

НАУКА ТА БІБЛІОТЕЧНА СПРАВА В УМОВАХ ВОЄННОГО СТАНУ В УКРАЇНІ: МІЖНАРОДНА ПІДТРИМКА

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Changes in the strategy priorities of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine in wartime conditions *

Dear colleagues!

I would like to start my speech by expressing my deep gratitude to the leadership of CENL for the humanitarian aid and opportunity to speak at the annual conference this year, especially Professor Frank Scholze and as well as my gratitude to all directors and their teams who supported our library in these difficult times. It confirms the high mission of the Conference as a powerful professional association, designed to form common goals for the development of cooperation and partnership. But today, in such difficult historical conditions, this mission has extraordinary importance for Ukraine, for libraries that have historical cultural heritage and scientific resources but are not able to solve the problem of confronting the threat of destruction, survive and continue effective activities on their own.

It is difficult to find all the words of gratitude for attention to our problems, for professional unity and real support, for organizing the protests and broad public events that revealed the essence of aggression and its consequences for libraries and culture as a whole. We appreciate the efforts of European national libraries to emphasize on Ukrainian culture and our library, to demonstrate Ukrainian collections, to organize a series of conferences, exhibitions, and charity concerts, to publish materials about Ukraine and Ukrainian authors.

* Виступ на щорічній Конференції європейських національних бібліотек (CENL), яка проходила 19–21 червня 2023 р. (Див.: Генеральний директор НБУВ виступила на Конференції європейських національних бібліотек. *Національна бібліотека України імені В. І. Вернадського* : вебсайт. URL: <http://www.nbu.gov.ua/node/5926>).

An important role is played by the support of Ukrainian initiatives, including that of our First Lady Olena Zelenska, in the field of the distribution of Ukrainian books. Ukrainian librarians who went abroad to European countries during the hostilities were given internship and work opportunities. I personally received assurances of unity from almost every national library.

Let me express my most special gratitude for true donor assistance in the preservation and digitization of fonds. Libraries have made great efforts to participate in helping state, public and private institutions, organizations and foundations in the field of culture, art and education.

With the help of provided equipment, European national libraries have created opportunities for the digital rescue of Ukraine's cultural and scientific heritage. This is the high standards of real humanism.

The psychological aspect of helping librarians and scientists is also important. Your sincere willingness to support us in any way, your understanding of our crisis situation, and your help, are highly positive factors for the library staff.

We gained considerable experience in the first year of the war. This year showed that the threat of destruction of libraries as a result of military aggression and missile attacks is absolutely real, and not only in the eastern territories of Ukraine. I will give an example of our library. Today, the most valuable part of the fonds of national memory is stored in the Library building, located in the historical center of Kyiv, the most saturated with national monuments, on Volodymyrsky Street, next to the National Academy, the National University, the National Museums and the National Opera. On this relatively small space of the street, which is the heart of Kyiv, which bears the name of one of the founders of the ancient Kyiv state Prince Volodymyr, in October 2022, we survived the rocket attacks of the Russian army. Although the shells did not hit the buildings direct, they still caused significant damage on the eve of the winter season.

We overcame the costly consequences of the explosions with the help of the Ukrainian government, the Academy of Sciences, private companies, and individual sponsors. On May 29, we again survived the attack, now another – the central building, was damaged by fragments of downed rockets and an explosive wave, the windows, the entrance and some reading rooms. This fact became a convincing warning that we should not expect this threat to pass us by. This destruction can happen at any time and with greater losses.

These events drive the main argument for changing the library's strategy. The priority is to speed up the digitization of our collections in order to preserve information and provide it for users.

This became possible thanks to the CENL organizational efforts and care of a number of European national libraries who helped to obtain funding and purchase equipment for us. And above all, we are immensely grateful to the German National Library, Berlin State Library, the National Library of Poland, the Swedish National Library and the Swedish Academy, the National Library of France, the National Library of Finland and the University Association, and many others.

Your help enabled our library to acquire powerful scanners and servers, computers, and other equipment. We received equipment that we could only dream of.

These resources will become the basis for the National Digital Library of Ukraine, the project of which was launched in 2022.

With the help of the British Library and the State Library of Berlin we took care of the preservation of the fonds, and the availability of the restoration equipment, special paper, and packaging. It allowed us to resume the activities of our conservation department, as we got the opportunity to restore damaged manuscripts, old prints, archival documents, newspapers, maps, and other items.

A big thank also goes to the Poland National Library, our long-time partner, that constantly helps us in our problems, which provided us with fire-fighting equipment: including the necessary number of fire extinguishers and other special fire-fighting means. The National Library of Poland helped towards our participation in IFLA activities in 2022, and in other international events, and organizing contacts with foreign cultural foundations that are ready to support our Library. A special gratitude is for the help in the employment of Ukrainian refugees, in particular to the National French and British libraries.

Many of the national libraries and Research Libraries organized summer schools, online training for employees, offered projects and grants, etc.

Another aspect of changes in the priority of activities is opportunities to join the European scientific infrastructure, which is also chosen as a priority direction. Today, our library is an important component of the digital knowledge infrastructure of Ukraine.

Since 2016, the EU has been actively developing the ideas and services of the European Research e-Infrastructure as an integrated ecosystem of digital tools that facilitate research and innovation.

At the same time, in 2016, the information portal project "Science of Ukraine: Access to Knowledge" was launched in our library. The portal provides integrated access to scientific electronic resources of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine through the search profiles of scientific institutions and scientists, promotes popularization, increasing the rating and accessibility of scientific achievements of Ukrainian scientists. The main open access resources on the portal are the electronic archive of scientific periodicals of Ukraine: more than 1.4 million full texts of articles from 2.8 thousand scientific journals, scientific profiles of 154 thousand Ukrainian scientists, and a database of abstracts. This is the largest integrated scientific resource in Ukraine.

V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine resources are also part of the National Repository of Academic Texts (NRAT), which is created by the Ministry of Science and Education. The VNLU repository and the sites of four scientific journals containing open-access information are presented in the pan-European OpenAIRE repository.

V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine develops the library portal of the NAS of Ukraine and the Data Repository with a focus on integration into the international and European digital communications of more than 200 scientific institutions of the

NAS in various fields of knowledge. Therefore, the Library in 2022 became part of a special working group of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, which undertook the development of issues of the concept and principles of joining the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), implementation international standards and entering the European information scientific infrastructure.

Therefore, we are very interested in participating in the Research Infrastructure initiatives of CENL. On October 8, 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the resolution "On approval of the plan for Open Science", and creation of conditions for a national cloud of open scientific data.

V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine acquires a key role in the formation and distribution of open-access resources on the European platform.

The electronic resources of our library are the basis for the further development of the process of integration into the European research infrastructure and digital scientific communication. But, refusal of free Russian software products and technical support for the creation and management of electronic resources, we have got a problem of the development of effective information services for access to sources of scientific information. But even in these conditions, we are looking for ways to implement this plan. Further support of technical equipment would be very important for us.

Summing up my report, I would like to emphasize once again that through all the negative adversities of this past year, we also had a great positive experience of European solidarity and friendly support, which gave us the opportunity to adopt new strategic priorities and **inspired us to work and believe in the future.**

Thank you very much for the help and support!