

The National Library of Finland

Annual Report 2005-2006

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The Expanding role of the National Library of Finland

The status of the National Library as a national cultural institution for all citizens and a service unit for the Finnish library network will be reinforced in 2006. A new strategy was compiled in 2005 in conjunction with key customers and stakeholders to meet the new challenges. The mission statement of the library describes the different service roles: **“The National Library ensures the availability of the published national heritage in the community. The National Library disseminates and produces information content for the citizens and the community and builds services together with the library network and other actors in the information society.”** The responsibility to safeguard the availability of cultural heritage is common to national libraries in general. The task of developing services in conjunction with the library network, for example, aintenance and development of library systems or national licensing is almost unique.

The status of the National Library as the central service unit of the library network will be confirmed in 2006. When the change of status has taken effect, the National Library will serve university libraries and also polytechnic, special and public libraries. The library network has defined which services will be included in the first stage and the range of services will be expanded in the future. The Library will prioritise the enhancement of services to the libraries as well as measuring their impacts, especially at the beginning of the strategic period. During this strategic period, the Library will also strive to make significant improvements in the quality of local services and digitisation.

The new role of the National Library as a service unit for the library network means several administrative changes in practice. The most visible of them is the change of the name of the organisation. Helsinki University Library – the National Library of Finland will become the National Library of Finland. This underlines the importance of the national responsibilities of the library. The steering mechanism of the library has changed, too. Within the library network, the National Library is the only library running budgetary negotiations directly with the Ministry of Education. Cooperation methods between the library network and the National Library are also under development. The third important administrative development area is the budgetary system. Currently, the

financing system for the library is complicated even though the major part of the funding is allocated by the Ministry of Education. Library will have its own sub-item in the state budget.

The library network has defined the national services it provides and these have been confirmed by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry will provide the National Library with permanent funding to run these services. The specific and demanding task of the National Library is to develop these services to meet the needs of the library network and to provide the network with added value. The services can be grouped into three categories: developing access to high-quality information; developing the digital working environment and developing impact assessment. All these aim in providing researchers, students and citizens relevant information resources in a cost-effective and user-friendly way. The National Library is developing indicators to visualise the impact of the services.

The expanding digitisation co-operation of the Finnish memory institutions is organised by the Library and its Centre for Microfilming and Digitisation / National Digitisation Centre. The directors of the central archives, libraries and museums have committed to the development of the National Digitisation Centre and to the allocation of funding for this purpose. The national digitised resources will enhance research, services for the users and competitiveness. The Centre will further engage in international dialogue and e. g. have the responsibility within Finland for EU projects regarding digital cultural heritage as well as the national co-operation.

International Relations

On the international level the Library is active in a number of fields and is participating in the work of several organisations, including IFLA, CDNL, CENL (chairing the work group of the network standards), ISSN Governing Board, Dublin Core Board of Trustees, Endeavor User Group, European Endeavor User Group, National Libraries Endeavor Advisory Board, Endeavor's European Libraries Advisory Board, Elsevier Library Advisory Board, Nature Library Advisory Board, Springer library Advisory Board, Blackwell Library Advisory Board, SPARC Europe, Project COUNTER, a partner in the consortium of TEL (The European Library), a partner in ICOLC (International Coalition of Library Consortia) and the corresponding European one, partner in the International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC).

In 2005 the Library participated in the following projects, for example: MINERVA – MINISTERIAL NETWORK for Valorising Activities in Digitisation, CoBRA+, Nordic Web Archive NWA. The library is also a partner in ONE Association, Scandinavian Virtual Union Catalogue and in the European Library.

National Library of Finland has been visited and benchmarked for the FinELib solutions, for the active role in promoting libraries cooperation in the country and in digitisation, for the new 'triangle' concept of the library system (Voyager), national information retrieval portal (Metalib/SFX) and DOMS (EnCompass).

In general, the Library has managed to reach its goal to be one of the leading national libraries in Europe.

Funding

The Library's funding for 2005 has improved slightly if compared to that of 2004 but it mainly covers the increasing expenses.

The main part of the development work is still being carried out with the help of externally funded projects. The grant needed for financing the measures required by the revised Legal Deposit Act is included in the Library's regular budget. Additional resources for establishing a National Digitisation Centre has been received from the Ministry of Education and the County Administrative Board of Eastern Finland.

The size of external funding in 2005 was €1,7 million. The sum raised from priced services has increased to €1,9 million. The Library's total budget in 2005 was about €19 million.

The Helsinki University together with the Library founded a Fund for the preservation of the national collections as part of the National Cultural Heritage. The Library runs the Fund. The Library introduced the Save the Book - project that enables both the citizens as well as the companies to take part in preservation the national collections. The project was rewarded as the Book Act of the Year.

The Staff

At present the total number of permanent staff is 213. The total number in staff-years was in 2005 about 252.

All the universities in Finland adopted a new payroll system. The system presumed that also the Library evaluated every member of its staff. Library tried to line a reasonable rate of pay to the information branch.

As part of its strategy for the development of its personnel the Library started a systematic development program of the staff competence. It also included analysing the know-how of all the teams.

The technical basis of the Digital Library Services of Finland

The national Digital Library services of Finland are produced and co-ordinated by the National Library. These services consist of three central modules, all in production: ILMS (Voyager), the Information retrieval portal software (MetaLib/SFX) for accessing remote and local databases and other electronic resources, and the Digital Objects Management System (ENCompass, DSpace). The goal is that these three applications would communicate and work seamlessly together, as well as with other applications, via API's and using open standards.

Libraries do not have local servers for these applications. Instead there are four shared Sun servers, all managed by CSC (Center for Scientific Computing). Both university and polytechnics libraries have their own Voyager server. In addition there are servers for MetaLib and ENCompass.

University librarians have made a decision in 2004 to modernise the Voyager server in 2007. Voyager server modernisation project will also investigate the technical possibility and financial impact of consolidating all or at least some of the present servers.

The Nelli portal based on MetaLib will be in production in most universities, polytechnics and regional public libraries by the end of 2006. Thus, Nelli is a national service available for basically every Finn. It will play a major role in the Finnish information society. MetaLib will be the "one-stop-shop" application to access all kinds of material: the electronic contents and databases licensed by FinELib (the National Electronic Library programme), the Voyager databases and the digital objects stored in ENCompass. MetaLib supports OpenURL, OAI and Z39.50 standards that are essential in linking to heterogeneous material.

For the time being there are no standards for portal metadata, which prevents exchange of such metadata between portal applications. National Library is an active participant in NISO Metasearch Initiative, which among other things is developing metadata elements sets for collection and service descriptions. The university libraries' collection description initiative, Tietokartta (Knowledge map), uses already the future collection description metadata element set standard. The data will be stored into ENCompass.

The third component of the digital library services, the Digital Object Management System ENCompass, went into production in April 2005 when a database containing 4680 published works of the former president Urho Kekkonen was opened for public. From networking and standardisation point of view, ENCompass remains the weakest link of the triangle, and National Library works together with Endeavor to develop these aspects of the application.

The Digital Library

Many present activities of The National Library are geared towards the creation of a digital library. Our new "triangle concept" will provide the technical basis for the Finnish Digital Library. Content to the Digital library will be provided through licensing, e-publishing within the country and large-scale digitisation and work related to the new Legal Deposit Act. FinELib, the National Electronic Library programme, can be taken as an illustrative example of the creation of the digital library. The central financing allocated by the Ministry of Education is today about €4.5 million and the total turnover about €12 million. The Ministry is financing the universities, polytechnics and public libraries centrally. The share of central funding to different sectors varies. At the time of writing 111 institutions have signed a contract with the programme, including all universities, polytechnics, regional public libraries and 38 research institutes.

At present FinELib has purchased licenses to about 21.500 scientific journals, more than 270 databases, 125.000 e-books and a number of reference works and dictionaries in electronic format. The usage of the electronic resources is extensive. FinELib is also carrying out user surveys to analyse user satisfaction. Two master's thesis are ready and four more have been started which exploit this usage information as raw data.

Digitisation

The development of digitisation is carried out in the Library's Centre for Microfilming and Conservation/National Digitisation Centre in the city of Mikkeli, in south-eastern Finland about 230km from Helsinki. The Library has created a permanent digitisation service which has the ability to digitise materials on a large scale. The Ministry of Education and the County Administrative Board of Eastern Finland have provided financing for establishing a National Digitisation Centre. The Centre's activities have an international, national and regional context in the form of partnerships, cooperation and coordination.

Activities

eKAM (electronic libraries, archives, museums) aims at promoting digital cooperation between museums, libraries and archives according to the KULDI (Digitisation of cultural heritage committee appointed by Ministry of Education) strategy, ongoing development in the digitisation of Finnish cultural heritage despite lack of funding and a more effective use of resources. National Library has been coordinating the work from the start. It will form an important part of the activities of the National Digitisation Centre in the future as well. Some eKAM activities have received government funding: the pre-study into a common interface for museum, archive and library material in 2003 and the benchmarking tool Mikaela. Mikaela (www.ekam.fi/mikaela) was launched in May 2006 and National Library / Centre for Microfilming and Conservation is a member in the Michael Plus consortium which has been granted funding from the eTEN programme in 2006. Michael is a project to launch a multilingual online service to enable European cultural heritage to be promoted to a worldwide audiences. National Library is responsible for launching the national Michael portal for museums, archives and libraries and for the liaison with the trans-European service.

On the EU level Finland's goal is to make the European cultural diversity in heritage available digitally on a broad scale, with good quality, cost-effectively, user-friendly and to enhance the understanding of other cultures. Automation of the whole digitisation process and large volumes of digitised text material as well as multilinguality and automation of text converting software also for older text and smaller languages (Finnish, Swedish...) are important steps in the European development.

Projects

The Library was responsible for running the Nordic Historical Newspaper project, TIDEN, launched in October 2001. This was one of the first newspaper digitisation projects in which Gothic text was interpreted by Optical Character Recognition to enable free text search to large newspaper contents in Sweden and Finland. All Finnish newspapers published between 1771 and 1860 have been digitised and the next phase containing copyright-free newspapers until 1890 is underway. In 2005 new workflow processes have been taken into use in National Digitisation Centre. Automation is increasing considerably as well as productivity and the quality of the end product. The digitisation processes are constantly under development.

The National Sound Archive in the Library has launched a joint project with the Finnish Institute of Recorded Sound and the Finnish Broadcasting Corporation. The project is called the Sounds of the Century and its objective is to transfer Finnish sound recordings into a digital format that is suitable for archival use. The database is called Raita. In addition to this the project aims to take care of the long term storage of the digitised recordings and to bring the material to the use of researchers as a service of the National Library. When copyright regulations allow the digitised music will be added as mp3-copies into Raita and is available online.

The mass digitisation of national sound recordings is beginning parallel to Sounds of the Century at National Digitisation Centre as a project (autumn 2005 – spring 2007) and will continue as a permanent function.

Legal deposit

A Proposal for the new Legal Deposit Act was completed in June 2003, with complementary work with Copyright Act. The new Legal Deposit Act would cover a wide variety of electronic resources: electronic publications available on open networks will be archived in the National Library and radio and TV programmes in the Finnish Film Archives. The proposal for the Copyright Act includes regulations for harvesting web materials and for providing access to the collections.

Since June 2003 progress with the Legal Deposit Act has been slow, due to delays in processing of the Copyright Act. As of this writing it is difficult to say when the new Deposit Act will come into force, but this will definitely not happen before 2007. Nevertheless funding from the Ministry of Education has helped the library to continue Web archiving, encourage voluntary e-deposit and design work flows for digital deposit.

There is a common belief that digital publishing will reduce the amount of print publishing. As of yet this is not happening in Finland. Maintaining two parallel systems for traditional and digital publications will be a challenge. One response to this is to automate, if possible, the work flows for digital content. This would not be possible without the triangle (Voyager, MetaLib and ENCompass) and the new functionality it provides.

Acquisitions

The majority, with €12 million, of serial acquisitions are at present carried out centrally via the National Electronic Library Programme, FinELib. As regards acquisitions of traditional library materials, additional funding is received from the University of Helsinki and the conversion of Russia's debt to Finland into licensing of Russian data sources and delivery of Russian publications to Helsinki University Library's extensive Slavic collection. These have helped the library to maintain its collections in spite of meagre acquisition funds. With € 750 000 the library increased its collections with 12,087 monographs (about 10 % more than previous year).

The library has received one of the most valuable gifts of books ever, the private library of professor Heikki A. Reenpää, former managing director of the Finnish publishing house "Otava". "The Reenpää collection", consisting of 25.000 titles, focuses on old Finnish literature. The Finnish fiction is well represented in the gift, the belles lettres being one of the main themes of the publishing house "Otava". The literary substance and the bibliophilic value of the collection are both exceptionally great since professor Reenpää, himself a great Bibliophile and a pre-eminent Finnish collector of books, has always emphasized the material value of books.

The library has received as a deposit a valuable rare book, owned by Sampo Group: Nicolaus de Lyra. Biblia cum postillis (Nürnberg: Anton Koberger, printed 1485-1497). The book is a Commentary book on the Bible. This Commentary is a significant addition into the collections of the Library.

The Collection Mapping Project

The Library coordinates a project launched by The Council for Finnish University Libraries, the so-called "Collection Mapping Project". The project is funded by the Ministry of Education and by the participating libraries. The organization of the project consists of a Steering Group and a network of contact persons in the libraries. The project aims to promote information available on collections in the Finnish university and polytechnic libraries.

The actual work will be done in the libraries, and Helsinki University Library is coordinating the project. HUL is responsible for: user interface, description platform and format.

The aims and benefits of the project are:

- 1) to create collection-level-descriptions of different collections (including resources in all forms: printed, licenced and digitized) in the university libraries.
- 2) to improve the availability of resources nation-wide
- 3) to give information on the best collections and to help to locate them
- 4) to give tools for a nationwide planning of collection management and development

Besides acting as coordinator of the project, Helsinki University Library has started the descriptions of its own collections. So far the most important special collections of the Library have been coded on collection-level (using Dublin-Core metadata). To date also some parts of the National Collection (Fennica) and of the Slavonic Library collections have been coded. The project is still going on.

Preservation and Conservation

Helsinki University Library carried out a condition survey of its National Collection between 2001 and 2004. This random sample survey formed the first stage of a larger survey planned to reach completion in a few years' time. When the project is completed, it is possible to perform more in-depth analyses that will also allow a meaningful international comparison of the results.

The aim of the first stage of the Helsinki Survey was to chart the National Collection from 1810 to 1944. It was during this period that paper made from rags was giving way to more acidic paper made from wood pulp. Acidic groundwood paper "destroys itself" considerably faster than rag paper. Brittle paper is a major problem in the collection. Many other countries have also conducted condition surveys - for example, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the United States (Yale, Stanford) - and the Helsinki Survey is mostly based on the American survey methods developed for the Finnish National Collection.

A condition survey is an effective planning and decision-making tool for the preservation sector. The preservation activities of Helsinki University Library have expanded, and it now has the capacity to respond not only to the preservation needs of the library but also to those of the country's library sector as a whole, for example, through microfilming and digitisation. It is important to know on which areas the preservation activities should be focused to guarantee best possible results.

Urgent action is called for by those book groups, or parts of them, that show damage to the paper, covers or binding and where the degree of damage is above average. This is because brittle paper and low pH will cause further damage to already damaged materials.

Because preservation measures concern a vast number of volumes, more resources are needed - both people and equipment - to realise them. The evaluation on how to implement the Digitisation and Preservation Programme is being made in 2004-2006 jointly by the Library's management and the heads of the Collection, User and Preservation Services. As the condition survey progresses, the results will be evaluated and the Digitisation and Preservation Programme will be expanded to include new groups of materials. Additional surveys will be carried out until all materials that need to be preserved in the long term have been surveyed. In 2004-2005 a survey of the Slavonic collection is being conducted and a random sample-drawing from the collection from the period of the Swedish rule 1488-1810 is being planned.

Due to the results of the survey a grant of 350 000 € was given from the Ministry of Education to the Centre for Microfilming and Conservation/National Digitisation Centre for digitisation and preservation activities in 2004-2006. The most brittle 2000 books and journals in great demand will be digitised and / or microfilmed. Another 98 000 books will be waiting for further funding on the verge of extinction.

Services to Users

The number of library visitors grew 42 % compared to year 2004. The main reason for growth was Library's unique exhibition Treasures and several other events which introduced the library's oldest and most beautiful books to the public.

According to the customer survey services maintained their good quality. A new Nelli-portal was launched to improve information search and use of e-material. The interface of library's customer work stations was renewed and new e-journal work stations were taken to use.

Self service is established as a normal part of library service. 30 % of open collection check-outs were made as self service, and 80 % of renewals via internet. 33 % of all loans were from library's closed stacks and couldn't be checked out as self service but the reservation of the close stacks material via internet is possible, however. This new possibility is widely used as it makes possible to make reservations at home. The use of Fennica-collection --

the national collection - was 4 % of all library use. Most used was research collection for humanities. Of all customers some 70 % was Helsinki University students and teachers.

The supply of digitized material grew as more old Finnish newspapers were offered in the Finnish Historical Newspaper Library. Another interesting new digitized collection is Industrial price lists 1810-1944 which contains some old product catalogues, too. Raita – digitized records in the National Library – database contains digitized copies of Finnish 78 rpm shellac records. 113 of those copies can be listened in mps3-mode in the internet.

Nelli information retrieval portal was taken into use in winter 2004 – 05 and in general Library has remarkably increased the acquisition of e-materials.

The Historical Newspaper Library, launched earlier, has reached large popularity among the researchers with 150 000 users per year. The Historical Newspaper Library, available at <http://digi.lib.helsinki.fi>, will contain 1 000 000 pages in 2006 when it will be ready.

Industrial price lists (<http://digi.lib.helsinki.fi>), belonging to the ephemera collection have been digitised in 2004-2005 and launched in October 2005. The material from 1810-1944 reflects the history of the evolving industrial and everyday life in Finland and contains about 128 000 pages. The multi-faceted and fascinating material is a vast resource for researchers, journalists, designers, teachers and students alike.

The PERI+ service with digitised scholarly journals has been available since 2004 via public libraries and national university data terminals. The Finnish copyright organisation KOPIOSTO has developed a procedure for helping us to solve the copyright issues related to making the material available on the Web, currently about 110 000 pages.