



France: National INIS Centre: New Directions and Main Achievements in an Evolving Context

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France: National INIS Centre: New Directions and Main Achievements in an Evolving Context



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In a letter dated October 8, 1969 and addressed to the Director General of the IAEA, the French Governor of the IAEA Board of Governors gave his official consent for France to participate in the newborn INIS. At the same time, it was decided to establish the France National INIS Centre at the premises of the Central Documentation Department, located at the Saclay Nuclear Research Centre (French Atomic Energy Commission - CEA), near Paris. Forty-five years later, the Central Documentation has become the "Information Valorization Service" (SVI in French) which incorporates INIS, the CEA-Saclay Scientific Library and several other scientific and technical information-related activities (archives, scientific watch, collaborative work, bibliometric surveys, etc.).



Odile Mouffron is the Alternate INIS Liaison Officer for France. She joined the CEA in 1995 as a subject analyst for INIS within the Information Valorisation Service (SVI) of the CEA-Saclay Research Centre.

INIS-France: workforce versus production

Until 2006, France was also a member of the Energy Technology Data Exchange (ETDE). During the pre-2000 era, the workforce dedicated to both INIS and ETDE input preparation was quite high (Fig. 1). The workflow process was organized so that all bibliographic inputs prepared for the INIS database were simultaneously submitted to ETDE's 'Energy' database. The 'pure' ETDE inputs (corresponding to non-INIS topics) represented about 30% of France's annual production of the period. In 2006, for both budgetary and workforce reduction reasons, France decided to withdraw from the ETDE and to focus its efforts on INIS. Additionally, France took this opportunity to cut down on subcontracting over the following years. However, the gradual decline of the workforce dedicated to this activity — which slowly began in the early 2000s — became more pronounced by 2008. Thus it became necessary for France to subcontract once again and to look for new means of production in order to maintain a good level of coverage and contributions to INIS, comparable to that of the preceding period.

Classical production versus voluntary inputting

A solution emerged during an informal discussion at the 11th INIS/ETDE Joint Technical Meeting (Vienna, November 2007). At that time, the INIS Secretariat was already making extensive use of its Computer-Assisted Indexing (CAI) system for the preparation of tens of thousands of journal article inputs (per year) to the database, using records purchased from big international editors. As indexing was no longer a problem for the Secretariat, their main concern was now access to specific documents, in

particular the conference proceedings, and their bibliographic description. For France, the situation was the other way around: we had many conference proceedings on hand waiting to be processed, with the capability to prepare the bibliographic description of hundreds of articles, but not enough workforce or time to analyze and index each of them. Common ground was immediately found and a new kind of cooperation was born: France would voluntarily submit complete inputs without indexing for some important missing documents and the INIS Secretariat would take over the indexing with the help of the CAI tool. France submitted its first voluntary inputs as early as December 2007, and since then has produced more than 17 730 voluntary inputs, mainly from international nuclear conference proceedings and foreign key-journals. Voluntary inputting has become a regular activity of the French National INIS Centre and now represents, on average, about 40-50% of France's annual production (Fig. 2).

Grey literature digitization and knowledge preservation

During the last ten years, the French INIS Centre has launched several digitization/preservation projects for historical grey literature documents which, in large part, come from the unique collection of reports of the CEA-Saclay Scientific Library. One project worth mentioning was carried out between 2004 and 2007 and involved the active participation of the INIS Secretariat to digitize more than 2760 CEA reports on microfiche (belonging to the 'CEA-R' collection) published between 1948 and 1969, thus covering the pre-INIS era. A second project, initiated last year, concerns the digitization of about 380 selected reports published between 1953 and 1994 in the discontinued

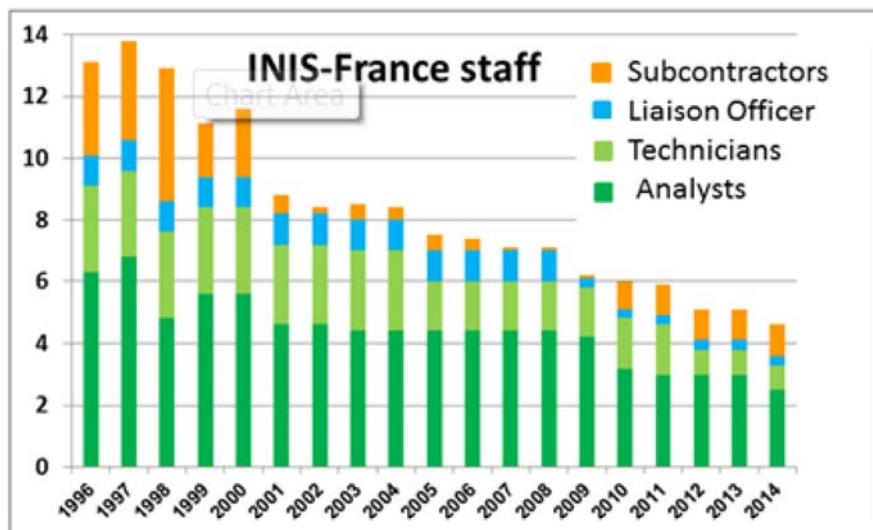


FIG. 1. INIS France: 1996–2014 staff distribution per category

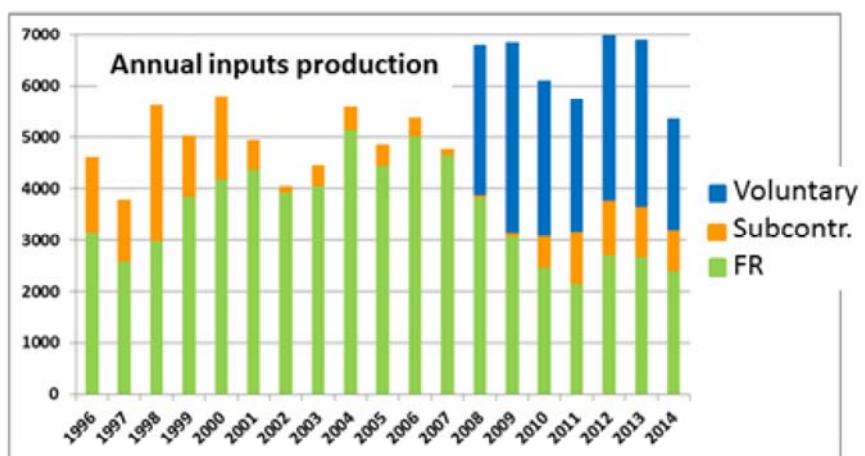


FIG. 2. INIS France: 1996–2014 input production, including all input prepared for ETDE (until 2006) and for OECD/NEA (all years).

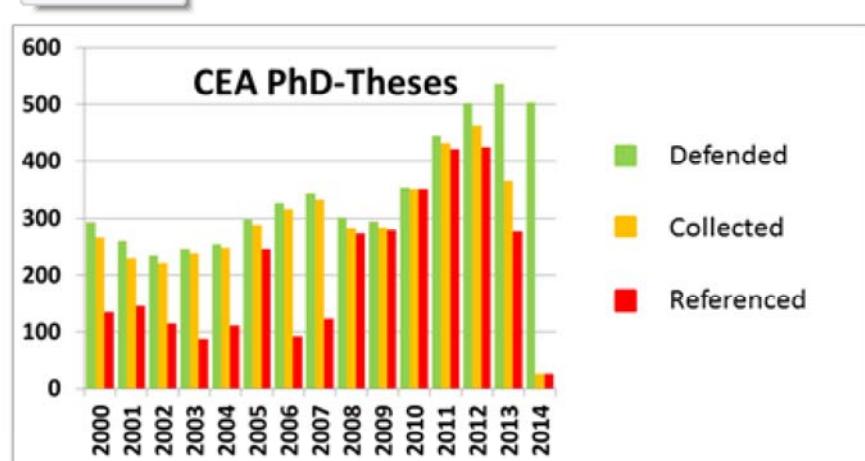


FIG. 3. Number of CEA PhD Theses defended since 2000 with respect to the number of manuscripts already collected and referenced in the CEA PhD Theses database.

collection of CEA's technical notes (the 'CEA-N' collection). This second project will be completed before mid-2015 and all documents will be made available in full text through the INIS Collection. Last but not least, a third project concerns the collection, digitization and preservation of all historical and recent PhD theses prepared at the CEA. A 'CEA PhD Theses database' has been specifically created on the CEA-Saclay Intranet to make the full text of these PhD Theses accessible to all CEA researchers. Among all collected theses, about one third deal with nuclear topics and are consequently referenced in INIS in parallel. This project is bound to be developed since the number of PhD theses prepared at the CEA has dramatically increased in recent years with the number of thesis defenses exceeding 500 (Fig. 3). Such a project requires considerable time and effort, not only to process the documents, but also to retrieve the original manuscripts, since compulsory depositing of PhD Theses has never been implemented at the CEA. For this reason, even in recent years, manuscript collection is never 100% successful.

PhD Theses and promotion of INIS

France participated in the Open Access Pilot Project launched in 2008 which led, the following year, to open access of the INIS database on the Internet. Since then, promoting INIS really started to make sense in order to inform the public at large about the richness of the database resources. Attracting new users is a task we have managed to carry out in two ways: internally, using flyers which, for instance, are made available to the users of the Scientific Library (Fig. 4), and externally, by targeting the university laboratories potentially interested in using INIS. These laboratories are identified thanks to the information recorded in the CEA PhD Theses database. In practice, for each recent CEA thesis referenced in INIS, we address a personalized E-mail to the PhD student and to both his university and CEA supervisors. The text of the message stresses the particular interest of the PhD work for the nuclear sciences and technologies, which is the reason for its referencing in INIS, and provides the direct link to the INIS record describing the document. In this way, for 145 CEA-theses published in 2012 and entered into INIS, more than 400 E-mails were prepared and sent to PhD students and laboratory researchers or managers, representing as many new potential INIS users.

Statistics of INIS usage in France

The indexing of the INIS Collection Search (ICS) by Google.com and Google Scholar search



FIG. 4. Two INIS promotional flyers made available for library users.

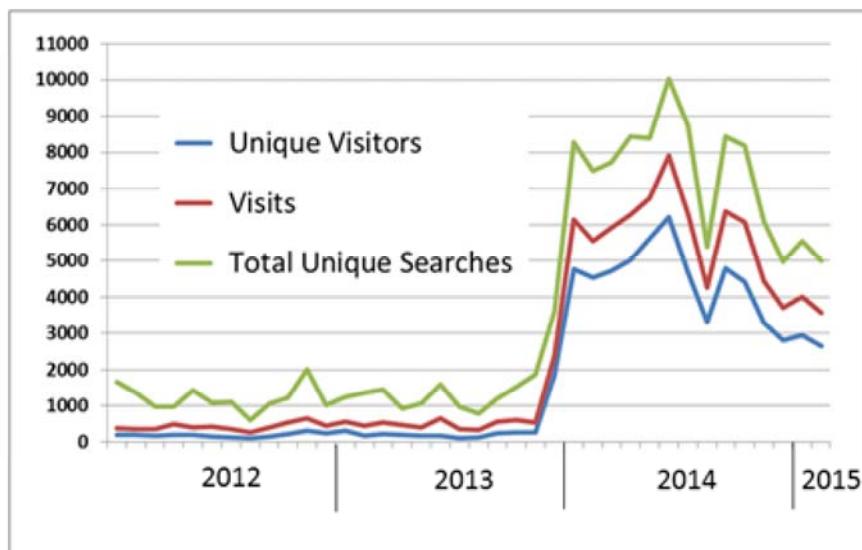


FIG. 5. France- INIS Collection Search Statistics (Jan. 2012–Feb. 2015).

engines at the end of 2013 led to an impressive increase in the number of unique visitors worldwide. A similar result has been observed in France (Fig. 5) with the monthly number of unique visitors oscillating between 2500 and 6000 since January 2014 (monthly average of 4250 visitors compared with the previous years' monthly average of 150–200 visitors). Among those users identified in 2014, CEA is leading with 3726 unique users, followed by Areva (1605 users), the National Nuclear and Particle Physics Institutes (IN2P3 – 1047 users), Electricite de France (EDF – 1036 users) and followed by a huge list of universities and research institutes that highlight the pertinence and efficiency of our promotional actions.

Conclusion

This brief look back over the last 20 years of the France National INIS Centre allows us to measure how far we have come and what choices we have had to make in a constantly evolving context. We have particularly stressed what, in our view, represents the most important mission of INIS, which is the preservation and dissemination of nuclear knowledge, in particular through the coverage and full text archiving of conferences and grey literature documents, with special attention paid to PhD Theses.