

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA (NLE)

ANNUAL REPORT 1997-1998

Acting Director General: Mrs. Tiiu Valm

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Library staff: 435 (standing of 01.01.1998)

Collections: 3.494,269 (standing of 01.01.1998)

Registered users: 114,900

Library visits in 1997: nearly 607,000

Loans in 1997: over 500,000

Administration

On May 8, 1997 Dr. Ivi Eenmaa, Director General of the National Library of Estonia, was elected Mayor of Tallinn. Subsequent to the decision of the Board of the National Library Mrs. Tiiu Valm, Adviser on Libraries of the Estonian Ministry of Culture, was to assume the role of Acting Director General of the Library for the duration of Dr. Eenmaa's tenure as Mayor.

Legal status

On 19 March 1998 the Estonian Riigikogu (Parliament) passed the new National Library of Estonia Act. The new law provides for the immovables and movables presently belonging to the State and used by NLE to become the property of the Library. The Law also specifies and amends certain issues regarding the administration of NLE. The Board of NLE shall have extended competence to pass decisions regarding the Library. In general the new Law aims at a greater independence of NLE.

Finance and funding

The budget of NLE for 1997 was 45 million EEK (ca 5,62 million DEM), in addition to that the Library earned revenues of 4,45 million EEK (ca 556,2 thousand DEM). The budget for 1998 is 49,74 million EEK (ca 6,21 million DEM) plus planned revenues of 3,7 million EEK (462,5 thousand DEM).

Automation and structural changes

Major issue in automation during 1997-1998 was the testing of INNOPAC, the new integrated

library system. The cataloguing and acquisition modules have already been tested, the next step is the testing of circulation and serials modules. Simultaneously, USMARC training has been provided for the staff and the member libraries of the consortium have agreed on the use of common USMARC fields. The whole preparatory process is being monitored by the NLE Executive Task Force of Library Automation and Technology, consisting of the Acting Director General, Deputy Directors and Chief Specialists of the Library. Preparations to implement the new system included several changes in the organisational chart of the Library as well as in basic work processes. Proceeding from the rearrangement of work, a number of structural units were reorganised and new units established, the latter including Retrospective Conversion Group and Authority Control Department. The changes naturally necessitated the extended training of the staff, the development of technical infrastructure and the continual conversion of existing databases.

Publishing

The number of titles published by NLE in 1997 was 47. The most outstanding among them was an exclusive album RIIGIKOGU (Parliament), covering the history and present day of the Estonian parliament. The album was the first of its kind in Estonia; it was compiled and published in cooperation with the Office of the Riigikogu. Other publications worth mentioning: "30 Years of Book Conservation in the National Library" (celebrating the 30th anniversary of the NLE Preservation and Conservation Department), series of publications on national bibliography (books, printed music, cartography, official publications).

International cooperation

Besides CENL, NLE is presently the member of 11 international organisations: IFLA, CDNL, IALL, ECPRD, LIBER, EIA, SLA, IAML, Bibliotheca Baltica, ICA and IPC.

The 5-year cooperation agreement between NLE and Helsinki University Library regarding the microfilming of old Estonian newspapers is coming to an end. As a result of this joint project, NLE possesses a collection of microfilms, consisting of 1,343 films covering 92 titles of newspapers from 1918-1940.

In 1997-1998 a number of new specialised rooms were opened: the Swiss reading room (rebuilding and redecoration of the reading room partly financed by the Swiss Embassy), the Swedish reading room (renovation financed and equipment and literature furnished by the Swedish Embassy and the Swedish Institute), the Polish corner (with a selection of up-to-date literature and a permanent photo exhibition on Poland furnished by the Polish Embassy). The Internet Centre has expanded the range of services, continuing to offer free access to Internet and some additional services for charge, e.g the use of E-mail and word processing. The starting negotiations regarding Estonia's acceding to the European Union will be reflected in the establishment of a corresponding new information centre - the Information Centre on the European Union which is planned to be opened in May, 1998. Another landmark of the aspirations towards integration into Europe is the planned opening ceremony of the Office of European Integration in NLE building at the end of May.

A cooperation agreement was signed between NLE and the Copenhagen City Library, providing for the exchange of staff. A joint agreement on the cooperation of the National Libraries of the three Baltic states will be reviewed and amended in May.

Public relations

NLE continued to function as a cultural, education and communication centre - 561 events took place in the Library premises during 1997, 37 of them directly related to library world.

Exhibitions covered a wide variety of areas, the total number of displays organised in 1997 was 92, including 48 book exhibitions. Special attention should be drawn to a display arranged twice a year: the exhibition of the Estonian State Decorations. This is a permanent project for NLE; under an agreement signed between the Library and the State Chancellery of the Republic of Estonia, the Library has undertaken the obligation to display the replicas of Estonian State Decorations twice a year to the wide public.

In cooperation with the City Government of Tallinn, NLE established an annual prize for the best modern graphic artist of Estonia. The first prize was festively awarded in March, 1998.

NLE is continually popular among the wide public - the number of registered readers is approaching 115,000. The number of daily visitors varies from 2,000 to over 3,000.