To avoid cancelling subscriptions, some libraries are diminishing their book orders, sometimes drastically. Others have had to stop binding their periodicals.

**Mathematicians are very close to “their documentation”**

Mathematicians play a non negligible role in the acquisition policy for books and periodicals in their libraries. In a majority of cases, this policy is decided by a committee of mathematicians.

In most libraries, mathematicians have free access to the shelves. Almost all libraries lend their books (all of the collection or only part of it) to their researchers, but a good number of libraries, especially in France, do not lend their periodicals.

80% of libraries have exchange policies. This policy gives some oxygen to several institutions, especially in Eastern Europe. The circulation of “gray literature” is intense and increasing, with an important scientific impact on the community of mathematicians. This circulation grows all the more as “modern means” tend to become widespread.

75% of libraries are now computerized, most of them for cataloging and lending, a certain number also for acquisitions and management and only a few for periodicals. Computerization started slowly about ten years ago. Its pace has quickened the last five years. For example, among the 36 Western European libraries which answered the questionnaire, only 6 are not yet computerized. In France, only another 6 are not computerized out of a total of 27.

Computerization, however, has often been rather anarchic, if we may say so, as each library decided on its own software and norms. Nonetheless, the creation in France of an “informal network” has led to an attempt at normalization: 3/4 of libraries use the same software and follow the same norms.

If, in answer to informal questions, some people mention problems of work space, most insist particularly on financing and personnel problems.

If this questionnaire was helpful in defining some of the problems and focusing the discussion, it is clear that we must consider it as an initial contact and that a more comprehensive survey of all mathematics libraries in Europe would be useful.

FINANCING OF THE LIBRARIES

The Situation of Libraries in Russia

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The problems mentioned here are identical to those of the former Soviet Union, including the Baltic Republics, the Ukraine and Moldavia. Russia is in very serious economic trouble and certainly will not recover during the next 3 to 5 years.