

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA (NLE)

ANNUAL REPORT 1998-1999

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Numerical data as on 1 January 1999:

Library staff: 469

Collections: 3.522,819

Registered users: over 130,000

Library visits in 1998: 563,000

Loans: over 538,000

Administration

After Mrs. Ivi Eenmaa, previous Director General of the NLE, was elected Mayor of Tallinn in 1997, Mrs. Valm acted in the capacity of Acting Director General for nearly one year. On 1 September 1998, the NLE Board appointed Mrs. Tiiu Valm as new Director General.

Subsequent to the elections to the Estonian *Riigikogu* (Parliament) in March 1999, a number of new members were appointed to the NLE Board. The Board also elected a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman: they are Mrs. Sirje Endre, MP, and Mrs. Meeli Veskus, Counsellor of the Ministry of Culture respectively.

Finance and funding

In the 1998 budget approved by the NLE Board expenses exceeded income by EEK 1,2 million. It was due to the salary increase of about 20 per cent, to the rate of pay rise in other

Estonian libraries. The missing amount was covered by a supplementary budget from the Government Reserve Fund.

The NLE budget for 1999 is EEK 60.232,000, including EEK 4.250,000 revenue from priced services. The expenses amount to EEK 61.432,000. The EEK 1.2 million gap is due to the fact that the government supplementary budget allocation for salaries was not taken into account.

IT and new technology

In 1998, most undertakings at the NLE were in one way or another relevant to the ultimate INNOPAC transition, to the use of an integrated library system, which enables to network the data resources of nine major Estonian research libraries. INNOPAC cataloguing started in December and reader services at the turn of the year. The most important databases had been converted into INNOPAC before the system was implemented at the beginning of 1999:

- The Estonian National Bibliography. Books. 1992-1998;
- The Union Catalogue of Foreign Books. 1993-1998;
- The Database of Estonian periodicals. 1994-1998;
- Register of Library Users as on 19 December 1998.

Since January 1999, these databases are accessible via 18 patron terminals. All the employees, users of INNOPAC, attended training courses tailored for their specific needs; they also participated in the system tests.

In 1999, the main effort in IT development will focus on the improvement of library services by installing a sufficient number of client terminals (at least 40), by creating a CD-ROM network and providing access to electronic journals and full-text databases.

At the beginning of 1999, the first changes were made to the library's home page. Besides having a new appearance and structure, it should become more user-friendly and more informative, being the library's "front door" leading to the majority of our databases.

Structural changes and development

During the transition to the use of INNOPAC the NLE devised detailed document flows, the path of publications from acquisition to readers, and made preparations for database-centered information processing. The recently established Authority Control Department is responsible for the classification of documents and cataloguing by subject headings and for monitoring the compliance of authority files with international standards. They also compiled the initial version of the Estonian Universal Thesaurus which was published at the beginning of 1999. There is a new Catalogue Group for the management of old card catalogues, where the number of new entries will gradually fall, proportionally to the growth of the on-line catalogue.

In addition to the founding of the Authority Control Department, National Bibliography Centre and EU Information Centre, the acquisition of documents and their processing were merged. Everything concerning foreign publications is now done by the Foreign Acquisitions and Exchange Department, the National Bibliography Centre takes care of our national imprint, and the Fine Arts Information Centre deals with sheet music, sound recordings, maps and items of graphic art. Each of them has its own acquisition budget and thus the overall planning has been simplified.

Research

Remarkable results were achieved in the field of rare books. Some studies focused on the problems of provenance of the Rare Book Department and on the methodology of attributing, others on the study of New Testament editions in the 16th century and editions of the 17th and 18th century Bible.

The study conducted in the NLE collection of rare music detected items of rare printed music and original works. An expert study was made of the 18th century music manuscripts.

National bibliography and other reference tools

From 1999 on national bibliography will be published in four parts. There is going to be

- a monthly edition and a yearly list of *Books*
- a yearly edition of *Serials*
- a yearly edition of *Estonian Official Publications*
- a yearly list of *Music*.

Estonica and cartographic items are entered in the yearly edition of *Books*.

As the cost of printing keeps increasing and the number of Internet users growing, it has become feasible to provide access to *New Music Acquisitions* and *New Acquisitions on Art* only electronically, on the NLE homepage. This is also the site for annotated lists of new acquisitions in the area of law, politics, economics, for the bibliography of acquisitions in library and information sciences, and for the list *New Estonian Books*.

The above-mentioned four parts of the current national bibliography continue in hard copy as well as two special bibliographies - *Bibliographia iuridica Estonica* and *The Bibliography of Library and Information Sciences*.

Services

The PHARE funding helped to establish The European Union Information Centre with a reading room for twenty. The Centre has to raise the awareness of the Estonian public on EU issues. It provides information for the Parliament, for the public sector and supplies regional information centres with EU materials. In 1999, the reading room is to be furnished with terminals that enable clients to search EU databases on their own. There are plans to start the so-called Euro-Telephone Service to deal with short inquiries on the EU from all over the country.

In 1998, the equipment in the Swedish Reading Room was upgraded. Now the NLE houses also the Latin-American Reading Room, with the collection of publications mostly from Venezuela. There are plans to supplement it with materials from other Latin-American countries.

In order to improve the services provision for professionals in library and information sciences the NLE opened a reference room with a specialised open access collection of more than 1,200 items and with access to a number of databases.

Cooperation

The project to microfilm Estonian newspapers published between 1918-1945, undertaken jointly with Helsinki University Library, ended in 1998. In order to carry on with this work on its own, the NLE bought the camera belonging to Helsinki University. To minimise the project cost and to increase efficiency, the major Estonian libraries and archives set up a task force. As a result, there are plans to establish an archive of microfilms of Estonian periodicals. Work on Soviet periodicals is to start in 1999, alongside with technical preparations for the conversion of these microfilms into electronic format.

Material on the items representing the collection of the NLE was prepared for the exhibition *Treasures of European National Libraries*, which is displayed on-line, on the GABRIEL homepage.

At the end of 1998, the NLE signed the amended cooperation agreement between the national libraries of the Baltic countries, providing for the exchange of information, materials and staff. A similar agreement on staff exchange was signed with the National Library of the Czech Republic in 1999.

Exhibitions

The NLE housed 298 exhibitions in 1998: 254 on the NLE collections, 15 art exhibitions, 14 photo exhibitions and 15 other exhibitions in a variety of other fields. Major exhibition projects: 80 Years of Estonian Libraries, Estonian Republic 80, National Library of Estonia 80.

Publications

The number of the NLE publications fell in 1998 because an increasing number of these materials is available on-line. Consequently the earnings from sales fell too. Our goal is to boost the sale of bibliographic databases while providing all basic services to our users free of charge. The number of print editions amounted to 34 titles in 1998.

Major celebrations and events

On 21 December 1998, the NLE celebrated its 80th anniversary. The Nation and the Library were the two discussion topics at the conference held on this occasion. The papers dealt with the changed role of the NLE and with the trends of information development in our community.

In 1998 the NLE reinstated its Learned Council. The Council will start a research project on the library performance evaluation, a study on target population services and a study on quality of services. The users of music and fine arts materials will make up the first target group to be studied.