

## ANNUAL REPORT TO CENL 2018

Name of country: **France**

Name of library or equivalent national-level organisation:

**Bibliothèque nationale de France**

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## Audiences first or a renewed relationship

The changing context of uses has driven the institution to strengthen its outreach to its audiences. The priority objective of the audience policy included in the performance contract is to consolidate the BnF's bound with its natural audiences - academic and school audiences - in addition to diversifying these audiences, and to further disseminate its collections and services, both by means of digital technology and by intensifying its policy of exhibiting works.

As a result of this resolute action, 2018 was a good year for the Library in terms of visitor figures. In terms of physical attendance, total attendance across all the BnF's sites, including attendance in reading rooms, at exhibitions, events and for educational activities and tours, reached was approximately 1,300,000. The Library's range of online services registered nearly 40 million visits. Following a decline in the use of services offered by the Library, the re-establishment of a closer bound with its audiences in 2018 was thus confirmed.

Attendance registered in the reading rooms reached 926,000. Compared to 2017, there was an increase in attendance, despite a year with slightly fewer opening days and exceptional closures due to maintenance work (Maison Jean-Vilar for one term). The increase (up 7%) is significant for the objectives of active readers (i.e. cardholders who have come to a reading room at least once) and the momentum linked to the price reform implemented in spring 2017 has been confirmed: the number of new enrolments was at a level equivalent to 2017 and much higher than in previous years.

To facilitate readers' access to the collections of the Richelieu, Arsenal and Opéra sites, the online document reservation service continued to be deployed, henceforth integrating all departments and collections available in the BnF General Catalogue and BnF Archives and Manuscripts. In 2018, several new mediation and collection access systems were tested or deployed in the general public library, following proposals from the Biblio Remix project organised in 2017, bringing users and professionals together to rethink the layout and services of the Press and Audiovisual rooms: press kiosk, virtual reality sessions, access to new audio resources and listening via a chair with speakers, etc.

As for attendance levels of exhibitions in 2018, attendance figures reached over 270,000. Moreover, the BnF put on exhibitions either in partnership or off-site that attracted more than 300,000 people. The institution continued its "In the collections of the BnF" cycle, which enables its heritage treasures to be presented and shared: exceptional items from its collections are presented in a number of French cultural institutions outside Paris, chosen according to their symbolic value but also for their significance in relation to local collections or the chosen theme of a festival. The frequency of these exhibitions is around 4 or 5 projects per year, each time defined and designed in partnership with the host site. Finally, as part of the "Culture Near You" (Culture près de chez vous) plan, the Library proposed some forty works for the Catalogue of Desires, a selection of works from the national collections designated to go on tour.

After several years of decline following the 2015 attacks and the implementation of the heightened Vigipirate security plan, educational activity attendance has also increased considerably, exceeding the annual target. Off-site, it is deployed in the form of training for mediators.

Finally, the new areas of event programming – formalisation of multidisciplinary conferences in a BnF people’s university, better coordination with the collections, strengthened partnerships, and the dynamism injected by events such as the BnF Festival – have been strengthened in order to ensure a more understandable relationship for the public.

The institution's online audience figures have never been higher. Gallica, the digital library, registered close to 16 million visits. This digital library provides access to 6 million documents, of which nearly 5 million can be consulted remotely. The copyrighted documents it contains, however, can only be accessed in its research rooms. Moreover, RetroNews, the BnF press site developed by the BnF-Partenariats subsidiary, was deployed, registering nearly 5 million visits in 2018, the year the new version of the site was launched. To diversify access and content retrieval conditions, the BnF also offers image retrieval through an API IIF (International Image Interoperability Framework). In 2018, more than 110 million visits were registered.

As part of its audience policy, the establishment is deploying, on a structural level and following the decision of its board of directors in November 2018, an Audience Department (Direction des Publics), comprising two divisions (Audience Development and Mediation, and Ticketing Orientation Reception). This department’s mission will be to define, in collaboration with the other departments, and implement the audience development policy; to design and carry out mediation activities aimed at taking specific audiences (schools, families, diverse groups and audiences, particularly from the social field, etc.) on a journey of discovery through the collections and sites of the BnF; and to manage all the reception, information, orientation, user enrolment and membership card and ticket sales systems.

## Collection management as a constant concern

Building on the strategic orientations of its documentary charter and its digitisation charter, the BnF has endeavoured to implement a comprehensive documentary policy, addressing physical and digital collections in a consistent manner. A multiannual digitisation programme, created in accordance with the priorities defined in its charter and adapted to funding sources for heritage digitisation, has been implemented. Following a year marked by very high digitisation volumes, 2018 posted slightly lower results, due to changes in financing arrangements and a number of tender renewals that led to a slowdown in activity in certain sectors.

The development of the collections also includes born-digital documents: the Library has set up an entry channel for donations and acquisitions and has continued its training and testing efforts for the legal deposit of born-digital documents, a major documentary issue. In view of the decree for the legal deposit of born-digital documents, which is still under examination by the Ministry of Culture, the establishment has signed agreements with (publishers?) to continue document ingestion tests, particularly for books and audio documents.

The BnF is currently engaged in redesigning its catalogue production tool. This comprises two separate projects: Tying Together Works, Expressions, Events and Items (NOEMI for Nouer les oeuvres, expressions, Manifestations et Items), which entails redesigning the BnF's cataloguing tool, and the National Entity File (FNE) project, the objective of which is to pool the production and dissemination of authority data produced by French libraries, primarily the BnF and the Bibliographic Agency for Higher Education (ABES) network. A NOEMI prototype was developed in 2018 for the purposes of cataloguing tests under the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) model and batch processing. This prototype, tested by BnF cataloguers in the summer of 2018, is also a strong vector for managerial change. It is the continuation of the digital transformation of the BnF that is being

carried out through these innovative tools.

The conservation of (both physical and digital) collections is one of the main focuses of the contract. The storage capacities are fast reaching saturation point and the institution is examining and implementing solutions to expand its storage facilities in the short and longer term. For several years now, a plan to increase the density of existing spaces and to rent additional spaces has made it possible to avoid rapid saturation. The Library is working to define a global plan for the establishment and management of collections to be integrated into the long-term real estate strategy of the institution. Two procurement procedures for project management assistance were carried out in 2018 for the creation of a Collection Implementation Plan, on the one hand, and a Real Estate Plan, on the other. The process will continue throughout 2019.

Finally, it should be noted that 2018 was marked by the achievement of the priorities defined in the objectives and performance contract for handling the collections: maintaining significant activity in terms of curative and preventive conservation, and improving the plan. In order to improve the overall awareness of the health of the various collections it preserves, to optimise and anticipate future needs in terms of conservation treatments, the Data mining and ALGOritHms for predicting the condition of COLlections (DALGOCOL) research project, with the Heritage Sciences Foundation, was launched in 2018. The aim is to be able to use data from different sources and computer applications and to prepare decision support indicators to guide conservation treatments.

## Cooperation and scientific promotion as key goals

The BnF carries out a large number of national and international cooperation activities that facilitate the sharing of its expertise, the pooling of its infrastructures and the co-production of content.

The Library's activities are deployed throughout France. This cooperation is primarily documentary in nature - through the Collective Catalogue of France (CCFr), the digitisation of local collections and internet archives. Since 1 January 2018, metadata of the CCFr have been under Etalab licence. To promote data sharing and co-production, the BnF contributes to the implementation of new bibliographic tools. In 2018, it set up Automated Processing for the Development of Retrieval tools (TAPIR for Traitement automatisé pour la production d'instruments de recherche), a shared development tool in Encoded Archival Description (EAD) for collaborative updating.

Owing to the collaboration of publishers and accredited bodies, the services of the PLATON platform, which provides access to reading for people with disabilities, have been extended. The system for depositing individual files adapted by organisations was launched in 2018.

The Gallica collective offering also expanded in 2018. The digital library now offers users access to collections from almost 400 national and international partners. Two new Gallica Vanilla sites were brought into operation: the Digital Diplomatic Library, produced for the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, and France and England: medieval manuscripts between 700 and 1200, the result of the cooperation programme with the British Library supported by the Polonsky Foundation. With the addition of these innovations, there are now six "Gallica Vanilla" digital cooperation tools aimed at institutions that have digitised, or wish to digitise, some of their collections, but which do not have a dissemination platform or wish to renew their current platform.

In the field of international digital cooperation, the Library has also set up two new sites within the Shared Heritage collection: France-Brazil and France-China. In terms of European cooperation, the Rise of Literacy project, which is funded by the European Commission and brings together twelve partners around the theme of building a Europe of knowledge, has been carried out. The BnF has digitised some forty periodicals and journals representing approximately 200,000 pages.

The BnF is known to be an important operator in the dissemination and enhancement of digital

heritage. It invests in the field of digital humanities, which is reflected in research and development projects for text and data mining tools. The institution continues to implement the Corpus research program, which is part of the 2016-2019 four-year research plan. The objectives are to prefigure a data provision service for research and to provide researchers with data and tools for their analysis, while respecting copyright and privacy.

## A strong commitment with regard to human resources and financial balance

The reorganisation of the Human Resources function took effect on 1 December 2018, following the decision of the board of directors of 21 June on the reorganisation of the Delegated Directorate for Human Resources (DdRH) and vacant posts advertised internally. The reorganisation should strengthen this function.

As regards budgetary issues, the BnF has continued to control its operating expenditures and has improved the consumption rate of investment budgets. 2018 was characterised by an increased level of patronage, partnerships and donations. Prospecting campaigns are particularly oriented towards the renovation of heritage spaces on the Richelieu site.

### **Some 2018 figures**

- Publishers legal deposit: 82,313 books, 219,766 periodical issues, 15,496 brochures and other publications, 13,644 specialised documents and 15,265 audiovisual documents
- Collection of 2.7 billion URLs as part of the online legal deposit
- Acquisition, excluding heritage acquisitions, of 49,995 monographs
  
- 926,231 visits to reading rooms at all sites and access provided to 870,980 documents
- 4.5 million documents in open access in Gallica ([www.gallica.fr](http://www.gallica.fr)); 15,841,558 visits; 393 partners
- Attendance at temporary exhibitions (both with an entrance fee and free of charge): 273,131 admissions
- Attendance at public events (debates, conferences, symposia, concerts, readings): 24,012 people
- Participation of 18,995 students and teachers in educational activities and 14,694 visitors in tours and workshops
  
- BnF staff end 2018: 2,271 employees (i.e. 2,179 full-time equivalents)
- 2018 budget: in CA, 230 million euros

The full annual report (in French) will be available at [www.bnf.fr](http://www.bnf.fr): The BnF > Discover > History and missions: <http://webapp.bnf.fr/rapport/html/accueil.htm>