General information

The Silesian Library is a regional public library with a scientific status, taking into account:

- the needs of academic communities from Silesian universities,
- the scope and directions of scientific research conducted in Silesian scientific institutions,
- providing instructional and methodological assistance to municipal public libraries.

The library continues the traditional specialisation of its collections, in accordance with the collecting policy adopted by the Silesian Library's predecessors – **the Library of the Silesian Sejm (1922-1936) and the J. Piłsudski Silesian Public Library (1936-1945)**. History

In 1952, the library was renamed to the Silesian Library and was recognised as a scientific library. Since 1 July 2000, after the merger with the Regional Public Library, it has been fulfilling the role of a regional library, retaining its previous scientific status.
The Silesian Library collects documents of all academic branches with a particular emphasis on law, economics, social sciences and humanities as well as regional literature (Silesiaca) i.e. literature concerning historical and contemporary Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin including administrative changes in the area. By the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 19 July 2017, the Silesian Library was included in the libraries that have collections included in the National Library Collection.

The library has nearly 2.8 million volumes in its collection, including:

- printed documents (books, brochures, journals and other periodicals),
- handwritten materials (manuscripts, typescripts),
- cartographic materials (maps, plans, atlases),
- iconographic materials (graphic materials, photographs, postcards, bookplates),
- audiovisual documents (analogue and compact discs and cassette tapes),
- ephemera,
- electronic media (CDs and DVDs).

The most important tasks of the Silesian Library include:

- collecting, cataloguing, sharing and protecting Polish and foreign literature and other documents supporting the development of scientific research and educational needs,
- archiving legal deposits,
- providing information and bibliographic assistance to institutions and individuals,
- popularising books and reading by organising exhibitions, shows, meetings with authors and other cultural events,
- initiating, conducting and publishing scientific and research work in the field of librarianship, scientific information and related fields, with a particular emphasis on Silesian collections,
- coordinating activities of public libraries in order to create a uniform information system within the Silesian Voivodeship.

Library materials are subject to special protection and require optimal storage conditions. This is why a lot of valuable items in the library’s collection are made available on a presentation basis (on-site, in the reading room) or in a microfilm form (periodicals, some old prints); optimum storage

conditions are ensured by a modern system for storing the collection used in the Silesian Library.