

Esko Häkli

National Library of Finland

Esko.Hakli@helsinki.fi

The National Library of Finland: *Aspects on the Development of Its Role and Tasks**

THE LIBRARY AND ITS HISTORY

Compared to most national libraries in Europe the National Library of Finland has an unusual administrative status. The Library is part of the University of Helsinki and was until the end of July 2006 known as the Helsinki University Library, its traditional name. The Library receives its basic financing from the university budget of the country, which has had a direct and lasting impact on the development of the Library's national library tasks.¹

The present National Library of Finland was established in 1640 together with the University and located until 1827 in Turku, the earlier administrative centre of Finland, that is, the eastern half of Sweden.² The University was consequently two years younger than the University of Dorpat (Tartu), however with the difference that, with an exception of a shorter break caused by a war in the beginning of the 18th century, it has been functioning all the time. In 1809 Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy under the Russian czar, the Emperor as he was called in Finland. In 1828 the University was moved to Helsinki where it received numerous important book donations, first of all from St Petersburg. Already in Turku it had received the legal deposit right to everything printed in the great Russian Empire. Because of the great fire in Turku in 1827 the existing legal deposit collections begin to accumulate only after the fire. In this way the Library is, among other things, in the

* The article is based on the experience of the author, on publicly available documents and publications and on the information given by former colleagues. In particular the author is indebted to Mr. Juha Hakala, Director of the IT Development of the National Library. More detailed information about the recent development is available in English in the following sources: The Annual Reports delivered by the Library to CENL (accessible in the Internet) and *Helsinki University Library Bulletin* (1998-2005) and the *National Library of Finland Bulletin* (2006-), which since 2009 is accessible on the Library's website <http://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/extra/bulletin/index.html>

¹ University libraries play an important role for the information provision in Finland because they are not closed institutions but serve the society at large. There are 22 universities and university level institutions of higher education with 164 000 students (2008) and 27 polytechnics with 94 000 students (2008). The number of special libraries is 19. The biggest of them are the Library of the Parliament and the National Repository Library.

² About the early history of the Library see: Vallinkoski, J., *The History of the University Library at Turku*. Vol. 1: 1640-1722. Helsinki: Helsinki University Library, 1948. Vol. 2: 1722-1772. Helsinki 1975. (Publications of the University Library at Helsinki 21, 37.) Vol. 3 exists as an unfinished manuscript only.

possession of a representative collection of Latvian literature printed in both Latvian and German.³

During its whole history the Library has been a research library. Towards the end of the 19th century the number of library units within the University started to grow. The new units were independent of the University library, which therefore has never been the main library in the administrative sense of the word. It has been a separate institution, specialized on arts and humanities. It has still the best collections of old literature in the country as well as a great number of special collections. The services of the Library are heavily used by the University, by its students and teachers. They form about 75 per cent of the users of the Library's local services.

The Library is also a cultural institution. Traditionally it has arranged exhibitions based on its own collections. On its premises the Library has also arranged concerts, lectures and other programmes. During the years several large research projects, focusing on the Library's own collections, financed with external grants, have been carried out. For the time being one of the projects is working on the medieval literature in Finland and studying the large collection of medieval parchment fragments kept in the Library. Another project, conducted in co-operation with the Sibelius Society of Finland, is working on the critical edition of Jean Sibelius. The project is, so far, the biggest research project in the field of music in Finland.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE LIBRARY

Already towards the end of the 1990s the Library was one of the national libraries of Europe with the widest range of tasks. Since then the Library's role as the central service organization for all library sectors has been strengthened. Recently new proposals have been put forward to expand the Library's services even further.⁴ In addition, the Library is an important service provider to the whole book sector and is also working more and more closely together with archives and museums.

Achieving the present situation has taken time and the process has by no means been self-evident. As long as the range of the national library tasks was limited they were not necessarily seen by other libraries as specifically national library tasks. They quite simply were a historical feature of the Library of the University of Helsinki. For the Library itself it was self-evident that it was the National Library and it did not hide its opinion. Formally the Library's role as the National Library was confirmed in the statutes, given in 1960 by the Chancellor of the University. A small part of the Library's national tasks was defined in the Act of Freedom of the Press and later in the Legal Deposit Law. Discussions about a separate law of the National Library started in the 1980s and were based on a proposal put forward by

³ The legal deposit right to publications printed in the Russian Empire was the basis for large collections of Russian literature and literature published in the Russian empire in other languages than Russian. See e.g.: Esko Häkli, 'Ältere Bestände aus Lettland in der Universitätsbibliothek Helsinki' in: *Bibliotheca publica. Civitas Lubecebsis. Mare Balticum. Bibliothek – Hansestadt – Ostseeraum, Festschrift für Dr. Jörg Fligge*. Hrsg. von Robert Schweitzer und Bernd Dohrendorf. Lübeck 2005. (Veröffentlichung der Stadtbibliothek Lübeck. Dritte Reihe. Bd. 50.) Pp. 19-43; *Handbuch deutscher historischer Buchbestände in Europa*. Hrsg. von Bernhard Fabian. Bd. 7.2. The following texts: Pp. 15-23 Esko Häkli, 'Bibliotheken in Finnland' and pp. 27-52 Cornelius Hasselblatt, 'Helsinki'.

⁴ *Opetuksen ja tutkimuksen toimintaympäristö 2020 – korkeakoulukirjastojen rakenteellinen kehittäminen digitaaliseksi palveluverkoksi*. Helsinki 2009. (Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä 2009: 26). [Teaching and research environment 2020 – university and polytechnic libraries into a digital service network. Reports of the Ministry of Education.]

a Task Force set up by the Ministry of Education. The proposal led, however, to no results. Instead the regulations were included in the new law on the University of Helsinki in 1991. The attached statutes, given by the Government, specified the Library's tasks as the National Library in a rather detailed manner.⁵

In 1997 a new law covering all the Finnish universities was given. It replaced the former laws of the individual universities.⁶ Regulations on the National Library were transferred into the new law. In that situation the department of the Ministry of Education, which is in charge of the public libraries, wanted to make it explicit that the national library tasks had nothing to do with the public libraries.⁷ Therefore the scope of the national library tasks was restricted to research libraries only. Public libraries had, at least in principle, their own central library (Helsinki City Library) and the department of the Ministry obviously wanted to keep the development in its own hands. Of course, the fact that public libraries are run by the local authorities may also have had an impact. The Ministry is supporting them financially but all the decisions are in the hands of the local authorities.

The strict separation of the library sectors came as a surprise to the Helsinki University Library and it soon proved to be problematic even to the public libraries. For instance the responsibility for creating and maintaining the union catalogue of the regional public libraries was given to the National Library.⁸ Even in other ways the public libraries become dependent on the development work done by the National Library. Due to the legal restrictions the cultural department of the Ministry had soon to find ways for public libraries to be able to use services of the National Library. The Ministry had, so to say, to buy these services with the help of separate arrangements. The disadvantages of the restriction, as a matter of fact imposed on libraries by the Ministry itself, became more and more obvious and in the autumn of 2001 the directors of the Helsinki City Library, the Helsinki University Library and the National Depository library signed a letter to the Ministry of Education asking the Ministry to take the necessary measures in order to foster creation of a common service infrastructure for all library sectors. The result was a Task Force with the brief to prepare a revision of the Helsinki University Library's scope as the National Library. In the beginning of 2003 the Task Force put forward a proposal to expand the Library's responsibilities as the National Library to cover all library sectors and to change its name to 'National Library', but not to separate it from the University of Helsinki.⁹

The arrangements required time, however. In 2003 the Ministry set up a new Task Force to look at the issue once again. It published its Report in January 2006 and, as to the legislation, repeated the proposals of the previous Task Force.¹⁰ Still during the same year 2006 the Articles concerning the National Library in the University Act were amended. It was

⁵ Law on the University of Helsinki no 854/1991 § 23 and the corresponding statutes no 1241/1991 § 18.

⁶ The law no 645/1997 and the attached statutes no 115/1998.

⁷ The Finnish Ministry of Education contains *de facto* two Ministries, a Ministry of Education and a Ministry of Culture, both of them with a minister of its own. Public libraries belong to department of culture.

⁸ The union catalogue has recently been laid down and replaced by other arrangements.

⁹ *Kansalliskirjastotyöryhmä 2002. Kansalliskirjaston tehtäviä ja toimialaa uudelleen arvioivan työryhmän muistio.* [Report of the Task Force called to re-evaluate the tasks and the scope of the National Library.] Helsinki 2003. (Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä 2003:1.)

¹⁰ The Report is no 2006:1 in the series 'Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä'.

explicitly stated that the Library had to serve university libraries, public libraries, libraries of the polytechnics and special libraries.¹¹ This gives the Library a strong basis for its work and the Library's status as a service provider could no longer be questioned. To mark the Library's new status its name was formally changed to 'National Library'.¹² The Library remained part of the Helsinki University but it may eventually become an independent institution.¹³

As a matter of fact, the separation of the Library from the University had been seriously discussed already in the 1990s. It proved, however, to be a very complicated issue. The obvious consequence would have been to move the Library's financing out of the global university budget to the cultural budget of the Ministry of Education, where the National Archives and the state museums were located. However, the university budget has been much more favourable to the Library and facilitated the creation of modern technical infrastructure for libraries. The cultural budget with much less flexibility could hardly have allowed that.

AN EMERGING NATIONAL LIBRARY: ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TASKS

Even if the expression 'national library' was used in Finland for the first time as early as in 1825 the word received its present meaning not earlier than in 1918. At that stage 'national library' was understood first of all as a library with a complete collection of domestic literature, or at least as complete as possible.¹⁴ Until the beginning of the 1990s the National Library tasks were more or less based on the Library's collection of the country's own literature. In 1919 Finland received a new Act of Freedom of the Press and the number of the legal deposit copies was increased to four. The Library was given the task to receive the copies from the printing houses and to distribute them to the deposit libraries. The Act was the first law dealing with the Library's national library tasks.

¹¹ University law, 29.6.2006 no 586, Articles 25 and 25a. The university legislation was renewed in 2009 but the regulations of the National Library remained unchanged.

¹² The University has recently made a decision to consolidate its library system and to create one administrative library organization, which shall start on 1 January 2010 and carry the name Helsinki University Library. The decision on the name was to a certain extent controversial. The National Library is a separate institution.

¹³ In the report mentioned above (note 2) for instance an idea has been put forward to amalgamate the National Library and the National Repository Library. However, it may be possible only when the National Library has been separated from the University.

¹⁴ Esko Häkli, 'Nationalbibliotekstankens utveckling i Finland' in: *Från vän till vän. Festskrift till Olof Mustelin – historiker och bibliotekarie – på hans 60-årsdag*. Åbo 1984. (Skrifter utgivna av Åbo Akademis Bibliotek 17). Pp. 143-149. Before the British Museum was established in 1753 the Bodleian Library in Oxford held the position of a national library. However, instead of being 'national' it was 'public'. The expression 'national' came into being during the French revolution. In Finland during the 19th century a national library was understood as a public library. Since 1707 the Library had enjoyed the right to a legal deposit copy of everything printed in Sweden, including Finland, of course. During the latter half of the 18th century the Library, under Henrik Gabriel Porthan (1739-1804), started to pay special attention to the country's own literature and literature related to Finland. In 1781 Porthan wrote: "Every letter published in bygone centuries by our compatriots shall be scrupulously collected." In 1827 the Library was destroyed by a great fire which also destroyed the whole centre of Turku. The Librarian, Professor Fredrik Wilhelm Pipping succeeded surprisingly well in rebuilding the collection of Finnish literature, which can be seen from the bibliography of the Finnish literature which he published in 1856-57. In the statutes given in 1960 the main emphasis still lies on the collection of Finnish literature even if the National Bibliography and the union catalogue of foreign acquisitions in the research libraries are mentioned. Perhaps the most remarkable point is the task to promote and develop co-operation between research libraries in the country.

The Library assumed the formal responsibility for the National Bibliography as late as in 1949 even if the Bibliography had been edited on its premises much earlier.¹⁵ In the 1960s, in order to rationalize the work in the legal deposit libraries, efforts were made to start cataloguing the deposit copies centrally, however without success.¹⁶ Co-operation with publishers was more successful. In 1968 publishers started sending their new books immediately after their publication to the Library to be catalogued for the monthly journal of the Finnish book trade.¹⁷ Since then the Library has co-operated closely with the book trade. For instance in 1992 the Library introduced a new type of co-operative cataloguing with the wholesaler Kirjavälitys. The International Standard Book Numbering (ISBN) system was introduced in 1971 in co-operation with the Finnish Publishers' Association.¹⁸ The co-operation continues. Together with the wholesaler Kirjavälitys the Library has set up a unit which maintains the Finnish version the ONIX for Books -format and the services attached to it.¹⁹ The Library is also compiling the annual statistics on the Finnish book publishing.

Starting in 1978 the National Bibliography has been produced with the help of automated means and already in 1998 the project to convert the previously published volumes of the Bibliography was concluded.²⁰ The National Bibliography went online 1990 (the database FENNICA) and in 1992 it was made available on the Internet as one of the first National Bibliographies, if not the first. The Library's other catalogues went online in 1991. As the first in the Nordic countries the Finnish National Bibliography was made available as a CD-ROM version in 1990 and published in this form until 2003. To cope with the increasing number of published titles and the increasing demand of fast delivery of bibliographic records, caused by the implementation of a new library automation system in the university libraries, the Library had to find ways to strengthen its cataloguing capacity. When two other legal deposit libraries were prepared to share the burden a distributed cataloguing arrangement was launched in the beginning of 1979. This arrangement lasted until the first years of the 2000s.²¹ In 1988 the public libraries' service company Kirjastopalvelu Oy (the later BTJ) joined the arrangement. Against its contribution the company received the right to sell national bibliographic records to public libraries. The co-operation still continues today.

¹⁵ The bibliography was published in two parallel series, one containing the publications in Finnish and the other one in Swedish. Their publishers were Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura (The Finnish literature society) and Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland (The Swedish literature society in Finland).

¹⁶ One of the main obstacles was that libraries were lacking common cataloguing rules. Even after the rules had been adopted the centralized cataloguing was met with resistance. One of the directors of the legal deposit libraries praised the cards because their back side was blank and could be used for many useful purposes! Another reason for the resistance was that the libraries could not receive the catalogue cards together with the books but some months later.

¹⁷ The legal deposit copies were to be delivered only a few times a year and were, therefore, always received late after their publication.

¹⁸ The ISSN numbering was introduced in 1975.

¹⁹ ONIX = Online Information eXchange, an exchange format for the book chain. In connection with allocating ISBN numbers the information about the book shall since 2007 be sent in ONIX format.

²⁰ A project with the aim to produce the National bibliography of the period from 1488 to 1800 retrospectively was completed in 2001.

²¹ The two legal deposit libraries were the university libraries of Jyväskylä and Turku. Jyväskylä discontinued its participation in 2000. Turku followed a couple of years later. During a number of years also two other libraries contributed with a smaller number of records. A similar arrangement was discussed in the United Kingdom already in the 1960s in the two well-known reports, the Parry Report (1967) and the Dainton Report (1969). It was again taken up at the end of the 1980s and in the beginning of the 1990s.

The Legal Deposit Act of 1981 also contained a provision for audiovisual material. For several reasons the responsibility for the cataloguing of this new material was not solved by the Ministry before 1998 when the Library was given the task with the resources to set up a National Archive for Recorded Sound. The work started in 1999. In co-operation with the Finnish Broadcasting Company and a private Finnish Institute of Recorded Sound the Library succeeded in creating a catalogue of all known Finnish music recordings from 1901 onwards. The retrospective cataloguing was completed in 2001 and alongside it a substantial amount of recordings from the time before 1981 had been purchased. In this way the National Discography, a part of the database VIOLA, came into existence. This was a major extension of the Library's tasks to collect, preserve and make available the country's published cultural heritage.

After a decade of preparatory work the old Legal Deposit Act was replaced in 2007 by the Law on Collecting and Preserving Cultural Materials. It covers not only the traditional printed material but also born-digital material published on the Internet.²² The implementation of the law will be discussed further down.

The Library started editing a union catalogue of foreign acquisitions in Finnish research libraries in the beginning of 1930s and the first volume was printed in 1931. Due to the increasing number of new titles purchased by the participating libraries the printed union catalogue was in the 1960s lagging behind too much to be of any practical use. In the beginning of 1980s new ways were sought to improve the situation. In 1972 an automated union catalogue of periodicals could be introduced but the union catalogue of books did not receive a permanent solution until the new online library system for all university libraries was installed (1989-1993) and a union catalogue for the whole network was set up in 1993.

Already in 1951 – earlier than in most other countries - the Library started microfilming all Finnish newspapers. This work is still going on. In order to strengthen the Library's preservation capacity a new service unit, Centre for Microfilming and Conservation, was established in 1990 in the town of Mikkeli, 230 kilometres North-East of Helsinki. In 1989 the Library also established a unit for retroconversion of catalogues in the town of Kotka, 100 kilometres East of Helsinki. In accordance with the Government's policy on regional development both units were placed outside the Helsinki metropolitan area, which was the only way to receive additional staff resources and financial support from the local authorities. Even if the units primarily served the Library's own needs they were planned as service units for other libraries as well. For instance the services of the retroconversion unit in Kotka were used by several libraries. When the main needs of the catalogue conversion were satisfied the unit was closed in 1998 whereas the microfilming and conservation unit is a permanent part of the Library, employing today more than 50 people. It also takes care of the Library's digitisation programmes. As a matter of fact it now has the status of a National Digitisation Centre carrying out digitisation even for other memory organizations.

²² The law no 1433/2007 came into force in the beginning of 2008. The number of the copies of the printed material to be delivered is still six as in the previous law. Small brochures have to be delivered in two copies. Small leaflets without any substantial contents need not to be delivered. Printed newspapers have now to be delivered in one copy only instead of the previous two copies.

LATER EXPANSION OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY TASKS

In the 1970s research libraries recognized a need of a common service organization. In two committee reports (published in 1974 and 1978) proposals were made to establish a central unit for the research libraries. The proposals aimed at something which very well could have been called a 'national library'. *De facto* the national library tasks should according to the proposal should have been moved from Helsinki University Library into the proposed new unit entrusted with a number of additional tasks. The result would have been a separate national library but at that time it was not opportune to use such a word. The proposal illustrates the situation even in other respects. It was not self-evident into which direction Helsinki University Library was going to develop. The Ministry of Education tried to persuade the University to better coordinate its library system (with about 160 library units) and to make the University Library its main library even in the operational sense of the word. When the State in 1974 took over the Student Union's large library it was, as an Undergraduate Library, made a department of the University Library. The same happened to the Library of the Scientific Societies in 1979. Therefore these new responsibilities gave the impression that the university library tasks might dominate.

However, the proposal of 1974 did not receive the Government's support. Therefore an alternative proposal was made in 1978 to give the proposed new tasks together with the necessary resources to the Helsinki University Library, provided that the functions were placed in a separate organizational unit within the Library and that the status of the Library as the National Library was regulated with statutes given by the Government. Even if the proposal represented a new realism it also illustrated the suspicions of the other university libraries towards Helsinki University Library and perhaps even more towards the University of Helsinki, the oldest, biggest and 'most beautiful' of the universities of the country. Libraries were afraid that the possible new resources given to the Library could be used somewhere else within the University or that the Library would prioritize the local needs of the University. Of course, this was only a psychological problem because the use of the recurrent grants was at that time strictly regulated in the state budget. At the policy level psychology is, however, a hard fact.²³

The psychological problems were solved, at least partially, when the Library, according to the law of 1991 received a Board with a strong external representation. This made it possible for the Ministry to give the Library new tasks and to remove the corresponding resources from the Ministry to the Library. In 1992 the main part of the practical co-ordination and planning tasks were moved from the Ministry to the Library and in 1993 the Automation Unit of Finnish Research Libraries followed. The Automation Unit had been established in 1974 and during the twenty years of its existence it had been the university libraries' main centralized resource, if not the only, in the field of library automation. Since most university libraries had limited local IT resources at that time, it is difficult to overestimate the role and impact of the Unit. It was instrumental when the VTLS integrated library system was installed during the years 1989-1993 in all university libraries. The result

²³ It is an old truth that every generation has to carry its own fights. Even if Finnish libraries are internationally known for their ability to co-operate the everyday reality is not only sunshine. Even today there can be seen such an antagonism between the National library and the other libraries.

was a network, called *Linnea*, consisting of three elements: the VTLS software, local library systems and a physical union catalogue.²⁴ The University data transmission network FUNET was, and still is, used to facilitate communication between the local systems. The Automation Unit had been active in the development of the necessary standards for bibliographic formats and cataloguing rules and it also built up a number of network services. When the Unit in 1993 moved over to the Library the Library received the task to function as the support organization of the automation network of the university libraries. This was an important extension of the Library's national library tasks. It formed the basis on which the Library's later development as the service unit of the library network has been built.

The Automation Unit had created some operational services of its own, which were taken over by the Library. It had, for instance, created an article index based on shared cataloguing. A number of special libraries in particular were indexing Finnish journal articles in their subject fields into the database which now carries the name ARTO. Today it contains over one million references mainly starting from the beginning of the 1990s, however with some material beginning in 1977. Today about 40 libraries are indexing articles in about 600 journals. The database hosts some special bibliographies, for instance in the fields of history and literary science. There are also plenty of links to articles in full-text.

During the latter half of the 1990s the role of the Library's common services to university libraries was growing rapidly. The biggest programmes were organized as consortia.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES' AUTOMATION NETWORK LINNEA2

In 1997 the university libraries decided to start negotiations of the purchase of a new library automation system. Helsinki University Library was given the responsibility for the practical executive tasks including all preparatory work, negotiations with the suppliers, installation of the system as well as its maintenance and further development. In the course of the process, which required several years, all university libraries agreed on the same integrated library system soft-ware. After some hesitation the universities also accepted the Library's proposal to mount all the local library systems on one and the same server and to outsource its technical maintenance.²⁵ Every university had to pay its share of the price of the shared server and software and, of course, of the running costs. As a result the universities jointly owned the common server environment. At the beginning of 2000 the universities signed a consortium agreement, the first formal university consortium in Finland.²⁶ Helsinki

²⁴ Esko Häkli, 'A unified automation system using VTLS for academic libraries in Finland' in: *Program 26* (1992), pp. 239-248. The union catalogue is created automatically but requires, nevertheless, quite a lot of editorial work. In the 1990s, when the first automated union catalogue was planned, some enthusiastic believers in the unrestricted capabilities of the computerized systems tried to convince the decision makers of their view that a physical union catalogue could be replaced by a virtual one. Happily enough they were in the minority. Existence of a union catalogue built on unified standards was of great help even when the present joint system for all university libraries was installed.

²⁵ The service provider taking care of the servers was the not-for-profit company CSC, fully owned by the Ministry of Education. Today its official name is CSC – IT Center for Science. The server was a SunE10000. Outsourcing the technical service has saved libraries substantial amounts of money and effort for the libraries.

²⁶ See: Esko Häkli, 'Towards a National Digital Library' in: Esko Häkli, *Off the Record 2. Articles and Papers. Aufsätze und Vorträge*. Helsinki 2002. Pp. 96-114. The second university consortium agreement concerning the Virtual University was signed a couple of weeks later and received much more publicity. In addition to the universities the Library of the Parliament and the National Repository Library are members of the Consortium.

University Library as the National Library has acted as the Executive of the *Linnea2* Consortium.

At the practical level the Library took care of the adaptation and implementing of the new system, all data conversions needed when data was loaded from the existing system to the new Voyager system as well as of the support the member libraries needed. At the end of 2001 the OPAC databases of the individual libraries were installed in the new system, which is still in production. One of the big tasks of the National Library's network services division is to co-ordinate the service network and to develop the system further. Later even the libraries of the polytechnics have installed the Voyager software and are using the same technical service provider as the university libraries as well as the services of the National Library.

In October 2007 an important technical rearrangement was made with far reaching policy consequences. The server infrastructure was consolidated: a new powerful server replaced all old servers.²⁷ This time the purchase could be financed with a special Government grant. Consequently the *Linnea2* Consortium is now only a customer of the server maintenance company CSC and needs no longer to carry the responsibility of the owner of the hardware, which now belongs to the service supplier.

The description above may give an impression that the Finnish university libraries have rich resources at their disposal. This is not the whole truth, rather the contrary. Even if the joint arrangements cost money and even if the results can be characterized as a kind of spearhead applications their aim is to improve the quality of the service and save money. Finnish libraries have been successful in both respects. Large servers have proved to be very reliable. As regards the financial aspects of server consolidation, it has been estimated that the server acquisition in 2007 will pay itself back in two years. To achieve the same high service level with the help of individual local applications would have required many times more resources for the hardware, software and staff.

The same policy of saving can be seen in the efforts to use the available technology as efficiently as possible. Cataloguing, for instance, has traditionally been one of the most costly library routines. In the early 2000s the National Library built a technical environment which enabled the libraries to copy bibliographic records not only from Finnish sources but even from no-cost bibliographic databases of big foreign utilities and to do this 'on the fly'.²⁸ Copy cataloguing has been used not only for cataloguing the new acquisitions but also for retrospective conversion. Today, depending on the material, the share of the copy cataloguing in the university libraries may be up to 85 per cent of all cataloguing. Of course, this applies to the printed publications. A different pattern is followed in the handling of the metadata of the electronic resources.

²⁷ Initially polytechnics libraries had their own centralized Sun server, also hosted by the CSC. A separate server was in use for Metalib portal application. In addition libraries started to use CSC's disk storage system. Details of the arrangement can be found e.g. in the Annual Report 2007-2008 delivered to the CENL: http://www.cenl.org/docs/annual_reports/Finland_annual_report_2007.pdf

²⁸ The tools used are the BookWhere Z39.50 client and Usemarcon format converter with customised conversion tables.

THE FINNISH ELECTRONIC LIBRARY (*FINELIB*) CONSORTIUM

The second consortium *FinELib* (Finnish Electronic Library) concentrates on purchasing electronic publications, first of all scholarly journals. The first license was signed in 1997 but it was not until 1998 that the Ministry of Education launched a major funding programme for purchasing and financing licenses. During the project period 1997-1999 the Library took care of the tasks of the Secretariat of the programme but from 2000 on the programme has been an integral part of the work of the Library. *FinELib* is a co-operative programme, organized as a consortium consisting of about 110 registered members who represent universities, polytechnics, research institutes and the regional public libraries. The *FinELib* Consortium is organized in a slightly different way from that of the *Linnea2* Consortium. There is no formal consortium agreement signed by all participants. Instead the four Councils representing the four library sectors have signed a Memorandum of Understanding of the principles of the consortium, a kind of constitution. Because all members are not interested in all available licenses it is more practical to set up a separate consortium for every license. Consequently there are several sub-consortia.

The purchase of the licences for the university libraries is financed partly through a central grant, partly out of the budgets of the participating libraries. Today the main part of the access to electronic publications in Finnish libraries is purchased through this channel, in the case of the universities to 85 per cent. In 2008 the number of the available e-publications was 17 656 periodicals, 131 bibliographic databases, 319 reference works and 296 606 e-books. The total turnover of the Consortium is somewhat over €12 million a year of which 3,1 million Euro are granted centrally to the acquisitions of the universities and polytechnics. The National Library is preparing and negotiating the purchase of all licenses. It also makes the final decisions. For that purpose it is collecting the necessary information and compiling statistics of the use of the purchased material. It is also organizing training.

The biggest single task besides the licensing has been the work on a portal to the electronic material. The portal *Nelli* was opened in 2004.²⁹ In addition to functioning as a portal it is also offering other services. It is taking care of the identification of the users and their rights and through it libraries also can have access to other support services of the National Library.

MANAGING THE CONSORTIA

Consortia are by definition joint enterprises of their members. Consortia need not only clear rules and written agreements; they also have to be managed and it has to be done in a way which gives the members a possibility to influence the policy and the individual decisions. Even if the decisions have to be based on a consensus consortia must be able to act efficiently. Both of the Consortia described above have their administrative bodies which reflect the interests of the members. Even if the *Linnea2* Consortium is explicitly a consortium of the universities, universities are represented in its Steering Committee and Consortium

²⁹ The portal is based on MetaLib and SFX applications.

meetings by their libraries. The nature of the Consortium is more or less technical whereas universities, polytechnics and research institutes, together with their teachers and researchers, have more direct interests in the *FinELib* Consortium. Therefore, they have also a strong representation in the Steering Committee of the Consortium. The practical questions are taken care of by a Consortium Committee, consisting of library directors. The selection of licenses is prepared by expert groups of different subject areas.

The active participation of the membership is not the only feature of the Consortia. They have also a rather strong infrastructure at their disposal. Even if libraries were co-operating earlier the co-operation was based on voluntary contributions of the participating libraries. There was no work force, nor a real administration, only different types of working groups were available as instruments. Today the Consortia can rely on the National Library, which has the role of the Executive. It makes its staff resources available, prepares the decisions and takes care of their implementation. In other words, things have to happen. Even if the policy decisions are being made by the Consortia the Executive plays, of course, an important role. Its expertise has a great influence both on the policy questions and the practical decisions.³⁰

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY: THE CONTENT

The National Library started the development of digital library services early on. The initial view was that the main functional modules of the digital library are an integrated library management system, an information retrieval portal and a document management system. In Finland all these modules have been implemented and the National Library is responsible for them. As mentioned above the installation of the present library automation system was completed in 2001 and it is in use at 21 universities, 27 polytechnics and 16 special libraries. The information retrieval portal *Nelli* became operational in 2004 and is now used by 20 universities, 27 polytechnics and 19 regional public library districts. *Doria*, the Digital Objects Management System went into production in 2005 and the system is now used by 3 universities and from 2008 by all polytechnics.³¹

When building up digital collections the Library is not only purchasing access to electronic contents through licensing. It is also proceeding on two other strands, legal deposit and digitisation. Alongside the preparations of the new legal deposit law the Library in 1997 started to develop technical procedures for handling the electronic legal deposit and the archiving of Internet publications in particular. Even if the permanent archiving is still an unsolved problem the Library was well prepared when the new law came into force at the beginning of 2008. The material is no longer 'delivered' but the National Library has to download it. In addition, radio and television broadcasts and films are included and they have to be delivered to the National Audiovisual Archive, a separate independent institution.

When the Act on Collecting and Preserving Cultural Materials came into force all legal regulations for the legal deposit of electronic material were in place.³² The material accessible

³⁰ I have discussed these issues in my earlier paper 'Creating New Information Infrastructures through Co-operation' in: Esko Häkli, *Off the Record 2. Articles and Papers. Aufsätze und Vorträge*. Helsinki 2002. Pp. 84-95.

³¹ The service is based on DSpace, which will be complemented by DigiTool for certain kinds of materials.

³² The Act (no 1433/2007). Earlier there had been no law on collecting the radio and television programmes. Arranging

on the Internet is retrieved and stored at periodic intervals, at least once a year. In addition selected so-called thematic harvesting is carried out. The Archive, maintained by the Library, contains more than 130 million files.³³ The Internet material has now been made available to the users, when Finland's Internet Archive, as it is called, was opened on 2 April 2009. So far the archived resources can be accessed only on the premises of the Library but they will soon be made available also in the other legal deposit libraries.³⁴ The Internet Archive is the newest expansion of the Library's legal obligations to preserve the country's cultural heritage.

The Library started its digitisation activities in the 1990s. In 1995 a test database for digital images was created and digitisation of various types of selected material started. A common database for libraries, archives and museums was created but the co-operation did at that stage not prove successful because archives and museums had not yet drafted their own policies for the future. The situation changed and in 2003 they wanted to continue the co-operation. An agreement was reached to support the development of the Library's digitisation unit to a common service unit for all sectors of the memory institutions.

Large scale digitisation started in the National Library in 2000. Experiences of the microfilming had shown that reformatting of library materials was a task which required special expertise and a guarantee of continuity. At least in a country like Finland it had proved difficult to find service suppliers able to meet the requirements. Therefore it was decided to try to build the digitisation capacity in-house in the Library.

The largest single digitisation project, so far, has been the *Historical Newspaper Library* covering the Finnish newspapers from 1771 to 1890, to be extended soon to 1900. The Newspaper Library contains about one million pages and was opened in 2001. It has become a popular service with 4,7 million page views in 2009. Another project, called *PERI+*, was launched in 2000 with the task to digitize complete sets of important periodicals. Its progress has, however, been rather slow. Other groups of material which have been digitized or which are in the process are 1) about 125 000 pages brochures, price lists and other minor material of industrial companies from the years from 1810 to 1944, 2) valuable historical maps from the Nordenskiöld Collection, 3) the large collection of fragments of medieval publications on parchment, and finally 4) theses of the University from 1642 to 1827, when the University was located in Turku.

Mass digitisation of monographs started in 2008 when the Library installed a large scale automatic scanner. The monograph digitisation process is the first one that was designed with long term preservation in mind. The Library is using the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard METS maintained by the Library of Congress.³⁵ Gradually all

financing for this new task was one reason why it took so long time to get the law enacted. The other reason was the delay of the revision of the Copyright Act.

³³ The material contains millions of websites and image files and thousands of word, audio and video files. The National Library uses Heritrix software and other tools developed by the highly successful IIPC consortium to harvest and access the web content. It is likely that more dedicated tools will be needed for depositing other materials, such as electronic newspapers. It remains to be seen if the national libraries can co-operate successfully in these areas as well.

³⁴ All users can check - using the historical URL of the resource - if a Web document has been archived, and when, at <http://verkkoarkisto.kansalliskirjasto.fi:8080/index.jsp?lang=en>.

³⁵ The end product is a METS container which includes all the relevant descriptive and administrative metadata (including

digitisation processes of other materials will be revised in a similar way, which will make it possible to preserve the data for future generations via migration. Mass digitisation is not reasonable unless preservation is taken into account from the very beginning of the process.

The paper based library material is not the only object of digitisation. When developing the National Sound Archive the Library has also initiated a major project with the aim to digitise old gramophone records. The work, which started in 2005 and aimed at digitising elder material before the legal deposit, is carried out jointly with the private Finnish Institute of Recorded Sound and the Finnish Broadcasting Company.³⁶ Recordings received as legal deposit are being digitised by the Library's Digitisation Centre in Mikkeli.

Even if electronic publishing does not belong to the core functions of the Library the Library has been active in a couple of projects which are close to publishing. In 1996 the Library launched a project called ELEKTRA in order to set up a mechanism to collect full-text versions of articles of printed Finnish scholarly journals.³⁷ An additional aim was to develop a procedure for making copyrighted publications available in the Internet. Therefore the Library started to co-operate with the collecting agency KOPIOSTO. The project resulted in a permanent service and contains for the time being about 18 000 mainly new articles in full-text. The annual increase is about 2000 articles from about 30 scientific journals.

On behalf of the University the repository *E-thesis* for doctoral (and to some extent also master's) theses was launched in 1997. In connection with the Open Access efforts of the Ministry of Education the Library in 2006 started to develop a local institutional repository for Open Access publishing and the *E-thesis* was launched within the new service called *Doria*. Since then the use of the repository has grown fast. The Library has developed the *Doria* service as a technical platform to be used for cataloguing and access to digital collections. The Library is maintaining the technical infrastructure whereas universities and polytechnics will take care of the contents and administration of their repositories. For the time being the repository houses theses of four other universities. Even if the polytechnics are setting up a common repository of their own they will be using the technical platform maintained by the National Library.

THE NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY

The Ministry of Education has launched a project called The 'National Digital Library' for the period 2008-2011. The aim is to promote the availability of the information resources of libraries, archives and museums. 35 institutions are directly involved with the project, which has a total budget of €16 million, but indirectly the project will influence more than 700 libraries, archives and museums. The National Library is responsible for the development

preservation metadata in PREMIS format), in addition to the text of the resource in METS/ALTO format. Image files are linked to the METS, with necessary structural metadata. docWORKS is the tool used for post-processing of the digitised content. Close co-operation with the software provider has been very important means of making sure that all the required functionality is available.

³⁶ The first target is to digitize about 9 000 recordings (78 rpm) from the period of 1901-1961. Recordings which no longer are copyrighted can be listened freely to in the Internet. In addition 45 rpm recordings have been digitised. The Library's Digitisation Centre is from the year 2008 on digitising Compact cassettes.

³⁷ At that time the content of the journals was already prepared by digital means. The digital texts were sent to the printers but not used in other ways. The task of the project was to collect them and make them available online. All subscription-based journals could not make their electronic texts available immediately. Normally one year was kept behind a moving wall.

of the national user interface whereas the National Archives are working on the long-term preservation. The National Digital Library has its roots in several initiatives which were initially launched separately. In addition to the two sub-projects even digitisation of most essential non-digital collections is included in the programme. The project is co-operating with the *Europeana* in order to ensure that contents of the Finnish National Digital Library will become available on *Europeana*.

Once in production in 2011, the common user interface will have a major impact on how and what kind of services libraries, archives and museums can provide. When front office and back office systems are totally separate, memory institutions have the freedom to decide what content is provided to the users and in what way. The National Library, for instance, can merge its national bibliographic databases and thus provide access to all national bibliographic data via a single service. It will be interesting to see, what impact this will have for instance on our - and users' - understanding of what the national bibliography is.

Digital preservation system, to be implemented in the next phase of the National Digital Library initiative in 2013-2014, will also force the memory institutions to change their current processes. A good example is the book digitisation process in the National Library, which is based on (and which has had an impact upon) standards work carried out in the long-term preservation arm of the National Digital Library initiative.

ABOUT THE ECONOMY OF THE LIBRARY

Until the beginning of the 1990s the State budget itemized in detail the purposes of the recurrent grants-in-aid given to the universities. The Ministry of Education was able to influence the details of the expenditure to library purposes because libraries received separate allowances for different purposes and because it was not possible to transfer money from one expense heading to another. In the 1990s the budgeting principles underwent a radical change. In 1994 for instance the University of Helsinki adopted the so called single line budget and since then it receives one block grant and has to decide itself how to allocate it to the various purposes.³⁸ This changed the situation of the university libraries. They became a totally internal issue within their universities and the Ministry was no longer deciding upon their resources or, for that matter, not even on their existence. Because libraries are not producing examinations, which are the basis for the annual grants of the universities, in the eyes of the university administrators they became cost factors.

The University of Helsinki had always been proud of its Library and even used its national library tasks as an argument for the national role of the University. Introduction of the new budget principles changed the situation almost over night. After having been a pride of the University the Library suddenly became a burden! At the beginning it took some time for the Ministry and the University to agree on the division between the national library and the university library tasks. The national library tasks were to be financed separately out of the global university budget and were not burdening the budget of the University. The situation was rather uneasy for the Library. The Library could not directly participate in the budget negotiations between the Ministry and the University. Until 2004 it had the possibility

³⁸ Esko Häkli, 'From detailed grant-in-aid to single line budget' in: *European Research Libraries Cooperation: The LIBER Quarterly* 6 (1996) no 1, pp. 1-10.

to discuss with the Ministry and the representatives of the University about its work and development plans but the discussions were not official budget negotiations. In addition, the University and the Library had separately to agree on the University's share of the Library's budget, because the University was using the Library's services. These negotiations have not been too easy.³⁹

The procedure was changed in 2005 when the Library received the right to negotiate its National Library budget directly with the Ministry. The agreement on the National Library budget is now attached to the agreement between the Ministry and the University. Basically the agreement covers a period of three years and the National Library grant is explicitly specified in the State budget. In addition, the Library continues negotiating with the University on the services, which the University, so to say, is 'buying' from the Library.

The budget of the Library consists of the following main parts:

- the National Library grant, specified in the State budget
- the share of the University as compensation of the services the Library is rendering to the University
- other income: the share of the other library sectors of the cost of the network services and the income earned through fee-based services

In 2008 the total income was about 21,9 million Euro and the expenditure 21 million Euro. The income was divided as follows: the national library grant €13 300 000, the share of the University €3 571 400 and the other income about €5 000 000, which includes the special grants for financing of the services of the public libraries and the libraries of the polytechnics, the recurrent grant for purchasing licenses to the university libraries and, finally, the Library's own earnings. In a normal way the Library reports to the Ministry about its activities and results. The more detailed monitoring of the Library's work belongs to the Library Board, which is also making the most important policy decisions.

SOME WORDS IN PLACE OF A CONCLUSION

The development of the National Library of Finland towards the institution it is today has not been straight forward. The decisions influencing the Library's role and tasks have been depending on the development outside the Library. We have seen that the decision to give the Library the responsibility for the university libraries' automation network became the basis for the Library's development to the central service provider for the library network. It was only natural, though not necessarily self-evident, that the Library also was given the task to function as the Executive for the acquisition scheme of electronic publications. The Library's activities in the field of electronic library services have grown organically.

Another important change in the environment was the change of the budgeting principles of the universities. After the introduction of the single line budget the Ministry of Education could no longer interfere in the co-operation between the libraries. Libraries, or as a matter of fact the universities, in their turn were no longer interested in using their

³⁹ Recently the University has reorganized its own libraries into one administrative unit and made a decision, which may cause some confusion. After the name 'Helsinki University Library' had so to say become free the University decided to give it to this library organization.

resources to common goals but preferred concentrating on their local core functions. If the university libraries wanted to continue the co-ordination and develop common plans they had to do it without the influence of the Ministry. The result was that the university libraries in 1996 established the Council for Finnish University Libraries.⁴⁰ After the initial period Helsinki University Library took care of the tasks of its Secretariat, which meant that the National Library did the practical work and the Council represented the interests of the libraries.

The new single-line budgeting created a new type of financial parochialism whereas the accelerating development of the networking would have required more central financing. In such a situation it was natural to develop the National Library towards a common service organization and to canalize a greater part of the development resources through it. For the National Library such a development has meant greater responsibilities and required more dynamism. The basic technical solutions necessary for the library network on a national scale are largely in the hands of the National Library. The pace of the development has during the recent years been fast and nothing is suggesting that it will slow down. Therefore the Library has to strengthen its own expertise and also to make sure that it has all channels at the international level open for efficient information exchange. And finally, it is to be hoped that libraries can be able to develop and maintain a constructive mode of co-operation for the benefit of all libraries and their users.

Appendix

THE PRESENT TASKS OF THE LIBRARY

The main functions of the Library include:

1. The national library tasks mainly based on the collections. The Library, among other things,
 - supervises the delivery of the legal deposit on behalf of all legal deposit libraries
 - collects and archives electronic publications as legal deposit, either by downloading them from the publishers' systems or harvesting on the Internet
 - maintains the collection of the country's own literary output, both printed and digital
 - maintains the National Archive of the Recorded Sound
 - produces the National Bibliography and the National Discography, maintains their databases and produces the national book statistics
 - is responsible for the Standard Numbering
 - offers services to publishers (bibliographic records, ONIX service)
 - runs large preservation programmes such as conservation, microfilming and digitisation
 - functions as research library and maintains large collections of foreign research publications and other source material
 - carries out a substantial cultural programme and a number of research projects

⁴⁰ In connection with the budget negotiations between the Ministry and the University of Helsinki in 1996 the Ministry encouraged the Library to assume the responsibility for the co-operation between the university libraries.

2. Tasks related to the Library's role as the central service organization for the library network. The Library, among other things,

- maintains and develops the integrated library system used by the universities, polytechnics, some special libraries and the state archives (Linnea2)
- runs a number of databases, for instance union catalogues
- maintains the general thesauri and music thesauri (in Finnish and Swedish) and as a partner in FinnONTO project supports the development of ontologies based on these thesauri in order to foster the Finnish Semantic Web
- runs the acquisition scheme of electronic publications for all library sectors (FinELib)
- develops the centralized Digital Library services for the different library sectors and runs a number of services based on it, such as digital object management system (DORIA) and an information search portal (Nelli)
- runs the National Digitisation Centre
- takes care of the necessary standardization, such as rules for cataloguing and metadata as well as data formats of the most different kinds and more recently, standards related to long term preservation and digital publishing
- compiles the library statistics for the research libraries
- functions as the Executive of the practical co-operation between libraries
- co-ordinates the acquisition of the common user interface for the National Digital Library initiative

3. Other public services include, among other things,

- maintenance and development of a repository of articles of scholarly journals as full-text (ELEKTRA)
- development of an infrastructure for open access repositories for universities' and polytechnics' theses and other publications (DORIA)
- maintenance of the open access repository of theses for the University of Helsinki (E-Thesis)
- maintenance of the University's local library catalogue HELKA, which also includes the catalogue of the National Library
- functioning as one of the support organizations for the Digital Library services of all memory organizations (persistent identifiers and resolution services based on them; co-ordination of the development of thesauri).

The listing is by no means exhaustive, nor is it detailed enough. Moreover it reveals nothing of the dimensions of the individual tasks. However, the IT based network services have become much more visible than the traditional national library tasks, even if even the latter are increasingly making use of the modern technology. In the long run, many of the library's most popular services will be unique (for instance the Web archive or the newspaper archive, long term preservation of digital publications) in the sense that nobody else in the country will be legally or technically able to provide similar services.