



Slovenija

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Digitisation policies and emerging initiatives

Since the end of 2002 Slovenia has a new legal act defining public interest, subjects, activities and financing in the field of culture. Ministry of Culture (<http://www.gov.si/mk/>) has prepared an important strategic document which has been adopted according to the act, the resolution on national program for culture, defining priorities of cultural policy planned for the period between 2004 and 2007, like:

- preserving and development of the Slovenian language;
- encouragement of cultural diversity;
- fostering access to culture;
- education for creativity;
- culture as generator of economic development etc.

Among them the informatization in culture has been defined as an important part of the program, aiming at the enhancement of access to culture, information on culture, research and scientific evaluation in culture. Several measures have been designed to achieve realization of this priority, e.g.

- to ensure financial resources for improvement of ICT equipment in public libraries and other cultural institutions;
- to develop libraries as public information and lifelong learning centers and multimedia centers;
- to set up national register of the objects of cultural heritage in electronic form;
- to develop national cultural portal;
- to start archiving Slovenian electronic publications;
- to give special priority to digitising cultural heritage to present it on the Internet.

Coordination and cooperation activities

In library and information sector, Slovenia has a long tradition of cooperation and coordination, which resulted in its shared online catalog and services system (COBISS) (<http://www.izum.si>) including all kinds of libraries in the country. There are several coordination bodies responsible to anticipate and follow up development plans of this system. There is not as much formal cooperation in other fields of culture like museums and archives. But, learning from experience, a need for an agreement exists to organize a coordination body on the national level to guarantee a concerted action in all regions for digitisation of cultural heritage as an important element of the information society.

Cooperation in the fields of cultural heritage

The experience that has been gained from the first steps in digitisation will help our institutions to plan their future activities in order to preserve the most valuable written and printed documents and objects of heritage in electronic form. It is planned to strengthen regional and international cooperation between libraries, museums and archives, the result of which should be the benefit of each partner and especially the end user. We shall also look for partners in the commercial sector (especially publishers) to cooperate with cultural institutions when processing and preserving current documents published in print or on the Web.

European cooperation

Cooperation with European countries concerning cultural heritage is a good opportunity for Slovenia to make its heritage visible. The Ministry of Culture has

joined the MINERVA Plus project as a partner institution. The national library (National and University Library, <http://www.nuk.uni-lj.si>) has been involved in several international projects of preserving cultural heritage kept by libraries. It is expected that this library together with the Ministry will take the leading role in international cooperation and exchange of experience in the area of digitising cultural heritage. There has also been some international cooperation in other fields of culture, like archives and museums.

Inventories and resource discovery

After setting up a coordination body for digitisation Slovenia will assure that guidelines of good practice for digitisation are agreed upon and accepted, and at the same time set up an inventory of on-going digitisation projects in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to enable possible partners to join the projects.

Good practices and skills

Slovenia hopes to benefit from the European development, of good practices and skills shared in the frame of the Lund Principles and the Lund Action Plan. It is ready however, to also share its own good practices with other partners.

Research activities

The National Library started digitisation activities and projects in 1998 and these first projects were focused on the preservation of national written and print heritage. Now digitisation plans include as well materials for university students use. Research activities

had been carried out to define the historical and cultural value of the documents to be digitised and above all, criteria for digitisation, like national or international value of materials, vulnerability to decay, exposure to intensive use and stimulating access. These activities were also aimed at planning database structures, indexing, interfaces, document retrieval etc. Although the digitisation activities are only at a start in Slovenia we believe this is the point when most of the contents and technical questions ought to be solved.

Ongoing projects

Since 1998 the national library (National and University Library in Ljubljana) has performed several digitising projects, like:

Digitisation of Slavic manuscripts from the collection of Jernej Kopitar

<http://www.nuk.uni-lj.si/>

kopitarjevazbirka/

The collection of 34 mainly Cyrillic codices from the 11th-15th century.

Jernej (Bartholomeus) Kopitar (1780-1844) was a famous Slovene linguist and chief librarian of the Court Library in Vienna. He collected old medieval manuscripts (codices), which were written mainly in Cyrillic and with some exceptions in Glagolitic alphabet. The most important manuscript in this collection is Codex suprasliensis, written in the 11th century, and one of the oldest codices in Cyrillic alphabet preserved. The collection of 34 codices from the 11th-15th century were transferred to NUK in 1845 and today they represent the most valuable collection in the national library. Although they do not belong to Slovenian culture, the decision to digitise them stemmed from several reasons:



Abrahamus Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1584
© National and University Library

- Slavic manuscripts are much rarer than Latin manuscripts, which makes them extremely valuable;
- the collection represents a complete corpus which was easy to manage;
- by digitising the access to them has been enhanced while at the same time they have been protected from handling.

Digitisation of portrait photographs of famous Slovenians

<http://www.nuk.uni-lj.si/portretnazbirka/>
Digitisation was carried out in the period from 1999 to 2000. 11,000 scans of portrait photographs from 1850 till 2000 were processed.

In 2001 software for user access to scans was prepared, which was the final phase of the project. Copyright have not yet been dealt with. From this database portraits free of copyright were selected and they can be accessed online via the Internet on NUK's home page).

Among digitisation projects, the collection of portrait photographs of famous Slovenians was chosen to begin with for several reasons. These photographs are a valuable part of the history of Slovenian photography, ethnology, culture etc. and as such most frequently sought for by publishers, galleries, museums, cultural and artistic associations. Since the material carriers of photographs are very vulnerable to damage and are exposed to accelerated decay, free access to them for the users like researchers, students, teachers, amateurs and others can not be provided. By digitisation, the problems of preservation and enhanced access were solved at the same time.

Digitisation of the collection of old maps of Slovenian territory from 1548 to 1871

<http://www.nuk.uni-lj.si/zbirkazemljevidov/>

The project is a common endeavour of NUK and Slovenian Landsurveying Institute, planned for 2002. Thirty maps, specially those which are most vulnerable to damage, were selected for digitisation. Some of them are very important for cartographic, geographic, toponymic and historical research. The maps were scanned by the Slovenian Landsurveying Institute. The method was making digital scans. Although the files were very large, the resolution was perfect for analysis and research purposes. A special database was developed containing the data on authorship, year of publication and format size. However, a complete database in Unimarc with the possibility of conversion into Dublin Core is planned to be prepared shortly.

Planned projects

Cooperation between libraries and archive institutions in the region has been planned for the future. Due to rich history and constant changes in state borders, many Slovenian ancient written documents, which represent an important part of our cultural heritage, are no longer on the Slovenian territory. Digitisation offers the possibility to gather all Slovenian national heritage in one place and enable access to it for the users. We would also like to follow the recent trends in university libraries and digitise text books that are out-of-print or are prescribed as obligatory teaching materials for students. Copyright agreements will have to be achieved before carrying out such projects. Newly designed projects have intensive research and development parts, because their goals are to create unique electronic databases with electronic archives. Several projects have been planned but not all of them approved yet for financial support, like:



Collection of full-text articles by Slovenian authors

It relates Slovenian Bibliography with full-text Slovenian serial articles. The implementation of a press clipping system has been planned to be included when processing journal articles. The press clipping agencies in Slovenia, as many others abroad, base their selection of articles from daily newspapers on the ever changing demand of their clients. Although they are not comprehensive and as a consequence they do not provide full information on recent articles published in newspapers, but they can serve as a start point. Partners from the commercial sector in Slovenia has been contacted to help us processing on a monthly basis all articles published in most popular dailies. The system should offer an image of the newspaper page, image of the article, and the text of the article processed by OCR. Basic information like title, author, source will be entered automatically in a database, which will later be also furnished with bibliographic metadata.

The digital collection of Slovenian towns and villages postcards up to 1941

5,000 pieces have been digitised. The Map and Pictorial Collection of NUK was established in 1945 and has since then been collecting different types of materials including atlases, maps, globes, postal cards, placards, calenders, ex libri, graphics, photographs, paintings, etc. At present its collections comprise more than 88,000 inventoried units or 232,000 units of material. The digitisation of the collection of landscape post cards on Slovenian places printed before 1940 includes ca. 13,000 post cards. Digitisation project was based on the following criteria:

- value and importance of materials for national heritage;
- frequency of use;
- type of the carrier and its resistance to time; format of material.

Multimedia presentation of special collections (cartography, pictures, manuscripts etc.)

Multimedial walk through old maps, cards and portraits would represent a culmination of digitisation projects and representation of cultural heritage kept by the Cartographic Collection of the National Library. The digitised materials would be used to be linked together into an interesting representation of Slovenian cultural heritage.

Historical map sheet set

It is part of the international project, Building A Globally Distributed Historical Map Sheet Set.

It has been planned to be a partner in a two year international project in cooperation with New York Public Library, American Geographical Society Map Library, Map and Geographical Information Center Homer Babbidge Library, Det Kongelige Bibliotek Denmark and National and University Library in Zagreb. The aim of this project is making a structure that will enable the exchange of separate leaves of the Austro-Hungarian special maps through the Internet.

National collection of electronic documents (eLib.si)

The project has been planned to be carried out in cooperation between the National Library, other institutions and commercial firms. The aim of the project is making a portal, which is going to combine the results of all finished projects of modelling electronic collections. The portal will enable access to all sources of information of the National Library and to on-line referral services in culture.