

Scientific Information in the Digital Age and Its Influence on Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery¹

Sofija Konjević (1)

1) Ruđer Bošković Institute, Zagreb, Croatia

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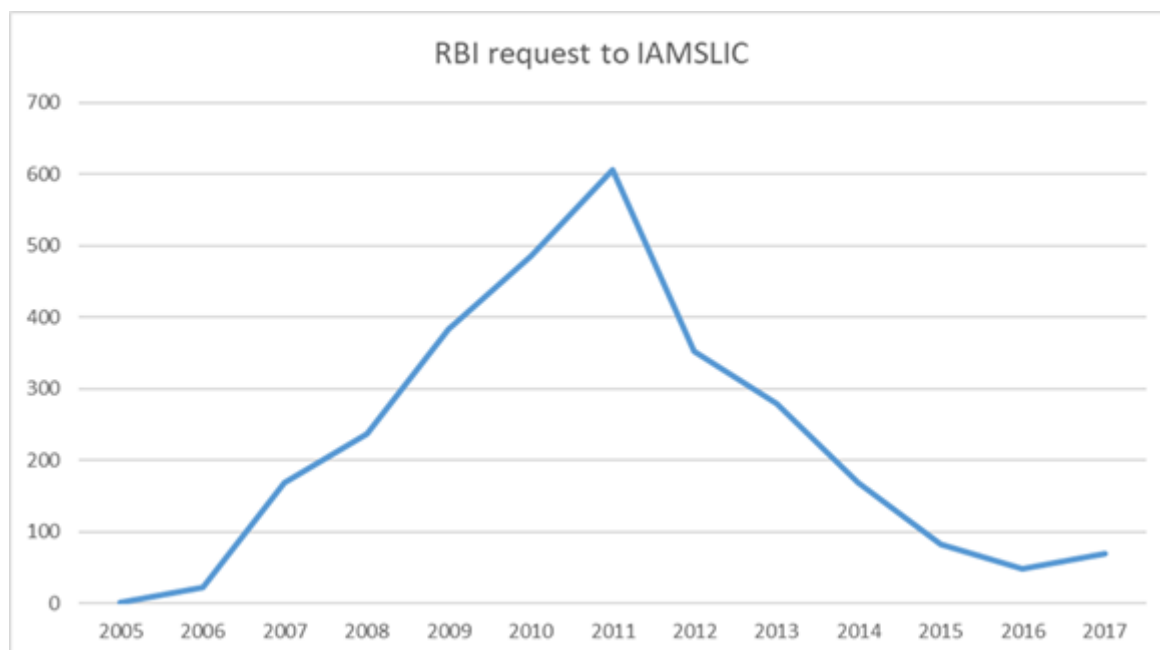
Abstract:

Interlibrary loan (ILL) has always been very important and had its place among other library services. The service enables library to obtain material from other library to its users, or to supply material to another library. Towards the end of 20th century scholarly journal publishing has undergone significant changes by the introduction of e-journals to the market. The other types of library materials followed the trend with its own digital editions (e-books, e-thesis etc.). The academic publishers had monopoly on publishing for years, as a consequence the subscription prices were high, access to e-publication was restricted therefore Open Access initiative emerged as a response. The initiative has been supported by policies of many countries demanding that publicly funded research should be available free of charge to all.

Technological changes increased availability of electronic resources and therefore some authors predicted decrease of interlibrary loan requests (Echeverria and Barredo 2005; Jackson, 2004). While some libraries were facing decrease of ILL requests, at RBI library² in years 2004-2005 ILL requests were at its peak. The number of requests from RBI Library to other libraries (outgoing requests) varied between 800-1000, and the number of received request between 400-600 from 2004-2013. The highest number of outgoing requests was registered in years 2005 (1051), 2011 (1033) and in 2013 (1030). The fulfillment rate is at 80-94%, and the main reasons for cancellation was that items are owned by Centre, and recently more often because additional payment was not approved. Until 2008 obtained items were mostly fee-based (Macan; Konjevic, 2011), while now items obtained free of charge (95%) prevail. Besides increased number of e-resources one of the main reasons behind this was usage of IAMSLIC Z39.50 Distributed Library. IAMSLIC catalogue was introduced to EURASLIC community in 2005 at Split conference. RBI library started to use it modestly at first, and from 2007 quite frequently. For several years RBI library was among main requestors at IAMSLIC Z39.50 Distributed Library.

¹ The slightly modified presentation was presented at Stručni skup Izgradnja, upravljanje i evaluacija zbirki (Collection Development, Management and Evaluation), National and University Library, Zagreb, April 12, 2019

² In 2016 RBI Library was renamed into Centre for Scientific Information.



The requests for article copies dominate among the requests at RBI CSI, so it was expected that proliferation of e-resources will influence the service. From 2014 onward decrease in ILL requests (both outgoing and incoming) is noticed. As probable reasons for this trend, according to our estimation is increased availability of e-documents whether thanks to subscription or thanks to open access, and even to some illegal resources. According to Schöpfel (2014) up to 50 per cent of newly published articles are available free of charge, as now publishers following OA policy usually allow archiving of some version of paper (pre-print, post-print).

Computerization of library operations, technological changes, the appearance of the World Wide Web, proliferation of library material in digital form influenced interlibrary loan services. Nowadays more frequently terms Document delivery (DD) and Resource sharing (RS) are used for the service. Will interlibrary loan continue to exist as special service or it will be integrated in other library services will be revealed in years to come.

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