

Annual report to CENL 2016

Name of country: France

Name of library or equivalent national-level organisation: Bibliothèque nationale de France

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The second performance contract of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) was signed on 22 May 2014 by the French Minister of Culture and Communication and the Chair of the BnF. This contract focused on the values of trust, sharing and innovation which are the guiding principles of the BnF in the fulfilment of its work. In 2016 this contract reached its term, and the groundwork was laid for a new targets and performance contract applicable over the 2017-2021 period. It was therefore a year of transition, in which major undertakings under the 2014-2016 contract came to fruition and more than 200 of the BnF's staff members worked together towards specific aims, with the human feasibility and budgetary sustainability of the new undertakings to which the BnF is committing very much in mind.

The BnF's three overarching strategic priorities for the 2014-2016 period related to **access to national collections, sharing its wealth and know-how and optimising the resources which allow it to carry out its core missions**. The next performance contract was drawn up and adopted during the first Board meeting of 2017 along these very lines, to ensure continuity in terms of principles, but with strategic adjustments.

Figures at a glance

- L legal deposit for publishers: 7,986 books, 250,215 deposits of periodical issues, 17,198 brochures and various publications, 10,602 specialised documents and 22,525 audio-visual documents
- L collection of 2.8 billion URLs as part of the non-print legal deposit
- L acquisition, excluding heritage acquisitions, of 43,532 monographs

- L 874,290 visits to reading areas, all sites combined, and presentation of 844,914 documents
- L presence in Gallica (www.gallica.fr) of 3.8 million documents in open access mode; 14,237,252 visits; 346 partners
- L visits to temporary exhibitions (free and payable access combined): 166,792 admissions; 2,061 works loaned for external exhibitions
- L attendance at 184 public events (debates, conferences, symposiums, concerts, readings): 19,193 people
- L participation of 14,160 students and teachers in educational activities and 10,593 visitors in tours and workshops
- L visits across all sites: 1,150,000 visitors – i.e. 50,000 more visitors than in 2015

- ┆ BnF staff end 2015: 2,340 employees (i.e. 2,187 equivalent full-time staff)
- ┆ 2016 budget: EUR 218.5 million, including EUR 134.3 million in staff costs, EUR 47.4 million in operating expenses and EUR 39.8 million in investment expenditure

The first of the strategic undertakings under the 2014-2016 contract, and a key stage in the BnF's day-to-day running, was the completion of the first stage in the Richelieu site's renovation and its reopening to the public, both of which took place in 2016. Renamed "Richelieu - libraries, museum, galleries" to highlight the wide range of events and activities it hosts in scientific and cultural terms, bringing together on one site the libraries of the Institut national d'histoire de l'art and the École nationale des Chartes, along with a large proportion of the BnF's departments, the renovated site aspires to be a centre for scientific excellence devoted to history of art and heritage, to broaden and modernise its services for readers, to welcome as many people as possible through a carefully reconsidered content and cultural offering and to cement its standing as a museum at the heart of Paris. The scientific and cultural project that the BnF has set out for the site was updated in 2016 to reflect this new centre. Readers now have a fully redesigned range of services available thanks to the reopening of this site – not least in digital terms.

On a more general note, through 2016 the BnF pushed on with its efforts to keep its range of services for readers in step with the times: rolling out Wi-Fi, promoting its offering and services and simplifying its access conditions (with a major overhaul of its pricing policy, in anticipation of the guidelines laid down in the 2017-2021 performance contract). The first building blocks of a new cultural policy have also taken shape: for example, the BnF organised its first hackathon, enabling users to develop a tool based on its collections and forging a new relationship with a section of the public not usually in the habit of using the library.

Incidentally, digital technology continues to represent a key strategic priority for the BnF, which is aiming to make it an integral part of national heritage and ensure sustainable access to it for audiences. This strategy is naturally in keeping with the choices being made in terms of digitisation. Regarding the development and provision of digital collections, over the course of the year progress continued on the specialised document, press and printed item digitisation programmes, as well as on the projects under way with private operators via BnF-Partnerships. More than 27 million digitised images were produced – significantly more than in previous years with 2016 being the first full year for the mass printed item market outside the launch period. With 4 million documents available for remote consultation either from the BnF's own collections or those of its 346 partners (more than 500,000 documents), the digital library Gallica is a major springboard for national heritage dissemination and visibility.

It was also in 2016 that the digitisation charter was finalised and the 2017-2021 programme defined within this context. Outstanding collections earmarked for exhaustive digitisation by 2021; media and formats for which the state of conservation (out of use, microforms, press) calls for more advanced digitisation if they are to be made available to the public; and much larger collections (books, journals, images, etc.) concerning which the BnF is aiming to attain complete corpora for those defined within them (prominent texts and prominent authors; coherent subject collections, etc.) or special requests are made – especially coming from scientific communities: these are the three main digitisation priorities, marking a shift after a decade given primarily over to mass digitisation of printed works.

Not only that, but in 2016 it was also possible through the digital strategy – over and above just the question of collection digitisation – to focus on the necessary linking between the digital collections and the physical collections, so as to shore up and develop their coherency. In this regard, the BnF set up a system in 2016 for easier integration in its collections – via legal deposit, acquisitions and donations – of born-digital documents. Major headway has been made in the design of sectors bearing on collection, storage and communication to readers of digital documents, whether these concern digital books

coming under the legal deposit or acquisitions and donations of born-digital documents. The first tests were performed in 2016 aimed at verifying the validity of the integration chain for the legal deposit. Operational startup is due to commence once the implementing legislation, currently being drafted at the Ministry of Culture and Communication, has been adopted. The technical arrangements for digital sound have also begun to be looked into. Lastly, several documents have been able to join the collections thanks to the implementation of the Acquisitions and Donations of Digital Documents sector. A milestone has therefore been reached in the efforts to forge a unified, more comprehensive vision of the development of national collections.

The digital strategy is also geared towards shoring up the BnF's work in terms of library science, a strategic mainstay for the visibility and communication of physical and digital collections alike. In this way, the BnF has brought its bibliographic production more closely in line with Web uses. In 2016, new versions of its General Catalogue, Archives and Manuscripts Catalogue and Union Catalog of France (CCFr) have been developed, thereby simplifying access to the collections by fitting in with online search uses. Consultation of the website data.bnf.fr is continuing to grow, with more than 4 million hits in 2016. This reform is also evident in the continued recovery of publishers' data via legal deposit declarations, the deriving of bibliographic records for foreign works acquired and the development of standards within the "bibliographic transition" standardisation group.

At the same time, the BnF has pressed ahead with its traditional activities and priorities set in motion since 2014. Worthy of note in this respect is how exceptional 2016 has been in terms of major heritage acquisitions, including the acquisition of several National Treasures or works of major interest on the heritage front: the Royal Breviary of Saint-Louis de Poissy, the archives of Édouard Glissant, the Trésor de Cuts (an outstanding collection of silver coins from the late 10th century) and an exceptional manuscript of Berlioz' opera *Les Troyens* (the Trojans). National and international partnerships have also thrived, a clear sign of the ambitious policy the BnF is pursuing in terms of cooperation. With respect to national cooperation, note that the non-print legal deposit archives are now accessible in 11 printer legal deposit libraries in the regions outside of Paris, which shows the great store that the BnF has set by digital technology in its cooperation policy.

International action forms part of the BnF's missions regarding cooperation and research, as they are expressed in its founding decree and set out in its performance contract. For six years now, the terms in office of the BnF Chair on the boards of the Europeana and Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) Foundations have made a major contribution to the BnF's international activity. The BnF remains one of Europeana's foremost contributors in terms of both the amount of data it provides and its participation in European projects looking to improve operations and uses. Accordingly, in 2016 it took part in the *Europeana DSI (Digital Service Infrastructure)* project, which enabled funding to be secured for Europeana through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and setup of a new model for the aggregation, dissemination and reuse of data, along with the *Europeana Sounds* project which came to an end in January 2017. What is more, the BnF continued to support Francophone partners through three publication donations: 20,000 young people's publications to the National Library of Ivory Coast, received under the second copy of the legal deposit for the 2008-2014 period by the National Centre for Young People's Literature (CNLJ). Thanks to this donation, a youth corner could be created as well as a documentation centre for young people's literature; 13,000 publications to the Zinder media library (Niger), which was destroyed in 2015 during the riots; thanks to a partnership with the firm Electre, establishment of an annual donation of 1,500 publications reflecting the current French editorial scene to the library of Alexandria with a view to updating the collection of the Francophone library.

In the same way as the scaling up of the forms of scientific, educational and cultural mediation, which reflects the BnF's firm commitment to reach out to an ever wider audience and so provide access to knowledge and culture, these various achievements are showing the first signs of a positive impact in the

2016 user numbers. Indeed, 2016 has been a fairly good year for the BnF in terms of visitor numbers which, across the BnF's premises (including attendance in reading rooms, at exhibitions, events and for educational activities and tours), are up from 2015 to around 1,150,000. This increase corresponds to an improvement in attendance for the cultural programme, while use of reading areas has remained stable compared with 2015 (-0.6%), despite a three-day closure when the River Seine broke its banks and the quarter-long closure of the Richelieu site for the transfer of collections in connection with the ongoing renovation works. At the same time, more than 14 million hits have been totted up in 2016 for the digital library, and the survey carried out among Gallica users displayed a 95% satisfaction rate, which is quite remarkable in the digital realm.

All of these developments have taken place against a backdrop of more or less stable resources.

2016 put in a positive performance in terms of sponsorship deals, partnerships and donations that were worth nearly EUR 5.3 million. The target of improving over the 2014/2016 three-year period on the amount of sponsorship that was raised over the 2011/2013 three-year period was exceeded by a wide margin. This revenue could be channelled towards funding heritage acquisitions, cultural promotion and digitisation projects as well as towards the planned renovation works. In 2016, the BnF thus initiated its 4th call for public contributions for the renovation of the Ovale room at Richelieu. The target has been set at EUR 500,000. Commercial revenue is also on an upward trend, especially publications (for the 3rd year running) as well as collection reproduction services thanks to the Reproduction Department's drive to modernise the offering and services of recent years. The efforts to control day-to-day operating expenses, meanwhile, are continuing to bear fruit, particularly in favour of pooling maintenance contracts bearing on different sites. Accordingly, the amount of expenditure in 2016 concerning site and equipment maintenance, IT maintenance and managed services, and logistics and operations (excluding fluids), is down compared to the average expenditure for 2011/2013.

It would be fitting to conclude with the observation that, with a view to applying the budgetary management and public accounting (GBCP) requirements, the BnF has significantly reviewed the way its budgetary and financial services are organised, and that the approval of the accounts is now complete: the statutory auditors approved the 2015 accounts without any reservations, and the 2016 accounts without any reservations or remarks: evidence of altogether commendable sincerity and diligent consistency.

The full annual report (in French) will be available at www.bnf.fr: The BnF > About the Library: <http://webapp.bnf.fr/rapport/html/accueil.htm>