



Estonia

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Boundary fence and gate of Alatskivi Castle 19th century
Tartu County, Alatskivi commune, Alatskivi population centre
KM Reg. No 7159
Orig. CC Kanut, KM-07159

Policy

Policy scenario for digitisation

Estonia is currently drafting a strategy for the digital preservation and digitisation of cultural heritage. The strategy will be completed by December 2003. The idea to draw up a national strategy for the digital preservation of Estonian cultural heritage came from the Council of Cultural Heritage Preservation, affiliated to the Minister of Culture. The Council is composed from representatives of libraries, museums, archives and cultural heritage institutions. The fact that we do not have a repository to store digital data nor a systematic approach on the storage methods, led us to develop a set of policy measures. In December 2002 a round-table discussing the digitisation of cultural heritage took place. As a result of this brain-storming the Ministry of Culture decided to develop a national strategy for the digital preservation of Estonian cultural heritage. A working group was set up in January 2003, the first draft of the strategy was completed in June. Now the strategy is undergoing a final review and will be completed by 1 December 2003. The aim of the National Strategy for the Digital Preservation of Cultural Heritage is to formulate an unified approach for all "memory organisations" and other institutions involved with digitisation of cultural heritage and to secure public access to digitised cultural heritage. The strategy covers the digitisation of national cultural heritage and storage of digitised cultural heritage as well as digitally born cultural heritage, regardless of the actual physical location of the objects or the juridical ownership of heritage. The strategy for digital preservation of cultural heritage is a part of national information policy. The first stage of the strategy covers the period from 2004 to 2007.

Strategic actions for the period 2004-2007:

- setting up the Council of Digitised Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture as a steering group to coordinate the digitisation and preservation of digitised cultural heritage;
- coordination by the Ministry of Culture of a balanced co-operation between the overall preservation and the digital preservation of cultural heritage;
- in co-operation with the State Chancellery, Estonian National Archives and Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture will create a supervising and managing organisation to implement the strategy;
- initiation of a state programme for the digital preservation of Estonian cultural heritage;
- setting up working groups and expert bodies to implement the strategy;
- drawing up long-term integrated plans and funding models for cultural heritage institutions (libraries, museums, archives, media, scientific councils etc) concerning the creation of digital cultural heritage, its choice and preservation;
- drawing up strategic action plans for the next three years to support the long-term plans cultural heritage institutions;
- working out a detailed plan according to foreseen actions and projects for the next year;
- initiation, preparation, compilation and implementation of projects aiming at the digitisation, preservation and availability of digitised cultural heritage as derived from the detailed action plan;
- setting up a plan to systematically update the strategy for digitisation of cultural heritage and implementation of the plan.

Alatskivi Castle, 1880-1885
Tartu County, Alatskivi commune, Alatskivi population centre
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There are 2 appendixes complementing the political part of the strategy. The first is a set of detailed guidelines especially for the "memory organisations" and state institutions. The guidelines include the fundamental principles and criteria for preserving digital cultural heritage, directives for carrying out actions associated with the preservation of digital cultural heritage. The second part consists of a detailed action plan about the time and duration of the activities, annual budgets, sources of funding and expected results.

Terms of reference and national policy profile

The Information Technology Bureau of the Ministry of Culture is responsible for the technical cooperation of the national policy on digitisation of cultural heritage. Contact person: Marika Ahven, marika.ahven@kul.ee, tel. +372 6282 382.

Co-operation activities

Co-ordination of national networks

The co-ordinating body for the digitisation of cultural heritage is the Working Group at the Ministry of Culture, working on the strategy for digital preservation of cultural heritage, compiled from Heads of main institutions dealing with digitisation and experts of such institutions. The Working Group consists of representatives of the following institutions: Ministry of Culture, Estonian National Library, State Conservation Centre "Kanut", Estonian Literary Museum, Estonian Historical Archives from the Estonian National Archive, Estonian Radio, Council of Cultural Heritage Preservation at the Minister of Culture. Information networks and co-operation exist between several councils

and working groups: Council of Cultural Heritage Preservation, Consortium of Scientific Libraries, Council of Museums, Broadcasting Council et al. These working groups and councils inform us about the current situation in their fields of responsibility, their needs and state of digitisation. On the basis of these working groups and councils we intend to form a network of expert bodies and working groups in various fields covered by the strategy to further improve co-ordination. At the moment we do not have a Web portal for fast distribution of information, setting up such a portal is planned for the first half of the year 2004. The portal will give access to the digital materials of different institutions and organisations on the Web.

Some examples of digital material on the Web:

Artifacts (Object collections)
of the Estonian National Museum
<http://www.erm.ee/?lang=ENG&node=3>

Virtual exhibitions of the Estonian National Museum
<http://www.erm.ee/?node=54>

Digitised material from the collections
of the Estonian National Library
<http://www.nlib.ee/digi/digi.html>

List of Estonian publications on the net
<http://www.nlib.ee/rteavik/vvanded.html>

Relationships and co-ordination with other national initiatives in connection with eEurope, e-government, e-learning

The topic of digitising cultural heritage is included



The Kadriorg Palace, built in 1417-1436
Harju County, Tallinn - Kadriorg
KM Reg. No 1065
Orig. CC Kanut, KM-01065



Harju County, Tallinn - Toompea
 Reg. No of MC 1087 (the Dome Church) and 3451 (altar)
 KM Orig. CC, KM-03451-01

in the new version of the Fundamentals of Information Policy of Estonia

(<http://www.riiso.ee/en/index.html>), including the following items:

- preparation of a state programme to preserve the national memory in a digital form;
- integration of the digitised national memory into the e-learning programmes of educational establishments;

digitisation of database of public libraries.

Hence one of the objectives of digitising cultural heritage and storage it is to make use of these materials in the field of education. To implement this, a state initiative to support e-learning has been put into operation.

European and international co-operation

The Strategy for Digital Preservation of Estonian Cultural Heritage is based on:

- the principles of a programme initiated to develop national action plans and policies in the member states in the framework of EU eEurope 2002 Action Plan (2000);
- the Lund Principles (2001), the fundamentals for drawing up national development plans for the digitisation of cultural heritage: following the action plan for member states developed according to the Lund Principles for the European Commission, which foresees common responsibility and the need for co-operation both in the work of information institutions and also in developing national strategies.

In 2003 Estonian Ministry of Culture joined with the project MINERVA Plus. The aim of the project is to enlarge the existing thematic network (MINERVA)

of European Ministries to discuss, correlate and harmonise activities carried out in digitisation of cultural and scientific content, for creating an agreed European common platform, promoting recommendations and guidelines about digitisation, metadata, long-term accessibility and preservation. The project lasts from 2004 to 2005, it is approved by the European Commission in the 6FP. In 2003 the Estonian National Library joined in a project reUSE, the aim of which is the creation of a digital archive that meets the standards of long-term preservation. The project duration is from 2003 to 2005, and is funded by the EU eContent Programme. The project participants are the national libraries of European countries and institutions dealing with digital archiving. The Estonian National Library takes part in a pilot project aiming at creating an archive model.

Competence centres

According to the fields of activities and specialization the present national competence centres in digitisation are the following:

State Conservation Centre "Kanut"
<http://www.kanut.ee/>

Estonian National Library
<http://www.nlib.ee/>

Estonian Radio
<http://www.er.ee/>

Estonian National Archives
<http://www.ra.ee/>

Digitisation projects

The Ministry of Culture supports the development of several digitisation projects, the major of which are:

KVIS ("Information System of Cultural Heritage"
Covering the information systems of Estonian museums), co-ordinator: Ministry of Culture
<http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x795>

Digitisation of the collections of the Estonian Art Museum
Co-ordinator: Estonian Art Museum

National Register of Listed Monuments
Co-ordinator: National Heritage Board
<http://register.mui.nas.ee/>

Digitisation of museum objects in danger of being destroyed ("Red Book")
Co-ordinator: State Conservation Centre "Kanut"
<http://www.kanut.ee/punane.htm>

Digitisation of the oldest periodically issued newspaper "Postimees"
Co-ordinator: Estonian National Library

Database of Estonian publications ISE
(Index Scriptorium Estoniae)
Co-ordinator: Estonian National Library
<http://ise.nlib.ee/>

Database of the phonetics of speech recognition in Estonian
Co-ordinator: Institute of Cybernetics, Tallinn Technical University
<http://www.phon.ioc.ee/base/>



Cabinet Altar, 1483
Bernt Notke (1430/40-1509)
Harju County, Tallinn's downtown, the Holy Ghost Church
KM Reg. NO 1290
Orig. CC Kanut, KM-01290-06 and KM-01290-02