



GLS Satellite Meeting 2019: Guidelines on Advocacy for Government Libraries

Part 2 - Country Case Studies

The digitization and the accessibility: a best practice in the Luca Pacioli Library (Italy Ministry of Economy and Finance - State General Accounting Department) Delegate: Ms. Paola Maddaluno

Short Description of the Library

http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/ragioneria_generale/biblioteca_luca_pacioli/la_biblioteca/index.html

The Luca Pacioli Library is the library of the State General Accounting Department (RGS) of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), located in Rome in the government finance building. The accounting department is 150 years old and is one of the oldest Italian state institutions. Its library, inaugurated in late 1956, was named after Luca Pacioli, a Renaissance scientist who is noted for his studies concerning bookkeeping. The library's first volumes were donated by different inspectorates of the State Accounting Department. In particular, the library conserves the original paper Final Statement of Accounts from the Unity of Italy in 1861.

In time, the Library became a main reference point due to its holdings concerning auditing, accountability, finance, economy and statistics and essential for research and studies in these disciplines. Today the Library includes approximately 20.000 volumes.

After the renovation of its magnificent interior in 2006, the Library was reopened to the public with completely refurbished spaces and new services. One of its most innovative features is the new and completely automated book delivery system.

The library participates in the National Library Service and is also part of the State Public Library Pole, under the Alessandrina Library of the Sapienza University in Rome. All volumes are cataloged according to international standards.

The library software enables employees of the Ministry to request loans, examine the table of contents, suggest purchases of books and to register for a newsletter about new acquisitions.

In 2008 the Library adopted the Libraries Unified Regulation of the Ministry and complies with the unified catalogue.

Accounting Digitation Project

The process implemented for the development of electronic sources in the Italian Public Administration begins with the application of specific laws, particularly the Digital Administration Code of 2005 and subsequent amendments that rule this process, in accordance with EU policy.

The State General Accounting is one of the first areas of the state administration to carry out such procedures. All Final Statements of Accounts as of 2005 are available online.

In addition to the above, the Library also maintains a paper copy of the documents released by the State General Accounting that are catalogued; these are available via the National Library Service (SBN).

In addition to this, and at the request of many economist to examine the paper documents before 2005 in order to analyze the annual national profits and losses, the Library promotes the diffusion of these data.

Considering these frequent and continuous requests, the need for transparency concerning the national financial activities as well as the necessity to guarantee the conservation of these documents which are part of the National heritage, the Library has gone on implementing the digitization project of earlier years.

Project Description

http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/ragioneria_generale/biblioteca_luca_pacioli/rendiconti_digitalizzati/index.html

The main characteristics of this project are:

- In-house work, employing human resources of the press service that have been expressly trained to use digitization software and hardware.
- accessibility to the government sites is mandatory for the publication of the related files.

The in-house work reduces expenses, preventing material from being taken and processed outside the building. A dedicated working group formed by budget experts, computer technicians and librarians has been set up in order to promote accessibility.

The processed files are not accessible because they are mainly tables, therefore they are saved as simple images.

The budget expert suggest to divide the years of Final Statement of Accounts in ranges of years characterized by a common accounting framework. Each period is presented with an introduction and information about the accounting law that governs it.

The Library provides a list of volumes which may be useful for consultation.

Furthermore, in order to avoid any dis-service for off-line users , the names and telephone numbers of library staff which can give access to the original documents by appointment, have been supplied. This availability is defined as a best practice because it allows all users access to information that is fundamental to acquiring knowledge of the actual running of the State. The initiative is an exercise in transparency that is of great value for our citizens and give them the opportunity to interact directly with the library.

In light of the positive outcome of the initial phases of the project, we are now continuing with the digitization of the years preceding 1964.

Conclusions

At present the reports from 1996 to 2004 (n.560 volumes) are available online.

This ongoing project, which includes the digitation of all previous Statements from 1862 to 1966 (n.240 volumes) has been appreciated by our library users.

Meanwhile the following other documents have also been scanned:

- the Public Expenses Technical Commission Acts of this commission that operated c. 20 years in the period between 1982 to 2002;
- historical volumes preceding the Annual Reports (document of public sources that examines the costs of the employees of the Public Administration) from 1923 to 1988.

The retrospective cataloguing of these volumes is in the planning stage.