

Beyond the Library Collections

Proceedings of the 2022 Erasmus Staff Training Week at ULiège Library

François Renaville and Fabienne Prosmans (Eds.)

ULIÈGE LIBRARY
LIÈGE





Beyond the Library Collections by François Renaville & Fabienne Prosmans is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

ULiège Library, 2023

ISBN: 978-2-87019-316-7 (print), 978-2-87019-313-6 (online), 978-2-87019-314-3 (pdf),
978-2-87019-315-0 (epub)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25518/978-2-87019-313-6>

D/2023/0480/2

This open access book was published online on e-publish.uliege.be on April 1, 2023.

Browse the catalogue of our open access books: <https://e-publish.uliege.be/catalog>

This book was produced with Pressbooks (<https://pressbooks.com>) and rendered with Prince.

Contents

Preface	xi
<i>Tina Baich</i>	
Introduction	1
<i>François Renaville and Fabienne Prosmans</i>	
<u>Part I. Collaboration for shared collections and preservation</u>	
Collection management collaborations in Sweden	7
<i>Karin Byström</i>	
Access to academic heritage: ENC theses available online	19
<i>Camille Carette</i>	
When David and Goliath work together: The impact of a cooperation agreement on library strategy	27
<i>Susanne Kirchmair</i>	
How the interlibrary loan service can collaborate with other libraries and university services	39
<i>Isàvena Opisso</i>	
<u>Part II. DDA and EBA as opportunities</u>	
Purchase on demand via interlibrary loan: Analysis of the first four years at University of Antwerp Library	49
<i>Jennifer Van den Avijle and Luca Maggiore</i>	
Patron-Driven Acquisition et Evidence-Based Acquisition : Comment implémenter ces modèles afin d'étendre l'offre documentaire dans une bibliothèque ?	63
<i>Marion Favre and Manon Velasco</i>	

Part III. Interlibrary loan workflows and experiences

- How library systems influence the interlibrary loan workflow: A comparison between Alma and Koha 91
Martina Kassler and Veronica Fors
- International loans in the Main Library of AGH UST: The technical library as a witness of change 109
Karolina Forma
- The gentle art of giving and receiving: Resource sharing services in a museum library 119
Florian Preiß
- Four years of ILL service at the Faculty Library of Arts and Philosophy (Ghent University): Findings and challenges 129
Joris Baeyens
- Changing tools, changing habits, changing workflows: Recent evolutions of the interlibrary loan service at ULiège Library 139
Fabienne Prosmans and François Renaville

Part IV. Enhanced ILL services through collaborations and networks

- From fee to free: How to reduce expenses by eliminating revenue 163
Léa Bouillet
- HERMES, an international project on free digital resource sharing 173
Carmen Lomba; Stefania Marzocchi; and Debora Mazza
- The NILDE network and document delivery in Verona University Libraries 187
Elisabetta Guerra

Part V. Impact of Covid-19 on library accessibility and services

- COVID-19. New challenges and new solutions at the University of Warsaw Library 201
Franciszek Skalski

How COVID has changed our world. New opportunities for the future? A case study for UPM Libraries <i>Reyes Albo</i>	217
Book Contributors	227
Acknowledgements	235

From fee to free: How to reduce expenses by eliminating revenue

Léa Bouillet

Abstract

Interlibrary loan (ILL) service has always been considered as a special service within the library offer. As such, it is customary to find that ILL has its own cost policy and is not a free service for registered users. At UT2J university, ILL is free, both for end users and for other ILL services that request materials from our collections. Indeed, by providing free ILL for other libraries, we are able to provide free ILL for our staff and students. The fact of eliminating the revenue generated by lending materials also eliminates the expenses related to borrowing requests thanks to the principle of reciprocity. This economic model is virtuous, guarantees equal access to the documentation to all users, and allows us to promote our collections at a national level.

Keywords

Interlibrary loan; Free ILL; Reciprocity; Equality of access; Positive communication

Article

Introduction

Interlibrary loan (ILL) services are nothing new in academic libraries in France ([Nortier, 1965a](#), [1965b](#)), or the rest of the world, but our new environment, strongly based on digital communication, instantaneousness and free access (either actual or imagined), has had quite an impact on the way ILL is organised and provided as a service to users. One of the main goals of ILL at University Toulouse Jean Jaurès has always been to maintain easy accessibility to documentation for everyone, students and staff. As a provincial university, it is especially important for researchers to have access to the same level of resources as researchers in Paris.

As a consequence, the cost policy of the service is one of the main focuses, and has

been greatly challenged in the last few decades by local and national decisions. The principle of free ILL for students and staff, and of reciprocal free ILL with other libraries, is an economic model to which the library is particularly attached, but that has to be defended as it is not the most obvious choice when it comes to saving public money.

Background at UT2J

So how is eliminating revenue leading to a reduction in costs? Both the local and national contexts of the university Jean Jaurès are key to understanding this policy but some simple calculations can easily show how this has become an obvious choice for our ILL.

University Toulouse Jean Jaurès (UT2J) is part of a network comprising four universities and 17 engineering or specialist schools, with about 130,000 students in all fields, from literature to civil aviation. The University's 20 libraries ([Bibliothèques de l'UT2J, n.d.](#)) specialise in human and social sciences and are part of a network of 54 academic libraries in Toulouse and its region, employing about 400 staff members. This library network is coordinated by an inter-institutional service for documentary cooperation ([Service Inter-Établissements de Coopération Documentaire, n.d.](#)), whose mission it is to provide and manage services that the network needs, such as its library system Alma, the remote Ask a Librarian service, its shared catalogue Archipel, staff training, etc.

This network implies that each student, irrespective of which university or school they are registered in, has access to every library and can borrow documents without having to register again or pay a fee. A common library card, using the student ID system, allows for easy access to this service. As such, no ILL is provided between the libraries of this local network, except between the libraries located in Toulouse itself and those located outside the city. Since the three main universities were once one single entity (before 1970 and the Faure law following the events of May 1968) ([Alcouffe et al., 2019](#), pp. 118–119), this state of affairs is historic and self-evident to everyone. Services such as a shuttle service for borrowing and returning documents between the libraries have been implemented in the last few years to develop this cooperation, free of cost to users.

National organization of ILL in France

On a national level, things are much more complicated. French academic libraries share a national catalogue, the SUDOC, managed by the French national agency for academic libraries (ABES). Interlibrary loans are based on this catalogue and its back-office interface, SUPEB. This software, which uses an in-house software solution, enables the ILL service to manage their borrowing requests and to receive lending requests and process

them, though digital documents cannot be sent through this interface and no billing system exists.

Until the 1990s, French libraries could rely on a postal franchise allowing French institutions to send each other letters and packages at no cost. Each library had its own policy regarding the cost for the end user, some deciding on free ILL and others preferring to bill their users for the time it took to locate and obtain the document for them; but in both cases, no shipping costs were incurred by the libraries and consequently no shipping costs were passed on to library users. However, at the end of the 1980s, the postal franchise on which the academic libraries relied was deemed to be illegal and a misuse of an agreement between the postal services and the French government. Academic libraries were in fact benefiting from the laxity of controls on the use of the postal franchise, but were not allowed, legally, to use it to send documents for ILL ([Deguilly, 1987](#)).

In 1996, the postal franchise was no longer available to French academic libraries, which greatly changed the way ILL costs were dealt with. ILL operations witnessed a significant increase in costs, and each university had to decide on how to manage these new costs. Some libraries decided to introduce a fixed price for any book they lent to other libraries, to cover postal charges. Others suggested that another economic model would be more cost efficient: a reciprocity system, based on an equilibrium of requests and loans, to avoid billing and potential added costs. The University Jean Jaurès quickly decided that this solution was the easiest one to implement. A librarian at the University of Saint Etienne took it upon herself to create a list of libraries implementing this reciprocity system, to provide visibility to all ILL services operating in this way ([SCD de l'Université de Saint Etienne, n.d.](#)). This list now comprises over 400 libraries which have agreed to share their documents for free with other French academic libraries.

In view of this initiative, the ABES was called upon in 2006 to study the possibility of an integrated exchange and billing system for ILL services ([Baraggioli, 2018](#), pp. 53–54). The billing platform was designed on the basis of the reciprocity system: every document, whether it be an original sent by post or a copy sent by email, would be sent for free between academic libraries. At the end of the year, the balance would be zero, in surplus or in deficit. In the event of deficit, a financial compensation would be provided directly from the Ministry of higher education.

Several difficulties have prevented the completion of this project. Firstly, only libraries that are part of the SUPEB network, almost exclusively French academic libraries ([Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur, 2020](#)), would have had access to this central billing system, which excluded municipal and foreign libraries, among others. At UT2J, for example, 32% of the requests made by students and staff cannot be completed through SUPEB. ILL would have had to maintain another billing system for those requests, which would have been time consuming and complex. Secondly, each university is allowed to choose its own rates, and no consensus was ever found on the cost that would apply in the event of deficit. Finally, those universities whose collections were in

particularly high demand argued that this system would result in the loss of significant revenues, despite the financial compensation. As a result, this project was abandoned and to this day the ILL reciprocity system is still based on local decisions and an informal list maintained by one of the participants.

Organization of free ILL at UT₂J

When the ILL service at UT₂J was confronted with the added cost of shipping in 1996, a decision had to be made as to whether that new cost should be passed on to service users and requesting libraries. Since no one wanted to take the controversial decision of having students pay for the ILL requests, it was decided that the service would remain free of charge for all service users and that the ILL service would join the reciprocity list of libraries providing documents for free.

For users, participating in the reciprocity system guarantees that books and theses will be provided for free, as long as they can be found in a French library. The ILL service subsidizes the cost of shipping the document back to the lending library and, if the only library able to provide the document has a fee-based ILL service, it also subsidizes that cost. As for copies, for a long time it was common practice for service users to pay for the price of scanning and printing the material. A standard cost of €3 for a copy of 10 pages, and €1.70 for every 10 pages hereafter was applied, except if the lending library practiced reciprocity: in this case, the article was provided for free to the user. Since this happened in 90% of the cases, it was decided in July 2022 to provide all articles for free, for an added cost to the service of about €90 per year. The only documents users have to pay for are documents that can only be obtained from abroad, because the shipping cost is much higher and there is concern that subsidizing these requests would lead to an explosion of requests for documents that are unavailable in France, adding too great a cost to the service.

With a view to simple and universal access, there is no need to be a student at the University to enjoy these conditions. All users registered in the library network can access these rates, within the limit of three requests per week. It should be noted that only one of the other two universities in Toulouse provides its users with free ILL access, and only since 2019.

How much does it cost and save?

Our ILL service has been working this way at UT₂J for many years now, and despite budget cuts and great attention on how public money is spent, free access to the ILL service

and reciprocity between us and other libraries has never been abolished because having no revenues also means we spend very little money.

	With reciprocity		Without reciprocity	
Costs	€36,055		€55,233	
	Documents provided by libraries that don't practice reciprocity	€1,790	Documents provided by other libraries	€20,968
	Shipping back documents	€19,185	Shipping back documents	€19,185
	Shipping documents to borrowing libraries	€15,080	Shipping documents to borrowing libraries	€15,080
Revenues	€1,154		€17,258	
	Invoices to users (copies of articles or documents from abroad)	€778	Invoices to users (copies of articles or documents from abroad)	€778
	Documents sent to libraries that don't practice reciprocity	€376	Documents sent to other libraries	€16,480
Total cost of service	€34,901		€37,975	

Table 1 – Cost comparison With reciprocity vs Without reciprocity

When it comes to simple calculations, this system is the most cost-efficient for our ILL service. Not all costs are easy to identify, but even just taking into account the most obvious ones, such as shipping, the balance is clearly in favour of reciprocity.

Using the 2019 data for borrowing and lending requests,¹ it is possible to make a financial projection of costs for the scenario in which reciprocity is not the norm, and compare it with actual costs for ILL that year (Table 1, Figure 1).² This projection doesn't take into account a change of fares for users (hence possible revenues), since it is not an acceptable option at UT2J to begin charging students for the service.

1. Statistics from 2019 were preferred to those of 2020 or 2021, since the activity of ILL was greatly impacted by COVID restrictions.

2. The average cost practiced by libraries that are not part of the reciprocity network is 8€ for an original document. This simulation was made based on this cost.



Figure 1: Cost comparison With reciprocity vs Without reciprocity

Reciprocity saves us 8.8% of the total cost. With 3,001 patron requests received (and 2,621 sent once documents available in Toulouse or online are deducted) and 2,060 documents lent, the average cost of sending or receiving a document is €7.45, instead of €8.11 without reciprocity.

The balance is positive mostly because our ILL service borrows more documents than it lends, but it is necessary to add the working time saved on preparing invoices, tracking payments, checking bills received and paying them to this €3,000 saving, which might seem slight considering the overall cost. Indeed, in practical terms, practicing reciprocity means that no invoice needs to be prepared nor bill to be paid. The ILL takes great care to send borrowing requests to libraries that practice reciprocity, unless the document in question cannot be found in these libraries. This way, the ILL staff doesn't spend its time preparing invoices and paying bills, and the university accounting department doesn't have to be involved in ILL proceedings, all of which are hidden costs when providing a fee-based service.

The ILL also has to be on the look-out for unnecessary spending:

- No document available in another library in Toulouse can be requested through ILL. The staff is quite vigilant in checking the Archipel catalogue, as well as the local public libraries catalogue and some very specialist libraries before sending a request for a document. If need be, the patron is required to go to the local library that owns the document instead of requesting it through ILL.
- No document available online can be provided in physical form, though ILL staff make it a point to provide this online document to the service user.

- The staff strive to ensure that all requested documents are picked up. Service users that don't come to pick up the requested documents can be excluded from the service if it happens several times.

Overall benefits

Besides the economic considerations, the library finds many reasons to maintain this policy, from the user standpoint, as well as from that of the professional back office. Whilst UT2J may only be the 24th biggest university in France (in number of students), its ILL service was the 5th busiest in French academic libraries in 2019 ([Ministère, n.d.](#)). The number of ILL service users has been stable since 2014, with about 740 people using the service every year, at a time when a lot of ILL have seen a decrease in their activity, due in part to online resources. Libraries now have to compete with SciHub or social academic networks like ResearchGate, which allow free, if illegal, access to articles. It is essential that libraries are able to propose a legal alternative to these platforms, with the same easy and free access. Unfortunately, copyright laws in France don't allow for exactly the same ease of use, as it is not permitted to send an electronic copy of an article directly to the service user, except when software is used that prevents the recipient from viewing the entire document online and requires them to print the article to read it. Free ILL is a good start, however: it is easy to communicate about the service; it unifies the library offer, where there is no fee-based service; it plays a role in providing a positive image of the library and what it has to offer, by placing the user in the centre of library policy. Finally, it is a good way to raise awareness of copyright laws and also, in a roundabout way, to promote open access. As it is, free access to the ILL service is key to explaining that the ILL service at UT2J has been able to maintain this level of activity. 48% of service users are master degree students, mostly from the field of history. These students would have to pay for all their requests themselves if the service was not subsidized by the library, unlike most PhD students (12% of service users) and academic staff (13% of service users), who would most likely charge the costs associated with their ILL requests to their research programme. Finally, free ILL is a lever to ensuring equality between all users, and to guarantee that research is possible to students outside Paris, where a lot of research material is located. One student once said to the head of our ILL service: "Thanks to you, it is possible to write a quality thesis outside Paris".

From a professional standpoint, reciprocity allows our collections to be more visible and more accessible to other researchers outside Toulouse. In particular, the UT2J library houses a national collection of excellence on Spain and Portugal called "CollEx-Persée études ibériques" ([CollEx Persée, n.d.](#)). This collection represents 20% of the borrowing requests the ILL service receives. For other libraries, being able to request these documents for free guarantees that this national collection of excellence, for which the

university receives special funds, is accessible to everyone in the country. It is a way to promote our collections and to be able to rely on the national network of academic libraries to develop our acquisition and conservation policy.

Conclusion

The UT2J ILL service can rely on several decades of experience to justify the need for free ILL with other libraries and for library users. This economic model allows for ease of access, ease of communication with patrons, better visibility of our collections on a national level, and saving public money, whether they be direct savings or in terms of human resources. If practicing reciprocity between libraries is quite widespread and develops to include international sharing (HERMES project ([HERMES, n.d.](#); [Lomba et al., 2023](#)) or NILDE network ([Guerra, 2023](#); [NILDE network, 2017](#)) for example), access to a free ILL service for users is less common. However, several French university libraries have moved to this economic model in the last few years, such as the University Toulouse III Paul Sabatier in 2019 ([Bibliothèques de l'UT3, 2019](#)), the University Lyon 2 in 2020 ([Bibliothèques de l'Université Lumière Lyon 2, n.d.](#)), or the University Savoie Mont Blanc in 2022 ([Bibliothèques de l'USMB, n.d.](#)), hence proving the viability of this model.

Bibliography

Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur. (2020). *Liste des bibliothèques participant au réseau SUPEB*. <https://abes.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/liste-bibliotheques-supeb.pdf>

Alcouffe, A., Auger, F., Barrera, C., Bousigue, J.-Y., Cantier, J., Devaux, O., Espagno, D., Gounelle, A., Grosclaude, L., Grossetti, M., Jalaudin, C., Jolivet, A.-C., Lacoue-Labarthe, I., Lamy, J., Meynen, N., Pech, R., Périé, G., Barrera, C., & Ferté, P. (2019). *Histoire de l'Université de Toulouse. Volume III. L'époque contemporaine XIXe-XXIe siècle*. Editions midi-pyrénéennes. Université fédérale Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées.

Baraggioli, J.-L. (2018). *Étude sur la modernisation du prêt entre bibliothèques et la fourniture de documents à distance dans le cadre du GIS - CollEx-Persée*. <https://www.collex-persee.eu/1664-2/>

Bibliothèques de l'Université Lumière Lyon 2. (n.d.). *Le Prêt entre Bibliothèques devient gratuit*. Bibliothèque Universitaire; Webmestre Université Lumière Lyon 2. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://bu.univ-lyon2.fr/pret-entre-bibliotheques/le-pret-entre-bibliotheques-devient-gratuit>

Bibliothèques de l'USMB. (n.d.). *Nouveau: Gratuité du PEB (prêt entre bibliothèques)*.

Bibliothèques Universitaires. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.univ-smb.fr/bu/2022/04/26/nouveau-gratuite-du-peb-pret-entre-bibliotheques/>

Bibliothèques de l'UT2J. (n.d.). *Liste des bibliothèques de l'UT2J*. UT2J – Bibliothèques; Valerie Peyrou. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://bibliotheques.univ-tlse2.fr/accueil-bibliotheques/bibliotheques>

Bibliothèques de l'UT3. (2019, September 3). *Le service du PEB est désormais gratuit!* Bibliothèques de l'UT3. <https://bibliotheques.univ-tlse3.fr/toutes-les-actualites/le-service-du-peb-est-desormais-gratuit>

CollEx Persée. (n.d.). *Le réseau CollEx Persée*. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.collexpersee.eu/le-reseau/>

Deguilly, F. (1987). *Mariage forcé: La Poste et le prêt inter*. *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, (2), 163-169. <https://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-1987-02-0163-002>

Guerra, E. (2023). The NILDE network and document delivery in Verona University Libraries. In F. Renaville & F. Prosmans (Eds.), *Beyond the Library Collections: Proceedings of the 2022 Erasmus Staff Training Week at ULiège Library*. ULiège Library. <https://doi.org/10.25518/978-2-87019-313-6>

HERMES. (n.d.). HERMES project. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.hermes-eplus.eu/>

Lomba, C., Marzocchi, S., & Mazza, D. (2023). HERMES, an international project on free digital resource sharing. In F. Renaville & F. Prosmans (Eds.), *Beyond the Library Collections: Proceedings of the 2022 Erasmus Staff Training Week at ULiège Library*. ULiège Library. <https://doi.org/10.25518/978-2-87019-313-6>

Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche et de l'innovation. (n.d.). *ESGBU, données 2019*. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://esgbu.esr.gouv.fr/broad-cast/database-export>

NILDE network. (2017, January 3). *Rules and Regulation of NILDE*. NILDE World. https://nildeworld.bo.cnr.it/en/content/rules_and_regulations

Nortier, M. (1965a). *Le prêt entre bibliothèques en France*. *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, (4), 119-131. <https://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-1965-04-0119-002>

Nortier, M. (1965b). *Le prêt entre bibliothèques en France (fin)*. *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, (5), 155-168. <https://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-1965-05-0155-001>

SCD de l'Université de Saint Etienne. (n.d.). *Liste de réciprocité pour le PEB*. Retrieved August 19, 2022, from https://scdnum.univ-st-etienne.fr/peb/liste_reciprocite.php

Service Inter-établissements de Coopération Documentaire. (n.d.). Retrieved August 19, 2022, from <https://bibliotheques.univ-toulouse.fr/bibliotheques/trouver>

About the Author

Léa Bouillet, Head of Public Services Department

Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès (University Toulouse Jean Jaurès)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9927-070X>

Léa Bouillet (1989) has a master's degree in book history and passed the competitive examination to become a library curator in 2011. After one and a half years of training at the National School of Library and Information Technology (ENSSIB) in Lyon (France), she began her career in 2013 as head of public services at the University Health Library of the Paul Sabatier University in Toulouse (France). After 4 years, she was appointed director of public services in the libraries of the University Jean Jaurès in Toulouse. She is primarily responsible for the public services policy, projects related to handicaps, training in information skills and ILL. In parallel, she provides training in preparation for library examinations with the Occitanie library careers training centre (Mediad'Oc).