Helsinki University Library

The National Library of Finland

Annual Report 2001-2002

Helsinki University Library. The National Library of Finland

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Management of the Library

Professor Esko Häkli, the national librarian of Finland for 25 years, retired in November 2001. During his distinguished career the library has become the key player in the Finnish library community. Professor Häkli was also very active in the international arena and created contacts which have enabled the library to participate in international projects.

The new national librarian since 1. February 2002 is Doctor Kai Ekholm, who has previously held the position of the Director of the Jyväskylä university library.

During 2001, the library's internal organisation has not undergone any major changes. Also the library's position as regards the Helsinki University is still the same; there are no plans to separate the library from the university. The current organisation has enabled the library to provide efficient services to other libraries and selected target groups beyond the library community. The aims specified in the National Library Strategy and its sub-strategies have been reached well.

Ministry of Education continues the investigation of how to extend the library's activities to polytechnics and public libraries and possibly even beyond the library sphere by setting

up a working group. The library's role as a metadata knowledge centre has produced a great demand for consultancy and education services.

Handling of Electronic Publications and Formats, including New Legislation

Harvesting of the Finnish Web space, which started in April 2001, reached an important milestone in March 2002, when harvesting of the root domain *.fi was finished. The result was 9.4 million files from 29 million locations (URLs). The size of the archive is 340 GB, and it is located on the tape robot of the Center for Scientific Computing (CSC). The same storage system also contains the Finnish climate data for the last decades.

Harvesting took one year because extensive usage revealed problems in the harvester application. The present version, published in October 2001, is very reliable and does not need a large server to function well (we used a work station from Sun Microsystems). Other reason for delay was that we did not have a complete list of domains within the .fi root domain; once such a list was obtained from a Finnish portal company InfoCenter Finland, was it possible to harvest basically everything that current technology allows.

The next step is harvesting of Finnish pages from other root domains such as .com or .org. This will also be done by the server list received from InfoCenter Finland. Based on the results from Sweden we expect these domains to contain approximately 3-4 million unique Finnish pages.

The Nordic national libraries NWA (Nordic Web Archive; http://nwa.nb.no) project, which is financed mainly by the NORDUNET 2 programme, is as of this developing an access module to the web archive, using a search engine built by the Norwegian company FAST. Denmark, Iceland, and Norway are also using the same harvester as Finland, which simplifies the task of building the user interface to the archived materials.

In connection with the work of the CENL Working Group on Networking Standards two Internet standards have been prepared. RFC 3188, published in October 2001, registers a URN namespace identifier "NBN" for National Bibliography Numbers and describes how NBNs can be used as Uniform Resource Names. RFC 3187, also published in October, contains the same information for ISBNs. There is also an Internet draft, which describes usage of Serial Item and Contribution Identifiers (SICIs) as URNs. This draft has not yet been approved by the Internet Engineering Task Force.

The scope of the CENL working group has been broadened substantially, since more networking standards have emerged. Z39.50 International Next Generation, OpenURL and Open Archive Initiative are but the most prominent ones of these. More information about the drafts can be found on the Working Group's homepage: http://www.lib.helsinki.fi/cenlwg/

The Library is seeing the standardization of metadata as one of its strategic tasks and is, therefore, actively developing standards and promoting their use in the society also outside libraries. Dublin Core has been published as a national standard, shortly after ANSI/NISO published Dublin Core as a national standard in the U.S.A. An extended version of the Finnish Dublin Core was published for description of the government publications. In order to foster and unify subject cataloguing, all subject headings list

maintained by the Helsinki University Library (Finnish General Subject Headings List in Finnish and Swedish, plus subject headings for music, also both available in the two domestic languages) are now available for free for the Internet users (see http://vesa.lib.helsinki.fi/).

Funding

The structure of the Library's funding has been explained in the report of 1999-2000. A reduction of 5 per cent in the Library's basic national library grant for the year 2001 was made, but this cut was alleviated by additional funding received late 2001 for acquisition of materials. The funding for 2002 is slightly improved from 2001.

The main part of the development work is still being carried out with the help of externally funded projects, although the library has been able to hire more development staff due to internal restructuring. Grants have been received from the Ministry of Education, the European Union, Nordunet2 initiative and NORDINFO. The grant needed for financing the measures required by the revised Legal Deposit Act has been included in the Library's regular budget in 2001, and this funding continues in 2002. Additional resources for establishing a National Digitisation Centre has been received from the Ministry of Education.

The size of the external funding in 2001 was approximately 1 million €. A similar sum was earned from charged services. The Library's total budget in 2001 was almost 16 and in 2002 17 million Euro.

The Staff

The total number of permanent positions is now 179 with an increase of 7 positions compared to the year before. In addition to vacancies, which now have been filled, a number of temporary posts have been changed to permanent ones due to the legal stipulations. If tasks have proved to be of permanent nature it is not allowed to use temporary staff to take care of them. The third reason has been the necessity to strengthen the IT staff. The total number of the working years are about 220.

Training of staff has been particularly active, due to implementation of the new library system, Voyager, and preparation to the legal deposit of electronic resources.

Information Technology and Networks

During Summer 2001, all libraries in the LINNEA2 consortium moved into the new integrated library system, Voyager. Given the large size of the project – 26 databases were involved – the system change went very well; the planned schedule did not slip at all for the library databases.

In at least two respects LINNEA2 was unique in the European scale. First, in all 30 million records were converted from FINMARC to MARC21-Fin, a Finnish variant of MARC21. The conversion was done in the Helsinki University Library, using the UseMARCON software. In spite of some technical problems UseMARCON performed extremely well; conversion was done with no loss of data. Second, LINNEA2 libraries

consolidated their systems from 17 HP3000 servers to a single Sun E10000 server, located in the Center for Scientific Computing. The capacity estimates of the new system have proved to be accurate; the E10000 system, whose nickname is Sanni, is able to serve the present users without problems.

As a result of the server consolidation, the university libraries save approximately 250.000 € in a year in server support costs paid to the hardware vendor. Moreover, server maintenance requires approximately 2-3 man years less staff annually. The quality of service has been good, and due to the reliability of the Finnish Universities and Research Network, FUNET, the usability of the system has been excellent.

Although all libraries are already using Voyager in their OPACs, some functions are still missing. The union catalogue Linda and other Linnea databases have been available for searching since January 2002, but Linda is as of this writing not used for copy cataloguing and no updates have been done to the database yet. Adding links from Linda to the holdings information in OPACs has proved to be a complicated process.

In addition to Voyager, LINNEA libraries are using Bookwhere Z39.50 client in order to maximise the efficiency of copy cataloguing. At present, major share of foreign acquisitions can be copy catalogued using freely available sources such as the Library of Congress. Copied records are converted to appropriate format and character set with UseMARCON. During Spring 2002 libraries are testing OCLC's WorldCat database in order to see how much the extent of copy cataloguing can be broadened with it. Preliminary results are very encouraging; WorldCat contains a lot of records not available from elsewhere.

Another initiative which will simplify copy cataloguing is Scandinavian Virtual Union Catalogue. In this project, union catalogue hosts in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have agreed to make their databases available for free, in return to access to all other databases. Thus the libraries who participate in production of Linda can now access for free the Danbib database, which is a for-fee service. In the same vein, Danbib libraries can use Linda and Manda (our union catalogue of the regional central public libraries) with no cost. Initially SVUC includes information retrieval and copy cataloguing, but our aim is to expand the service to ILL and document delivery in the future. As ILL support will be available in the next version of Voyager, the SVUC plans are very appropriate for us.

 In the area of database production there were two important initiatives. As planned, the retrospective conversion of the national discography, Viola, was finished in September 2001. The database contained in April 2002 more than 500.000 records, substantial increase from just 300.000 records one year ago. The national article index, Arto, now contains more than 700.000 records from more than 1000 serials as a result of a successful, although rather complicated, retrospective conversion of all records from the old KATI article index. Moreover, 7500 articles digitised in the Elektra project are now linked to Arto.

All Linnea databases and Elektra articles have been licensed to all Finnish public libraries, polytechnics and universities with three license contracts funded primarily by the Ministry

of Education. These licenses have caused drastic growth in usage of these resources; a good proof that the Internet has not made high quality information services redundant.

The Digital Library

Many present activities of the Helsinki University Library are leading towards creation of a digital library. The most obvious example of this is the National Electronic Library Programme (FinELib), which the National Library is responsible for. Large-scale digitisation and work related to the new act on legal deposit are also cornerstones of our present digital library activities.

FinELib has made a lot of progress during year 2001. Although only universities can receive shared financing out of the budget of the Programme, FinELib has become a truly national scheme. As of this writing 101 institutions have signed a contract with the Programme, including all universities, polytechnics, regional public libraries and several research institutes. The Ministry of Education has granted money so that the Library has been able to hire new staff members for the growing needs of the expanding activities.

At present licenses to about 8.000 scientific trade journals, more than 100 databases as well as a number of reference works and dictionaries in electronic form have been purchased. Some of the licenses are truly national to their coverage. Negotiations with additional publishers were very successful and as of this writing there is less demand to negotiate ever new licenses; on the other hand, there are growing needs to re-negotiate old licenses, which are about to expire.

The work on a common search portal for all electronic services has still not led to the choice of the application. Portal selection has proved out to be a complicated process because we are shooting at a moving target. The portals available now are very different from those available in 1999. For instance, support for OpenURL and Open Archives Initiative protocols has emerged only lately, but it is obvious that e.g. OpenURL support is a must in a modern portal application. As a result of this development, portal now occupies a much more central role in the libraries' information system and we need to evaluate its links to other systems such as OPACs and union catalogues more carefully.

An interesting aspect of FinELib is that it is a good example of information technology changing libraries' work in a fundamental way. Acquisition of serials used to be local activity, which required a lot of local tasks, such as selection, acquisition, cataloguing, serials control and routing. Now, all these functions have vanished from the local level. Selection is done in expert working groups, acquisition and cataloguing centrally by FinELib. And there is no need for serials control or routing any more, and the customers do not need to visit the library any more to access the information. There is little doubt that similar change will eventually affect also monographs. So, even if our mission remains the same, the actual tasks have been revolutionised in a few years.

More information about the National Electronic Library Programme can be found on its homepage: http://www.lib.helsinki.fi/finelib/english/index.html.

The development of the digitisation has been concentrated in the Library's Centre for Microfilming and Conservation in Mikkeli in South-Eastern Finland. The Library has

been partly successful in creating a permanent digitisation service which could can digitise materials on a large scale. Financing has been provided by the Ministry of Education.

The work of the Mikkeli Centre has been focused on digitising newspapers and periodicals. The Library leads the Nordic project TIDEN and its own domestic project AURORA. At present the 39 out of 44 Finnish newspapers published between 1771-1860 have been digitised and OCR-converted into text. In March 2002 The Finnish Historical Newspaper Library, available at http://digi.lib.helsinki.fi, contained 116.000 pages of data. It has rapidly become a very popular service. The user is able to make full text searches and also use a newspaper index which has been digitised in the project. Although all page images are converted to text for search purposes the user will receive the facsimile of the original on the display. Since the OCR process has proved to be difficult for the old materials, we decided to use Excalibur search engine which supports fuzzy searching. This has rendered search results bearable even if the source data contains a fair amount of OCR errors.

The aim is to continue the newspaper digitisation until 1890, where the work, so far, for copyright reasons has to stop unless a suitable model for solving the copyright issues can be found.

The project PERI+, which is digitising a number of scholarly journals, has digitised thousands of pages from these journals. The Finnish collecting agency KOPIOSTO has developed a procedure which will help us solve the copyright issues related to making the material available in the Web. At present, the plan is to make the service available towards the end of 2002.

The Library maintains the database E-thesis containing the University's electronic publications, primarily dissertations. Approximately half of the all dissertations published annually are made available via E-thesis (http://ethesis.helsinki.fi). There are plans to extend the service so that it will contain at least on abstract of each dissertation, and a choice of other publications.

Digitisation

The Helsinki University Library is moving from digitisation projects to programmes. During the Historical Newspaper Project the database, workflow and access were built in a digital library perspective. As our library has experience from other large projects as well it is time to shift away from short-term thinking to ongoing planning, to encompass the whole variety of the digital cultural heritage library, including selection, access and preservation in a long-term perspective. This will of course in time result in a digitisation policy.

Helsinki University Library is also coordinating a digitisation program for the research and public libraries in Finland. The Library was nominated coordinator in 2001, by the Digital working group for the Cultural Heritage nominated by the Ministry of Education. The coordinator has established a framework for the digitisation program based on a digitisation survey made to the libraries in early autumn 2001. Technical and special collections expert groups have been established. As the digitisation program is completed, it will result in a broad understanding of the national digital heritage to be available on the

web and of needed technical solutions. As the digital program is established on a voluntary base, libraries are of course able to perform digitisation projects of their own.

Legal deposit

After the publication of the proposal to the revision of the Legal Deposit Act, which was reported already in last year's report, further steps had to wait for the EU directive on copyright. Once the directive was published, the final round of work was launched. The aim was to revise both legal deposit legislation and the national copyright regulations in parallel. Unfortunately it seems that only the copyright act will be revised during 2002 as this is dictated by the directive; the new act on legal deposit will most likely be set in force in January 2004.

The Library will continue, with project funding from the Ministry of Education, to create methods and solutions for handling the legal deposit of electronic publications. After the Web archive is completed, the next technical step will be development of a process for electronic newspapers. In more traditional vein, a number of new staff members have been hired for cataloguing of electronic resources. Our preferences include hand-held materials such as CD ROMs, network serials, and dissertations and other publications from the universities.

Acquisitions

Major share, with 3 million Euro, of the serial acquisitions are at present carried out centrally via the National Electronic Library Programme. As regards acquisitions of traditional library materials, additional funding from the Helsinki university and conversion of the Russia's debt to Finland into licensing of Russian data sources and delivery of Russian publications to the Helsinki University Library's extensive Slavic collection has helped the library to maintain its collections in spite of meagre acquisition funds. With one million Euro the library increased it´s collections with 15 000 monographs and 2 000 periodicals.

Preservation and Conservation

During the last few years a model for a condition survey has been worked out for our Library. The survey is primarily based on the famous surveys planned almost two decades ago in the University Libraries in Stanford and Yale. Of course other surveys are also familiar like the ones made in Hague and in Uppsala. There is still condition surveys going on in libraries, some on a regular bases like in the Netherlands and collection specific surveys like the ones in Harward University in USA.

There are two main aims of our survey. One is to point out the condition of the national and special collections internationally, for our politicians and our main public. Finnish television has already been interested in the survey and it was presented in the news in 2002 as well as in the largest newspaper in Finland in autumn 2001. The other aim is to get a deep understanding of the condition for the very specific collections in our library. That is why a stratified sample of research disciplines and other specific collections is carried out. As a result we will be able to see the kind of damage caused and direct

treatments on the bases of the survey. These results will of course be linked to our preservation and digitisation programs.

A specialist in statistics has planned the survey. A program for collecting the data has been worked out. To this day the research disciplines of the National Collection 1810-1944 has been treated and the statistical analyses will be made during autumn 2002. The survey will continue for at least two more years.

Services to Readers

After the move of the collections into the new underground stacks was completed in early 2001 the library has been able to streamline the operations. A book transportation system, TELELIFT, is in operation and any material can be delivered to customers in just two hours. This is a major improvement to the previous situation in which the collections were dispersed all over Helsinki, and the customers often had to wait until the next day to get the material they had ordered. In order to improve the services even further, an enlargement of the library's open access collection to about 450.000 volumes has been carried out. The organisation of these collections has progressed well during 2001, although the work is not quite finished yet. In spite of the increased accessibility also the security of the collections has been improved especially via new usage principles for old and / or rare materials. The library will work close to other libraries and security officers concerning the criminality.

The library´s intentien is to improve it´s reader services even more suitable for researchers and at the same time to offer an increasing part of it´s services to be used from it´s web-sides.

In spite of moving into the new library system the library was open the whole time and the loans increased by 27%.

Cultural Events, Exhibitions and Publishing

The library arranged 14 exhibitions with other culture institutions. The major event was perhaps the waste programs of "A Hundred Years for the Finnish Gramophone Record" . The exhibition and other events got a good publicity. Several writer meetings and series of public lectures were arranged. International seminars like Seminar on Long-term Preservation of Electronic Documents and Digital Future in the National Libraries were also arranged. The library has also arranged several public concerts and a grand ball.

The library has started in 2002 a new cultural program with which it aims to increase the cultural effectiveness and to get new partners.

The library´s major publications during 2001-2002 are Ex Insula Lux, a book of medieval saints, Res Publica Litteraria, a book in honour of professor and historian Matti Klinge and Bibliotheca Academica, a book about the Helsinki University Library.

Library Co-operation

The Library's mission is to promote co-operation between Finnish libraries. In other words, co-operation is not only a goal for the Library but also a working method. Therefore, the main part of the items belonging under this heading has been described already above.

On the national level the Library has established co-operation also with organizations outside the library world, such as publishers, newspaper publishers, the Finnish Broadcasting Company etc.

On the international level the Library is active in a number of fields and participates in the work of several organizations. The Library participated in 2001 e.g. in the following projects: CoBRA+, Nordic Metadata II, Nordic Web Archive NWA, ONE-2, Scandinavian Virtual Union Catalogue, and The European Library TEL.

On behalf of CENL the Library chairs the Working Group on network standards (URN, Z39.50, OpenURL, OAI etc.).