

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA (NLE)

Annual Report 2000/2001

Numerical data as on 1 January 2001:

Collections 3,445,025

Staff 496

Registered users 138,236

Library visits 349,405

Loans 403,167

Administration

At the end of 2000 the NLE carried out its first in-house communication audit in order to evaluate in-house dissemination of information and to find out the most serious bottlenecks. The audit was carried out in the form of a questionnaire. The profound analysis of the results should be ready in spring 2001 and reveal also the attitude of the NLE staff towards their work, the library and its administration.

Funding

State allocations for 2000 were equal to 1999 - 55,982,000 million EEK (ca 3,1 million USD). The revenues earned by the NLE amounted to 5,313,000 EEK. Acquisitions, salaries, investments and IT purchases were budgeted as priority areas. The most serious problem created by insufficient funding was the gap between the requirements necessary and possibilities available for developing information technology. For this purpose the NLE would have required 1,945,000 EEK (to cover 270 workplaces, 80 INNOPAC Integrated Library System licenses and computer network maintenance costs). The corresponding amount provided by the budget was 690,000, making only 35 per cent of the required sum.

Legislation

In 2000 the NLE began to draft amendments for the National Library of Estonia Act. The amendments have already been approved by the National Library Board and will be handed over to the Parliament in autumn 2001. In order to improve the operation of the organisation, the NLE has also worked out a number of new administrative acts, like the statutes of structural units, Conditions of Use of National Library Reading Rooms, Order for Concluding Agreements, etc.

Buildings, renovation

Major renovation projects included the refurbishing of reading rooms in the Fine Arts Information Centre and the small conference hall, the rebuilding of security systems and the installation of new surveillance cameras. The new Information Sciences Reading Room has been opened in March 2001, the new Finnish Reading Room will follow in May.

Information technology and networks

Continual improvements were made to the library system INNOPAC, a new updated version of the system was installed. However, there are still a number of backlogs waiting to be

solved in 2001, among them the translation of the whole system into Estonian, the use of cyrillic in www catalogue.

Retrospective conversion projects followed the planned schedule:

- The retrospective conversion of Estonian books published during 1945-1991 has reached the year 1951; during 2000 the amount of input records was 42,200. The project will end in 2001.
- The retrospective conversion of Estonian books published during 1918-1944 will be finished by the end of 2002. The year 2000 saw the input of nearly 6,500 titles.
- In 2000 the conversion of printed music was started.

The total number of records made in the electronic catalogue in 2000 was 83,958.

In 2000 the NLE worked out the project ERIKA for cataloguing, archiving and preserving electronic publications.

Digital library

The strategic objective of the NLE for the coming years is to reach a new era in providing information services – the digital library. This goal would be achieved through development projects; working groups to launch these projects were established in 2000.

Insufficient funding unfortunately prevented the full development of most projects, thus the project ARES (*Electronic System of Articles*) was continued on a testing level. The project HERMES (*Electronic Preservation of Estonian Humanitary National Memory*) did not start due to the lack of finances for purchasing the necessary hardware and software.

The most notable achievement in this field was the development of software for making in-house databases available in the premises of the National Library and the *Riigikogu* (Parliament) via local network.

Acquisitions

In 2000 the NLE introduced a new system for collection development and formed a corresponding structural unit - Department of Collection Development and Registration which united the National Bibliography Centre, the Foreign Acquisitions Department and the Cataloguing Unit. Under the new system the decisions on purchasing books, databases and other items are made by the information specialists in the relevant subject field who consult with experts in the particular area and take due account of the needs of the corresponding target groups and the tasks of the library.

Alongside with the said Department, another new body was formed in 2000 - the Collection Development Council is responsible for making the basic decisions relating to acquisitions. During 2000 and in the beginning of 2001 the Council has devised the principles of collection development policy and a long-term acquisition plan.

Preservation & Conservation

In 1999 the first stage of the project THULE ended, having identified the state of collections in major Estonian libraries. In 2000 the NLE presented the results of this sub-project to UNESCO and Open Society Institute in Budapest, organised a corresponding seminar and published an overview *The State of the Estonian Book*. At the initiative of the THULE working group the Council for Preservation of National Heritage was formed at the Ministry of Culture, being responsible for the development of preservation strategy, evaluation of conservators and harmonisation of terminology.

The most notable change in work organisation was the incorporation of the Microfilming Unit in the Preservation and Conservation Department. Alongside with the retrospective microfilming of old newspapers the unit started to film the current annual sets of 29 major Estonian newspapers. The NLE also created the register of its microfilms.

Services to Readers

Heated discussions during recent years have led to a decision that from the beginning of 2002 the NLE will set an age limit of 16 years to its readers. This would allow the NLE to focus on offering specialised information and reference services for target groups and to avoid spending its limited financial and human resources on fulfilling the functions of a public library. The NLE has also devised a plan for reorganising reader services. Its first stage will be carried out in summer 2001 and includes the rearranging of the present Main Reading Room by building one half of it into the Reading Room of the Humanities and Social Sciences and retaining the other half as the Main Reading Room with less open shelves and more seating.

The pilot project of the Euro-Telephone service, launched in May 2000, was successful and since last summer the service has been available to the wide public during 8 hours on weekdays. During the rest of the time all questions are recorded by an answering machine and answered as soon as possible.

Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing

From April 2000 to April 2001 the whole Estonia has been celebrating the Year of the Estonian Book, the NLE has participated with a number of exhibitions and publications. One of the highlights of the celebrations was a large exhibition displaying 900 Estonian books published during 1940 to 2000 (from the collections of the NLE and the Estonian Academic Library). Another notable event, organised in collaboration with the Estonian Academic Library and the Tallinn City Archives, was an exhibition of the oldest Estonian books in Tallinn which took place in the town hall. An international binding exhibition *Scripta Manent II* displayed the works of 155 binding artists from 21 countries. The contribution of the NLE also included 18 smaller exhibitions and 5 publications.

In 2000 the NLE organised 333 exhibitions introducing its collections and 56 exhibitions of art, photos, etc. The most outstanding from the latter was called *Treasures from Antiquity. Etruscan and Roman Art and Handicraft from the Berlin Collection of Antiquities* and displayed ancient original exhibits from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.

Two large international conferences were organised during 2000: *Libraries in Open Society* on Slavic and East European collections in libraries worldwide, and *National Bibliography in the Changing Information Environment* treating the topical issues in national bibliography.

Co-operation

The NLE continues to participate in the following international co-operation projects:

GABRIEL

LibEcon2000

Multilingual Dictionary of Library Terminology

EXCEL
