

# SUBJECT LIBRARIAN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY

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## INTRODUCTION

The last decades had vanished into dynamically changing world of knowledge. The new information technologies and the rapid development of means and ways for information diversification had a great impact on the future existence of the library institution. The librarians of today are challenged to answer the increasing demand of constant furthering education, improving the rate of professionalism and developing responding attitude towards the increasing users' needs.

The future of the information professional is regarded as continual self-qualification in the field of library and information sciences, on the first place, as well as complimentary education in the diverse scientific subject fields of the human knowledge. The Library of NBU, as a unit of importance to the structural scale of the university, is supplying a high level of reference work, according to the academic profile of the home institution and to stimulates the research activity within the residents.

## SUBJECT LIBRARIAN POSITION AT THE LIBRARY OF NBU

The idea to implement the functional position of the "Subject Librarian" in our library was absorbed through the European practice, specifically from the U.K. libraries.

The creation and the organizational development of the Subject Librarian Service were stated out in the "NBU Library Strategic Plan. 1999-2003": Chapter 4, position 3 "Organizational change" - the position of the Subject Librarian would allow to achieve a high professional conduct towards users in: humanities, liberal sciences, art and literature and media sciences.

The career opportunities in our libraries are very few, if any. We are gaining experience in hard times, lacking library staff motivation. In order to create a

satisfactory level of library staff self-esteem we projected the implementation of the Subject Librarian position. It gives possibilities for qualification growing on functional level.

The successful fulfillment of the goals, urged 13 representatives from the NBU Library, at the beginning of the academic year 1999-2000, to start their complimentary education in different subject fields.

The project foresees that the Subject Librarian service would foster some organizational changes - creating new job opportunities with certain obligations and duties, corresponding. It would also facilitate the interlibrary cooperation between the NBU Library and the university libraries from the Sofia University, Technical University and UNWE (University for National and World Economy), as well the cooperation and coordination with information professional from Eastern Europe. This very particular goal is the fundament of the TEMPUS Project 14 464 - 99 "Modernization and organizational development of university library" with duration from 1999-2001.

According to the project a training session on Subject Librarian trends in the Bulgarian university libraries was held through 3.07-7.07.2000 with guest lecturers from the Portsmouth University Library, Great Britain.

The Subject Librarians are members of the library staff, responsible for looking after a subject or group of subject related Departments. The Subject Librarians tailor the library's services to those particular groups and act as two-way intermediaries between the library and teaching departments.

The educational extension of the team of subject librarians also involves high level of language skills, to help the subject resource cataloguing. Most of all we praise those of our colleagues, who are working on the improvement of their English language skills for most of the electronic and print resources in the Library of the NBU are presented on

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that language. Also greater part of the Internet resources is primarily in English, which the subject librarian is forced to know in order to modernize the range of services supplied. The University encourages the administrative staff with summer language acquisition courses.

We had already achieved our first meeting of subject librarians' team on 20.04.2000. On that first activity we fixed the aims and tasks of the subject librarian. They were presented before the Library Council and were approved. Here we could point some of them:

1. Subject Librarian is the liaison between the library and the departments;
2. Cooperation between the SL and the Head of the Department in outputting of thesaurus in the field;
3. Taking part in the faculty meetings-keeps the SL update to the transformation of programs and courses;
4. Applying user education for new students and faculty staff;
5. Assisting readers to access library materials in the field, he/she is in charge of. Helping faculty to understand the range of resources available - printed and electronic;
6. SL knows the academic staff very well and facilitates the scientific and research approach of these;
7. SL takes part in the acquisition process and helps the Serials division in choosing valuable resources, considered in advance with the teaching community;
8. SL promotes library resources on an approved scheme with the Head of the Department and Program Directors;

9. SL has a network created for information circulating;
10. SL is required to use at least one foreign language;

The working group, including all subject librarians has its sessions on a regular scale and concentrates on discussing problems, occurring in our everyday activity, as well as, concerns, procedure brushing and opinions. We were inspired:

- To change our attitude on the meetings with the new students;
- To regulate consultative hours with the users;
- To improve the quality and diversity of library information materials (we have developed one brochure, viewing the SL Service in common and for each of the subject fields, covered);

The project ended with a final workshop on 3.12.2001. An inquiry results were submitted, commemorated on the impact of the SLS and the achievements and improvements on library services as a whole.

#### FUTURE TRENDS OF THE SLS

SL becomes more common in the university library since 1940. Information technologies changed and furthered the development of the subject librarianship in particular. It is challenged by the perspective of end user fast accessing specific range of knowledge and creating a working network for information diversification. The SL tailored attitude towards the end users is the formula of library survival.