



**The Strategy for the Development  
of Libraries  
in the Czech Republic  
for 2017–2020**

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Prague 2017

Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic

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## The Position of Libraries in the Information Society

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Libraries have accompanied civilisations in their historical transformations. Libraries in the 21st century act in the world of information abundance, at the time when their information monopoly has ended. In spite of that, the number of their users has not decreased and the essence of their activities as book-lending places has acquired a new quality, although the traditional services based on the mediation of documents have experienced a dramatic development as well. Therefore, libraries offer anyone who is interested orientation in a world of opportunities and uncertainties, irrespective of the form in which the knowledge is presented and preserved.

The quality of one's life in a community often depends on one's ability to react to changes in living conditions. Precisely libraries are an ideal environment for seeking paths and solutions for both individuals and groups. They have retained a high degree of social trust as a safe, non-discriminatory environment where it is possible to find information, knowledge, orientation and experience meetings, sharing and relaxation. Libraries providing public library and information services (hereinafter as the 'PLIS') are, by virtue of the Library Act,<sup>1</sup> perceived as public<sup>2</sup> and they form a system of libraries.<sup>3</sup> The presented Strategy for the Development of Libraries in the CR for 2017–2020 does not differentiate between individual types of libraries, considering the principles and programme priorities described to be shared by most of them. Nevertheless, this does not exclude the possibility of the subsequent preparation of component strategies for a certain type of libraries for the sake of further characterisation of their specific services within a certain timeframe.

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<sup>1</sup> Act No. 257/2001 Coll., on Libraries and the Terms and Conditions of the Provision of Public Library and Information Services, as subsequently amended (Library Act).

<sup>2</sup> They provide, by virtue of Section 2 of the Library Act, in a manner guaranteeing equal access for all without distinction, public library and information services and they are entered in the register of libraries kept by the Ministry of Culture pursuant to Section 5 of the Library Act.

<sup>3</sup> The system of libraries defined in Section 3 of the Library Act comprises the National Library of the Czech Republic, the K. E. Macan Library and Printing House for the Blind, the Moravian Library in Brno, established by the Ministry of Culture, regional libraries, established by the competent regional authorities, the basic libraries, established by the competent municipal authorities, and specialised libraries, established by other entities.

The Strategy for the Development of Libraries in the Czech Republic for 2017–2020 (hereinafter as the ‘Strategy’) evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of library activities, identifies threats to the system of libraries if it does not sufficiently reflect the changing social demand, and it actively uses the potential of the opportunities offered to the libraries.

Libraries are naturally conceived now as places of work with both printed and electronic documents and resources using state-of-the-art technologies. This connection of the principles is one of the basic tools of sustainable library development. The preparation of the national digital platform, the creation of component products facilitating the provision of services, and the efforts to legislate the entire process of the acquisition and preservation of digital documents and of making them accessible in high quality in the long term are a prerequisite of a synergic combination of the traditional form of libraries and smart use of technologies.

The development and perception of the basic functions of the libraries make them open educational, cultural, community and creative centres in any environment of their operation. Such a library strategy must overcome the impending risks lying in an unbalanced level of support of libraries both in different areas and on individual levels of public administration or regions. A reason for the insufficient support may be the fact that it has not been anchored enough in the public mind that a library not only consumes public funds but also produces countable social welfare, several times exceeding the means invested. It is an actual part of a community infrastructure, i.e. of the civic facilities in the vast majority of towns and villages or of the background of scientific communities.

An unchanging task for libraries continues to be work with documents and information resources in both printed and electronic form. This core of widely used library services must be built, administered, made accessible and preserved in the long term on the national as well as local levels in all effective forms. In this area, the Strategy states very precisely what is necessary to achieve this goal; the key words are: efficiency, cooperation, reliability and accessibility.

The premises of libraries, their functional models and equipment are an essential part of the prerequisites for the provision of quality services. In addition, it is important to develop active cooperation between libraries and the Ministry of Culture of the CR (hereinafter as the ‘MoC CR’) as well as other ministries, which may, by opening grant programmes also for libraries, significantly influence the quality of the services that they offer. The equipment of libraries with technologies and their subsequent renewal are as important as the development and work of methodological centres, which unify procedures and set the standards on the national level.

Libraries in the 21st century ensure the continuity of access to documents and information, education, reading and readership, the meeting of people and ideas. In addition, however, they offer new forms of services, which are not always sufficiently known to the public and which people do not associate with libraries yet. In the next period, it is thus necessary to monitor two inseparable principles: the efficiency of the activities of libraries and the marketing of their services. The idea that all libraries are of the same quality and that they are known to everyone and thus do not have to be presented to the public is outdated. The monitoring of the leisure market, the development of lifelong learning through libraries, the calculation of the return on the public funds invested into libraries are the forms of work that must be supported by the creation of national methodologies.

The profession of a librarian is not defined in the Library Act, but it is specified in the National System of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications.

High-quality professional preparation at vocational schools complemented by the system of lifelong professional education connected with an adequate system of remuneration is requisite for the preservation of the ability of the librarians to meet the demands of the profession and for a successful service to the public.

One can often hear: 'There have been and will be libraries.' The existence of libraries providing public library and information services is taken for granted. Nevertheless, it would be significantly compromised if there were no social demand for libraries or support of them and if they were not able to understand their assignments and offer promising solutions to social needs. The priority areas of the presented Strategy prove that libraries are aware of the social demand and are ready to meet it. Libraries, their users and politicians jointly create visions and take advantage of the opportunities that these new visions offer.

## A SWOT Analysis of the Current Situation in the System of Libraries in the Czech Republic

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### **Strengths**

1. The guarantee of free access to information, the provision of independent public services that are essentially free of charge and provided in a manner guaranteeing access for all without distinction
2. The perception of libraries by the public as reliable, trustworthy and safe institutions; the persistence of the public interest in the use of library services, a high number of both physical and virtual visitors
3. The existence of an extensive network of general and specialised libraries ensuring the availability of PLIS
4. The existence of the basic legislation and recommendations (including international), defining the PLIS
5. The existence of long-term developed structured historical collections and conservation collections of domestic as well as foreign documents
6. The existence of physical spaces, their equipment, professional staff and their motivation for education
7. The high standardisation level of the processes of the processing of library collections and making them accessible as the basis for cooperation between the systems developed
8. Intensive digitisation of library collections on national as well as regional levels
9. The ability to process information professionally
10. The ability to cooperate; experience with the sharing of information resources and services
11. The system of the coordination and support of the provision of PLIS by the basic libraries on a regional level
12. A sufficiently wide offer of foreign electronic information resources
13. The existence of professional education at all levels
14. The existence of multi-form financing in the form of grant programmes, the EU Structural Funds, project funding including support of research, development and innovations
15. A functional system for measuring and comparing the performance and activities of libraries operated by municipalities and regions including the evaluation of the economic efficiency of their services

16. Active participation of civic associations, societies, advisory bodies and informal associations of libraries and their employees in the development of PLIS
17. Active cooperation between libraries and foreign professional associations; participation in the activities of international professional associations

## **Weaknesses**

1. Insufficient integration of libraries into the system of school and out-of-school education
2. An insufficient degree of cooperation between libraries and schools in the support of reading, information and digital literacy
3. An insufficient degree of cooperation between libraries, schools, publishers and the book market in activities in support of reading and its social prestige
4. An insufficient degree of cooperation between libraries in the provision of PLIS and the development of library collections – between individual libraries, between libraries and the authorities operating them, between librarians and library users, between academics and librarians, between libraries and other institutions
5. Not very prompt services, complicated and inconvenient access to resources, insufficient offer of mobile applications, online payments, the inability of libraries to react flexibly to the needs of users
6. Fragmentation of the offer of services and information resources, the absence of central services combining traditional services with services with digital content
7. A limited offer of digital resources and services intended for the general public, mainly in the area of eBooks
8. A weak support of the long-term preservation of digital documents (including audio) as an important component of the cultural heritage
9. The lack of a system of the collection, preservation of and access to born-digital<sup>4</sup> documents
10. The lack of the legislation and infrastructure to ensure a legal deposit copy of network/online electronic publications
11. Limited funds for the purchase of current literature, obsolete library collections; low efficiency of the purchase of electronic information resources for research and development
12. Barriers hindering the use of libraries and their services by disadvantaged social groups
13. An insufficient degree of the marketing of PLIS and the development of public relations
14. Insufficient space for library activities, complicated rental relations, obsolete interior furnishings and information technologies, limited opening hours of small libraries
15. Unbalanced funding of the regional functions of libraries in individual regions
16. Slow processing of a legal deposit copy by some recipients, reduced efficiency of shared cataloguing

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<sup>4</sup> Digital documents created without an analogue equivalent, which means that they have not been created through the digitisation of an analogue source (e.g. a printed book) and neither are they planned to be converted into an analogue form (e.g. a website). The absence of an analogue equivalent increases the risk of their damage, distortion or loss.



17. Unresolved copyright aspects of the development of library services in the digital environment
18. The lack of a system for the deposition of little-used library collections, an interdisciplinary methodological centre for the conservation of modern documents including experts on library-collection deacidification
19. Limited use of examples of good practice from abroad, conservativeness, little flexibility, (de)motivation
20. Insufficient internationally comparable statistics of the activities and performance of libraries
21. The lack of a system for lifelong library staff training; insufficient qualification of workers in some areas, e.g. digital literacy, pedagogical skills, marketing, management; little emphasis on personal development
22. Insufficient funds for the purchase of library collections and other information resources, mainly foreign literature
23. Insufficient participation of libraries in educational and training programmes. Schools do not sufficiently emphasise information education of the users with the aim to increase their functional literacy and thus also their ability to search for and use information resources effectively.
24. An inefficient employee remuneration system, providing little motivation for lifelong learning and for improving the quality of PLIS, which results in the outflow of skilled workers from the field or prevents young professionals from being interested in working in libraries. Libraries will not have enough skilled workers to provide modern services.

## **Opportunities**

1. The involvement of libraries in the systems of school and out-of-school education, including lifelong adult education, the development of civic education and the digital literacy of the entire population
2. The perception of libraries as educational, cultural, information and community centres, as the centres of creativity
3. The perception of libraries as an important part of the research and development infrastructure
4. Wider possibilities of library cooperation in the area of services within the EU, e.g. the European Digital Library Europeana, and in the world, e.g. Google
5. Digitisation – digital economy, mass digitisation of printed production and the consequent increase in the demands on the long-term preservation of digital documents and making them accessible
6. Wider access to unique information thanks to the digitisation of library collections, the use of this information in research and development, in education and in leisure activities
7. Digital humanities, big data, data mining
8. The potential of using mobile communication – smartphones, eBook readers, tablets
9. A growing number of information sources and the role of libraries in familiarising the public with the information environment
10. The need for safe places, open spaces
11. The growing importance of education, hunger for culture, increasing creativity; new information needs of the users
12. People living longer, having more leisure time; loneliness and desire for contact

13. A decline in reading literacy and the resulting interest in library activities in support of reading literacy
14. The development of civil society, the use of volunteers and citizens performing community service
15. Deepening economic differentiation of society, interest in free services
16. Growing interest in central services that combine the use of traditional and digital documents
17. Amendments to the Copyright Act, the possibility of using orphan works and out-of-commerce works, eBook lending
18. Amendments to the Copyright Act, the legislative basis of the development of the system of libraries in the CR as a consequence of technological and social changes (the issues of LTP, LLL in libraries)
19. The use of the European Structural Funds and other financial mechanisms for the development of libraries
20. The application of the system of legal deposit copies also to network/online digital documents
21. Cooperation with publishers and distributors of both traditional and digital documents

### **Threats**

1. A decrease of interest in traditional library services, the perception of libraries as institutions for the 20th century, low expectations on the part of the public, the competition from other leisure activities
2. Information hyperinflation – libraries are no longer necessary to acquire information, the vast majority of people feel overwhelmed and tired by information overload
3. The potential unfavourable development of public budgets may limit the funding of libraries, which may result in the reduction of the services provided and thus also the inability of libraries to meet the expectations of their users
4. The potential negative development of public budgets may limit the process of the construction and modernisation of library buildings as an attractive meeting place, providing a differentiated environment for studying and personality cultivation
5. The difficult reconciliation of interests between the authors and other copyright holders on the one hand and libraries as the mediators of information and cultural values to the broadest layers of society on the other; concerns about the dangers of abusing digital documents to make pirated copies
6. Competition between commercial providers of electronic services
7. A strengthening of the tendency to charge for the basic library services; the end of the perception of libraries as a public service; the violation of the principle of equal access to information resources through libraries

## A Vision for the Year 2020

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**The libraries that we create together offer services and information resources as well as an open space for education, culture and personal development.**

### *Together*

Libraries are not isolated institutions – on the contrary: they form a cooperative network represented by all the librarians serving their readers. Nevertheless, they not only cooperate with each other; they also seek synergy with other entities of the public life: cultural, educational and other institutions, civic activities as well as public administration. In addition, they perceive their users not only as customers but also as partners and co-creators of libraries. Last but not least, they also listen to those that themselves do not use libraries but, as taxpayers, cover their operation. This is the only way in which they can retain their position as an indispensable institution to which people feel a civic responsibility.

### *Sources*

Libraries provide access to cultural heritage, education as well as entertainment through a wide range of documents capturing writing, images and sound. These include not only traditional documents, hence stored on physical media, but also documents accessible through digital networks, which become increasingly important. Libraries provide qualified access to all of these sources – they are thus ready to help anyone in seeking a suitable information source.

### *Space*

Libraries are a shared public space for all without distinction and regardless of their language, religion or handicap; a space that must be both open and safe, meets the needs and requirements of the users and is economically efficient. Libraries are easily accessible not only in a physical space (a town, a village, a campus), but also in a virtual space (responsive web, social networks, applications...).

### *Development*

Libraries embody the past, preserve values and draw on traditions while offering experiences from discovering new things, inspiration and support for one's creative activities, work, studies. They are every user's ally on his/her path of personal development. They do not make decisions for him/her but offer opportunities, the context, new perspectives. They promote the freedom of speech and encourage everyone to form his/her own informed opinion. They contribute to solidarity and to the development of communities. They preserve the memory of the past for the present as well as the memory of the present for the future.

## The Priority Areas to Ensure the Future Development of Libraries

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1. Libraries in a Virtual Environment
2. Libraries as Open Educational, Cultural, Community and Creative Centres
3. The Development of Library Collections and Information Resources
4. Long-Term Preservation of Traditional Library Documents
5. The Construction of Libraries, ICT Infrastructure Support in Libraries
6. The Evaluation System and Marketing of Public Library and Information Services
7. Library Staff Training
8. Libraries as Scientific Research Institutions

### 1. Libraries in a Virtual Environment

#### The Initial Situation

*The digitisation of library collections creates the conditions for the preservation and wide accessibility of cultural heritage for the needs of science, education, creativity as well as the personal development of the population of the Czech Republic, also making them accessible in the European and global contexts. Libraries make long-term investments into the digitisation of library collections. In the last period, the libraries developed the basic digitisation resources and tools – digitisation lines, software tools for the digitisation and its coordination including standards (e.g. the Digitisation Register, the Union Catalogue of the CR and the Czech National Bibliography). These tools contribute to mutual coordination and significantly reduce the risk of duplicate digitisation. Cooperation with Google has also made it possible to implement a major PPP-type project focused on the digitisation of historical library collections.*

*The development of the internet and ICT is accompanied by an ever increasing number of electronic publications without an equivalent in the traditional physical form, which are born-digital. These include documents published on the internet, eBooks, etc., which form an important part of the cultural heritage. In this area, libraries have similar tasks like in the case of printed documents, i.e. to accumulate the documents, process them, preserve them in the long term and subsequently make them accessible for the public. The area of long-term preservation of digital data still lacks*

*complex legislation, technologies, programs and personnel. Without the fulfilment of this relatively new function of libraries, there is a risk of losing a significant part of this segment of cultural heritage. Therefore, draft amendments to the Library Act (No. 257/2001 Coll.) and the Act on Non-Periodical Publications (No. 37/1995 Coll.) have been prepared.*

*Within the Implementation of the Strategy for the Development of Libraries in the CR for 2017–2020, the National Strategy for the Long-Term Preservation of Digital Data in Libraries has been prepared and subsequently accepted by the Central Library Council.*

*There is growing public interest in services in the digital environment; new digital libraries and countless specialised systems emerge, which is the reason for their limited use. The main limits to a more effective use of digital documents are the overall fragmentation of services and copyright restrictions. A draft amendment to the Copyright Act (No. 121/2000 Coll.) is currently in the legislative process; this amendment will make it possible to conclude extended collective licensing agreements for library services in the digital environment.*

*In 2015, the trial operation of the Central Library Portal was launched, with the aim of this single access point being to facilitate access to services and information sources of libraries providing public library and information services all over the Czech Republic.*

## **Measures**

- 1.1 To develop library services in the digital environment, to provide access to information sources including traditional documents**
- 1.2 To support the digitisation of library collections**
- 1.3 To accumulate born-digital national cultural heritage**
- 1.4 To ensure trustworthy, long-term preservation of digital documents including its legislative basis in Act No. 257/2001 Coll. (Library Act)**

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objectives:

- To develop strong central services, mainly the Central Library Portal
- To conclude, after the amendment to the Copyright Act becomes effective, collective licensing agreements for the use of out-of-commerce works and subsequently to develop a system of making digital documents accessible through libraries to all without distinction
- To continue in the digitisation of library collections including the extension of digitisation to other types of documents and the digitisation of special collections
- To develop a methodological centre for the digitisation of library collections, which will make it possible to improve the coordination and standardisation of digitisation processes in libraries
- To create the legislative, technical and personnel prerequisites for the collection, processing and long-term preservation of born-digital documents
- To create a system of the long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage in libraries

## Indicators of Successful Implementation

• The operation and development of the Central Library Portal, the number of the libraries involved
• The introduction of new services and tools making electronic documents accessible in the digital environment
• Digital service utilisation rate
• The creation of a methodological centre for digital documents in libraries, focused on digitisation, the reception of born-digital documents, making digital documents accessible and their long-term archiving
• The preparation and implementation of library collection digitisation strategy
• The development of digitisation coordination tools
• The development of tools for the protection and long-term preservation of digital documents
• The development and operation of the system of electronic legal deposit copies for the collection and processing of born-digital publications, mainly network/online documents
• A functional LTP system in the National Library of the CR including the archiving of the digital documents of libraries in the Czech Republic
• The legislative basis for electronic legal deposit copies
• Prepared and updated standards for the areas of the digitisation of library collections, their preservation and making them accessible

## 2. Libraries as Open Educational, Cultural, Community and Creative Centres

### The Initial Situation

*The transformation of libraries from mere book-lending places into lively educational, cultural, community and creative centres is a long-term global trend. This trend is also followed by Czech libraries, but the transformation process is very slow and encounters numerous limits. Libraries have considerable potential for development in the area of informal and civic education, with growing importance in the support of reading, information and digital literacy both among children and adolescents and among adults. There is also considerable potential for the development of activities directed towards specific groups of users, especially members of minorities and people at risk of social exclusion. Libraries are a traditional and natural centre of social inclusion.*

*The functioning of libraries in smaller villages essentially depends on the system of the support of the regional functions of libraries, through which regional and other libraries provide them with support services. The main objective is to ensure the availability of the PLIS in all the places of the CR and to settle the differences in the level of the services provided to the inhabitants of towns and small villages. Regional functions are funded by regions (in compliance with Section 11, Subsections 3 and 4 of Act No. 257/2001 Coll.). In some regions, the funding was not continuous in the last period, which resulted in undesirable differences between individual municipalities, districts and regions.*



## Measures

- 2.1 To use the potential of library networks as natural community centres
- 2.2 To develop the educational functions of libraries mainly in the area of life-long and civic education in cooperation with educational institutions and other partners on the national, regional and local levels
- 2.3 To support reading and digital literacy of children and adults
- 2.4 To organise campaigns to promote reading and its social prestige
- 2.5 To expand the offer of library and information services for diverse target groups and their needs (members of minorities, various age groups and a different socio-cultural background or people with disabilities, people at risk of social exclusion)
- 2.6 To ensure access to the internet, to ICT resources and to the digital content for all without distinction
- 2.7 To develop regional functions of libraries
- 2.8 To support volunteerism in culture both conceptually and methodologically

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objectives:

- To increase the number of libraries offering quality educational, cultural and community activities, libraries supporting creativity and creating a wide offer of both educational and relaxation activities for different user groups
- To increase the amount of the funding of the regional functions of libraries according to the standard<sup>5</sup>

## Indicators of Successful Implementation

• The number of libraries organising cultural, educational and community activities; progress in time
• The number of organised educational, cultural and community events and the number of visitors to events; progress in time
• A comparison of the level of funding of regional functions between regions, the monitoring of expenditures per capita and library over time

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<sup>5</sup> The Methodological Guidelines of the Ministry of Culture to Ensure the Performance of the Regional Functions of Libraries and Their Coordination in the Czech Republic; available at [www.mkcr.cz](http://www.mkcr.cz)

### 3. The Development of Library Collections and Information Resources

#### The Initial Situation

*A long-term problem of Czech libraries is insufficient funding for the purchase of literature and other information resources. Library collections of a substantial part of libraries run by municipalities are obsolete and outdated, the libraries lack funds for the purchase of foreign literature (fiction, non-fiction, language guides), electronic information resources and eBooks for the widest public, and literature for national minorities. The share of this population continues to increase, but libraries are not able to offer them the corresponding services. The unfavourable situation has also been exacerbated by the economic crisis in the last years. In 2014–2015, the funding from the Ministry of Culture made it possible to implement the pilot and second years of the project of the acquisition of foreign literature for the collections of libraries in the CR. Considering its very positive response, it is socially necessary to continue to support the acquisition of this literature within newly established centres for foreign-language literature in individual regions. In addition, the potential of open-access repositories as free information sources for academic and scientific work is not utilised enough. The coordination of the purchase of electronic information resources for research and development is insufficient. The project of the National Centre for Electronic Information Resources has not been implemented yet. The cooperative system of analytical bibliography has faced a lack of funding in the long term. This results in the limited complementation of the ANL database, which threatens the full use of this database in the Central Library Portal.*

#### Measures

- 3.1 To develop an effective acquisition strategy, defining the roles of particular types of libraries; to place an emphasis on the quality of the collection of regional literature in libraries run by municipalities and regions, the libraries of museums, galleries and archives**
- 3.2 To introduce a grant programme to support library acquisition activities including the acquisition of earlier collections from second-hand bookshops, auctions and internet portals**
- 3.3 To support the acquisition of foreign literature into library collections to improve the language education of the population in the form of a grant title designated for foreign-literature centres created in individual libraries**
- 3.4 To continue in the implementation of a grant programme in support of the acquisition of the literature in the languages of national minorities, audio books for people with disabilities**
- 3.5 To continue in the Czech Library project to support the acquisition of non-commercial titles of the original Czech literature, literary science and related sciences for libraries entered in the register of libraries<sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> Section 5 of Act No. 257/2001 Coll. (Library Act)



- 3.6 **To support the purchase of electronic information resources (including eBooks) for research, development as well as the widest public, and also the purchase of licences allowing access to digitisation results and out-of-commerce works**
- 3.7 **To promote and use open-access repositories for access to published peer-reviewed research and development results**
- 3.8 **To use the tools of the Virtual Deposit Library project for effective acquisitions of documents discarded from libraries for the collections of legal deposit libraries**
- 3.9 **To support cooperative creation of national, regional and specialised bibliographies based on factual, full-text and multimedia sources**
- 3.10 **To process the library collections that have not been processed yet systematically retrospectively and analytically**
- 3.11 **To establish the National Licensing Centre for Electronic Information Resources – CzechELib**
- 3.12 **To react to changes in access to scientific information and offer access to public repositories**

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objectives:

- To increase the amount of the printed and electronic information resources purchased for library collections and monitor the effectiveness of their use
- To improve coordination in the purchase of electronic information resources for research and development and the wide public
- To provide information on the principles of open access to scientific peer-reviewed publications and research data and on changes in publishing practices (business model)
- To include also references to open-access journals and books and centralised open-access subject and institutional repositories into the offer of electronic resources both on national and international levels
- To take the changes in the access to scientific information into consideration when securing licences for access to electronic information resources
- To secure and institutionalise the processes of the system of the Czech central analytical bibliography on all levels as one of the key research tools created directly in libraries and used also for the promotion of the publication outcomes of Czech science and research in the Czech language as well

### **Indicators of Successful Implementation**

• The number and quality of newly acquired library units, progress in time
• The number of acquired electronic information resources and their utilisation, progress in time
• The establishment of the National Licensing Centre for Electronic Information Resources – CzechELib
• The establishment of a scientific workplace for analytical bibliography in the National Library of the CR (hereinafter only as the ‘NL’)
• An increase in the number of Czech periodicals recorded in the central analytical bibliography (with excerption of at least 75 % of the content) and accessible in the centralised system

## 4. Long-Term Preservation of Traditional Library Documents

### The Initial Situation

*A long-term task of the system of libraries is to ensure the long-term preservation of traditional library documents (books, periodicals, audio recordings, etc.).*

*Within the implementation of the previous Strategy for the Development of Libraries, the Strategy for the Long-Term Preservation of Library Collections of Traditional Documents in Libraries of the CR was prepared and began to be implemented. Methodological tools for the development and administration of modern collections, research into the collections, the selection of documents for conservation and restoration procedures, etc. were created. Most of these methodologies are certified by the MoC CR. They are freely accessible to a wide range of people interested in using them. In the last period, the National Library of the CR, the Moravian Library in Brno and the Research Library in Olomouc initiated systematic research into library collections. In addition, the LPIS 7 programme support areas were expanded, specifically by the care of modern collections.*

*It is necessary to update the above-mentioned Strategy for the Long-Term Preservation of Library Collections of Traditional Documents in Libraries of the CR and continue to fulfil other objectives set in it. These objectives are mainly connected with the preparation of a strategy for the introduction of a system for the treatment of little-used literature in the CR including the elaboration of the necessary functional and economic analyses, continued deacidification of library collections including the preparation of the documents for the establishment of the central deacidification workplace for the collections of Czech memory institutions, and the establishment of the methodological centre for the conservation and restoration of modern collections. At the same time, it is necessary actively to deepen cooperation between Czech libraries in the area concerned, mainly through the continuous spread of new knowledge and examples of good practice.*

*A newly resolved issue is the long-term preservation of audio heritage placed in Czech memory institutions including the preparation of an optimal method for the processing and digitisation of audio recordings as well as the operation of the Virtual National Sound Recording Library in the competence of the Moravian Library.*

### Measures

- 4.1 To update the Strategy for the Long-Term Preservation of Library Collections of Traditional Documents in Libraries of the CR and to continue to implement it**
- 4.2 To propose a system of the central deposition of little-used literature from library collections in the CR**
- 4.3 To develop an interdisciplinary methodological centre for the conservation of modern documents including a central workplace for the deacidification of library collections**
- 4.4 To preserve national audio heritage**

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objectives:

- To develop and coordinate a system of the long-term preservation of traditional library documents

- To take care of the written cultural heritage preserved in library collections; to participate in the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Preservation of, Access to, Documentary Heritage in the Digital Era

## Indicators of Successful Implementation

• The establishment of a methodological centre for the conservation of modern documents
• Sufficient capacity for the deacidification of library collections
• The protection and long-term preservation of audio recordings
• The preparation of a strategy for the treatment of little-used literature in libraries of the CR

## 5. The Construction of Libraries, ICT Infrastructure Support in Libraries

### The Initial Situation

*A crucial condition for the transformation of library services and for the expansion of their range and quality is adequate spatial and technical equipment. In the last decades, numerous (mainly regional and university) libraries have been built or renovated. On the other hand, it can be proved that the lack of library space still concerns the majority of libraries – up to 90 % of libraries in municipalities with a population of more than 5,000 inhabitants do not reach the recommended value of area per user, specifically 60 m<sup>2</sup> per 1,000 inhabitants.<sup>7</sup> In more than one-third of the libraries, the insufficient space limits activities for children and the possibility of organising cultural and educational events. Most of the libraries have the basic information technologies available, often thanks to the Library Public Information Services (LPIS) programme of the Ministry of Culture, but they are not ready to expand the offer of user services in the digital environment and to support the digital literacy of the population. 39 % of computers in libraries are older than 7 years; mainly libraries in small villages are not equipped with new devices, e.g. eBook readers, tablets, game consoles, etc.*

### Measures:

**5.1 To analyse the space available for libraries run by municipalities\_**

**5.2 To develop a methodological centre for the construction and renovation of libraries in the Moravian Library in Brno**

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<sup>7</sup> The Methodological Guidelines of the Ministry of Culture for the Definition of the Standard of Public Library and Information Services Provided by Libraries Established and/or Run by the Municipalities and Regions in the Czech Republic; accessible at [www.mkcr.cz](http://www.mkcr.cz)

- 5.3 To support investment projects of libraries in regions
- 5.4 To continue to support the equipment of libraries with ICT in the area of user services (the LPIS programme)
- 5.5 To take advantage of the opportunity to fund the development of libraries from the Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP) – the strategic objectives: 2.1 Community centre activities, 2.4 Informal education activities and 3.1 More effective presentation, enhanced preservation and development of cultural heritage (only intended for regional libraries)
- 5.6 To evaluate the effectiveness of the revitalisation of the Klementinum and depositories and examine the issue of the construction of the new building of the National Library of the CR
- 5.7 To reconstruct and complete the construction of the Moravian Library in Brno
- 5.8 To support the construction of new buildings of the Research Library in Olomouc, the Regional Library of the Highlands, the Moravian-Silesian Research Library in Ostrava

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objective:

- To improve the spatial and technical equipment of libraries, to build libraries as enjoyable places for studying, leisure time, meeting and for the development of creativity

### Indicators of Successful Implementation

• More library space intended for the users <sup>8</sup>
• The provision of high-speed internet access through libraries
• The equipment of libraries with the latest information technologies for providing services; increasing numbers of computers connected to the internet, etc.
• The provision of adequate space for the deposition of library collections

## 6. The Evaluation System and Marketing of Public Library and Information Services

### The Initial Situation

*The world of libraries and the media has recently been changing rapidly. When designing their services, libraries must monitor trends in information and communication technologies and education in order to be able to respond promptly to the needs of the public. The development of new services in the digital environment requires the use of the active*

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<sup>8</sup> dtto

*forms of marketing focused not only on the end users, but also on the authorities operating and financing libraries.*

*In addition, digital technologies open new communication channels, through which it is possible to promote not only digital but also traditional services. Nevertheless, most libraries cannot work with these tools – they are not acquainted with their offer, economic patterns, suitable target groups and procedures. A powerful tool for the communication of library services may be the Central Library Portal and the sharing of good practice in public relations.*

*The actual offer of services in the digital environment is then very unbalanced – mainly in the case of libraries run by municipalities, it is essentially zero. Even in libraries with an interesting offer, however, it is difficult to present it attractively to the public. In this respect, the situation is aggravated by the fact that the libraries have retained among the public their traditional image, which does not attribute them work with digital documents.*

*Since libraries are financed from public budgets, it is necessary in the long term to monitor their social and economic contributions, evaluate their performance and the effectiveness of individual services. Work in the field of measuring the economic efficiency of libraries was initiated and significantly progressed within the fulfilment of the previous Strategy. In this respect, libraries are better prepared and equipped than most of the other memory institutions. Nevertheless, it is necessary that the proposed procedures continue to be applied. The created methodology makes it possible for libraries run by municipalities and regions to map their overall effectiveness, but not individual services.*

*The measurement of economic efficiency must be based on quality, reliable, well-structured and uniformly interpreted statistical data, which basically exist only for traditional library services. Statistical data are also an important starting point for library benchmarking, which is another significant activity that can help to improve library services further.*

## **Measures**

- 6.1 To amend the Methodological Guidelines of the Ministry of Culture for the Definition of the Standard of Public Library and Information Services Provided by Libraries Established and/or Run by the Municipalities and Regions in the Czech Republic**
- 6.2 To support the creation of the methodologies for the measurement of the economic efficiency of library services and their application in practice**
- 6.3 To continue with library benchmarking**
- 6.4 To optimise and unify the statistical reporting of the activities of all types of libraries providing public library and information services, to update the related methodologies, to increase the qualification of the responsible library staff in this area**
- 6.5 To emphasise the focus of the libraries on end users (both existing and potential), systematically to identify their needs and subsequently to modify the conception of services**
- 6.6 To use the methods of marketing and active public relations for the presentation of the provided and planned PLIS**
- 6.7 To provide marketing, public relations and promotion on the national level; to provide services in this area to libraries without a professional background**



- 6.8 To promote the role of libraries in society and to promote their development among public administration authorities and the public
- 6.9 To monitor the needs of the users as well as the general population, to conduct research on both the local and general levels; to use the statistical data from library systems, the Central Library Portal and other sources for the analysis of the effectiveness of the acquisition, circulation of documents and the design of services

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objective:

- To apply and develop the tools and methods of the marketing of library and information services as well as library performance and efficiency evaluation methods

### Indicators of Successful Implementation

• The preparation of the new service standards
• The existence of the tools for the evaluation of the activities and efficiency of libraries and educational activities in the area, their use
• The proposal of a common core of statistical reports of libraries of different types
• Surveys of user needs, reading and readership, regular repetition and comparison of results in time
• Educational activities focused on the theme of marketing and public relations, the number of events and participants
• The creation of new and the degree of use of the existing tools to support marketing and public relations
• The marketing of the Central Library Portal, the increasing number of the libraries involved

## 7. Library Staff Training

### The Initial Situation

*The objectives set and the changes planned can only be achieved with qualified professionals. Previous surveys of the educational, age and salary structure of library employees demonstrate several trends. These include a high percentage of workers without professional library education (up to 50 %), high feminisation of the field (88 %), and aging library staff. Moreover, it is necessary to mention the bad library salary situation (with the average salary being 25 % lower than the national average). There is an increasing number of library directors and heads without education in the field.*

*The requirements placed on libraries are growing, including a wide range of specialisations, e.g. the areas of the digitisation of information resources and the provision of electronic services to contemporary society, community roles, educational roles. Especially in smaller libraries, there is a dramatic shortage of workers able to create and provide services associated with digital content. The professional library public cooperates with*

*higher education institutions in the field and monitors their level. Secondary-school education is not sufficiently connected with the professional public. For the founding entities and the management, there is no methodological basis regarding specific elements of library personnel work. The PLIS standard<sup>9</sup> contains only the standard of the number of training hours per employee.*

*Library staff must be qualified specialists able to support their users. All of these factors place considerable emphasis on the organisation and content of not only formal but also life-long education of the staff. The Library Act does not contain a definition of the profession of a librarian.*

## **Measures**

- 7.1 To analyse the current remuneration system, to conduct surveys of the age, educational and salary structure of library employees; to monitor the motivational and non-financial rewards and benefits applied in libraries; in compliance with state cultural policy, to introduce measures leading to the setting of a system of adequate remuneration of librarians and professional library staff**
- 7.2 To update the catalogue of work in the cultural sector, mainly for the librarian profession, and to interconnect it with the National System of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications**
- 7.3 To complete, accept and implement the Strategy for Lifelong Learning for Librarians and Other Professionals in Libraries; to ensure the coordination of the system of lifelong learning in libraries**
- 7.4 To prepare the methodology for the system of innovative education of library staff, e.g. based on the principle of the system of collecting credits for attending courses**
- 7.5 To prepare a handbook for personnel work in libraries intended for the management and the founding entities of libraries**
- 7.6 To prepare the contents and methodologies of courses for librarians in the structure of library specialisations based on the National Register of Qualifications; to prepare e-learning courses**
- 7.7 To deepen cooperation with secondary and higher vocational schools, and higher education institutions with librarian study programmes; to cooperate on the preparation and implementation of study programmes and subjects based on practical needs, to improve student internship quality**

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objective:

- To improve the educational and salary structure of library staff

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<sup>9</sup> The Methodological Guidelines of the Ministry of Culture for the Definition of the Standard of Public Library and Information Services Provided by Libraries Established and/or Run by the Municipalities and Regions in the Czech Republic; accessible at [www.mkcr.cz](http://www.mkcr.cz)

## Indicators of Successful Implementation

• A higher share of library staff with formal professional education
• A higher share of staff with informal certified professional education in libraries
• The updating of the catalogue of work taking into account the National System of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications
• A functional system of lifelong library staff training
• The number of accredited courses and their graduates

## 8. Libraries as Scientific Research Institutions

### The Initial Situation

*Scientific research, development and innovation are directly connected with the functions of libraries, influence the content of their activities and their organisational structures, and make it possible even for libraries not directly involved in research and development to use their results in practice. The relation between R&D and libraries has the form of infrastructure for research organisations; some libraries are themselves research organisations or are an organisational part of research organisations and actively develop research; it is important to realise that even libraries without official research status contribute to R&D results within their component R&D activities or such activities that are focused on an R&D project based on a partnership with a research institution. Since the first half of the 20th century, the professional quality of Czech and Moravian-Silesian libraries has increased and has been maintained thanks to specialisations accredited at schools of secondary and tertiary levels, the latter of which involve scientific research. Large libraries, in particular, conduct the basic as well as applied research. The research focus comprises a wide range of topics, from traditional humanities and social-science research agendas (the development of book and media culture encompassing the history as well as the present of not only book forms of media communication, social and professional aspects of library and information practice, musicology, Slavic studies and others), to technological subjects of research (the development of applications of communication technologies for better access to collections, the creation of tools for the development of electronic library systems, the development of the technologies and methodologies for the preservation of traditional as well as modern carriers of media content – vellum, paper, various video and audio recording carriers). Libraries receive funding from their own operational and diverse sources of subsidies and regularly apply for it: institutional R&D support, NAKI, Czech Science Foundation, European Structural Funds, etc.*

### Measures

**8.1 To ensure and to support cooperation between libraries, universities and academic institutions in order to synergise scientific-research work and integrate it into practice**



- 8.2 **To prepare an initial analysis of the current state of research and development in the library sector in order to map the information on the R&D of libraries in the national information system of research, development and innovation, the current institutional funding of R&D, their partnership with other research organisations, or other needs of (individual) libraries conducting complex research activities; to prepare a proposal for further action on the basis of this analysis**
- 8.3 **To discuss with research programme providers the possibility of providing continuous support of research activities in the form of related and other research programmes focused on library development needs, be it in the form of the basic research into book culture or applied research and development**
- 8.4 **To promote research projects at important interdisciplinary scientific conferences and to strengthen the media impact of these projects on wider social classes**
- 8.5 **To support the publication of library and information science periodicals and to promote research outcomes in this area both at home and abroad**

The implementation of the measures above will be directed towards the following objectives:

- To improve the educational and salary structure of library staff
- To continue in the development of selected libraries as research organisations
- To deepen the cooperation between libraries, universities, higher education institutions and academic workplaces further with the aim of improving the quality of research and development outcomes both nationally and internationally
- To support cooperation between the National Library of the CR and the RDIC in the evaluation of research results and the related support activities
- To provide information on the projects being implemented, to promote them actively and seek to make the maximum use of their outcomes
- To monitor the demand for new research and development priorities; to involve other forms of R&D funding – foundations, PPP projects, etc.
- To ensure support for research projects from different financial mechanisms including the implementation and stable operation of relevant results

### **Indicators of Successful Implementation**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term and continuous cooperation on the implementation of research projects not only between libraries but also between other institutions ensuring research and development</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active promotion of research activities at existing national and international scientific conferences</li> </ul>  |

## The Condition to Be Reached Through the Achievement of the Objectives of the Strategy

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The achievement of the objectives of the Strategy for the Development of Libraries in the CR for 2017–2020 will improve the content and quality of library and information services for the professional and general public.

1. The integration of all regional libraries, large specialised libraries, most of the professional basic libraries run by municipalities as well as other (university, museum, etc.) libraries into the Central Library Portal will provide a much better overview of the resources and services available in libraries in the CR and enable search from one place, which is more convenient for the users.
2. Once the amendment to the Copyright Act (No. 121/2000 Col.) comes into effect, the offer of library services in the digital environment will be significantly expanded by access to works unavailable on the market.
3. The participation of libraries in the implementation of national strategic materials (The Digital Literacy Strategy of the CR for the Period of 2015–2020, The Youth Support Strategy for the Period of 2014–2020, The National Action Plan Promoting Positive Aging for the Period of 2013–2017, etc.) will gradually increase the number of libraries with an extended range of services in support of lifelong learning, reading, information and digital literacy of both children and adults and of services for people at risk of social exclusion.
4. The stable funding of the regional functions of libraries will lead to more balanced results of libraries within the CR in the achievement of the standard of regional functions,<sup>10</sup> and thus also to better availability of public library and information services for people living in small villages as well.
5. With more, higher-quality acquisitions with particular emphasis on the availability of information resources in digital form, there will be a wider range of resources available for both education and leisure.

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<sup>10</sup> The Methodological Guidelines of the Ministry of Culture to Ensure the Performance of the Regional Functions of Libraries and Their Coordination in the Czech Republic; available at [www.mkcr.cz](http://www.mkcr.cz)

6. The establishment of an interdisciplinary methodological centre of the conservation of modern documents including a central workplace for the deacidification of library collections will lead to more professional care of modern collections in the system of libraries and thus also their more effective use.
7. The establishment of a methodological centre for the construction and renovation of libraries will have a positive impact on the preparation and actual construction of library buildings, taking into account the specifics of the spaces for the provision of PLIS.
8. Thanks to MoC grant programmes, libraries will be equipped with modern information technologies, attractive for the young generation of users.
9. The improved presentation of libraries and their services in the media will have a positive impact on the perception of libraries by the public as a safe space for spending their leisure time as well as for their further education.
10. The coordination and improvement of the awareness of library research projects within a professional community will contribute to the wider application of their outputs in practice and thus to the development and innovation of library and information services of the entire system of libraries.

## The Strategy Implementation Evaluation

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The coordination of the implementation of the Strategy will be entrusted to the National Library of the Czech Republic. For the implementation of individual priorities, separate working groups will be created in cooperation with an advisory body to the Minister of Culture for the area of libraries, the Central Library Council. The Ministry of Culture will continuously monitor the implementation and internally evaluate it in one-year intervals. The government will be presented the first comprehensive evaluation report by 31 March 2019 and the final report by 31 March 2021 – this final evaluation will be the basis for the preparation of a conceptual document for the area of libraries for the next period.

## The Abbreviations Used

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ANL	A bibliographic database of articles in Czech newspapers, journals and anthologies
CESNET	Czech Education and Scientific NETwork
CLC	Central Library Council, an advisory body to the Minister of Culture
CzechELib	National Licensing Centre for Electronic Information Resources
Digitisation Register	a register of digitised documents and processing monitoring
Entrusted library	A basic library entered in the register of libraries of the MoC, which, on the basis of an agreement with a regional library, performs regional functions in a certain area
Europeana	European Digital Library
ICT	Information and communication technologies
I R&D S	Institutional research and development support (institutional support of the Long-Term Conceptual Development of a Scientific Organisation)
LLL	Lifelong learning
LPIS	Library Public Information Services, a programme of the MoC of the CR
LTP	long-term preservation of documents
MoC CR	Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic
NAKI	Applied Research and Development of National and Cultural Identity Programme of the Ministry of Culture
PLIS	Public library and information services, see Section 4 of Act No. 257/2001 Coll., as subsequently amended
PPP	public–private partnership, the partnership between the public and private sectors in project funding
R&D	research and development
RDIC	Research, Development and Innovation Council, an advisory body to the Government of the CR
ÚISK	Institute of Information Studies and Librarianship of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University

**The Strategy for the Development of Libraries  
in the Czech Republic for 2017–2020**

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