

## **Workshop Seminar**



# **ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN LATIN AMERICA**

## ***National Report Argentina***

***Buenos Aires  
September 1999***

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*The Asociación de Bibliotecarios Graduados de la República Argentina (ABGRA) (Graduate Librarian Association of the Argentine Republic), wishes to thank the six Argentine institutions that participated in the Workshop-Seminar on “**Access to Information in Latin America**” and were responsible for answering the points that cover the National Report, requirement established for each one of the participating countries*

*Each one of these institutions submitted an individual report, which was summarized and revised in this Final Report that identifies their contributions, and we consider it offers an overview of the information situation in our country. The individual reports are available and those interested in consulting the complete text may ask the Seminar organizers for them.*

## ***National Report***

### ***Argentina***

#### **a) Size and state of the country's publishing industry.**

The development of the Argentine publishing industry has kept in line with the growth and development of the country's industrial activity and economic development. Therefore it has experienced, to a greater or lesser degree, the consequences of the crises that our country has faced together with the other Latin American countries with which we are bound by bilateral and multilateral economic agreements.

The publishing industry, is a part of the national productive chain, and represents 0.5% of the total added value of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)<sup>1</sup>. On a Latin American level it is closely related to companies providing services and inputs, exporting or importing national publishing production, co-editors or partners in joint ventures (UTES)<sup>2</sup>.

#### ***a.1) State of the Argentine Publishing Industry***

For the last 50 years the Argentine economy has been characterized by high inflation indexes, devaluation, changes in currency and lack of policies that foster and promote development and consolidation of the farming and industrial sector. Towards the end of the eighties, the production prospects of the farming and industrial sectors evidence a depressed market, with a decline in gross domestic production, businesses in great debt, machinery that is too obsolete to compete with the great exporting powers, added to the effects of the formation of large economic gaps, telecommunications expansion and the intensive use of knowledge and new technologies.

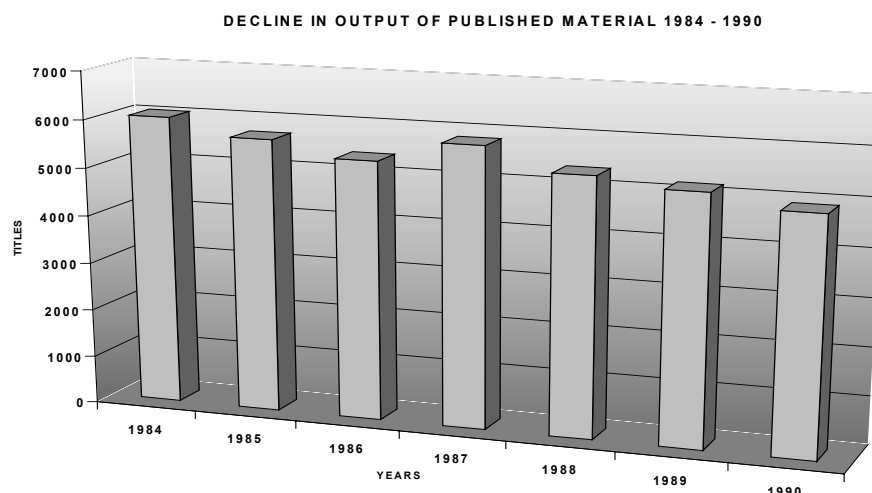
The hyperinflation phenomenon further complicated this situation as GDP slumped and investment fell below half the historic average. In 1989 and 1990, according to data of the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC) (National Statistics and Census Institute) the variation rate of the consumer price index peaked reaching 4,923.6% and 1,343.9% respectively<sup>3</sup>. The slump in national production in this period inevitably impacted the Argentine publishing industry, which in the 1984-1990 period experiences a 18.55% decline in its annual output.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Ministry of Economy, Works and Public Utilities. Estimated figure for 1998.

<sup>2</sup> UTES: Joint ventures

<sup>3</sup> 1998 Statistics yearbook of the Argentine Republic. Buenos Aires: INDEC, 1998



An important change starts in 1991 with the introduction of economic reforms initiated by the enactment of the convertibility law and the liberalization of foreign trade. The economic stability of the country, added to an annual inflation rate below 1% since 1996, Value Added Tax (VAT) exemption for book sales, measures for promoting exports such as 10% export tax rebates on exports to countries outside the Mercosur, and the removal of import duties on books helped to reactivate the Argentine publishing industry and book trade.

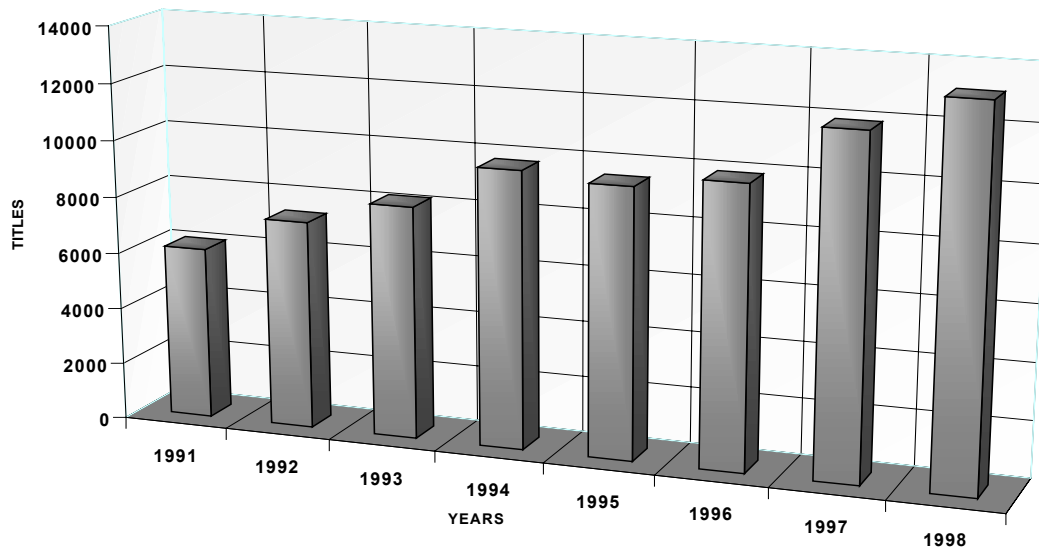
In “Historia de la Empresa Editorial en Argentina. Siglo XX” (The History of Publishing Houses in Argentina. 20<sup>th</sup> Century)<sup>4</sup>, Dr. Eustasio García defines the situation of the Argentine publishing industry in the nineties in the following way: *“The last decade of the century (and the millennium) witnesses a strong publishing industry in Argentina, although not without obstacles and difficulties. It must adapt to a world that faces drastic changes in economic and production relations among nations, resulting from the rapid technological progress, especially in the field of communications, energy, transport and knowledge management through information and computer science.”*

*Later on he points out, “Between 1991 and 1998 Argentina underwent a deep transformation, which we think is irreversible in its essential aspects (...) Faced with this new reality all businesses had to undergo political adjustments, modify their strategies and in particular, streamline their structures in order to compete and face the changes that had taken place in the market. This new reality also brought difficulties for many traditional businesses that were not able or did not know how to adapt. Notwithstanding, we are convinced it has been beneficial for Argentina in general and in particular for the publishing sector.”*

*The statistics drawn up by the Argentine ISBN Agency, administrated by the Cámara Argentina del Libro (Argentine Book Chamber), confirm Dr. García’s thesis, showing that the Argentine publishing sector, in the 1991-1998 period has increased its annual output of titles by 115.95%*

<sup>4</sup> García, Eustasio A. Historia de la empresa editorial en Argentina. Siglo XX. Buenos Aires:

GROWTH IN PUBLISHED OUTPUT 1991 - 1998



### **a.2) Situation of the Argentine Publishing Sector in Latin America and the Caribbean**

One of the topics that have been extensively dealt with in Argentina and in Latin America in general, during the nineties, has been the impact of the cultural industries on the countries' economies. In this regard, Alvaro Garzón defines the cultural industry as *"any production and marketing business that has the following characteristics: 1) Its raw material is a creation protected by copyright; 2) This creation is secured on a physical or electronic medium and multiplied on an industrial scale and 3) The product is massively distributed or disseminated"*<sup>5</sup>

From this definition, the cultural industry is deemed integrated by cinema, video, music, software and books. And it is in this sense that books reach a double dimension: they are a fundamental cultural asset in the dynamics of education and the consolidation of cultural identities and, on the other hand, an economic asset that requires guarantees and incentives in order to develop.

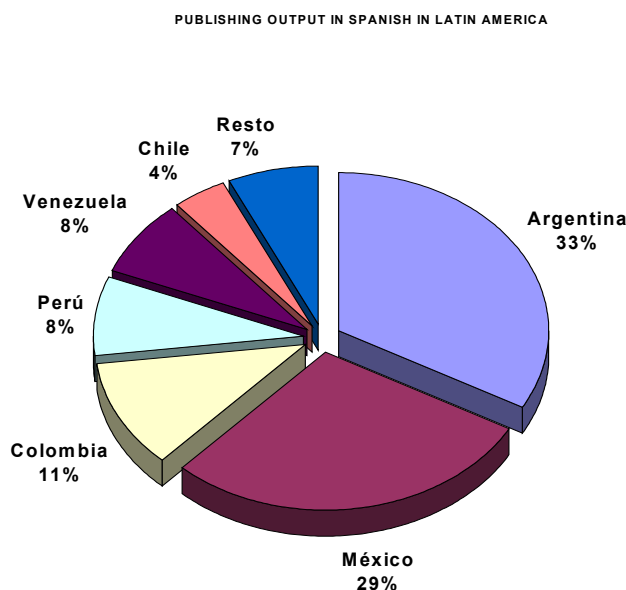
As part of the cultural industry, books are a productive segment that contributes to the development of countries, but obstacles that prevented the gathering of information hindered the study of their economic dimension in Latin America.

At the beginning of the nineties, the Centro Regional para el Fomento del Libro en América Latina y el Caribe (CERLALC) (Regional Centre for Promoting Books in Latin America and the Caribbean) started to develop a homogenous data gathering, processing and systematizing methodology for application in

<sup>5</sup> Garzón, Alvaro. Acuerdos internacionales de libre circulación del libro y otros bienes culturales en América Latina. (International agreements regarding the free circulation of books and other cultural goods in Latin America). In Revista El Libro en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 85, Jan-June, 1998, pag.38.

Latin American countries, within the framework of the “Book Production, Dissemination and Distribution Programme”. The Project is called **Book Statistic Information Production** and is supported by the Grupo Inter Americano de Editores (GIE) (Inter-American Group of Publishers) and the UNESCO. Its main objective is “to formulate a methodology for comparing and aggregating information at sub-regional and regional scales so that the scope of the profile drawn up may go beyond the borders of each country”.<sup>6</sup> Almost 7 years after its start up the project has shaped and consolidated a statistics information system on book production and sales in each of the intervening countries and at a regional level.

In the last comparative study published by CERLALC in July/December 1998, the production map looked like this: Brazil accounts for 54% of the total amount of titles produced in the Region, whereas Argentina is the first of the nine Spanish speaking countries considered in the survey with 33% of title production, followed by Mexico with 29%, Colombia with 11%, Peru and Venezuela with 8% and Chile with 4%.



According to Bernardo Jaramillo Hoyos, of the Colombian publishing sector, only four countries deserve to be compared regarding the performance of the sector: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. Brazil and Argentina are the most dynamic as the former’s title production has grown at an annual average rate of 11.3%, up till 1998, and ours at an annual average rate of 6.8%, whereas in Colombia and Mexico significant declines in title production of and the amount of copies sold have been reported.

<sup>6</sup> In: El Libro en America Latina y el Caribe. Special issue 77-78, April-Sept. 1994.

### **a.3) Size of the Argentine publishing Industry**

Speaking about the Argentine publishing industry means mentioning its size and importance, applying parameters that allow us to compare it with other cultural industries of similar characteristics, placing them in one business segment and interpreting the results obtained. Starting with this work plan and bearing in mind Garzón's definition, the book industry could only be compared with the film industry, video, music and software, but these industries are vitally different in their conception and definition, their production chain, inputs, marketing channels, scope and coverage.

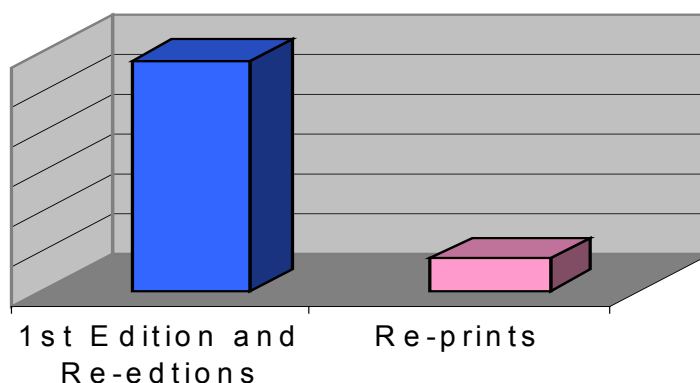
These differences, compel us to consider these industries separately for statistical purposes and only offer the alternative of considering the publishing industry autonomously, thus representing the 2,7% of the Argentine industrial sector.<sup>7</sup> The figures that lead to this result emerge from the makeup, structure, production and sales of the sector.

As well as the official figures, in 1993 the Argentine Book Chamber joined CERALC's "Book Statistics Information Production" Project. Annual diagnosis studies of the Argentine publishing sector were initiated, which, from that moment are carried out annually and contain the main results of data surveys, carried out on a cross section of Argentine publishers, specifically regarding production, sales, copyright, imports, foreign trade and job creation in the sector.

These results, added to the production statistics that the Argentine ISBN Agency draws up, lead us to an approximate picture of the publishing industry in 1998.

### **Output**

Total output in 1998, including 1<sup>st</sup> edition books, re-editions and reprints, was 54,276,206 copies and 13,156 titles, discriminated in the following way: 87.67% of titles produced are new editions or re-editions, whereas re-prints account for 12,33% of the total.



<sup>7</sup> Source: National Ministry of Economy, Works and Utilities

### Percentage of titles produced by publishing sub-sectors

<b>Publishing sub-sector</b>	<b>%</b>
Educational	22
General	53
Religious	11
Scientific, technical and professional	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

Following the methodology established for the Survey on the Argentine Publishing Sector, it was divided into four sub-sectors, which together account for 100% of national output.

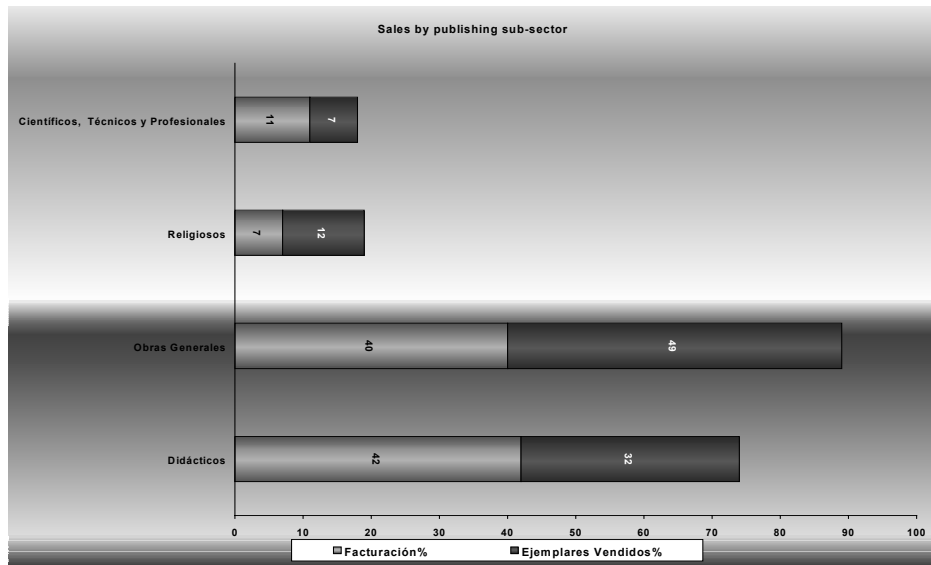
The position of each of the sub-sectors has remained invariable since 1993, with minimum variations in their percentages.

### Turnover and copies sold by each sub-sector

<b>Publishing sub-sector</b>	<b>Turnover %</b>	<b>Copies sold %</b>
Educational	42	32
General	40	49
Religious	7	12
Scientific, technical and professional	11	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Publishers of collector's books are included in the General sub-sector





The sub-sector producing **Educational** books had the largest turnover and sold the greatest number of copies (42% and 32%, respectively).

The **General** sub-sector accounted for 40% of total sales. Its turnover was also the second, accounting for 49% of the total.

The **Scientific, Technical and Professional** was third as far as turnover with 11% and sold 7% of the total amount of copies sold.

The **Religious** sub-sector accounted for 7% of turnover and 12% of copies sold.

### Marketing channels

Marketing channels	%
Traditional channels (bookstores, vendors, kiosks)	63
Supermarkets	6
Direct sales	2
Government (state, provincial, municipal agencies)	7
Libraries, Document centres	-
Book Fairs	-
Schools, colleges	-
Overseas Vendors	-
Exports	11
Book clubs	1
Others	10
Total	100

Most of Argentine books were marketed through **Traditional Channels** (bookstores, vendors and kiosks): 63% of the total.

Other important sales channels were **Exports** (11%), **Supermarkets** (6%), **Direct Sales** (door-to-door and by mail, 2%), and **Book Clubs** (1%).

The **Government** bought 7% of books sold. During **Book Fairs** sales did not amount to 1% of the total.

Sales to **Libraries and Document Centres** did not amount to 1% of the total sold that year.

### Jobs

In 1996 the Argentine publishing sector hired around 7,914 permanent employees and 1,009 temporary employees.

Type of contract	Total
Permanent	7,914
Temporary	1,009
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.923</b>

These are the last figures based on job creation in the sector. The 1997 and 1998 figures are at present being processed, owing to which it is not yet possible to provide them. Notwithstanding, the publishing sector restructuring, mergers and their integration in multinational groups could show lower figures in this period.

### Exports of Books published in Argentina

Countries	Titles %	Copies %
Uruguay	1	25
Mexico	12	19
Chile	6	13
Others	1	12
Venezuela	5	5
Colombia	14	7
U.S.A	2	5
Bolivia	10	1
Brazil	1	1
Spain	5	3
Peru	-	2

Countries	Titles %	Copies %
Paraguay	3	2
Ecuador	19	2
Costa Rica	3	-
El Salvador	6	1
Panama	2	-
Guatemala	-	-
Dominican Republic	8	1
Honduras	-	-
Puerto Rico	2	1
Total	100	100

### b) Ratio between demand / users' needs / domestic supply. Is it necessary to import published material or is the country self-sufficient?

In the previous items the annual growth of title production was shown, but a certain trend, the reduction of print-runs, that is to say the amount of copies printed per title edited, which can be observed internationally, must also be mentioned. Added to this, nowadays, is the production or printing of works on demand.

In this sense, Dr. Ana María Cabanellas, President of the Cámara Argentina del Libro (Argentine Book Chamber)) has said *“Let's face it, the 1999 edition is characterized by the publication of a large amount of titles, of print-runs that are*

*increasingly shorter. Readers have also changed their way of reading. One could say they demand increasingly more agile books, similar to films.*<sup>8</sup>

This statement is upheld by Dr. Luis Fernando Sarmiento, Head of the Technical Division of CERLALC. In his analysis of the Latin American market, venturing an answer on the reduction of print-runs *“This is due, probably, to a specialization in tastes, to kind of distinction and differentiation of demand”*.<sup>9</sup>

This paradox which appears in the publishing industry, has resulted in the decline of the production of copies per inhabitant, which in Argentina is 1.68 copies per inhabitant according to CERLALC’s calculations. Although this figure puts our country in second place in Latin America, it does not cover consumer demands for books, whether they be for studying, recreation or research, due to which domestic production must necessarily be supplemented with imported material, increasing publishing supply approximately by 40,000,000 copies per year.

According to statistics produced by the Spanish Culture Ministry, Argentina is first among the Spanish-speaking countries as far as book imports, exceeding 11,000,000 copies annually imported, towards the middle of this decade. But we must also bear in mind that this high level of importation (76% of all the material) is due to the fact that an important sector of companies established in the country are part of Spanish publishing groups or have Spanish capital.

Another circumstance that has favoured the greater presence of foreign works in our country is economic stability, though the quality of these works is variable for as well as the important new features of publishing houses, whether or not they are in Spanish, stock surplus especially from Spain has been added, increasing supply and competing with the national publishing houses.

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<sup>8</sup> Cabanellas, Ana María. Speech at the Book Dinner. Buenos Aires, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Sarmiento, Luis Fernando. Latin America: a large market to be explored. In. Revista El Libro en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 85, Jan-June 1998,

## Imports: Titles and Copies

Countries	% Titles	% Copies
Spain	76	64
England		6
USA	-	5
Colombia	4	6
Mexico	14	6
Brazil	1	5
Germany	-	6
Singapore	-	0
Chile	1	2
Ecuador	1	-
Venezuela	3	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### c) Present state of bibliographic control in the country

By definition, the National Library is responsible for national bibliographic control, but since the seventies due to budget reasons and lack of staff, it has not been performing this function.

This failure has been made up for, since 1982 by the Cámara Argentina del Libro (Argentine Book Chamber) in charge of administrating the ISBN Argentine System, by devolution of the Culture Secretariat of the Nation. Since the Argentine ISBN Agency has been put in place the output of commercial publishing houses has been registered, as well as the publications of official organizations, public and private institutions, achieving coverage of more that 90% of production, placing Argentina among the Latin American countries that have the highest percentage of registered titles regarding estimated production, together with Spain.<sup>10</sup> This information has been regularly published and as from 1997 a quarterly CD-ROM is published, which in its last edition (September 1999) is 115,000 entries, of which 5,833 are titles published between 1930 and 1981.

Regarding the National Library, in its report the institution's authorities decision to revert the aforementioned situation is pointed out:

1. The 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1998 the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting on "National Bibliography" was held, which brought together the technically responsible for that institution (Director of Librarianship Administration, Head of the Book Department, Head of the Special Material Department, Head of Technical Processes, Head of Acquisitions, Exchange and Donations, etc.). In that meeting the need to begin editing an updated national Bibliography was pointed out, for which purpose they considered they should contact the publishing houses that do not make the legal deposit of their published works and/or journals, so that they send a copy to the National Library. At the same time it was decided that they should also contact public and private, national and provincial institutions that publish non commercial material, in order to

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Statistical information. III and IV Latin American Meeting of ISBN Agencies.

establish the channels to allow the continual arrival of the same to the National Library. The possibility of editing a biannual bulletin that includes, at a first stage, new books and journals and ones in progress was considered. The second meeting was carried out on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1998, stating: a) Request the Culture Secretariats of the Provinces to implement the delivery of a copy of each new work and one of each new journal, or works and journals in progress, published in their respective provinces since 1998 or which have not yet been sent to the National Library; b) The list of material to be requested (including, annual reports, year-books and maps) covers: official publications of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government, self-governing entities, non government organizations and public and private universities; c) The implementation of the possibility of getting a sponsor for the future publications of the “National Bibliography” aforementioned is decided.

2. The Culture Secretariat reporting to the presidency of the Nation, by Resolution No 319/99 of the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1999, declared the “National Bibliography Catalogue Project” of national interest. In the whereas the role that every national library should fulfil, as the depository and centralizing body of information pertaining to the national printed heritage is emphasized, for “the aim of the project in question is to make up for the failure of a smooth and modern information system that, with institutional continuity, shall record all the publications released in the country”.

#### **d) State of the Book Trade in the Country**

Among marketing channels, booksellers are the most traditional and the most relevant, with approximately 1500 stores throughout the country, although according to the figures provided by the Cámara Argentina de Papelerías, Librerías y Afines (CAPLA) (Argentine Chamber of Stationery Shops, Bookstores and the like), the total would be 6,500 including in this section bookstores and stationery shops.

In the last decade the sector initiated its process of becoming more technical, incorporating management systems for stock control, replacement and for invoicing. The incorporation of scanners in these systems has increased the number of national publications that include the bar code EAN 13 – generated as a result of the ISBN – as an identification element for invoicing.

The new technologies, have also modified the traditional profile of the “bookstore”, turning it into a service centre, offering searches in its own databases, in CD-ROMs and online, in order to satisfy their customers’ requests.

The presence of bookstores on the Internet and the availability of catalogues online have become stronger in the last few years. Virtual bookstores have become a part of the marketing chain, although the significant ones of the sector consider that the sales volume of this service is not yet profitable. However, they are aware of competition that goes with globalization and must also face the increase of book sales over large surfaces, a new reality that has generated difficulties in the sector and forced bookstores to reduce their margins of profitability.

To complete the present prospects of the sector, the groups or consortiums that have formed chains or networks of bookstores establishing them in key places in the large cities should be mentioned.

**e) Who maintains the national archive of published material and how effective is it?**

The National General Archive is the official institution in charge of maintaining the historical document archive and is also the beneficiary of the legal deposit, established by Law 11,723 of intellectual property.

We know that it is undergoing a process of restructuring, but unfortunately we do not have data that allow us to establish its degree of effectiveness.

**f) The legal deposit's present state.**

Article 57 of the Intellectual Property Law (Copyright), establishes the legal deposit of works edited in the country. Whereas in Article 17 of its regulating decree (Decree 41,233 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> may, 1934) the National Library and the Library of the National Congress are appointed as Institutions that will receive one of the copies deposited. Initially the deposit of 3 copies was established for print-runs over one hundred copies, but a later resolution of the Dirección Nacional del Derecho de Autor (National Office of Authors' Rights), increased this amount to four copies, which must go to the following institutions: the National Library, the Library of the National Congress, the National General Archive, and the National Office of Authors' Rights (DNDA).

The copy sent to the DNDA is filed as a "witness copy", being presented as evidence, in legal actions, in cases of plagiarism.

According to data provided by the **National Library**, the latter considers that it is not working efficiently, but all necessary steps are being taken to try and change it and make it efficient and updated in line with current times.

At present:

1. An important percentage of publishing houses (which in some periods reach more than 50%) do not comply with the legal deposit that should be made in the Registro de Propiedad Intelectual (Registry of Intellectual Property) and which compels the publisher to deliver three books of each edition, free of charge,. One to the National Library, another to the Library of the Congress and a third to the National General Archive. (Law 11.723 of 1933).
2. The Registry of Intellectual Property is a passive entity. It receives material, but does not perform notification and/or controlling tasks. That is to say it does not notify or remind publishing houses that they must comply with the legal deposit, nor has it the power to impose penalties for its failure to comply. One solution could be the method that the National Library of Spain is trying out: the creation of regional legal deposits, that perform their role in their jurisdiction (Catalonia, the Basque Provinces, Galicia, etc.) and the

- National Library acts as a superior entity, the headquarters, with clear rules and standards that might result in penalties if there is failure of compliance.
3. The official publishing agencies are the first not to comply with the legal deposit in force, which makes the National State's control of all published material rather difficult. In 1995-1996 the National Library attempted to create a section that should be clearly responsible for gathering this type of material. The idea was Mr. Oscar Gonzalez's, the then Vice Director, but, unfortunately, due to his retirement from public office, the project remained with no one in charge of it and was never taken up again.
  4. With journals there is a special problem. The companies that publish journals, fascicles, serials, etc. will not be compelled to deliver the material as it is edited but afterwards, once the undertaking is finished. This results in several problems. First: that many journals cease to be published from one day to the next (for economic reasons, for example) and do not comply with the legal deposit required by law. Second: that as the journal is not delivered every time it is released, an important amount of knowledge is lost, in the case of all those so-called "scientific" or "technological" journals, which precisely are released in those media for its dissemination and discussion, (A typical case, for example, is the case of scientific experiments, which later lead to the discovery of new medicines or vaccinations). Owing to this, in order to overcome this problem, the head of the Newspaper Archive is forced, also, to be a Public Relations expert with the publishers in order to obtain all the material as it is edited.

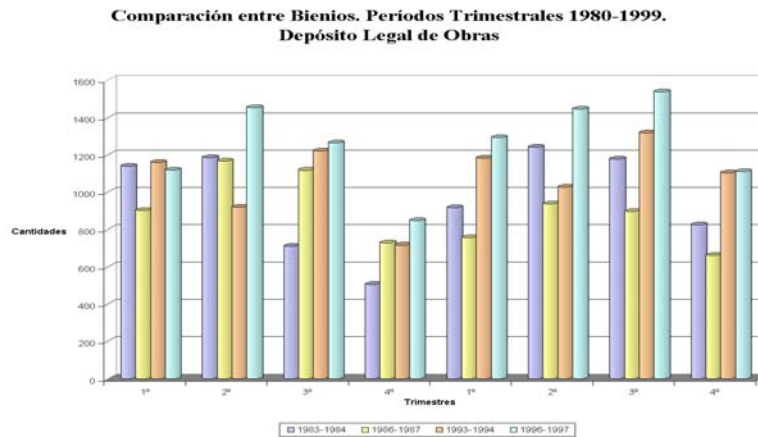
In the case of the **Library of the National Congress**, law 11,723, like the laws of other countries, does not indicate precisely the scope of the intellectual work, but states different expressions in a merely illustrative manner. Our country's case law considered that it does not have a restrictive or limited character, but that all intellectual works, which constitute a personal and original creation of the spirit fall under the protection of this law (National Civil Law Court of Appeals, Room B, 27/07/1963, in "Sbazo vs. Remington Rand". On the other hand, the Supreme Court characterized intellectual works by their features of personal and novel expression of intelligence, and considered them perceptible, original, born of the spirit's activity and represented by a complete body, endowed with significance and exuding an integral creation (Nobile A. case, 19/06/1968).

On the other hand, Article 57 does not expressly reach the Library of the National Congress but only does so, as mentioned above, via the regulating decree; lacking in this way legal force. This would allow other regulations or simple resolutions, in times of de facto governments, to construe differently the spirit of the law. Article 57 establishes that "The publisher must deposit in the National Registry of Intellectual Property three complete copies of works covered by Article 1, within three months following their release. If the edition is a luxury edition or does not exceed one hundred copies, the deposit of one copy will be sufficient.

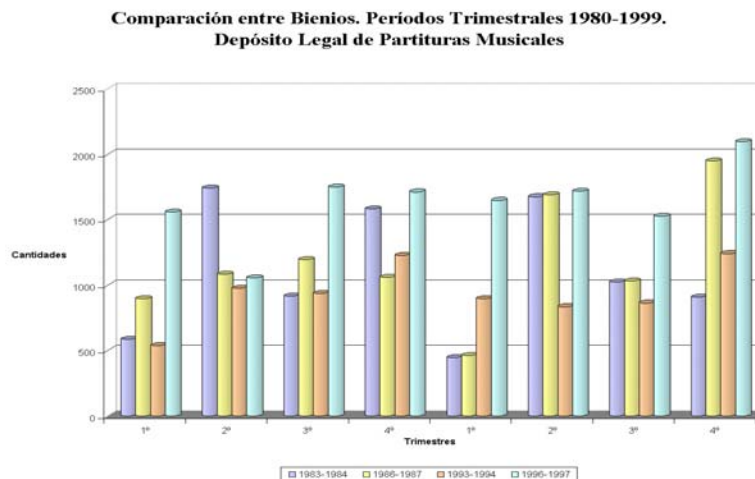
It is convenient to illustrate this presentation with the comparative tables of bibliographic material received in the last nineteen years. In this sense samples have been taken at random:

- a) two years have been taken, at random, for each five year period evidencing the increase in bibliographic material received, both for literary works and for musical scores.

**Comparison between 2 year periods and 3 month periods  
1980 –1999. Legal Deposit of literary works**



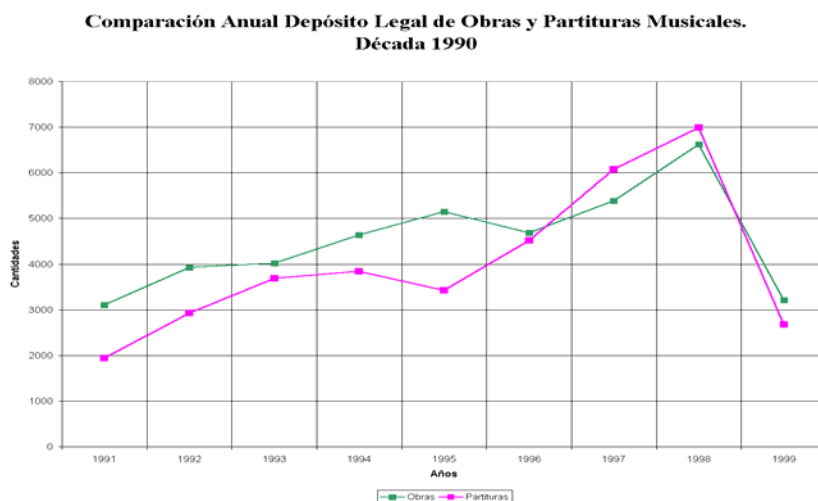
**Comparison between 2 year periods and 3 month periods  
1980 – 1999. Legal Deposit of musical scores**



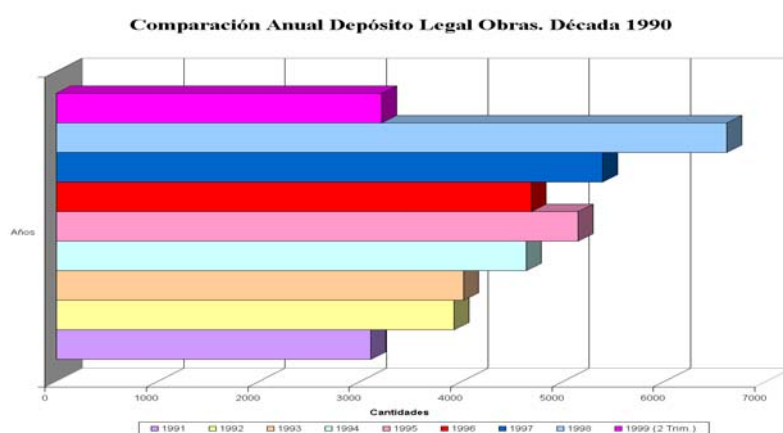


b) The same increase observed in the decade 1990 up till the present, both for literary works and musical scores together

### Annual Comparison Legal Deposit of Literary Works and Musical Scores The nineties



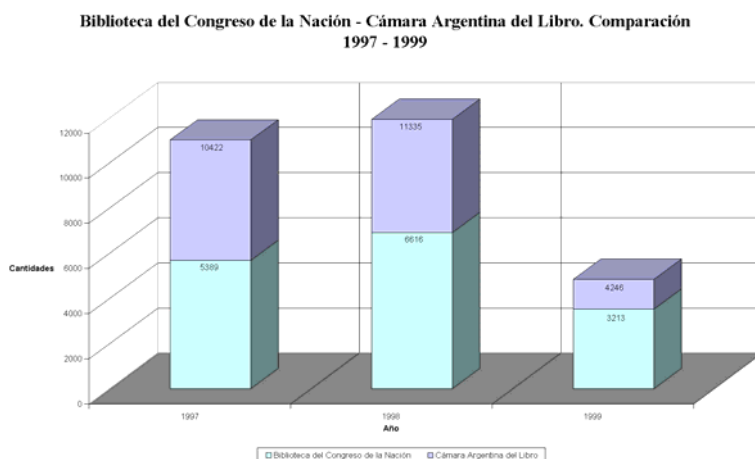
### Annual Comparison Legal Deposit of Literary Works. The nineties



c) There are remarkable differences between the material actually received by the Library of the National Congress and the Argentine Book Chamber,

regarding the years 1997, 1998 and 1999, according to what the latter institution reported to “La Nación” newspaper last 29<sup>th</sup> June.

### Library of the National Congress – Argentine Book Chamber Comparison 1997 – 1999



Contrary to that informed by the National Library, the **Argentine Book Chamber** has reported that Law 11.723 authorizes the Dirección Nacional de Derecho de Autor (DNDA) to perform inspections and charge penalties, equivalent to 10% of the commercial value of each unregistered work, which are applied as from the approval of ministerial resolutions, the proceeds being assigned to the Fondo Nacional de las Artes (National Arts Endowment).

The methodology followed is the following: as a co-operating agency of the DNDA, the Argentine Book Chamber supplies information regularly on registered works to the ISBN System. This information is checked with the information contained in the DNDA database and its group of inspectors visits publishing houses, divided by geographic areas of the City of Buenos Aires and Greater Buenos Aires, requiring registration proof of the works not found in the ISBN System. In each inspection an official statement is drawn up detailing the works claimed and setting the deadline for their registration. Since approximately two years ago, the legal proceedings in the case of failure to register are sent to the National Ministry of Justice, whose secretary's office decides on the penalty the publisher must pay.

Regarding the interior of the country, various operations have been carried out, via notes that remind the publisher that registration is compulsory indicating that failure to comply will result in application of a fine, which does not exempt the publisher from registering the works.

**g) What are the national acquisition policies, if there are any?**

- \* Do the university libraries co-operate in collection development?
- \* What are the relations among the different sector libraries (university, public, research, national)?

According to data provided by the **National Library**, it is carrying out a quick “updating” on the matter. In 1995 the Exchange and Donation Service was reorganized for it had suffered budgetary problems. This allowed it to receive once again a very important inflow of printed material, above all from other national libraries. Later progress was made requesting in exchange material that directly or indirectly spoke about Argentina and/or Latin America, as well as editions or articles by Argentineans published abroad and which are unknown in our country.

In 1998 the Exchange and Donation Service also became the “Acquisition” Service and the policy implemented in this matter has the same aim: to prioritize the acquisition of the aforementioned material. In this regard, the project that the national Library of Chile is carrying out can be of interest for the national Argentine Library, on creating a “Chilean office” that allows them to gather, classify and make available to all users everything published on Chile and by Chileans throughout the world.

Another of the National Libraries that answered the points of the report was the **National Teachers Library**, which since 1993 established contacts with Latin American representatives of organizations renowned for their journal provision services, such as Sweets, Ebsco and Blackwell, complying in this way with the requirements of the Ministry of Education that purchases should be made from a company with a representative in Argentina.

A committee was established in order to make the selection, made up by the Library Director, co-ordinators and the pedagogic adviser. Suggestions from different programmes and researchers of the Ministry were considered, defining the issues to be covered: Education and related sciences. At the same time lists of titles, both national and foreign, acquired from libraries with educational funds were required.

According to usage statistics from the sector the replacement, incorporation or renewal of some titles is determined. Moreover, the intention of acquiring all specialized publications in Spanish should be pointed out.

Electronic publications have also started to be acquired, because this medium enables remote consultation. These journals are already available for the documentation centres, which make up the SNIE, towards which future purchases are projected, as well as the Pedagogic Libraries.

With the aim of avoiding duplicating titles among geographically close institutions, a system of co-operative purchases is projected with institutions such as: the National Academy of Education, FFyL, CCNUR, OIE

#### **Newspaper Library Statistics:**

**Number of users** in the first six months of 1999: **486**

## Users' Profile

Profile	Percentage
Students	50
Teachers	29
Officials and agents of the Education Ministry	9
Others:	8
Professionals:	4
Teachers by their category:	
Higher	41
University	34
Secondary	16
EGB	6
Initial	3

**Inflow of journals:** out of **1054 titles**, only **559** had been registered of which we have no acquisition information.

At present we receive **285 titles through donations, 200 through purchases and 10 through exchange.**

**Languages:** in the collection Spanish is predominant (**65%**), and the remainder is divided among English in the first place, French, Portuguese and German (**34%**).

### Teacher users by category

Category	Percentage
Higher but not university level	41
University:	34
Secondary	16
General Basic Education:	6
Initial:	3

For its part, the **Library of the National Congress** incorporates bibliographic material in its holdings through purchases, donations, exchange, legal deposit, on account of its being the depository or reference centre of international organizations and due to the institution's own output.

One of its assigned functions is not to keep on its shelves the bibliographic materials which are not necessary for the fulfilment of its functions, which are outdated or are duplicates of other existing works. Thus in 1981 an administrative rule was dictated (ratified in 1983 by the constitutional government and by the H. Tribunal de Cuentas de la Nación (General Accounting Office) in 1984, which allowed the said bibliographic material to leave the institution and be incorporated in others, such as, for example, educational institutions, provincial parliamentary libraries, university libraries, public or private non profit institutions.

The main objective of the **Comision Nacional Protectora de Bibliotecas Populares (CONABIP) (National Commission for the Protection of Public Libraries)**, reporting to the Culture Secretariat of the National Presidency, is to support the development of 1,800 public libraries across the country and to encourage reading through a series of guidelines, programmes and specific actions on a national level by applying the Public Library Special Fund (Fondo Especial de Bibliotecas Públicas) (Law 23,351).

The CONABIP develops a special programme called “Books, Software and Videos”, with the aim of *“contributing in this way to the growth and updating of public library collections, strengthening the reader’s right to pluralistic information and the freedom of reading and choice, as well as supporting the gradual incorporation of new educational-cultural technologies in public libraries, promoting the complementary nature of printed and audio-visual material, digital and analogue material and of all the media that register knowledge, thought and the creation of mankind”*. To this end the CONABIP acquires and distributes bibliographic and multimedia material to the 1800 public libraries.

Since 1990 it has provided libraries with more than 2,500,000 books, equivalent to an investment of 25% of the budget for supporting these institutions. To this end the CONABIP acquires material based on a specific survey of needs, carried out by the public libraries themselves and based on policies aimed at promoting reading with works of literature, general interest, children’s and young people’s literature. These policies are also intended to consolidate reference, scientific, pedagogic and school text collections, to disseminate regional literature and reaffirm cultural identity: to update the basic and general collections – of more than 16,000,000 books – of the public libraries of the entire country and to incorporate new information, knowledge and entertainment supports.

Publishing houses and vendors are summoned via a direct communication – at the start of the business year – to the business chambers of the sector and respective companies.

Once the proposals and corresponding material samples are received the selection procedure is carried out with the participation of the National Commission for the Protection of Public Libraries’ authorities, the intervention of the specific Evaluation Committee, the corresponding authorization of the National Culture Secretariat and based on a budget distribution conforming to the annually available credits – by Law - for this purpose. This selection affects a wide number of the most important publishing houses of the country and in some cases foreign ones.

The provision of bibliographic material by the CONABIP, in the last decade, resulted in an increase of more than 20% in public library collections.

In the University Library sphere, the **Sistema de Información y Bibliotecas (SISBI) of the Buenos Aires University** drew up a survey according to instructions received for the drafting of this report and in order to rationally

analyze the present situation of Argentine University Libraries, regarding the access or availability of information issue.

In order to make up the questionnaire, the questions on the Guide Sheet were taken into consideration to draft the national report regarding:

1. Collection development
2. Exchange relations with other similar organizations
3. Material conservation and retention
4. Inter-library loans
5. Collective catalogues

The survey was sent to 60 Argentine public, national, provincial and University Libraries as well as libraries of private institutions.

The sample, based on 36 questionnaires that were answered, is considered representative as it covers all the regions of the country, in the central area, the Northeast, Northwest, central Andean provinces and the centre.

80% of the answers proceed from public, national and provincial universities and the remaining 20% are from private university libraries.

From the results we can gather the following:

Argentine university libraries practically do not participate in collection development. Even the two cases pointed out as positive are debatable for on mentioning a body they point out the Sistema de Bibliotecas y de Información de la Universidad de Buenos Aires, SISBI, which makes us think that according to the way this System functions that all the Libraries of the Buenos Aires University, on participating in the centralized purchase of journals are participating in this task.

In actual fact, what would happen according to our knowledge of the matter is that what is developed through the SISBI with the centralized purchase of journals, are the collections of each Library that participates in said System.

The lack of national acquisition policies mean that the University Libraries procure solutions individually, or regionally, with enormous efforts on the part of Librarians, in order to facilitate access to information for their users.

The co-operation relations between Libraries of different sectors is determined by economic difficulties, lack of qualified human resources and buildings and outdated equipment, despite which they maintain these relations in the majority of cases with organizations of the public or private sector related with the range of topics that concern each one of them.

It is remarkable that a high percent of University Libraries have no contact with the National Library.

**h) Does the country have libraries that are beneficiaries of the legal deposit? If so, how useful are they?**

As we mentioned before the country has two libraries that are beneficiaries of the legal deposit: the National Library and the Library of the National Congress

In the case of the Library of the National Congress *"We cannot but suppose that the 'legal deposit' as a means of acquisition is of great importance, for it allows the library to have intellectual works which make up a great volume of contemporary bibliographic material and which otherwise it would not be able to obtain, despite the delay with which works are received and the regulatory loopholes"*. The National Library, on the other hand, has not answered this point.

As far as the University Libraries, the present legal rule does not provide for Depository Libraries in this field. Although the problem was once posed in the Buenos Aires University, it has not been solved. In particular, faced with the impossibility of increasing the existing deposits, the School of Engineering also tried to organize a Depository Library, but due to lack of resources, this problem could not be solved either and that is why the SISBI representative considers that *us Librarians must assume the responsibility of selecting what can be preserved and what not, due to lack of space in Library buildings*.

**i) What is the conservation and retention policy? Is it organized?**

For several years the **National Teachers Library** has been performing preservation functions and restoring the bibliographic material through its specialized staff

This year, a specialist performed some tests in some of the rooms that have antique bibliographic material. A study of thermohigrometric variables was carried out to measure the temperature and the humidity of the atmosphere. A specially designed device that stores 1800 temperature values and other variables was used, during 15 minute periods. It is smaller than a matchbox, inviolable and is exclusively programmed from the PC, which makes the data unalterable.

Satisfactory results were obtained, as the temperature ranges from 17° to 19°, and humidity between 56 and 64 %. The values are within the parameters suggested for the conservation of bibliographic material.

Studies with insects and micro-organisms were also carried out with special elements for those purposes.

In the Second Stage the following measures are provided for:

- Drafting of easy to read instructions to prevent disasters
- Lists of instructions for emergencies
- Corrective preservation
- Conservation and restoration laboratory for bibliographic material

Regarding present conservation and retention policies in **University Libraries**, it can be seen that although 19 out of 36 point out that there are regulations on the matter, only 9 have rules formally established by one of the managerial levels of the university institutions to which they belong.

This indicator would be showing the lack of formally established conservation and retention policies by those who manage or administrate university institutions, and the establishment of certain rules remains, therefore, in the hands of Librarians. These rules are generally influenced by the lack of physical space or maintenance problems in the deposit due to the lack of adequate means.

**j) What is the present state of the inter-library loan / swapping of bibliography? Is there a system in place? If not, why not? Is one necessary?**

In the case of the **National Teachers Library**, the information networks emerge due to the need to share resources and exchange information in order to meet users' service and product demands. Networks enable the establishment of common work guidelines, facilitate access to information for users, promote the dissemination of databases, rationalize document acquisition, share resources and among other things decentralize information. For this reason, the development of common standards, methodologies and technologies put in place to serve the networking of co-operating centres can be defined as library co-operation products.

These products and/or services represent the expansion of the whole information infrastructure accumulated throughout the years and respond to the new demand for technical co-operation.

The tools for integrating and locating information and development are based on the following components:

Collective catalogues, inter-library loans, co-operative acquisition, CD-ROM, databases, networks and ordinary information sources (Guide sheets, software, handbooks, directories, etc.)

Basic information sources, guides, handbooks, directories, software are products that enable access and allow training and information needs of users from various communities, (scientific researchers, educators, the media and the general public) to be efficiently served.

In the National Teachers Library the inter-library loan is being implemented but it is not yet standardized and institutionalized by rules. Here we present a blueprint for the rules of this service which will shortly be adopted by the institution.



The Centro Nacional de Información Documental Educativa (National Centre of Education Documentary Information) is the co-ordinator of the Sistema Nacional de Información Educativo (SNIE) (National System of Educational Information) and is made up by representatives of the Documentation Centres of the 24 provincial jurisdictions. These in turn are the centres of the subsystems and provincial information networks in the area. For this reason we have drawn up this Blueprint for the Rules on Inter-library Loans.

The institutions that participate in this Project will be responsible for providing initial information on the documentary endowment of their respective newspaper archive indicating the state of their collection as from 1900. From that date on and every three months they will report on material incorporated during the period.

The development of a database is foreseen as a co-operative task with the primary information that will provide participants with updated information on new titles incorporated.

Later on the advisability of also publishing co-operatively a Bulletin on the Contents of the most significant publications might be considered. It would favour a wider and better use of journals and its development could result in important savings regarding their subscriptions.

The inter-library loan has been provided for in the Circulation and Loan Rules of the **Library of the National Congress**, in order to establish procedural standards that may allow for the fulfilment of duties regarding the care and preservation of bibliographic material as well as promote rational use of the same, in line with service requirements.

Due to the wealth of the Library's bibliographic holdings these are requested by other official and unofficial libraries and institutions, and tacit exchange arrangements have emerged. Thus material is exchanged (through inter-library loans or the exchange of publications) as well as information (via conventional or electronic channels).

There is an average of forty inter-library loans per month (including both the original documents as well as reproductions). Access is via mail, telex, fax, electronic mail, personal, etc. and the greatest exchange is with provincial courts and legislatures.

The **SISBI** has studied the Inter-library Loan Services matter in University Libraries, a service that according to the results of the survey previously mentioned, is provided by the majority of University Libraries. These services are carried out among the University Libraries, themselves, or with other scientific organizations of their field of specialization, 50% with overseas, but there is no single system and the informal one is the most frequently used. This shows the lack of a specific system, of a general nature, that establishes rules on this matter, such as typical or basic agreements that facilitate the establishment of interrelations with reciprocal benefits.

Despite the difficulties, 70% of the answers received indicate the need for a System.

**k) Which libraries are the best equipped, in terms of collections and technology, to provide an inter-library loan system?**

The data obtained in the survey carried out by the **SISBI**, indicate that regarding the University Libraries there are difficulties in the provision of those Services; 47% declare they are in a fit state, equipped with adequate technology and staff. Another 47% states the contrary and their reasons are almost the same: lack of means, lack of the necessary technology, lack of staff - not only regarding quantity, but also the urgency to incorporate professional librarians-, outdated collections, lack of collective catalogues in the same system, etc.

**l) Who is responsible for the international requests for inter-library loans?**

From the answers obtained there is no single institution responsible for international requests for inter-library loans. According to data of the report drawn up by the **SISBI**, in the university sphere, requests to overseas libraries are made by the Libraries themselves as there is no institution at a national level that handles this Service.

**l) Are there collective catalogues, and how efficient are they?**

The National Commission for the Protection of Public Libraries' web page (<http://www.conabip.gov.ar>) will offer as from September 1999 access to the National Collective Catalogue of public library collections across the country.

The process of creating the catalogue was based on the records of the Biblioteca Popular Sociedad Franklin, of San Juan. The process includes comparing records provided by different public libraries with those of this library and automatically re-cataloguing the records that coincide, achieving in this way the unification and standardization of cataloguing criteria, maintaining data on the original library and its placement. This procedure is facilitated by the use of the SIGEBI programme developed by the National Commission.

As a contribution to the unification of criteria and levels of cataloguing and classification, the CONABIP also distributes bibliographic and multimedia material to public libraries together with a "guiding" printed catalogue that facilitates the processing of works received in each public library.

The collective catalogue will provide an easy search for works in any province, with the aid of a powerful search engine. In the first stage, which is being developed at present, 73 libraries of 15 provinces were included, out of a sample of 10.000 records catalogued by the Franklin Library.

At present the catalogue is being tested, and for this purpose sites have been opened. Once the testing period is over, the collective catalogue will be

available on the CONABIP's web page and it will be possible to search and download records of interest.

For its part the **SISBI** has reported that, unfortunately, the Collective Catalogue of the Buenos Aires University, which for many years regularly received information not only from university libraries of the country but also from numerous scientific institutions, is not up to date. This is due to the fact that many Libraries have stopped sending information owing to the context of budget and staff difficulties already mentioned.

However, it is still a significant tool for the search of bibliographic material in different parts of the country. At present, the incorporation of new means of communication, especially the INTERNET, facilitates searches.

The Service that is provided by this Collective Catalogue is considered 60% positive, according to the Libraries that answered the questionnaire. However, the answers should be more deeply analyzed as the Libraries pointed out the difficulties they often face on trying to make use of it.

A detailed study of the present difficulties leads us yet again to the budget problem and the lack of qualified human resources that adversely impact service provision.

**m) Which are the libraries that have effective national collections and how well do they fulfil their role?**

The **Library of the National Congress'** collection has been built up due to the acquisition of both individual documents and collections of private libraries, donations, exchanges, legal deposits and due to the fact that this library is the depository of some International Organizations' publications. It is made up of all kinds of documents in different media and at present it has around three million bibliographic pieces.

Access to information can take place from inside the Library as well as from outside.

The Library's database has many bibliographic records such as monographs, cartographic material, journals, recordings, microforms, manuscripts, etc. It also includes records of authorities, collections and location.

The database grows with the incorporation of new works and due to the conversion of the old manual catalogues.

Three indexes have been developed: articles from national newspapers, and Juan Domingo Perón and Eva Perón's speeches.

The Database can be accessed via the Online Public Access Catalogue, and for this purpose the Library has computer terminals; from outside the Library it can be accessed by modem.

The Library also has a database of journal articles, which for the moment cannot be searched on line.

With the recent acquisition of new software and the future acquisition of computer equipment, there is a project to unify these databases and enable access to bibliographic references not only via modem, but also via the Library's web page.

In the legislative area two databases have been developed: one on national and provincial legislation and the second one on parliamentary proceedings, which for the moment are not online.

Argentina is one of the founding members of the GLIN Network (Global Legal Information Network), a project that concentrates a service of legislative characteristics, for the entire international community, to the extent that countries are interested in participating as members. Member countries should regularly incorporate laws and rules of a general nature published in their respective official bulletins. They are complete texts whose authenticity is guaranteed by each one of the contributing countries, through their co-operating institutions in legislative affairs.