Poland

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Nicholas Copernicus, *De revolutionibus* (manuscript)
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Policy scenario

1. General description of political support for digitisation (and national ownership)

In Poland digitisation started rather spontaneously, as in the case of computerised catalogue creation at the libraries. Therefore there is no national ownership policy yet and all digital assets simply belong to the institutions that created original digital material or converted analogue materials into digital form. However there is an understanding of the importance of an electronic culture. In view of this a couple of political actions have been undertaken to date. Most efforts have been put into the construction of satisfactory technological infrastructure, including networking and data processing. A complementary program on the creation of scientific knowledge repositories was funded. In July 14th 2000 the Polish Parliament decided upon building a legal basis for the Information Society in Poland. In the resolution it was stated that the present legal system and governmental policy did not provide adequate conditions for information society development. The importance of modern technologies, telecommunication, teleinformatics and multimedia services has been underlined in the Parliamentary resolution. Parliament put the Government under an obligation to prepare the foundations of the information society development. It was said that the governmental structure should allow coordination and accomplishment of such a policy at all levels of governmental administration.

In response the Polish Government prepared a document called *Goals and Directions of the Information Society Development in Poland*.

At the beginning of 2004 the Council of Ministers adopted the document *ePoland - The Strategy on the Development of the Information Society in Poland for the years 2004-2006*. Most interesting for digitisation, there are two initiatives supported as a high priority: the Bulletin of Public Information and the Polish Internet Library. The «Bulletin of Public Information» available on the address `www.bip.gov.pl` is mandatory for each public institution and presents information about those institutions (including legal and financial information) and describes the main activities. In addition, all public institutions are obliged to present the same information on their own websites. The Polish Internet Library, supervised by the Ministry of Science and Information Society Technologies, is described in more details at another section.

Further planning on State policy towards digitisation will be included in the document *Plan of the development of Information Society Technologies in Poland* that is under preparation. As a base for this serves the *eGovernment Act* that should be accepted by Polish Parliament on July 21st 2005. The Ministry of Culture supervises the major public libraries, museums and archives, and therefore it plays an important role for Polish culture. In the Ministry of Culture there is an understanding of the necessity of change in cultural services. Therefore in the document prepared by the Ministry of Culture, theStrategy *National Strategy for the Development Of Culture In 2004-2013* adopted in 2004 by Council of Ministers with the supplement issued in May 2005, it is underlined that «culture is one of the fundamental factors of a region's development with regard to intellectual capital, equalisation of opportunities, economic development (in particular increasing the attractiveness of territorial units to the territorial

community as well as to investors and tourists)»
(www.mk.gov.pl/website/document/?docId=215, p. 4).
Five sectors are listed in the Strategy, and one of them
is devoted to books and reading. The digitisation
programme is not planned as a coordinated and unique
activity, but some thoughts about digitisation can be
found included into such goals as: «1. Construction and
development of the infrastructure of public libraries and
modernisation of library equipment in order to reduce
the regional differences in access to library services;
2. Providing libraries with basic hardware and software,
construction of platforms and virtual networks systems
to avail the collections, construction of workrooms and
providing them with equipment to digitalise the
collections. 3. Designing and developing Internet
networks and systems in order to provide online
services by libraries for citizens and institutions,
including entrepreneurs. 4. Creating, where plausible,
new library outlets, including in cooperation with other
institutions of the public sector (for instance Social
Communication Centres with the Polish Post) and the
non-governmental sector»
(www.mk.gov.pl/website/document/?docId=215, p. 18).

2. Range of policy (geographical, institutional and ideological)

There are a couple of levels of policy related to
digitalisation. On the top there is national policy,
which brought to life the Polish Internet Library,
declared and opened by the Prime Minister on 21st
December 2002. The Library funded by the Ministry
of Scientific Research and Information Technologies
is available at the address www.pbi.edu.pl/.
For management purposes the Foundation of the
Polish Internet Library has been created, which includes

libraries as its members contributing content to this
initiative. The Ministry, as the main sponsor of that
library, provides substantial funds to make available
adequate content to Polish citizens and to present
Polish culture to the world. Up until now about 4 Million
Euros have been spent for that purpose. As a result
around 25.000 items have been scanned, and all of
them have been already made available to users.
The Polish Internet Library will include fiction,
educational materials, archival documents, and art.
Further plans include, beyond addition of new items,
improvement in accessibility, full application of W3C
standards, and research leading to improvement of
search mechanisms. For that purpose the M-CAST
project is being prepared with the Ministry as a partner.
Another goal is to promote Polish culture in the world.
To do so the Ministry of Scientific Research and
Information Technologies together with the International
Centre for Information Management System and
Services will coordinate the Polish part of the MICHAEL
project that offers access to the European Culture portal.
As decentralization has been put into action since 1999,
the establishment and improvement of a simple and
efficient local administration system has also changed
the situation of cultural institutions. The majority of
Polish public libraries are supervised by the local
authorities and have to convince them that a modern
library needs also to offer on-line access to its services.
At present only larger libraries are able to do so, and
some of them have even successfully applied for the
structural funds for that purpose. But most importantly,
on a local level the regional consortia were
spontaneously created. Such networks had been
successful in cooperation between libraries
in computerisation. The real achievements
can be noticed in the created networks of the biggest

city libraries in Krakow, Poznan, and Lodz. Another successful networks have been created by libraries using the same systems: the VTLS consortium, the Coalition for the library with Horizon, and the Aleph network to name just the biggest. Following that experience, a consortium has been set up in the Wielkopolska region for the first local Digital Library of Wielkopolska (`www.wbc.poznan.pl`). The majority of members of the Digital Library are the libraries, but there is also one archive and one publishing house. Even though the Library offers access to less than 5,000 items, in just a one year of operation it has been visited more than 250,000 times. The success of the regional library with plans to put local materials as a top priority for digitisation policy was noticed in Poland, and other regions are preparing for creation of the own local consortia as well. The most advanced is the Krakow area, with rich collections and strong institutions. But also other regions with smaller numbers of research institutions have prepared advanced plans for their local digital libraries. They apply for the structural funds available through the mediation of local administrations. It is rather difficult to identify any clear ideology for the number of already created digital libraries and plans. It is probably too early for that, as the primary effort has been put into learning and acquisition of technical capabilities. Some initiatives were undertaken only because of a scientific community interest in specific topics, as in the case of the Virtual Library of Polish Literature (`http://monika.univ.gda.pl/~literat/books.htm#books`), which was started as a UNESCO project by the staff of the Polish Literature Institute of Gdansk University; or the Old Polish Literature (`www.staropolska.gimnazjum.com.pl/ang/index`

`.html`), created by a professor from the Pedagogical Academy in Cracow. For the same reason, the ICM Virtual Library has been created (`http://vls.icm.edu.pl/`), where apart from centralized access to the main databases subscribed to for Polish researchers, Polish mathematical materials have been collected to serve the scientific community. These are only some examples from the range of uncoordinated activities undertaken.
In addition to those initiatives, many libraries have also started with digitisation of their own collections. Some of them have established a new digital library service with a separate catalogue even though the number of available materials is not yet significant (the Academic Internet Library of Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan - `http://abi.amu.edu.pl/`). Some libraries decided also to add information about digital materials to the existing catalogues. (AGH – University of Science and Technology - `www.bg.agh.edu.pl/EN/start.html`). In this way. the user obtains immediate access to the electronic materials when searching the library catalogue. An ideal type of literature digitized by the libraries consists of handbooks. However those materials, wrote by contemporary authors, need their acceptance before making a digital copy available for any user. Many authors accept digitization but the bureaucracy connected with making such an agreement takes time, and this process is slow at the libraries. Therefore many libraries make copies of books without IPR. This leads to the situation that libraries might digitize the same books many times, since it is not a coordinated action. An attempt at semi-coordination was initiated by the electronic journal for libraries EBIB when they issued a questionnaire to libraries asking them to provide information about digitization. Some libraries responded to this request and listed their

The Warsaw Confederation Act, 28th January, 1573
Archiwum Glowne Akt Dawnych, Warszawa

The Polish King Stanislaus Augustus confirms privileges granted to the
city of Warsaw, Warsaw 1772
Archiwum Glowne Akt Dawnych, Warszawa

digitized materials, but the libraries do not update their lists, so that much information is from 2002 and it is difficult to use this service as a serious aid. Digitization has started also at archives. Even though their situation is more complicated, since each archive has unique materials, some work has been done in establishing description standards. For that purpose the ISAD (G) (*General International Standard Archival Description*) has been adopted and some work has been carried out to adapt an American standard EAD (*Encoded Archival Description*).
Some digitised materials have also been made available to the public. The most attractive seems to be the collection of unique archival materials known as the Treasure of Polish Archives (`www.polska.pl/archiwa/index.htm` (previous address `www.polska.pl/skarby/index.htm`).
Polish museums unfortunately still don't find digitisation of their assets as an important activity. The main reason for the lack of interest is a concern, sometimes expressed publicly, that if a user can see the object on his or her own screen they are losing a potential client. But some efforts had been made to start digitisation of inventories, and printed materials. Some museums have started with the digitisation of graphics. Probably the most advanced in this respect is The Museum of Art in Lodz, with a professional website with available digital copies of a number of objects. `www.muzeumsztuki.lodz.pl/strona%20ang/ muzeumiang.htm`

However, an understanding of the importance of the creation of a sound and clear policy is present, both among the institutions with the resources and on the political level. This will be discussed in depth when the MICHAEL project starts, since the Ministry of Scientific

Research and Information Technologies together with the International Centre for Information Management Systems and Services (ICIMSS) plan to involve a significant number of archives, libraries, and museums in the creation of the MICHAEL portal of European culture. Thus will be a sound instrument for coordination of a certain number of efforts in digitisation.

3. Available instruments and the use of those: guidelines, funds, target organisations

In Poland, libraries were the first of the cultural institutions that started computerisation in the early nineties. The main effort has been put into translation and customisation of the standards used for metadata creation. As a national standard for the catalogue records, the USMARC format has been accepted; recently converted into MARC21. For subject description, the Library of Congress Subject Headings are used after translation and customisation. Formats and guidelines are published. The publications are listed on the National Catalogue NUKAT website (`www.nukat.edu.pl/`). The Centre also offers intensive training to all librarians cooperating with the National Catalogue in data creation but also to those who are the passive users of the catalogues and use the catalogue as a source of data import to their own catalogues.

Another set of customized guidelines and training are offered by the Coalition for the Library with Horizon system and these are addressed to over 60 libraries. Libraries from the Coalition are also the active members of the National Catalogue.
Some guidelines have been also published on the occasion of European projects like DELOS, PULMAN, CALIMERA, and MINERVA. Some of the materials not

Amurat IV Sultan of Turkey`s confirms
of the Treaty with the Polish King Sigismund III, Constantinopole 1623
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translated yet are offered to the librarians, archivists, and custodians from museums in an original version as a printed copy or in electronic version. Materials available in an electronic version have been downloaded many times from ICIMS website.
`www.icimss.edu.pl/en/Publishing_house/`
`www.icimss.edu.pl/delos/pl/publikacje.html`

Digitisation is a costly activity, and so this is one of the reasons for its slow development. But there is an understanding of the importance of virtual access to information, and funds are slowly increasing. Substantial grants have been made to improve the infrastructure and to build an information highway including an optical Internet enabling interactive television. Smaller funds are assigned for creation and maintenance of the Polish Internet Library. There is also an understanding among the local governments that structural funds from the European Union should be also spent to support the local initiatives devoted to creation of digital libraries. More ambitious research libraries use their own resources to create digital libraries. But since their funds are rather low, the number of digital copies is not impressive. As it has been said the majority of funds devoted to digital libraries are distributed among the most active and best-prepared libraries. But the Polish Internet Library plans include more active cooperation with museums and archives that have valuable materials.

Co-operation

1. National networks

The National Catalogue NUKAT has been created collectively with the financial help of the Mellon Foundation and is funded now by the Warsaw University, the Ministry of Scientific Research and Information Technologies and the Ministry of Education. In May 2005 the NUKAT catalogue includes almost 500,000 bibliographic records, and about 1,200,000 authority files. More than 800 librarians working also remotely from 49 libraries take part in the creation of the metadata.
To satisfy user needs, libraries from the Coalition for Library with Horizon decided to establish an additional source of information with the not-yet completed catalogue records. Those catalogues can be searched via KaRo. KaRo is a distributed catalogue of Polish libraries based on the Z39.50 protocol and Z2WEB WEB interface. It is a complementary tool to the Polish Union catalogue NUKAT.

In May 2005 it is possible to search catalogues of 73 Polish libraries from a single point of entrance in KaRo.
`http://karo.umk.pl/karo_en.html`

The Polish Internet Library is also developing into a network as new institutions join the Foundation and offer their own digital materials and collections for digitalisation.

2. International co-operation

Polish institutions are active in bilateral cooperation with their counterparts from all over the world. But the most important cooperation includes participation in European projects, among which we mention EXPLOIT, DEDICATE, LIBECON 2000 from the IV Framework Program of the European Union, three projects in which Polish cultural institutions were included.
In the Fifth Framework Programme, Polish institutions

took part in COINE: Cultural Objects in Networked Environments; CULTIVATE: Cultural Heritage Applications Network Part; DELOS: A network of Excellence on digital libraries; MEMORIAL: A digital document workbench for preservation of personal records in virtual memorials; PULMAN: Public Libraries Mobilising Advanced.

In the Sixth Framework Programme a couple of important projects have been realized with Polish institutions: CALIMERA: Cultural Applications: Local Institutions Mediating Electronic Resource Access; MINERVA Plus: Ministerial NETWORK for Valorising Activities in digitisation.

In the aforementioned projects from the IV-VI Framework Programmes mostly libraries and archives participated. But for the CULTURE 2000 programme, mostly museums applied who were taking part in activities leading to digitalisation of their materials. Among the projects can be mentioned NAVIS II (with a database of pictures of old ships); and ARENA: Archives of European Archaeology. In the World View Network the places in which the great astronomers (including Nicolas Copernicus) lived were promoted. In the Safeguarding historical waterfront sites project, examples of architecture were collected in digital and traditional form; the Polish archive was included in TAPE. Other projects include: ClioH's: Workshop II Innovative books and multimedia material for comparing and connecting the history of European peoples; Born in Europe; Socland: Multimedia Exhibition; EMarCon: Electronic Maritime Cultural Content. Museums participated in all of these projects. In 2004, for the first time, Polish institutions could apply for grants to the eTEN program. The EURIDICE project prepared as a result of participation in MINERVA

was successful, and among a total of ten cooperating institutions, four are Polish.

The international projects briefly listed here indicate possibilities for cooperation with a number of institutions with the same goals. In addition to the funds for carrying out the project, it also brings valuable contacts, and allows exchange of ideas. As a member of the EU, Poland can expect a growing number of such opportunities for cooperation.

3. NRG and MINERVA results, interpretation and impact

Participation in the MINERVA project even though not finished yet, has given us the opportunity to work together to benefit from the prepared guidelines and results. It resulted with applications for another projects such as EURIDICE devoted to digitisation of materials and creation of distance learning courses. But there are the highest expectations for the other project MICHAEL, which presents opportunities to promote cultural resources through the European portal. Coordination of such activities on the European level is invaluable both for cultural institutions and for European citizens.

Silver stamp of the Polish King Jan III Sobieski
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