

Annual Report to CDNL 2004 – 2005

Name of Country : The Netherlands
Name of Library : Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of the Netherlands
Name of Chief Executive : Dr Wim van Drimmelen

Visits to the library increased in the past year, as did the use of the KB collection. The lengthening of the opening hours in 2003 clearly had a positive effect. In terms of absolute numbers the use of the website increased even more. The KB website has been newly designed; also the underlying structure has been changed. The new site has a more straightforward structure, with three paths: 'Library', 'Exhibitions and Collections' and 'About the KB'.

The KB portal provides access to the digital library. After an experimental phase in 2003, the portal became a permanent feature of the KB website in November 2004. This programme makes it possible to search many different databases, including the OPAC, in a single action. KB pass holders can now access a greater number of files at home.

The international e-Depot once again welcomed a number of major academic publishers: Blackwell, Taylor & Francis, Oxford University Press (2004), Sage and Springer (2005). Elsevier, Kluwer and BioMed Central signed archiving agreements already in 2002 and 2003. An international conference on permanent access to digital academic publications and research data was held within the context of the Dutch EU Presidency. As a follow-up to the conference, the KB took the initiative to establish a European Taskforce on Permanent Access, in which national libraries are represented as well as research laboratories and publishers.

Continuing a project partly financed by the European Commission, the KB took responsibility for the office of The European Library in which 43 national libraries jointly make their information sources accessible via the World Wide Web.

As the national library, the KB co-ordinates two national programmes: Memory of the Netherlands (digitization) and Metamorfoze (preservation and digitization). As from January 2005 subsidies for these programmes have been added to the annual grant. This made an end to the insecurity of applying for funds every new programme period. The Memory of the Netherlands (www.hetgeheugenvannederland.nl) now contains about 50 digitized collections from just as many libraries, archives and museums. The material from the digitized collections was also used to develop 27 applications for secondary school. For Metamorfoze (www.metamorfoze.nl) a selection was made of 53 leading collections from Dutch heritage institutions. In 2004, 23 preservation projects were started.

The KB has started one of the largest digitisation projects of historic material in the Netherlands: the digitisation of all Parliamentary papers printed in the years 1814 – 1995 (over two million pages). A new development is the partnership between the KB, the National Archives and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage, joining forces in the areas of paper conservation and digital preservation.

The KB and the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) have signed an agreement to ratify their collaboration with regard to the newly established KB Fellowship. The Fellowship is intended to emphasize the importance of fruitful working relationships between libraries and academic researchers. The first researcher to receive this prestigious Fellowship was Peter Burke of Cambridge University. The next KB fellow will be Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (Collège de France), historian and former President of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The KB has renovated its exhibition area, which was inaugurated by H.R.H. crown prince Willem-Alexander early 2005. In a joint effort the KB and the National Archives present their collections in an innovative way. The exhibition (Legacy of the Netherlands) attracts much more visitors than expected.

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