

ICELAND

LANDSBÓKASAFN ÍSLANDS – HÁSKÓLABÓKASAFN NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF ICELAND

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The National and University Library of Iceland has undergone a complete change in its organisational structure based on a new strategy that was developed in 2002 and approved by the Board of Directors in March of 2003. The new strategy is called: Þekkingarveita á norðurslóð / (Knowledge Provider in the North) and contains the vision for the future, four main goals as well as actions to achieve these goals. The new organisational structure came into effect on October 1, 2003. In the new structure all the activities of the Library have been divided into three main divisions, Division of Services, Division of National Collections and Division of Administration. The Library has a double function as the National Library of Iceland as well as the Library of the University of Iceland. The inner processes, such as acquisition and cataloguing, are quite distinct depending on the type of material in question. This gave rise to the decision to split up both the cataloguing department and the acquisition department and include the functions within their separate Divisions. The Icelandic material is mainly acquired through deposit legislation and the National Bibliography is the duty of the Division of National Collections. At the same time the acquisition of foreign material to support university teaching and research holds an entirely different purchasing process and most of the cataloguing records are downloaded from foreign databases.

A new library system, Aleph from ExLibris, was opened in April of 2003, and covers all libraries in Iceland. The bibliographic records were first transferred from the older system, Libertas, which had been operated by the National Library and served the main research libraries in the country. The other large system, Dobis-Libis, which was run by the public libraries has now been abandoned and all the records from the public and school libraries in Iceland have now been included in the new system which means that more than 100 libraries are using the same system all over the country. This facilitates cooperation and interlibrary loans. The new library system is run by a limited company, Landskerfi bókasafna (Icelandic Library Consortium) which is owned 50% by the local governments and 50% by the national government. Libraries pay service fees to the Consortium depending on several criteria such as population for the public libraries and the size of stock and number of students for the university and school libraries.

Two areas are of main importance to the Library, national licences to foreign electronic literature and the development of the Electronic National Library. The Library is in charge of the programme of national licences to electronic journals and databases and signs contracts with the vendors and publishers of scientific and technical information in most areas of knowledge. This material is then made available to every person in Iceland, independent of location and area of interest. It is a public policy to have this national access to as much material as possible and the purpose is to provide small communities and research institutions around Iceland with access to the world of learning.

The other general focus of the Library operations is the development of the Electronic National Library. The digitised material includes now a large collections of manuscripts related to the Icelandic sagas, historical maps and now more recently the digitisation of historical journals and newspapers in Icelandic. All this material is available through the Library's homepage www.bok.hi.is.

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