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Synergy towards shared standards for ALM*.

Latvian scenario

ALM* - archives, libraries, museums

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Summary. The report reflects the Latvian scenario in co-operation for standardization of memory institutions`. Differences and problems as well as benefits and possible solutions, tasks and activities of Standardization Technical Committee for Archives, Libraries and Museums Work (MABSTK) are analysed. Map of standards as a vision for ALM collaboration in standardization and “Digitizer’s Handbook” (translated in English) prepared by the Competence Centre for Digitization of the National Library of Latvia (NLL) are presented. Shortcut to building the National Digital Library Letonica and its digital architecture (with pilot project about the Latvian composer Jazeps Vitols and the digital collection of ex-president of Latvia Vaira Vike-Freiberga) reflects the practical co-operation between different players.

In Latvia the Law on Standardization states that standardization aims to:

- ❖ identify general multi-applicable principles for future solutions;
- ❖ provide conditions for optimal arrangements in a specific domain.[4]

Standards are not laws – in democratic society they serve as a guidance or recommendations.

The everyday practice shows that the variety of standards, the lack of knowledge how to use them, make them compatible, and ensure their long-term use causes confusion to people.

The functions and the scope of memory institutions in digital era differ as well. For example:

- Archives shall preserve documents (single copies) for their users' needs;
- Libraries are concerned with the preservation and availability of the copies of analogue and online publications;
- Museums are to provide digital information on the unique objects of their collections.



ALM information and function diversity:

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Tomas Lidman, previous National librarian, at present National archivist of Sweden, Vice President of the International Council of Archives pointed that there are two things common for libraries and archives:

1. idealism;
2. wish to serve their clients. [3]

“Differences between libraries, archives and museums will largely have to disappear and their different philosophies, functions and techniques integrated in ways that are as yet unclear. It is possible and indeed necessary - to reorganize digital records into a new cognitive architecture.” [1]



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Kenneth Hamma //J.Paul Getty Trust [Europes Cultural and Scientific Heritage in a Digital World, Berlin, 22.02.2007]. -

http://www.eudico.de/download/vortraege/hamma_berlin.pdf

Cooperation in interdisciplinary standardization depends on:

- ❖ the knowledge of leading specialists;
- ❖ the skill of mutual understanding – mental interoperability;
- ❖ the factor of will or purpose;
- ❖ the necessity dictated by circumstances influenced by financial factor;
- ❖ the support of an umbrella organization (in Latvia archives, libraries and museums are under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture).

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Latvian Standardization Technical Committee for Archives, Libraries and Museums Work (abbreviation in Latvian – MABSTK) was established on December 2002, expanding the Technical Committee for standardization of Library Work (since 1997). Member institutions of MABSTK: Association of Latvian Academic Libraries, Directorate General of Latvia State Archives, Latvian Museum Association, Latvian Museum Council, Latvian Society of Archivists, Library Association of Latvia, Ltd. TietoEnator Alise, National Library of Latvia, State Agency *Culture Information Systems*”, State Authority of Museums, University of Latvia (<http://www.lnb.lv/en/for-librarians/standartisation-work>)

The main tasks of MABSTK: working out standardization projects and corresponding activity programmes; adopting international standards and elaborating national documents in branches of archives, museums and libraries; implementing unified terminology; giving consultations; organizing seminar series etc. The listing of 43 ISO standards (<http://www.lnb.lv/lv/bibliotekariem/standarti/latvijas-standarti>) and 24 normative documents (<http://www.lnb.lv/lv/bibliotekariem/standarti/vadlinijas>) adopted in Latvia (including several Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) documents translated in Latvian since 1997).

At the end of 2007 MABSTK celebrated its fifth anniversary summarizing achievements and planning new initiatives so that in future the memory institutions of Latvia to participate in Europe culture heritage project *Europeana*.

Interdisciplinary cooperation in standardization is important for implementation of common digitalization projects and establishing culture/web portal in Latvia. It is very hard to consider the standardization work as a soulful one, still it is very necessary. It demands professional knowledge in several domains, accuracy, knowledge of terminology, and creativity when forming new professional terms.

For a long time in Latvia archives, libraries and museums have been completely independent of each other supervised by different ministries, tackling their own set of problems, and often emphasizing the priority of one's own field over others.

When MABSTK came together for the first time in 2002 its members had almost no information on interdisciplinary problems. I do hope that after these 5 years we know and understand each other a little bit better.

The word "standardization" is not popular today, it creates an association with the restriction of freedom among the people ridden by the ideas of democracy. For this reason we let ourselves make mistakes, and then later on we realize that every project, every new initiative should be placed into a definite framework from the very beginning to provide it being predictable and sustainable.

What is standard in fact? It is *a sample, a model to be followed*.

The avalanche-like increase of common information volume causes the necessity for more qualitative information resources where the objects can be:

- browsable;
- searchable;
- identifiable;
- browsable in a hierarchy system;
- arranged according to its significance;
- digital copies of them can be received as batch-files in your PC at home.

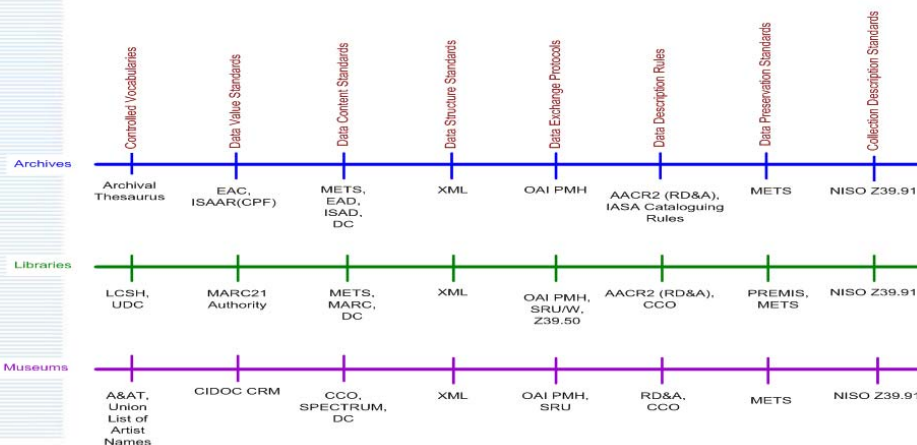
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For such provisions concordant standards are necessary. I would like to offer to your attention the map of standards of Latvia's memory institutions which is not exhaustive, of course; it is an attempt to show a graphic, more practical version for everyday use. It's just our vision.

Standards for archives, libraries and museums co-operation in Latvia



This map was prepared for the international seminar „**Sharing information and resources: cooperation of museums, archives and libraries in the field of standardization**” which was held in Riga, in April of 2007.

The seminar pointed out the areas where archives, libraries and museums (ALM) have made progress and reached some common goals as well as highlighted the areas for more efficient cooperation in the future. The participants noticed a certain exclusion of museums from common concern. There still exists some “mental inoperability” among ALM professionals. They should learn more from each other; determine the areas of common interest and distinguish the activities being completely their own individual domain. There is also a need to formalize the cooperation.

Standardization stands as a strong instrument for reaching common goals. Information access and data preservation were indicated as the key issues for cooperation and standardization. Regarding information access it was concluded that standardization should not focus solely on the content of ALM collections but also on information architecture and tools. Preservation is another area where joint efforts should be applied because of the similar nature of ALM materials. This applies not only to common standards but also to sharing resources and equipment. Participants agreed that for promoting cooperation there is a need to strengthen the links with universities and to establish ALM competence centres <http://www.lnb.lv/lv/bibliotekariem/konferencu-materiali/20070420/20070420>.



Main areas for ALM co-operation

- metadata formation;
- digitalization of objects;
- information exchange in each domain and among domains;
- discovery of resources and search in the World Wide Web
- long-lasting preservation of information from any data carrier

In the mid 2007 the **Competence Centre for Digitization of NLL** presented the first edition of “**Digitizer’s Handbook**” <http://lnb.lv:80/en/digital-library/for-partners> (to the time of IFLA conference there will be full English translation) which describes standards and quality criteria for scanning, file formats and metadata. The Manual introduced unified standards based on the best international practice, as well as official and de facto standards. At the moment chapters on object scanning, creation of master files and access files, file naming conventions and data structuring as well as metadata requirements are completed.



“Digitizer`s Handbook” (NLL Competence centre)

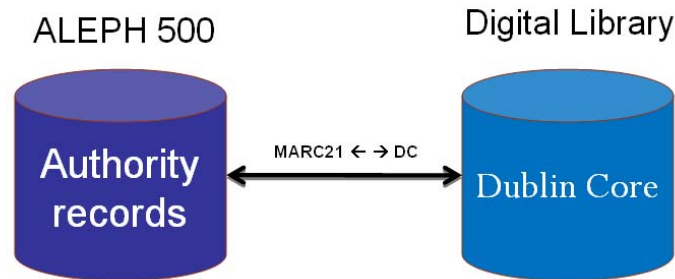
- **standards and quality criteria for scanning;**
- **creation of master files and access files;**
- **file naming conventions;**
- **metadata standards**

In order to achieve interoperability with European Digital Library (EDL) and Europeana in future and to facilitate cross-language searchability the criteria for metadata and data exchange are used as follows:

- Dublin Core TEL (The European Library) Application profile 1.5 (with format-specific modifications for maps, sound records, printed music etc.) and TEL Application Profile for Collections are being utilized for descriptive metadata;
- administrative and technical metadata – according to PREMIS;
- controlled vocabularies for subject search (Latvian version of LCSH) and 3 level hierarchic browsing based on UDC;
- OAI-PMH and SRU/SRW are being implemented for metadata harvesting;
- ISO 15511:2005 – for organizational identifiers;
- all objects have permanent identifiers (based on URN).

Digital Library and Authority control

- We plan to integrate Digital Library with the Authority records from NLL



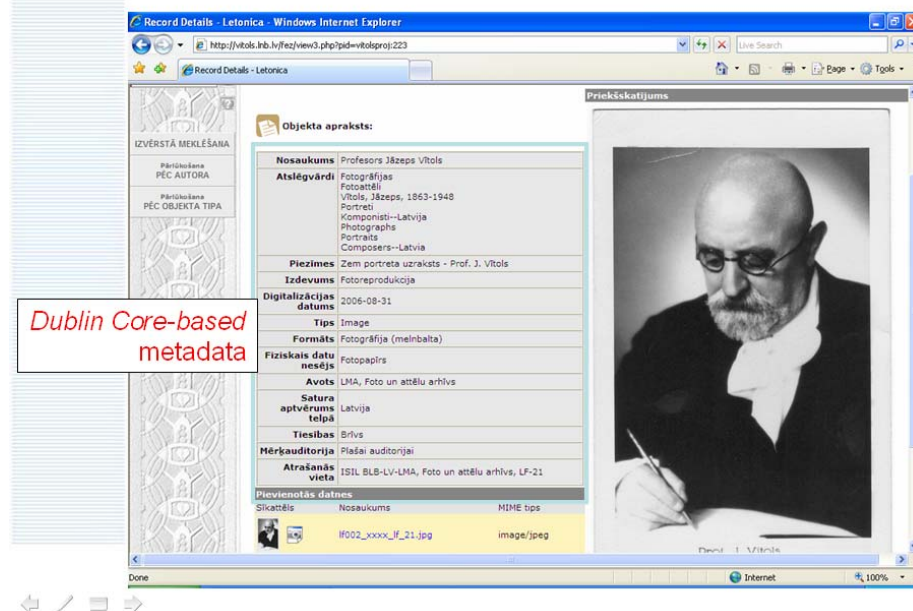
Latvia is developing new **Digital Object Management System (DOM)** that will be European Digital Library (EDL) compatible. It will be possible to make collections available for EDL by using OAI-PMH protocol. All memory institutions will be fostered to use DOM system which will support data transfer standards supported by EDL. Every National Digital Library partner institution will be required to add data accordingly to adopted standards.

There are 2 stages for data storage and access envisaged:

- 1st stage of DOM – storage, description, search (mid of 2008),
- 2nd stage of DOM – personalization of information (different content for different users) and interactivity (the possibility to comment resources, tagging, formation of private collections etc.). Some of the above functionality will be implemented by the end of 2008.

Practical cooperation between different players (Latvian State Historical Archive; Latvian Academy of Music; Latvian Academic Library; Writers, Theatre and Music Museum; NLL) is going on in building National Digital Library *Letonica* (with pilotproject about the Latvian composer Jāzeps Vītols).

FEDORA / Fez



The main task of the pilot was to digitize several types of objects and discover the possible difficulties. At the same time it was a great opportunity to test the level of co-operation between different organizations involved in one project and to test applicable standards and technologies. The open source system FEDORA/Fez was used for pilot project.

Problems:

- little amount of metadata information about digital objects;
- little or no integration possibilities among collections.

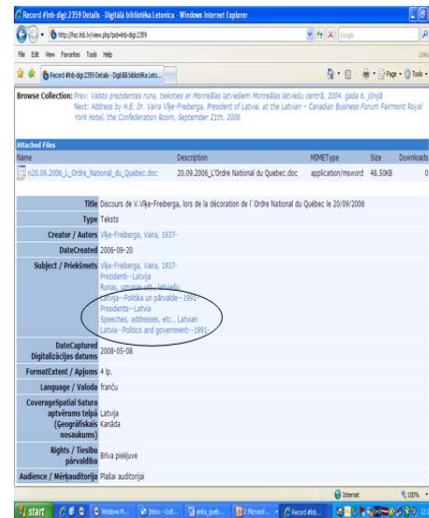
Every cultural heritage and memory institution in Riga or in regions can participate in the implementation of the National Digital Library *Letonica* (on-going creation about 25 separate collections) project. Each partner organization is responsible for quality of its digitized content, adequacy of digitizing process accordingly to the principles described in Digitizer's Handbook. At the same time every involved institution has to comply with the copyright law.

One of the most interesting collections for the international user could be the collection of ex-president of Latvia Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga.

Collection: President of Latvia – Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga



- Discours de V.Vīķe-Freiberga, lors de la décoration de l'Ordre National du Québec le 20/09/2006 Vīķe-Freiberga, Vaira, 1937-



Quebec, September 20, 2006
Photographer: Sgt Eric Jolin



Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada

The application of standards has positive impact:

- it cuts costs, giving economic efficiency;

- promotes information availability;
- facilitates user-friendly search media;
- standards serve as a kind of Esperanto language providing to some extent communication without knowing the language.



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At the same time the introduction of standards also means:

- time spent on the translation of standards and editing the translations;
- testing;
- developing methodical aids;
- training;
- continuous funding (~30 000 euros per year in Latvia).

Although standards are considered to be one of the manifestations of globalization they govern only the form of information packaging without influencing the unique and the nationally specific content of the presented information/data.



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Thank you for your attention!

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1. **Hamma K.** Standards, Standards. What's new? // Europes Cultural and Scientific Heritage in a Digital World, Berlin, 22.02.2007. - http://www.eudico.de/download/vortraege/hamma_berlin.pdf
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7. <http://www.lnb.lv/lv/bibliotekariem/konferencu-materiali/20070420/20070420>

8. <http://lnb.lv:80/en/digital-library/for-partners>

Appendix. Abbreviations for the Map of standards

A&AT – Art & Architecture Thesaurus

AACR2 – Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd ed.

CCO – Cataloguing Cultural Objects: a Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images

CIDOC CRM – CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model

DC – Dublin Core

EAC – Encoded Archival Context

EAD – Encoded Archival Description

IASA Cataloguing Rules – International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives Cataloguing Rules

ISAAR(CPF) – International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families

ISAD – International Standard Archival Description

LCSH – Library of Congress Subject Headings

MARC – Machine-Readable Cataloging Format

MARC21 Authority – Machine-Readable Cataloging Format for Authority Records

METS – Metadata Encoding & Transmission Standard

NISO Z39.91 – Collection Description Specification

OAI PMH – The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting

PREMIS – PREservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies

RD&A – Resource Description and Access

SPECTRUM – UK standard for documentation in museums

SRU – Search/Retrieve via URL

SRU/W – Search/Retrieve via URL/Web Service

UDC – Universal Decimal Classification

XML – Extensible Markup Language

Z39.50 – Information Retrieval Application Service Definition and Protocol
Specification for Open Systems Interconnection