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The National Library of Finland, Country Report (2009-) 2010

1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library.

The new Universities Act became applicable beginning 1 January 2010. Universities were granted the status of a legal person, enabling them to compete with the world´s leading universities on an equal footing. The status of the National Library did not change. The legal and structural changes affect also library services and work division between the libraries and national service providers has to be sharpened.

The Ministry of Education launched a project in 2008 to study how the changes of the network affect library services and how the role of National Library as a service provider could be strengthened. The report - Teaching and research environment 2020 - university and polytechnic libraries into a digital service network - was published in 2009. The committee puts forward a number of aims concerning development, the resources of the libraries and a review of relevant legislation. In particular, the committee stresses the importance of appropriate cooperation between polytechnic and university libraries and of service development in the libraries through closer integration with teaching and research carried out in the framework organisation.

The committee proposed also that the National Library would undertake sole responsibility for all joint library services and that the National Repository Library would be merged with the National Library.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, the National Library has prepared for an international evaluation, which will be carried out in autumn 2010. The evaluation will focus on, among other things, the Library's management, processes and strategic targets. The target of evaluation is a broad service entity – even on a European scale. Its importance to the library network and information society will now be objectively evaluated for the first time. The evaluation panel's development proposals for the Library are of particular interest.

The organisation of the evaluation comprises an evaluation panel, a national steering committee and a secretariat. The Ministry of Education appointed the following persons to the panel: Chair, Wim van Drimmelen, former Director General of National Library of the Netherlands; members, Gunnar Sahlin, Director of National Library of Sweden and Eero Vuorio, Director of Biocenter Finland.

The aim is to evaluate

1. the quality and impact of the National Library services and operations in
terms of information society, the academic community, the library sectors and other clientele

2. the effectiveness of the steering, financing and management of the National Library as part of the University of Helsinki and as an institution performing national duties subject to performance steering by the Ministry of Education

3. the evaluation shall devote special attention to assessing how the present operational entity, strategic choices and organisation of the National Library respond to the challenge of preserving and making available the national cultural heritage and to the challenges of future digital and networked information environments.

The panel´s primary work with site meetings takes place in October 2010. The report will be presented in the beginning of 2011.

The Library's representative is attending the European Commission expert group Member States' Expert Group on Digitisation and Digital Preservation together with the Secretary General of the National Digital Library. The Library's representative is chairing the LIBER Steering Committee on Digitisation and Resource Discovery. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) appointed Kai Ekholm, Director of the National Library, Chair of the FAIFE Committee for the term 2009–2011.

The IFLA 2012 meeting will be held in Finland. The National Library participates in the preparations, which were initiated in 2009.

2. Key facts and figures (size of major collections, number of staff, total operating budget, etc).

The Library was founded in 1640. The National Library of Finland is also the oldest and largest research library in Finland, serving scholars and readers nationwide. Among its internationally important collections are: The Slavonic and East European collections, The Monrepos Manor Library and The A.E.Nordenskiöld Collection.

The National Library of Finland is a service centre for libraries since 2006. The library is an active player in all the national projects mentioned above.

The Library´s Board has made repeated proposals to the University and the Ministry of Education concerning a marked increase in the Library's basic appropriations and especially in the financing for the expenses from facilities. The Board has considered it to be particularly important to ensure sufficient funding for basic duties, such as the maintenance of collections. It has frequently pointed out that the rental fees for the National Library's facilities continue to be raised without a corresponding share being added to funding. As the expenses from facilities continue to rise, the Library is forced to save and cut back on many basic matters.

The State´s supplementary budget granted the National Library €1 450 000 in 2009 and €2 300 000 in 2010 for "stimulus activities", which promote the National Digital Library service entity and content production (cataloguing and digitisation). The funding is a part of economic recovery plan in EU-countries, effort of employing young people. The Library hired 54 people for half a year in 2009 and 60 people for almost a year in 2010.

Facts of 2009:

Size of major collections (in millions of units): 7
Collections: about 110 kilometres
Number of staff (man-year): 256 (with stimulus 336)
Premises: 27 000 m2
Total operating budget: 26 milj. €

Local and interlibrary loans: 500 000
Visits: 190 000
Customers satisfaction: 8.9
Article downloads: 16,3 million (other libraries use of National Library's centralized services)
Digitised pages in a year: 1,6 (millions of pages)
Total amount of digitised pages: almost 4 million
Use of the Library's digitized pages in a year: 6,5 million

3. New developments in creating and building collections.

The National Library's collections were defined to be a notable national research infrastructure in a survey commissioned by the Ministry of Education. Research infrastructure refers, among other things, to an extensive public material collection or archive that is available to high-quality research. The uniqueness of the National Library's collections in the Finnish society, as well as the Library's long-term cooperation with researchers and the academic community made a big impact on the international panel that carried out the survey. The University of Helsinki's research strategy also treats the National Library's collections as a research infrastructure. The importance of the Library's printed collections is likely to increase if the number of libraries decreases nationwide and if their collections are reduced.

The Library published a new collection policy describing the collections, future challenges in collection management and a new acquisition program. The collection policy was completed in cooperation with research community. The acquisition policy conformed libraries mayor subject areas: history and cultural studies, Russian and East-European studies and philosophy.

The National Web Archive was opened for public use the 1st of April 2009. The Web Archive contains 300 million files from the beginning of the year 2006. Finland is the most liberal country in Europe regarding the openness of the Web Archive. The Archive is open for everyone but only in the National Library estate without any telecommunication connections, of course.

The National Library's up-to-date science collection focuses on the fields of history, art studies, Russian and Eastern European studies and philosophy. The acquisition of new resources in these fields is specified in greater detail in the Library's acquisition policy. Over a third of the new acquisitions consisted of scientific research and methodology literature, while magazines accounted for slightly less than a third. The Library acquired online materials in cooperation with the Helsinki University libraries. The National Library's online resources specifically include reference, source and other materials related to the Library's disciplines of focus.

A condition survey of the Slavonic Library, based on statistical methods, was completed in 2009. The survey targeted the Library's monograph collection, magazines and series up to 1950. The number of volumes totalled 124,000. In eleven per cent of the material, the paper was so fragile that the materials should no longer be used. Nearly half of the materials displayed damages from use, such as tears or missing fragments. The survey recommended new encasing for the materials, since their fragility makes them unfit for binding. The Library re-encased some of the materials with special government aid ("restoration aid").

The valuable Polish-Lithuanian Radziwill private library, which had been dispersed across various countries, was included in the UNESCO Memory of the World register in autumn 2009. A part of the library (around 1,200 volumes) belong to the National Library's collection. The collection ended up in Helsinki by the decision of the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences in the 1820s. The National Library now has two collections included in the UNESCO Memory of the World register, the first of them the A.E. Nordenskiöld Collection, which was added to the register in 1997.

Digitisation

The logistics and processes of the Library's digitisation procedures and their tools have been under major development in 2008 – 2009. The National Digital Library initiative and Europeana have been the framework for the extensive processes, tracking tools and metadata built throughout the Library. The metadata development is based on the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS). The Library has acquired a membership in the ALTO Editorial Board in 2009. Co-operation in development has been international and produced remarkable results on the European scale. The Library has launched its preservation policy and accomplished its digitisation policy, which outlines the digitisation programme.

The Library began mass digitization from its own collections in the beginning of 2008. The digitization is made in house. The production of the Digital Historical Newspaper Collection has continued very successfully, and the digitization of the old Finnish journals is ongoing. As special digital collections the library has built the Digital Collection of the Turku Academy Dissertations from 1700th to 1800th century https://oa.doria.fi/handle/10024/50699?locale=len&author= . The first part of the collection is online. Another special digitization project started in the beginning 2009 and continues; the aim is to digitize medieval parchment fragments. The fragment collection contains fragments from about 1 500 different medieval manuscripts. The Fragment-project contains also academic research as well as conservation of the original documents.

The importance of national digital collections is evident as the use of the digitised materials of the National Library rose from 4.75 million page requests to 6.5 million in 2009. The yearly production in 2009 was 1.6 million digitized pages due to additional temporary funding from the Ministry of Education.

4. New developments in providing access to collections.

Accessing digital collections
Digital rights management

A working group consisting of the National Library's experts has worked on the Library's own digital library. The National Digital Library will give customers easy access to the National Library's materials and services. The Digital Library will help the National Library to meet the customers' changing needs and promote electronic access to and availability of materials. The Digital Library gives customers centralised access to the National Library's existing materials and services, including the national collections, print and digital materials, references to the Library's collections and online material reservations.

The National Library builds its digital library in line with national policies. The policies and recommendations of the National Digital Library (see chapter 5) project are of key importance, but policies related to the reform of the library system architecture must also be taken into consideration. The goal is to offer customers fast and convenient channels for seeking and retrieving information. The digital library makes it possible to reach customers who do not use local services.

The Digitisation Policy of the Library states that the use and reuse of digital material should be as free as possible. The Library is creating a metadata profile in order to ensure the access, searchability and long-term preservation of national digital collections. The development is interactive with the National Digital Library.

Negotiations are going on with the national copyright organization to find solutions for licensing copyright material, for instance newspapers and journals, both groups in high demand.

The library is cataloging retrospectively the national collection in order to make it more accessible and also to enable effective mass digitization. The planning of the new platform for digital collections is going on and the results are impending in 2010-2011.

Parchment project
The project on Finnish literature in the Middle Ages studies medieval parchments contained in the National Library's collections and uses them to analyse medieval literary culture in Finland and the routes along which literary material arrived in Finland in the Middle Ages. Working in close cooperation with the project,

the National Library is building a scholarly research database of the fragments, which is also of great international interest.

5. Examples of collaboration between the reporting library and other national collecting institutions

The Ministry of Education has launched the Finnish Digital Library programme over the period of 2008 until May 2011. The Finnish Digital Library initiative is part of the Finnish Information Society strategy for 2007-2015. The aim of the initiative is to develop an efficient service for access to digital resources in libraries, archives and museums as well as to the web services of these organisations, and to develop specifications and recommendations for a national digital long-term preservation system. The specifications and recommendations for the national digital long-term preservation system have been finalised. The Ministry of Education and Culture coordinate the activities of the national digital long-term preservation system until 2015.

The public interface project runs from 2008 until May 2011 and by then a service for a large group of memory organisations should be up and running. Year 2009 was dedicated to the definition of the functional and technical specifications, preparation of the documentation for a tender and organising the tender. An EU-level tender has been carried out during September 2009 - August 2010 to choose the Public interface software. The competitive dialogue tendering process has been used. As part of the process a pilot to test the functionalities of the chosen software will organised. National Library of Finland is responsible of the coordination of the public interface project as well as the permanent maintenance of the service.

The participating organisations range from different kinds of libraries to art museums, science museums, audiovisual archives and other archives. Altogether, there are 35 organisations represented in the programme. The IT infrastructure of libraries, museums and archives will be undergoing a major change due to the initiative. The aim is to improve the efficiency of processes, save costs in digitisation, improve access to information and preserve content in the long term for use in education, research and innovation for the benefit of the country.

The challenges of the public interface project are more political or human than technical in nature. Questions such as " Who is the user and what are the needs of users?, What content can be accessed?, What is the added value of the new system compared to current systems?" have to be answered. The needs of users and, particularly, the entrance of the "Google generation" into universities and other institutions are exerting a powerful influence on the development of library services. Developments in standardisation and IT technology provide libraries and other memory institutions with new tools to react to the new demands.

System architecture for memory organisations was chosen to the roadmap of needed research infrastructures in Finland in 2009. The Finnish Digital Library forms the main part of the system architecture concept. In 2010 a selection process is organised to prioritise the research infrastructures on the roadmap.

Legal deposit and web archiving

Cultural Materials Depositing and Preservation Act, repealing older legislation governing legal deposits, came into force at the beginning of 2008. Among other things, the new Act mandates legal depositing of materials available on the web. The 2006 reform of the Copyright Act already gave the National Library of Finland authority a number of legal mandates requisite for web archiving, but Cultural Materials Act makes it a positive obligation and sets down more detailed regulations.

In April, 2009, the National Library opened the National Library Web Archive for the general public. All members of the public may use the archive, but only in the premises of the National Library. No digital copying of the material is allowed. In the future, a handful of other libraries will be able to offer the same service.

The Library assisted other legal deposit libraries to set up Web archive workstations in 2009 and also provided assistance to the Library of Parliament, which postponed the introduction of workstations to 2010. The materials of the National Audiovisual Archive will be available on legal deposit workstations in 2010.

Web harvesting is developed in cooperation with the International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC) and the Internet Archive. Future tasks in electronic legal deposit collection will include designing submission procedures that supplement harvesting. A submission system for individual electronic monographs has been introduced into customer use and the entry of preliminary information has been developed. A survey of the reception of digital copies corresponding to printed newspapers was completed in 2009, and preparations were made to transfer material on CD-ROMs to safer storage media. A total of 420 electronic publication titles were submitted last year.

The tenet of the Act is that library -initiated web harvesting is the principal method of archiving web materials. If required, the publisher must take steps in order to make harvesting possible. Where harvesting is not applicable, the Library may oblige a web publisher to deposit materials in another manner.

At the moment the archive contains circa 300 million files.