

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA

Annual Report 2001/2002

Numerical data as on 1 January 2002:

Collections	3,447,039
Staff	495
Registered users	40492
Library visits	309,278
Loans	334,812

Funding

The state allocations for 2001 amounted to 62,3 million EEK (ca 3,98 million EUR), increasing by 8% in comparison with the budget of 2000. The additional sum made it possible to increase salaries, to renovate the Humanities Reading Room and to purchase databases. The amount of revenues earned by the library was 6,847,983 EEK (437,850 EUR), forming 10% of the overall budget. Targeted funding amounted to nearly 300,000 EUR, aimed to support various training and preservation projects as well as the organisation of events on national or international level.

Buildings, Renovation

The most notable achievement was the renovation of the Humanities Reading Room. Another undertaking worth mentioning was the rebuilding of the microfilming laboratory and dry processing and wet processing rooms for paper in the Conservation Department. The overall capacity for building and renovation work diminished due to an increase in the cost of electricity and building materials.

Plans for 2002 include the renovation of the Social Sciences Reading Room and the purchase of technological equipment for the conservation laboratory of the Conservation Department. The NLE has also received permission to take a loan for renovating the stackrooms.

Information technology and networks

The NLE launched CIP-cataloguing which is linked with the ISBN number.

The library also compiled a programme for converting records in MARC-format into ISSN records. The latter are now forwarded to the international ISSN centre electronically.

The budget for 2001 imposed a saving policy on the NLE, excluding planned investments in information technology. The technological basis of the library is aging, nearly 50% of all PCs date from 1995-1997. In this situation the NLE saw its major task in maintaining the technological infrastructure on the existing level, thus ensuring the smooth operation of the networks. The most notable IT-related developments were the purchase of a new server (financed by the ELNET Consortium which unites 11 major Estonian research libraries) and the building of a new room for servers with independent security system as well as air-conditioning and air-cleaning systems. The NLE also renovated a classroom for computer training which can now seat 12.

Plans for 2002 include the implementation of the acquisition module of MILLENNIUM, the new web-based version of the library system INNOPAC, in co-operation with the ELNET Consortium. The main problem lies in the necessity of retaining the existing level of infrastructure. The library's budget contains only one third of the money necessary for replacing 20% of the existing PCs and paying the annual fees for software licences. The library's experts predict that if the current funding policy continues, the library will only be able to ensure the smooth functioning of its computer network in 2002, while 2003 may bring along major failures.

Standardisation

The NLE started to prepare the enforcement of international library standards as Estonian national standards. The first stage includes the translation of the documents.

The digital library

The working group responsible for the development of the library's home page designed a new structure for the web page. A new link was added - that of a digital library providing access to the digitised collections and electronic publications of the NLE as well as Estonian on-line publications. Old maps of Livonia and other digitised examples of the NLE travelling exhibitions can also be accessed via the library's home page.

In 2001 the NLE launched a digital library project "Subject Gateway" which aims at systematising web-pages, free and paid-for databases and on-line publications in the field of the humanities and social sciences. The first stage of the project has been completed - collection and harmonisation of material, building of a search engine and the testing of software. The next stage covers the input and indexing of the material collected. The project requires no additional resources as it is based on free software and carried out by existing staff members.

Services to readers

In 2001 the NLE changed its user regulations, providing for the admission of readers from the age of 16. The previous regulations did not specify an age limit for users. The change resulted from the notably improved services offered for children by public libraries in Tallinn.

Younger children can get a library card with a corresponding written request from a parent. The NLE continued to follow the principles of specialised reader services, renovating and opening the new Humanities Reading Room and the Information Sciences Reading Room, and reorganising the Social Sciences Reading Room. Besides providing print documents in the relevant fields, all those reading rooms offer a complex of information services including databases, reference services, thematical book exhibitions and information days introducing the corresponding information resources available to the users.

The users now enjoy the possibility to order documents via the on-line catalogue, enabling them to save time by pre-ordering the desired item before coming to the library and collecting it.

Acquisitions

Acquisition resources were divided as follows: 24% on the purchase of electronic databases, 40% on books, 36% on periodicals. The proportion spent on electronic carriers increased by 14% in comparison with 2000. The NLE continued to follow its collection development principles by terminating the purchase of documents on the sciences and natural sciences and reducing the amount of exchanged literature in favour of purchases.

Preservation and conservation

Work in this area focuses on 3 main tasks:

- the improvement of the preservation conditions of documents
- the mending, conservation and restoration of documents
- the making of preservation copies and user copies of documents

Most preservation copies are in the form of microfilms while the majority of user copies are on paper.

Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing

In 2001 the NLE hosted 70 exhibitions and 20 international co-operation projects. The most notable among these were an exhibition of Estonian graphic art from 1998 to 2001, awarding

prizes for lifelong work and young artist, and an exhibition displaying the Bible in different languages. The NLE continued its co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in sending travelling exhibitions to other countries, in 2001 they were displayed in Prague, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Stockholm, Madrid, Strasbourg, Paris, Vilnius. The NLE has launched a series of exhibitions introducing Estonian publishers and their production; another major project has been an exhibition introducing the Estonian national epic "Kalevipoeg" which will be displayed until the beginning of 2003.

The publication activities of the NLE were successful, producing 25% more revenue than initially planned. An undertaking worth mentioning was the digitisation of 37 old maps of Livonia from 16-18 centuries which were represented in the library's calendar of 2002 and published as a set of reprints.

Co-operation

At present the NLE participates in the following international projects:

- GABRIEL
- LibEcon2000
- Multilingual Dictionary of Library Terminology (a project led by Slovenia and involving the libraries of more than 10 European countries)
- PubliCA
- EXCEL