddressed, but complex services serves to inform a wide spectrum of users, who are not only scientists, the academic community, students, workers in agricultural and food production, but who are also from amongst the lay public.

School Libraries

There are a total of 4,204 (statistics from 2006) libraries at primary and secondary schools and colleges today, serving students and teachers. They are run and financed from the school budget. Their main task is to provide information and documentation for the teaching process. A school library can have two separate parts – one for teachers and another for students. As a rule, services are for school use only and not for the public.

Comenius National Library of Education

<http://www.npkk.cz>

Comenius National Library of Education (NPKK) is a scientific public library, focusing on education and schooling. It provides services to scientists and professionals

working in the education system, to university teachers and students studying at faculties of education or social-science faculties.

NPKK was established in 1919. Nowadays, the library has approximately 470,000 education and related social-science volumes, as well as books and journals concerning social sciences, in particular: pedagogy, psychology and related fields. Furthermore, there are also special collections of basic and secondary school textbooks since the beginning of the 19th century and a unique collection of national and foreign spelling-books (this collection also contains photocopies of spelling books from 1547–1793); education journals since the 1930s; Comenius-related literature; children's and youth literature since the end of the 18th century (kept in the Suk Study Library of Children's Literature).

Information about literature will be found in the following catalogues and databases:

NPKK books database includes records of books since the 1970s and contains all book sources;

Bibliographical database of education contains records of articles from approximately 240 national and foreign specialized journals. It has been under development since 1990. Bibliographical records of older journals could be found at <http://nr.is.npkp.cz/>

Suk Study Library of Children's Literature database contains records of literature since the early 1960s. The database will gradually contain all the collection resources.

Activities of the NPKK

Library services: Lending books; Study Hall; Bibliography Study Hall; Virtual Library of Education e-PK; cooperation with the National Library of the CR; cooperation with Czech libraries of education; cooperation with Czech section of IBBY (in promoting quality children's reading).

Since 1992, the Suk Study Library of Literature for Youth in cooperation with the Children's Library Club SKIP has held an annual inquiry at the beginning of April entitled SUK – We're All Reading. This culminates in the awarding of the Children's Prize for Best Children's Book of the past year, and the Professor Suk Prize. This jury made up of teachers awards the book that best contributed developing child readership.

Since 1996, The Librarians' Prize has also been presented, and around 20 of the year's most read books are evaluated.

The event also features a meeting of authors, illustrators and publishers of children's books with their readers.

The K. E. Macan Library and Printing House for the Blind

<http://www.ktn.cz/>



The K. E. Macan Library and Printing House for the Blind is a library with a universal book stock. The library works in the field of mediating information to the visually impaired.

In order to fulfill its tasks, as an organisation under the Ministry of Culture, the library carries out the following activities:

- keeps and provides access to its book stock,
- obtains books by self-production, by gaining legal deposit, by purchasing books, by gaining books as gifts and by book exchanges,
- in accordance with the Library Act and with the library regulations provides librarian and information services,
- makes audio books and periodicals in Braille and in enlarged print,
- issues and distributes periodicals and non-periodicals,
- digitizes texts for the needs of the visually impaired,
- provides cultural services to visually impaired students, musicians and other groups of people,
- publishes prints in Braille and relief graphics,
- makes and distributes audio recordings,
- provides information services associated with the subject of its activities,
- for the remuneration of costs makes print copies associated with the provision of public librarian and information services,
- promotes the subject of its activities.



Selected Library Statistics

Libraries established by regional authorities and the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic

	2005	2006	2007
Number of libraries	5,920	5,662	5,533
Number of branches	927	869	810
Number of library volumes	61,991,877	61,888,447	62,303,632
Number of readers	1,537,972	1,475,623	1,458,468
Number of visitors	20,502,263	19,902,397	20,923,610
Number of loans	71,974,107	68,696,902	67,394,938
Number of employees – work loads	5,175	5,154	5,147
Resources for stock acquisition ³ (in thousands)	296,044.0	319,384.1	296,710.5
Number of study carrels	30,442	35,810	39,056
Number of computers for users	7,183	9,086	10,319
of these with Internet access	5,894	7,905	9,160

Libraries of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic

	2005	2006	2007
Number of libraries	65	65	62
Number of library volumes (in thousands)	3,065	3,165	3,432
Number of readers (in thousands)	33	39	33
Number of loans (in thousands)	177	162	172
Number of employees – work loads	305	314	293
Resources for stock acquisition	not given	not given	not given

³ It follows from the KULT V12-01 statistics that the costs (expenditures) of libraries in small localities (i.e. volunteer libraries) are not included

Medical Libraries

	2005	2006	2007
Number of libraries	140	143	122
Number of library volumes (in thousands)	2,749	2,858	2,665
Number of readers (in thousands)	93	87	79
Number of loans (in thousands)	1,021	967	887
Number of employees – work loads	337	322	322
Resources for stock acquisition (in thousands)	80,312	76,001	66,741

Museum and Gallery Libraries

	2005	2006	2007
Number of libraries	272	257	252
Number of library items (in thousands)	6,477	6,735	7,188
Number of readers (in thousands)	29	–	26
Number of loans (in thousands)	250	230	219
Resources for stock acquisition (in thousands)	10,453	10,222	9,598
Number of employees – work loads	290	277	294

Union Catalogues, Portals



Union Catalogue of the Czech Republic

<http://skc.nkp.cz>; <http://www.caslin.cz>

The Union Catalogue of the Czech Republic ("UC CR") is operated by the National Library of the Czech Republic in the ALEPH 500 system. The electronic version of the catalogue was started in 1993. At present, it has over three million records of printed monographs, special types of documents and serials, both Czech and from abroad. Work on monographs and special types of documents in the UC CR is shared by 180 libraries, which send data to the UC CR in electronic format. A total of 400 libraries and information institutions cooperate in building the serials section of the UC CR by regularly sending updates on the acquisition of serials. Institutions contributing to the UC CR include research and university libraries, libraries of research institutes and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences, libraries of museums and galleries, as well as public libraries.

Records from participating libraries are all gathered on to a single base, which creates good conditions for the development of shared cataloguing. The data are stored in MARC21 format. In the cataloguing, AACR2 rules are adhered to. The standards for subject processing are the UDC and the Conspectus concept.

Information on document location is linked to the Directory of Libraries and Institutions in the CR. The system also provides for a direct link to circulation systems of some libraries. The UC CR base is also connected with the National Authorities base. Records from the UC CR can be taken over free of charge using the Z 39.50 protocol.

Other Union Catalogues in the Czech Republic:

Infozdroje (Infosources)

<http://www.infozdroje.cz>



Infozdroje.cz automatically shows a list of subscription-based e-resources available from the IP address of the user's PC. Information on consortia projects and e-resources available in Czech institutions is available to all users.


This website is available in Czech only and is maintained by Albertina icome Praha s.r.o., the distributor of foreign electronic information resources in the Czech Republic.

SKAT Union Catalogue

<http://www.skat.cz/eng/>



A union catalogue of 200 public libraries that use the LANIUS library system. The catalogue contains 301,000



records of nonfiction for adults and youth, and regional literature. The LANIUS company has operated the catalogue since 1995.

The Union Catalogue the Czech Academy of Sciences

<http://www.knav.cz>

The Union Catalogue ASCR consists of 45 institute libraries of the Czech Academy of Sciences. It contains records of all acquisitions of the institute libraries of the Czech Academy of Sciences since 1993, and older holdings of libraries are gradually being added. The Union Catalogue is operated under the system Aleph.

Union catalogue of medical libraries

This catalogue (LSS database) was established as a Union Catalogue of foreign biomedical periodicals in 1976. It contains over 8,700 records of periodicals in the holdings of libraries of health care institutions in the Czech and the Slovak Republics, medical faculties, selected institutions of the Czech and the Slovak Academies of Sciences and pharmaceutical companies. Also registered are about 2,000 periodicals only available online. The complete record in this database contains the journal name, ISSN, country of publishing,

frequency, publisher, place of publishing and possibly also the corporation responsible for the publishing of the journal.

The Union Catalogue of medical literature is operated by the National Medical Library using the ALEPH system. It consists of two parts. The Union catalogue of monographs includes medical literature, diploma and dissertation theses related to biomedicine published after 1994, and listing records of 80 cooperating institutions, mainly libraries of medical faculties, research and development institutions, hospitals and other organisation.

The Union catalogue of periodicals, containing 8,700 records of periodicals dealing with biomedicine available in libraries of health care institutions in the Czech and the Slovak Republics, medical faculties, selected institutions of the Academy of Sciences and pharmaceutical companies. Also registered are about 2,000 periodicals only available online.

Electronic Union Catalogue TinWeb

<http://tinweb.multidata.cz/tinweb/vkt/tw>

A virtual Union Catalogue of university libraries and specialized libraries. It provides for parallel searches of approximately 60 library catalogues in the T-Series system.

Portals

In the year 2004 the National Library of the Czech Republic in collaboration with Charles University in Prague and with the financial support of the Ministry of Education started another project called “Coordinated Creation of Subject Gateways”. The aim of the project was to prepare methodology of building the Czech subject gateways to be linked to the UIG, together with the creation of two subject gateways, the KIV and the MUS with the function of a prototype of a subject gateway.

The Uniform Information Gateway

<http://www.jib.cz>



The Uniform Information Gateway (UIG) provides an uniform and easy-to-use access to information of diverse resources, such as library catalogues, article, bibliographic and full-text databases etc. with the option of parallel searching of selected resources. Resources available in UIG are free accessible or licensed (access is possible only from defined IP addresses).

UIG comprises of two ExLibris products: MetaLib and SFX. MetaLib enables searching through diverse informa-

tion resources and an embedded SFX link server. UIG is a joint project of the National Library and Charles University, other Czech and Slovak libraries have cooperated since 2004 (now over 100 libraries are using more than 130 databases).

In 2004 the National Library in collaboration with Charles University and with the financial support of the Ministry of Education started another project called “Coordinated Creation of Subject Gateways”. It is also based on MetaLib and SFX tools. The project aim was to prepare methodology of building Czech subject gateways to be linked to the UIG, together with the creation of two subject gateways, the KIV and the MUS with the function of a prototype of a subject gateway.

The KIV (Library and Information Science) Subject Gateway

<http://kiv.jib.cz>



The KIV Gateway mediates information from the field of librarianship and information science. This function is provided via parallel searching subject databases in two steps: getting a bibliographic record and then getting the full text or information on availability of the document. The target group of users especially consists of librarians and information employees (including students and teachers).

The KIV was created by the Librarianship Institute of the National Library in collaboration with Charles University in Prague and it made an important information source of the Librarianship Institute. It is virtually connected with two other major tools: the Czech LIS Portal, traditional portal intended first of all for library practice, and the KKL – a unique Czech subject database of the library literature. The KKL database works as the main database of the KIV: it brings records of the high quality traditional documents as well as records of unsearchable internet documents.



The MUS (Musica) Subject Gateway

<http://mus.jib.cz/>

The MUS gateway focuses on music and musicology. MUS offers various services for musicologists as well as anyone interested in quality information related to music, such as parallel searching in catalogues of music libraries or specialised subject databases. Internet resources (web pages, documents, music editions) in any way related to Czech music or relevant to research in the fields of music and musicology are processed directly for the MUS and available both for searching and browsing according to selected subject categories.

The ART (Art and Architecture) Subject Gateway

<http://art.jib.cz>



The ART subject gateway was created with the aim of forming a seamless umbrella medium for users seeking information from the areas of architecture, sculpture, painting, drawing, graphics and applied graphics, artistic crafts, art industry, design, photography, art theory and criticism, monument conservation, archaeology restoration etc. It is an occasion for researchers to search various Czech as well as foreign information resources (library catalogues, Union Catalogues, article databases, interesting portals etc.) easily from one place using single user-friendly search interface.

The development of the ART subject gateway is an outcome of the joint effort of the libraries that are members of the Virtual Art Library (VAL, in Czech VUK) association, which is a free association of libraries without legal personality. The association currently includes nine libraries.

The ART gateway is intended mainly for researchers and students from the field of architecture, fine and applied arts, for libraries with artistic-science literature and for other interested persons from among the professional public – artists and architects, journalists, specialised craftsmen etc.



The TECH (Technology and the Natural and Applied Sciences) Subject Gateway

<http://tech.jib.cz>

TECH subject gateway was created in 2007 as a part of the Uniform Information Gateway (UIG) in the State Technical Library (STL). The fundamental part of the gateway is the MetaLib search engine, in which the paid and free databases are separated into clearly-arranged special packages. In the TECH gateway, it is currently possible to search a great number of variously accessible databases and catalogues available from the comfort of home or the office. The resources from the areas of science, technology and medicine consist primarily of databases purchased in STL, further resources selected from the internet with the help of prescribed methodology as well as catalogues of the largest technically-focused libraries in the Czech Republic.



Czech National Bibliography

<http://sigma.nkp.cz>

This new portal provides information about new documents catalogued for the database Czech National Bibliography. Information about books and articles is updated

monthly and arranged according to categories of Konspekt (Conspectus); tables of contents are linked with records for books where possible.

Information about continuing resources, sound recordings, printed music, cartographic documents, graphic and electronic resources is updated quarterly.

The Czech National Bibliography is prepared in cooperation of the National Library of the CR, The Moravian Library in Brno and Research Library in Olomouc and other regional libraries.

Electronic journals portal of Charles University

<http://pez.cuni.cz/ezdroje/zdroj.php?lang=cs&id=397>

Electronic Journals Library – Consortium Czech Republic (EZB)

<http://ezb.nkp.cz/konsorcium.htm>

Virtual Polytechnical Library (VPK)

www.vpk.cz



One of the projects of the STL is the Virtual Polytechnical Library. It links 41 libraries which can virtually consolidate their holdings and services, the aim is:

- better information and inter-library reprography services provided or available especially on the Internet,
- creating practical, organisational, personnel and technological conditions for coordinated, economical and useful retrieval of information sources,
- coordinated use of finances for multi-license purchases,
- coordinated acquisition, in order to optimize the existing financial resources.

Electronic Information Resources at Charles University

<http://pez.cuni.cz/ezdroje/fakulty2.php?lang=en>

Other Czech libraries specialized for some fields of knowledge provide subject portals too, e.g.

Econlib – Virtual Economic Library

<http://www.econlib.cz/>

MEDVIK portal – Medical virtual library

<http://www.medvik.cz>

Portal Agronavigator

<http://www.agronavigator.cz/>

Information Resources for Library and Information Sciences

Within the framework of the project 1N04170 07/2004 – 12/2008 Information resources for library and information sciences, an informal consortium was formed, comprised of the following institutions: National Library of the Czech Republic, Charles University, Masaryk University in Brno, Silesian University in Opava, Academy of Sciences Library of the CR. The main aim of this “consortium” was to improve the quality of services of the aforementioned institutions, to coordinate the building of electronic information resources in the area of information and library sciences, and to secure licenses for access to them. Resources are used for providing for research and development tasks. Within the framework of the project, access was secured to license databases:

ELIS – Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science

LISA – Library and Information Science Abstracts

ISTA – Information Science and Technology Abstracts Plus

LLIS – Library Literature & Info Sciences Fulltext

Computer Science Index, ERIC, Information Science and Technology Abstracts, Internet and Personal Computing Abstracts, Library Information Science & Technology Abstracts.

Arts & Humanities Collection

- This project has dramatically improved the research activity of scientists, teachers and students.
- Training of students in the fields of information science and library science has improved.
- The project provided higher quality and a more current information level of employees of institutions and users of libraries.
- It provided information resources for research and investigative activity of employees of the consortium's institutions.
- The licensed databases are interconnected in the KIVportal Library and Information Sciences. (<http://kiv.jib.cz>).

Czech Library and Information Science Portal


<http://knihovnam.nkp.cz/english/index.php3>

The goal of the Czech Library and Information Science Portal is to serve as the general Czech access point to the Czech and foreign library and information science information published both in electronic and paper text versions, accessible via www or library document delivery services. The Portal serves as a publication basis too, as the publishing output of the Librarianship Institute of the Czech National Library. The target user group of the Portal is the library and information science professionals, librarians from all types of libraries, LIS students and teachers and interested public.

The content of the Portal is divided into ten sections: subject groups, which represent nine “folders“ of documents and web links, visible at the home page of the Portal. User can browse the content of the portal clicking on relevant links, opening demanded documents or underlying detailed menus, or he/she can search the site using the Portal search engine (Czech version) or the Google search engine (English version – see the searching field in the very right column of the site).

The English version of the Portal consists of next subject groups:

- LIS Library Databases
- ILL, Union Catalogues, Portals, Digital Libraries
- Concept and Funding of Libraries Projects et cetera
- Legislation
- Libraries in CR and their Organisation, Library Statistics
- Library Services for Publishers
- Library Associations, Corporations, Library Prizes and Competitions, Support of Reading and Readers
- The Profession, Education and Training of Libraries
- Librarianship Institute
- Professional Information



The Profession, Education, and Training of Librarians

Future development of the profession will be determined by the education and qualification of staff. All kinds of professional education in librarianship is available in the Czech Republic – special secondary school, college, bachelor, master, and graduate studies. The tradition of education in what is the Czech Republic today started in 1927, when librarianship courses were opened at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, graduates of which were the first academically educated generation of librarians. Today, there are individual study programmes at six schools, three of which are universities.

Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts

<http://uisk.ff.cuni.cz/>

Institute of Information Studies and Librarianship

This is a representative institute of information and library science education in the Czech Republic, continuing a long tradition. At present, the institute offers both full-time and external studies. The content of the librarianship and

the professional information study programmes is very extensive both at the masters and doctorate levels. The Information Studies and Librarianship programme specializes in information, librarianship, and library science.

In addition to the traditional forms of education, the institute also offers a two-year programme of lifelong learning for professionals already working in the field. The institute cooperates with several foreign institutions and schools, such as the OCLC, the Dialog Corporation, VINITI in Russia, and universities at Chapel Hill and Saarbrücken. Employees of the Institute take part in the activities of international organizations, especially the IFLA.

Masaryk University Brno, Faculty of Arts

<http://www.muni.cz/>

Department of Czech Literature and Library Studies; Division of Library Studies

The Masaryk University in Brno is the second largest university in the Czech Republic. The Faculty of Arts provides professional and pedagogical training in many stu-

dy areas. The external studies programme in librarianship started in the 1991/1992 academic year, full-time studies in 1999. Librarianship education under the Information Studies and Librarianship programme offers these types of courses, i.e. three-year bachelors, five-year masters, and a subsequent two-year post-graduate masters, both in full-time and external forms. Students can broaden and complete their education through study visits at foreign universities under the EU international educational programmes or international, government, university, and faculty contract scholarships.

The Institute cooperates with the School of Information of Michigan (USA) and the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois (USA).

Silesian University in Opava, Faculty of Philosophy and Science

<http://www.fpf.slu.cz/>

**Institute of Czech Studies and Library
Science; Department of Librarianship
Institute of Computer Science; Department
of Information Science**


Silesian University was established in 1989. The beginnings of library education were closely connected with the study of Czech literature, focused in part on librarian-

ship and book culture. An independent study programme was started in the 1993/1994 academic year with the objective of educating graduate students for careers in public libraries.



Silesian University in Opava (SU Opava)

The Institute of Czech Studies and Library Science offers two courses. The three-year Bachelor's programme can be taken as a full-time or external study. It focuses on skills necessary for completing, processing, and organizing library collections, and on theoretical and practical knowledge for providing library and information services.



The study programme aims at preparing qualified and competent professionals for work in all the types of public libraries. At the beginning of the academic year 2008/2009 a new graduate Master's Programme in full-time form was opened.

The Institute of Computer Science offers courses leading to the qualifications of bachelor or master in Library and Information Science. It provides continuing professional education for librarians, other categories of library staff, and information specialists. The graduate Master's Programme is intended for students with a bachelor's degree in library and information science or the equivalent from another higher education institution. The programme duration is two years both in full-time and external form. The Bachelor's Programme is aiming at a variety of jobs in public and research libraries, public administration, organisations and private companies. The programme duration is three years in full-time form.

Modern information technology is creating new ways of managing and utilising information resources and the same time is creating a need for particularly highly qualified and professional staff. These programmes provides a theoretical and general insight into information and knowledge production; how to analyse and manage the information resources; how to produce information policy and a strategy for putting it into practice; an insight into project management and other forms of management.

Higher Professional School of Information Services, Prague

<http://www.sks.cz/en/>

Teaching at the Information Services College began on an experimental basis in 1992. Since 2001, the graduates of the college have been able to obtain Bachelors of Business Studies degrees in cooperation with the Institute of Technology Sligo in Ireland. Studies can be divided into bachelors and non-bachelors study programmes.

The first group includes the Applied Informatics bachelors programme, studying Business Information Systems. It prepares specialists for a wide range of functions in business information systems and information institutions of the information market. The second group includes the Information Management programme, specializing in Library Services (in both full-time and external study forms), or in Museum and Gallery Services.

The school was the first in the Czech Republic to have been awarded the EVOS certificate, granted by an independent commission on the basis of an evaluation of the high quality of school's activities.

High School and College for Vocational Studies in Library and Information Science, Brno

<http://www.vosis.cz>

Established in 1952, the school has evolved from an adult education school to library school, finally setting up a study programme aimed at information processing, archive science, and librarianship. Its secondary school graduates can work in the cultural sphere of state government, cultural institutions, information centres, museums, galleries, archives, centres of extracurricular education, and in all types of libraries, as well as in the private sector.

In 1996, the High School for Vocational Studies in Information and Library Science expanded to include a college, offering a three-year full-time post-secondary study of Information Systems. Its aim is to prepare versatile professionals for the culture and information industry, particularly in the field of gathering, processing, and storing documents, information and collections, as well as information service presentation and promotion. Students are able to participate in language courses in England and Germany, and the college students can take part in work study programmes abroad.

Business Academy and Secondary Special School and Higher Special School in Valašské Meziříčí

<http://www.oavm.cz/>

A school specializing in economics was established in 1949 after the consolidation of three schools of similar character in the region. At present, this school offers a four-year secondary education in business, a college special studies programme, and full-time bachelors studies. The college programme of Economic, Scientific and Technical Information Processing studies prepares students for work in informatics with versatile skills for processing economic, social, and statistical data in the business and supra-corporate sectors. The three-year programme is intended for secondary school graduates.

The System Engineering and Informatics bachelors study programme comprises studies in Euro-administration, Applied Informatics, Company Economics, and Information and Knowledge Management. Information and Knowledge Management focuses on analysis, planning, and management of company information systems, management systems, and on acquiring quantitative managerial abilities. Equipped with a basic knowledge of national legislation and EU directives, the graduates are groomed for work in information, administrative, and management bodies of both the business sector and public administration.

Library Buildings

Until the end of the 19th century, and often even longer, libraries in the Czech lands were simply a part of buildings meant for other use, whether they were libraries of monasteries, chateaux, public schools, or associations. For the territory now called the Czech Republic, the history of purpose-built libraries begins in 1891 and is connected to German-born Osvald Ottendorfer of Svitavy, Moravia, who dedicated his German renaissance style library to the town. At the time of its opening, it was the largest and most modern German library in Moravia.



Research Library in Liberec, photo L. Schiffner

Within one year during the 1920s, the capital city, Prague, gained two new buildings which were to be used as public libraries. In 1928, architect František Roith designed the Municipal Library, which experts considered to be one of the best European libraries. In 1929, a new building was opened in Královské Vinohrady that was to serve as a branch of the Municipal Library. Also completed in Prague in that year was the extensive reconstruction of the baroque Jesuit dormitories Klementinum, which then served what at that time were the National and University Libraries. This was the last of the construction boom in the Czech lands for some time.

It was not until after a long interval taking an unbelievable 55 years that in 1985 a new library was opened in a building of its own – the regional library in Most. The whole city, including the original library facilities, had to make way for coal mining. During the communist era, there were several modern housing estate libraries that cropped up in Prague and Brno which were placed within the facilities of cultural and community centres.

The situation of this unfavourable period is evidenced from a 1988 study in which 707 important libraries took



Research Library in Liberec, photo L. Schiffner

part. It states that public libraries in that period used only 29.14% of the space allocated to them according to technical and economic indicators. Most libraries were housed in multi-purpose buildings which were only later modified to suit the needs of a library. Library operations were often dispersed into several buildings and space constrictions forced 353 libraries (i.e. 50%) to build separate depositories.

After 1989, a phase of reconstruction and construction of new buildings for libraries of the most various types began. Libraries significantly expanded their facilities and improved services for their readers. Renovations took place in 75 libraries and the improved conditions and new premises have attracted 50–150% more readers. Here are some examples of successful projects:

- In 1992–1995, a central depository for the Czech National Library was built that could store 4 million volumes. The building also has restoration workshops and laboratories.
- In 1993, the reconstruction of the District Library in Tábor took place.
- In 1994, a new building was opened for the District Library in Mladá Boleslav.
- In 1994, the reconstruction of a new space for the Parliament Library was completed.
- In 1996, a new small library building in the town of Štětí was opened.



The National Technical Library, photo J. Vít, L. Kalivoda

- In 1996, an extension to the North Bohemian Research Library in Ústí nad Labem was completed. The total area of 1330 m² made it possible to circulate 50,000 book items and provide 100 places for readers.
- In 1996–1998, the general reconstruction and restructuring of services of the Prague Municipal Library took place. Today there are twice as many readers – i.e. 4,000–5,000 daily.
- In November 2001, the Jiří Mahen Library in Brno opened after its difficult but attractive reconstruction in the Schrattenbach Palace.
- At the turn of the millennium, the Research Library in the regional capital Liberec obtained a new magnanimously designed building. This was the first building of such size in the Czech Republic in 70 years. The building is located in the centre of town in the place where the synagogue previously stood before it was burned down in 1938 during Crystal Night. It cost 517 million CZK and occupies a total area of 12,503 m² in 4 above ground and 5 underground floors (the synagogue is 245 m²); the interior spaces are very flexible. There are 1.2 million book items (of which 230,000 are circulated), 300 reading places, and 180 places in other rooms.
- In 1998–2001, the construction of the Moravian Library in Brno cost 500 million CZK. There are 3 underground and 8 aboveground floors, a total area of 22,542 m², 671 study places, 4,073 magazine and newspaper

titles, 3 million book items, and underground parking for 96 cars.

- In 2003, the reconstruction of the building used for the Smíchov branch of the Prague Municipal Library was completed.



The National Technical Library, Atrium, photo L. Kalivoda

After 1989, there was also a significant change in conditions at universities as well as the demands made on obtaining information services. One of the new elements of this process was the construction of university libraries:

- University Library Pardubice opened a new library building in 1997.

- In 1996–1997, there was a reconstruction of the library and other spaces to be used by the library of the Faculty of Law, Charles University (increased area by 725 m² and 217 reading work places).
- In 1998–1999, there was the reconstruction of a space for the central library of the Technical University Brno.
- In 1997–1999, the new Ostrava University Library was constructed.
- In 1999, the extensive reconstruction of the baroque cannon and gun armoury was completed for use by the information centre of Palacký University. An important part of this centre is the university library, which was allocated 5,000 m² here.



Public Library Svitavy, photo M. Sychra



Hradec Králové Research Library, photo V. Mlynářčik

- In 1999–2001, a new university library building was constructed for the Western Bohemia University in Plzeň. There are 3,000 m² and 216 reading places that have been obtained for the 12,000 students and teachers.
- In 2001, the library for the Faculty of Arts and School of Social Studies of Masaryk University Brno was completed. The building was awarded the 2002 Grand Prix of the Association of Architects.
- In 2001, a building was finished and bestowed to the public. It's the most important library in all of Moravia – the Moravian Library. Project authors: Tomáš Adámek and Petr Benedikt from the design

studio Onex. Construction took place over the years 1998 – 2001 and cost CZK 500 mil. The building has three underground and eight above-ground floors. With an area of 22,512 m², it is so far the largest library structure in the Czech Republic

More recently, there has been an increase of several libraries every year, whether through reconstruction or brand new buildings. The library buildings are equipped with the most modern library furnishings and equipment. Since 2001, the Olomouc University Library has been regularly organizing the Library and Architecture Conference, where librarians and architects, Czech and foreign, have the opportunity to discuss their ideas and the latest trends in library architecture. Since 2003, it has compiled a database Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic and the State Technical Library regarding buildings constructed in the Czech Republic since 1990 – (<http://old.stk.cz/Stavby>). The database includes information on 93 buildings and is continuously being updated.

The year 2005 is the most significant year for project preparations and the building industry regarding Czech libraries. There are also investment plans being made for the construction of a new building for the Czech National Library.

2005: during this year, a building once serving as military barracks was transformed into the Karlovy Vary Regional Library. It has an area of 5,000 m² and 350,000

books. In 2008, a children's playground was added outside the library, where, aside from other activities, the library holds various children's reading events.

2006: a building was built to house the library of the Natural Science Faculty Library of Masaryk University in Brno. The floor space of 3,500 m² contains 240,000 books and 200 study positions.



Olomouc University Library (Archive Olomouc University Library)

2007: Brno is becoming the main library city of the CR. Since 2001, a fourth library building has been built, i.e. the third for Masaryk University, this time on its campus, for the fields of biology and medicine. There are up to 1,000 study positions over a floor space exceeding 5,000 m².

2008: the new building was opened as well as a Hradec Králové Research Library. Project authors: Designed by architects. Construction took place from 2004 to 2008. The overall floor space of 13,233 m² includes 5 above-ground and 1 underground floors. Interestingly, the build-



Library of Faculty of Arts and School of Social Studies of Masaryk University Brno (Archive of Library)

ing's ground plan is in the shape of an X. The building contains 880,000 books, of which 120,000 in free selection, and 440 study positions with 250 PCs.

2009: in June, test operation will begin of the National Technical Library, and at the beginning of September, it will be ceremonially presented to the public. This is the largest construction in the Czech Republic intended to be a library. Project authors: Designed by architects. The building stands between university buildings, and is shaped like a rounded square. It has a total floor space of 38,700 m² over 6 above-ground and 3 underground floors. The building also includes a branch of the Municipal Library in Prague, a cafe and underground parking lot for 300 cars. In the National Technical Library itself, there will be a series of team study rooms, a night study room, 29 individual study rooms, congress and exhibition hall and a visitor center

Throughout the entire period, reconstruction work has continued of mainly public libraries, municipal and even village libraries throughout the Czech Republic. Dozens of such projects have been realized since 2000. One of the most interesting of these is the extensive reconstruction for the municipal libraries in Vsetín and Svítavy, as well as in Police nad Metují, Náchod, Kostelec nad Černými lesy, in Světlá nad Sázavou, in Habartice and elsewhere.

Definite conclusion: newly constructed and renovated buildings offer more modern services and comfort, and have thus been attracting more and more users.

Library Periodicals

Library periodicals are a good source of information for library professionals. Most of them are now concurrently available in an electronic version.

Alphabetical list of the best known periodicals, with contact information:



BULLETIN SKIP

ISSN 1210-0927

online ISSN 1213-5828

<http://skip.nkp.cz/Bulletin/Bulletin.htm>

Published by the Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic (in Czech only), it comes out 4 times a year (since 1992) with one yearly special issue (since 1994). Archives of the web version are available since 2001,

or 1999 (selected contributions), respectively. Apart from articles dealing with theoretical and practical problems of Czech libraries and information on librarianship abroad, it keeps in regular touch with SKIP activities – reports from

central bodies and regions, foreign contacts of SKIP, and information service on the activities of library associations abroad.

ČTENÁŘ (THE READER)

Library monthly

ISSN 0011-2321

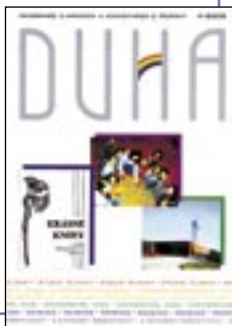
<http://ctenar.svkkk.cz>

From 2008 electronic edition

This is a monthly, published by the Kladno State Research Library at the Academia Publishing House and issued 12 times a year (since 1948). The oldest popular magazine for the general library public, it deals in particular with the practical problems facing libraries, acquaints its readers with the life of libraries abroad, and provides practical advice and guidance. It also gives attention to the libraries' work with literature, reports on library and related events, and prints reviews, opinions, etc. Regular features include the bibliographic review New publications



at the librarianship study room of the National Library, and matters of interest from the Czech Republic and from abroad.



DUHA (RAINBOW)

ISSN 0862-1985

e-mail: duha@mzk.cz

It publishes studies and articles on the libraries of Moravia. Regular features: Library Medallion, Conferences, Events, Reviews, From the Activities of Organisations, Interview about Books, Feuilleton.



GRAND BIBLIO – monthly

journal for reader's public – all the pros and cons with the books

ISSN 1802-4408 (online)

print 1802-3320

<http://www.grandprinc.cz>

Published by Grand Princ Publishing House – a leading company for free of charge journals in the Czechia. Since 2007

it comes 10 times a year (number 1/2 and 7/8 are double issues); min. 50,000 copies and 52–60 pages in every issue. Distribution in whole area of the CR and in the Slovakia too, mainly in public libraries, bookshops and railway station's information centres. It brings interviews with specialists from book culture (writers, booksellers, librarians, printers, distributors etc.), articles from book history and about multimedia, news from abroad and domestic ones, bestsellers charts, legal consultations etc. treated in comprehensible style.

IKAROS

Electronic journal
on information society

ISSN 1212-5075

<http://www.ikaros.cz>



Ikaros, available solely in the electronic format, focuses on the Internet as a medium, a specific communication environment and source of information. Furthermore, it covers various aspects of information society, information science, librarianship and related fields. It publishes reports from current events as well as articles which present theoretical and practical aspects of Library and Information Science. Its content is frequently used for educational purposes. It also provides live videobroadcasting and online coverage of professional events, especially conferences (e.g. INFORUM). In 2007 the journal celebrated a decade of its existence.



INFORMACE (INFORMATION)
ISSN 1210-8502
<http://www.lib.cas.cz/en/vydano-avcr>

Published four times a year by Library of the Czech Academy of Sciences, mainly for the use of the librarians and information professionals of the institutes of the Academy of Sciences and of cooperating libraries. It provides organisational information, an overview of interesting issues from the field of library and information services in the Czech Republic and abroad. It has been published since 1993 and has been available also on the web since 1997.

information services in the Czech Republic and abroad. It has been published since 1993 and has been available also on the web since 1997.



KNIHOVNICKÝ ZPRAVODAJ VYSOČINA (LIBRARY NEWS VYSOČINA)
ISSN 1213-8231
<http://kzv.kkvysociny.cz/>

This electronic quarterly has been published by the Vysočina Regional Library since 2001 and is aimed par-

ticularly for librarians of public libraries. It includes news from around the region and helps to resolve issues related to public libraries.

KROK (STEP)
Knihovnická review Olomouckého kraje (Library Review of the Olomouc Region)
ISSN 1214-6420 (printed version)
ISSN 1214-648x (electronic version)
<http://www.vkol.cz>



Since 2004, this library news bulletin (previously entitled Library Horizons) has been published as KROK – The Library Review of the Olomouc Region. It is issued quarterly in print and electronic form. It brings together information and news from the libraries of the Olomouc Region and includes a permanent column of KROK v literatuře (STEP in Literature), KROK do světa (STEP into the World), KROK forum (STEP Forum), KROK informuje (STEP Informs), Regionální kulturní osobnosti (Regional Cultural Personalities), and Conversation Step, Library Science Keeping Step, A Step forwards, A Step backwards.



**LÉKAŘSKÁ KNIHOVNA
(MEDICAL LIBRARY)**

ISSN 1211-3255

<http://www.nlk.cz/>

This is a journal for the employees of specialized libraries and information centres related to healthcare. It is a continuation of the earlier NLK (national medical library) journals (Healthcare Documentation 1962–1990 and NLK News Bulletin 1991–1995).

It brings together news from the

National Medical Library, methodological articles, medical library networks, and so on. It is published six times a year and is distributed free of charge.



**KNIHOVNA
(THE LIBRARY)**

Library Review

ISSN 0862-7487

ISSN 1214-0678

(electronic version)

<http://knihovna.nkp.cz>

This is published by the National Library of the Czech Republic four times a year (since 1990). It prints extensive theoretic-

cal articles, practical findings from domestic and foreign libraries, reports from conferences, seminars and other events, articles on the active participation of the National Library in foreign and international programmes, and reviews of important library publications. Each issue contains the bibliographic review News of Foreign Library Literature (annotated abstracts from periodicals delivered to the National Library; around 25 notes in each issue).

O.K.

Registered Books of the National ISBN Agency of the Czech Republic, National ISMN Agency of the Czech Republic, and CIP Agency

ISSN 1210-4566

<http://sigma.nkp.cz/web/ok.htm>

This lists the books registered with the National ISBN Agency of the Czech Republic. Published by the National Library, it comes out twice monthly (since 1993). It contains bibliographic entries of titles to be published and is sent to the National ISBN Agency of the Czech Republic. Listed according to publishers. Advertising column of the National Library. Intended for libraries, publishers, etc. to inform them about what is to be published.



U NÁS (IN OUR REGION)

Library and Information News
of the Hradec Králové Region
ISSN 0862-9366
<http://www.svkhk.cz/unas>

This is a library information newsletter published by the Research Library at Hradec Králové sporadically since 1991 and quarterly since 2000. It is a journal of libraries and librarianship of the Region of Eastern Bohemia. It is

published in printed form and on the website of the publishing library.



Associations, Corporations, and Partnerships of Libraries in the Czech Republic

ASSOCIATION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



Klementinum 190
110 00 Praha 1
Tel.: +420-221 663 338
Fax: +420-221 663 375
<http://skip.nkp.cz>

Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic (SKIP in Czech) is a voluntary professional organisation of librarians and information professionals, with the character of a civic association. It was established in the spring of 1990, following in the footsteps of a professional association by the same name which came into being at the time of the Prague Spring in 1968 but was abolished by the Ministry of the Interior in the summer of 1970.

The mission of SKIP is to constantly improve the standards of library and information services while increasing the profession's prestige, to advocate for libraries and their role in an emerging information society, and to establish suitable conditions for the development and activities of libraries and information institutions.

SKIP organises professional and social contacts among library and information professionals, including social events; cooperates with libraries and information establishments; participates in the professional training of specialists, and contributes to the lifelong education of library and information professionals; promotes and supports reading/readership, book culture and libraries.

SKIP participates in the creation and realization of professional concept and the necessary legislation, represents libraries in dealing with collective management organisations in the field of copyright.

It manages, and takes part in, many projects, from the local level to national as well as to European projects. To name at least some important recent ones: PIK (a national project to establish Internet connectivity in public libraries), VISK (a national project to develop public library services, including training of librarians for the new environment, development of information literacy of the general public, national programme of reformatting library collections etc.), projects of reading promotion, CERTIDoc (an European programme of certification of library and information professionals).

Since 1990, SKIP has been a member of IFLA – the International Federation of Library Associations and

Institutions. Lately, the SKIP has become a member of EBLIDA – a European library advocacy body. SKIP develops contacts with professional associations and organisations of the same or similar purpose at home and abroad, especially those from neighbouring countries, as well as with embassies and their cultural institutions.

SKIP is the profession's largest association in the country: it numbers around 1,400 individual and institutional members and 11 regional organisations.

Their expertise supports the work of sections, clubs, and commissions (public libraries section, educational section, employers' section, children libraries club, school libraries club, academic librarians club, francophone club, editorial commission, commission for foreign relations).

SKIP publishes the Association's newsletter Bulletin SKIP (both in print and on the web⁴, 5 issues a year) and other professional publications.

⁴ <http://skip.nkp.cz/Bulletin/Bulletin.htm> (in Czech only)

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Kounicova 65a
601 87 Brno
Tel.: +420-541 64 6 111
Fax: +420-541 646 100
<http://www.sdruk.cz>



The Library Association of the Czech Republic was founded in 1992 with the task of systematic organisation of professional events aimed, in particular, at research and special libraries. Its membership consists of 46 public and scientific libraries. It regularly organises seminars on the development of book collections, automation of library processes, and questions related to the establishment of library standards. It publishes the Information Sources series, featuring library directories, terminology dictionaries and other methodological aids. It provides information sources on professional literature. Professional activities take place within sections dedicated to bibliography, historical collections, information technologies, and regional functions.



ASSOCIATION OF LIBRARIES OF CZECH UNIVERSITIES

České vysoké učení technické
v Praze, Výpočetní centrum
Žitkova 4/1903
166 35 Praha 6-Dejvice
Tel.: +420-224 352 914
<http://www.akvs.cz>

Its members are the libraries of universities and institutes of higher learning, and its activities are carried out in its Working Groups for Information Education and Information Literacy, for Electronic Information Sources

and for Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Mission and Goals:

- to promote, develop and support university libraries in the Czech Republic,
- to advocate university libraries and facilitate their negotiations with information providers, in order to improve their opportunities for cost-efficient purchasing and licensing of electronic information resources,
- to support collaboration and partnership (in order to help in the continuous advancement and effectiveness of library activities and services, education and learning, spreading information literacy activities, etc.) on both the national and international level.



Library Prizes and Competitions



Library of the Year

This prize has been awarded annually by the Ministry of Culture since 2003 to coincide with Library Week. The prize is awarded in two categories – to a public library in a small locality and to an outstanding project in providing library and information services. The prize of the latter category may be awarded to an individual, as well as a library.



Zdeněk Václav Tobolka Honorary Medallion

This prize has been awarded annually each September by the Czech Library Association and the Library Foundation at the Libraries Today national conference since 2003. It is presented to a library or an individual in recognition of their contribution to the development of Czech librarianship.

Czech Librarian Prize

This prize is being awarded every three years by the Association of Library and Information Professionals of

the Czech Republic since 2001 on the occasion of the Association's General Assembly. It is presented to librarians and information providers for long-term excellence in library activities.

INFORUM Awards

The prize has been awarded annually by the INFORUM conference organisation committee since 1999 on the occasion of the INFORUM conference. Awards are given for outstanding projects, services, and activities related to electronic information sources and services originating in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.



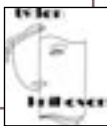
BIBLIOWEB

This is a library web pages competition, organised by the Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic since 2000. Libraries compete in three categories – specialized libraries, municipal libraries of communities under 20,000 inhabitants, and municipal libraries of those over 20,000.



Support of Reading and Readership

Libraries offer support for the education of children, young people and lifelong learning of adults, and for the spending of leisure time. Although libraries face competition from new media, and the use of their services is not compulsory, they are visited by growing numbers of people. Also, in spite of predictions to the contrary, there is still an increase in the use of their collections, including those of the books. Libraries stimulate the development of reading and help deepen education at all levels without discrimination. Every year, the Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic prepares several projects with the aim of promoting reading and the use of libraries.



Library Week

Since 1996, libraries have been organising an annual *Library Week* at the beginning of October. The objective is to present libraries to the general public and to introduce a wide variety of library and information services. During the week, libraries nationwide try to attract their regular readers, as well as those who have not as yet visited the libraries. Hundreds of libraries host

meetings with writers and politicians, and organise lectures, courses, exhibitions, surveys, and competitions. New readers can get a discount on registration fees, in some libraries, amnesty is offered on late returns. *Library Week* is also a time for the opening of new and reconstructed libraries.

<http://knihovnam.nkp.cz/english/>

The Great October Group Readings


This event is held on the first day of *Library Week*. Both library users and the general public are invited to libraries to read a passage and introduce their favourite author or book. Authors, athletes, politicians and other celebrity figures also take part in the readings.

<http://knihovnam.nkp.cz/english/>

A Night with Andersen

This is one of the activities used by Czech libraries since 2000 to increase children's interest in reading. On a weekend close to the anniversary





of the birth of Hans Christian Andersen, libraries invite their child users to spend a night at the library. Over the course of the evening, night, and morning, fairy tales are read and told, children get acquainted with the library, compete in literature knowledge, vote on the best book of the preceding year and meet the writers and other notable personalities of cultural and political life, sports, etc., who come to read and narrate to them. Hundreds of other interesting activities are held on that Night. Group communication is important – in a night-long internet chat which is set up for children, tens of thousands of messages are exchanged. In a number of towns, the event is held on more than one place. In some cases, children wanting to spend the Night in their library (and become *Sleepers*) have to compete for this privilege.

In 2008, *A Night with Andersen* took place at more than 660 locations – in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Slovenia – with participation of a total of almost 22,000 children and 5,000 adults.

A Week of Reading

Within framework of *March – A Month of Internet* organized in 1998–2008 by the Association BMI, with the SKIP as the main partner, a new event, *A Week of Reading* has come into being. It focuses on the widest promotion of reading, primarily by the reading aloud in the libraries. The aim is to link together communities and those people for whom reading is a hobby, love,

and passion; it is also to attract new members to the large reading community. In libraries you may see, the elderly reading aloud to children or children reading to the elderly, readings by librarians, members of associations and societies of various kinds, and of the general public as well.

<http://skip.nkp.cz/akcBMI08.htm>

Where the World Ends

The *Where the World Ends* project is focused on the development and support of child reading through new ways of working with the target group at the children's departments of public libraries. There are activities such as literary and creative arts contests, creative writing courses, various drama club activities, and the making of marionettes. Once every two years, the winners of regional competitions are dubbed *The Knights of the Fine Word*, together with a famous author and a famous narrator of children literature.

A Day for the Children's Book

The first Saturday in Advent is devoted to children. In libraries, there are held competitions, readings, performance of fairy tale dramatisations, and many other performances and games for children relating to the reading and books. Booksellers open their stalls, and publishers display their books there. All activities are focused on pro-

motion of the children's books and help parents to orientate themselves on the book market and choose book Christmas gifts.

SUK 200* – We All Read

The competition for the best children's book is co-organised by the *SKIP* and the *Comenius National Pedagogical Library*. Thousands of children vote on the best children's book published in the Czech Republic in the preceding year. At the same time, the voting by librarians of the children's libraries and that by a teacher jury are held. There is a special category, *The Sleepers Award*, in which the children taking part in *A Night with Andersen* (see above) vote for their favourite books. The Award is presented in a ceremony in the *Museum of Czech Literature* in which hundreds of children, writers, publishers, and illustrators take part.

Read it before Hollywood does

... because once the screen adaptation has been shown, you may not recognize the Original gem – the novel itself. Under the slogan above, the Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic produced a series of three posters to support reading and advertise library services. The posters evoke the amusing contrast between the classic title

(*The Old Man and the Sea*, *Jane Eyre*, *Crime and Punishment*) and the visualization resulting from the Hollywood treatment of the piece. With humour and exaggeration, the posters have been aimed primarily at that segment of the young population that tend towards "fast and passive" culture – TV, cinema, and the Internet. In 2005, the Prague branch of *Leo Burnett Advertising* won a *Silver Lion* at the *Cannes International Advertising Festival* for its graphic design used in the campaign. This project had a one time continuation in publication of a poster "I read..." with a picture of a then-popular singer with a book.

Cooperation with publishers and booksellers

To promote reading, libraries have also been cooperating with publishers and booksellers. For example, libraries collect votes for an annual readers survey for the *Magnesia Litera* literary prize. The prize goes to the most popular Czech fiction book of the previous year. Libraries organise a similar competition among their child readers who vote for their own favourite children's book.

<http://skip.nkp.cz/akcMagn.htm>



Library the Friend

This competition for the best children's library is run in a two-year-cycle. The children produce report – as at school – for the libraries in their towns and communities (with marks for library environment, librarian, collection quality, number and quality of ICT equipment for children in library, and for overall assessment). The competition jury assesses libraries based on criteria that include extent of opening hours for children, the proportion of registered library users in the community who are children, the number of loans per child in the community, number of events for children, number of public Internet work stations for children in the library, a library collection increase, the library's membership in the SKIP Club of Children's Libraries, quality of web pages for children, library environment, partnership in the community. The competition is organised in partnership with the company 3M Česko (3M Czech Republic), under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, with a professional guarantee of the National Library. Support to the children's libraries and to the SKIP – organised competition is thus declared by the Public Service, the professional community, and the private sphere.

READERSHIP IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The book *Do We Read? Czech Citizens and Their Attitude to the Book* deals with statistical data acquired

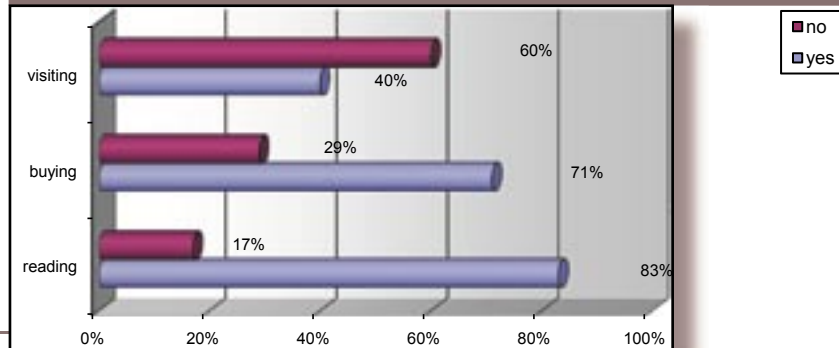
through a survey conducted by the Institute for Czech Literature – Czech Academy of Sciences and the National Library of the Czech Republic. The survey questioned a representative sample of the whole Czech population aged 15 years and over, comprising 1,551 anonymous respondents (statistical variation 2,5%), between May 25 and June 16, 2007, using standard questionnaires (face-to-face interviews of 38 questions; the average interview was 30 minutes long); the survey can be considered highly communicative and non-conflictual (the response rate was 66%). The 2007 survey focused on libraries (their attendance and services) in particular.

Highlights

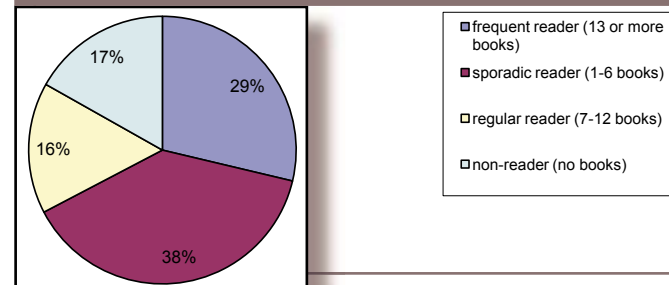
- 83% of Czech citizens aged 15 years and over read at least one book in the course of one year.
- On average, Czech citizens read 16 books within one year (median is 8).
- When asked about the frequency of their reading, the largest group of Czechs (23%) says that they read books several times per week.
- On average, Czechs read books for 41 minutes each day, read newspapers and magazines for 30 minutes, watch TV for 111 minutes, listen to the radio 113 minutes, watch video/DVD for 51 minutes, and use the internet for 86 minutes per day.

- 71% of Czech citizens buy at least one book a year. On average, we buy 6.6 books per year and spend 1,303 Czech crowns (= about 53 Euro) on them.
- The Czechs acquire books mainly in bookshops (14%) and from relatives and friends (13%).
- The main source of information concerning books is from a person's surroundings (relatives, friends) (17%) and bookshops (10%).
- More than one half of the Czech population shares the view that it is not possible to acquire an overview of the book market.
- The average number of books in Czech home libraries is 274 (median 120).
- As far as influences on reading choices are concerned, citizens of the Czech Republic hold that the main motivation for their reading is mediated through their family background (parents who read heavily and had a lot of books at home).
- The favourite place for reading is at home (23%) and in bed (17%).
- The most popular kinds of reading are contemporary recreational books (14%), followed by non-fiction (diaries, biographies, textbooks) (12%), classics (9%), and professional books (8%).
- The most popular author among Czech readers is Michal Viewegh; the most popular book is Betty MacDonald's autobiographical novel *The Egg and I* (originally published 1945, with 14 Czech editions as of 2007).
- 40% of people visited public libraries at least once a year.
- By far the most sought-after service provided by libraries is lending books, followed by lending magazines, reading rooms, copying and public internet.
- More than three quarters (79%) of citizens of the Czech Republic are predominantly satisfied with library services.
- The Czech population shows a high affinity for books. Compared to other European countries, the Czech Republic ranks near the top (along with Scandinavia and the Baltic states).
- To be or not to be a reader is primarily a matter of education. The main dividing line runs between people with a basic-school education and people with a secondary-school education.
- There is a considerable gender gap in the Czech population: 88% of women say they read at least one book per year, compared to 77% of men.
- Age and size of hometown (urbanicity) do not play any relevant role in deciding whether or not someone is a reader; nor does employment (i.e., students and retirees read at the same rate as people who are currently employed). The Czech population seems to be homogenous in terms of these variables.
- Income, as another variable, plays a specific role only in relation to buying books.
- Home libraries are an important trait of our reading culture. It is still possible to trace the fact that they

“Book Behavior”: reading books – buying books – visiting libraries in 2007



Types of readers within Czech population



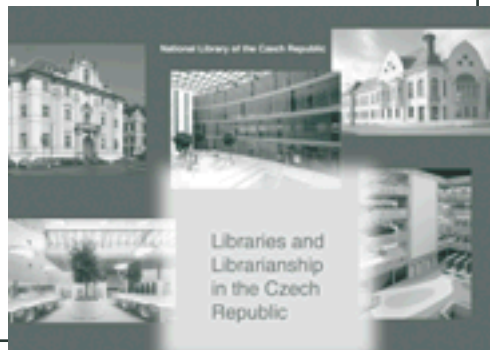
Criterion: number of books read in 2007.

played a crucial role, as an alternative source of books and information, during the Communist period (1948–1989).

- The internet as a way of buying books has not been adopted, yet. However, its role as an information source about books is more significant.
- Even those who claimed to be non-readers buy books in relatively significant numbers. Despite the fact that the number of those who buy books is smaller than the number of readers, buying books seems to be the most common “book activity”. The gender gap in book buying is also smaller.
- In accordance with general trends, at least within

Euro-American civilization, our place of reading socialization in the Czech lands is the family.

- In accordance with general trends, library attendance is higher for the younger generation, i.e. for people who are still in school or at university. People visit libraries less often in their thirties, forties, and fifties; library use reaches a second peak after the age of 60, i.e. in the period of retirement.
- A typical Czech reader tends to be a woman, to be educated (at least having finished secondary school), and to live in a large city. The typical Czech non-reader tends to be a man, to have less education, and to live in a village.



Libraries and Librarianship in the Czech Republic

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