Finland

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Albert Edefelt, *Women of Ruokolahti on the Church Hill*, 1887, oil on canvas.
The Finnish National Gallery/Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki

Policy scenario

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

Digitisation of cultural heritage committee appointed by Ministry of Education in 2000 sets in its final report in the summer 2003 the strategic aims for the digitization of cultural heritage:

- the digitisation of cultural heritage entails a substantially larger input than is made at present and stable, long-term government financing for personnel, equipment and software
- important cultural heritage will be made available to all on information networks. This will give citizens equal opportunities to learn to know their own cultural heritage and to obtain reliable information, irrespective of their place of residence and financial resources
- ensuring that digitised cultural heritage remains our national property which is accessible to all entails that the materials in museums, archives and libraries are digitised with public financing. The materials thus digitised will be made available free of charge to all on the Net
- the resources and facilities of the institutions responsible for preserving and digitizing cultural heritage will be secured. With a view to project coordination, promotion and cooperation, knowledge management and digitisation centres will be set up for museums, archives and libraries
- viable solutions will be developed in copyright to make the use of the materials possible
- the government will promote the accessibility of public knowledge reserves and the forms of presentation and commercialisation of public digital information.

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

This digitization policy covers whole country. The strategic aims cover the three sectors archives, libraries and museums.

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

The government has supported digitisation and information society projects undertaken by memory organisations. The support has so far been limited and digitisation has progressed slower than expected in the policy paper.
There is a digitisation programme for library material. The programme has been processed based on a survey of digitisation needs of public and scientific libraries and other memory organisations. The Ministry of Education has financed among other things the digitisation of newspapers published in Finland in the 1800th.
There is a digitisation program also for museums. In the project, museums are digitising their collections in accordance with the jointly agreed prioritisation plan. In the program the Ministry of Education is supporting the digitisation projects of individual museums. The program has been and is the principal funding source for small museums in addition to their regular budgets to do the digitisation work.

Albert Edefelt, *Duke Karl Insulting the Corpse of Klaus Fleming* 1878, oil on canvas
The Finnish National Gallery/Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki

Albert Edefelt, *Conveying the Child's Coffin*, 1879, oil on canvas.
The Finnish National Gallery/Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki

Co-operation

1. National networks

The co-operation has begun with the most central memory organisations. The digitisation co-operation of libraries, archives and museums has been arranged on a voluntary basis in Finland since autumn 2003. The voluntary co-operation is called eKAM which means "electronic libraries, archives, museums". eKAM meetings are arranged approximately twice a year. The directors of the memory organisations meet once a year. The small preparatory group has meetings whenever necessary. The working groups realise the objectives of the co-operation: they plan and accomplish tasks allocated to them by the directors. There are five working groups at the moment – their life cycle depends on the task and new groups are funded according to emerging needs. The technology group started in August 2003 aiming to create a common portal for all these memory organisations. The pre-study of the project was ready in the first quarter of 2004. In the pre-study the current data structures of principal Collection Management Systems were studied and compared in order to find basis for common data retrieval. In the pre study suitable technology alternatives are evaluated as well.
The benchmarking group started its work first in autumn 2004. It is planning an online benchmarking solution for the cultural digitisation initiatives. The information working group will start its work early in 2005 with its first task to plan the launch of the benchmarking system. The material selection group will look into the substantial questions regarding possible common digitisation projects of the memory institutions. An example of the eKAM co-operation is the seminar

"Net open?" that was arranged in Helsinki in November 2004. It gathered more than 200 experts in digitisation to discuss the current position, trends and possibilities in the digitisation of cultural heritage in Finland. There are also several regional cooperation projects between memory organisations.

2. International co-operation

Finnish memory organisations are working actively in different international networks such as EMII, CALIMERA, HEREIN, EPOCH which are concerning digitizing and presenting cultural heritage. Memory organizations are also working in several cooperation projects in EU and neighbouring areas.

3. NRG and MINERVA results, interpretation and impact

Ministry of Education appointed the national NRG working group in the end of the year 2003. In the working group all the central memory organisations and also the Ministry of Education is represented. The main focus of the work of the group is to follow, propose and discuss on current cultural heritage digitisation issues. The working group also looks after the information delivery for the memory organizations encourage the cooperation between memory organisations. MINERVA technical standards have been taken on account when developing new applications. English version of NRG reports and *The Good Practice Handbook* has been delivered throughout the memory organisations. In the work creating the national benchmarking online system the experiences in accomplishing the international MINERVA benchmarking online interface will be taken into account.

Main digitisation initiatives

1. National portals for culture/networked digital repositories and services for the users

In Finland there are several cultural portals: they have different approach to the culture and they do sometimes overlap. Here are examtoples some of the most central ones. In addition to these there are naturally several more portals, for example the portals of the central institutions.
Kulttuuri.net aims to include all Internet links related to Finnish culture: artists, associations, media, organisations, specialist services and so on.
Kulttuuri.net is the product of a working group set up by five cultural organisations: Finland Festivals, The Finnish Museums' Association, The Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras, The Artists' Association of Finland and The Finnish Theatre Information Centre.
www.kulttuuri.net/english/

Agricola is an electronic portal to history and research. The aim of the portal is to make a connection between institutions that are collecting and producing historical information and the users of the information. The target is to promote Finnish history research and education. Today the portal is financed by the Ministry of Education, the history faculties of some universities and some foundations.
http://agricola.utu.fi//

The Science Linkhouse is an information retrieval service, a subject gateway with subject-specific reference library -type collections of Internet resources. The idea of Linkhouse is that the information seeker does not have to search the whole Internet with a search engine. Instead s/he can find relevant resources in a selected collection. The Science Linkhouse is open to all information seekers. The actual target group is, however, the Finnish academic community. The Science Linkhouse is maintained by information professionals in Finnish information service organizations. The construction and maintenance of the service have been partly funded by the Ministry of Education.
www.linkkitalo.fi/

The Oak of Finland Plus is a joint project of National Board of Antiquities, National Board of Education and Ministry of the Environment for the development of cultural heritage education. Goals of the project are: to make Finns substantially more aware of their own cultural heritage and to reinforce the role of heritage in education, to teach students to respect their cultural environment and other cultural heritage, and to perceive themselves as part of the continuous cultural heritage, to develop students' skills in fostering and enlivening the cultural heritage, to develop models of co-operation between schools and the experts of material heritage and cultural environment, to inform the teachers and students of the many and versatile services our museums provide to seek knowledge and stimulation, to support co-operation between schools and regional environment centres as part of the cultural heritage education, to teach means of influence on matters concerning cultural heritage, to produce multidisciplinary teaching materials on cultural heritage, to guide teachers and students to use and develop vocational heritage in their own work.
www.edu.fi/projektit/tammi/

Suomen museot online portal is a national portal for digitized museum collections. The portal was launched in May 2004. The idea of developing a common portal

for all Finnish museums was presented already at the end of the 20th century, although the tender process did not start until year 2003. Then, National Board of Antiquities built a common museum portal or search system to solve the accessibility and resource problems of the museums. The portal is free and open to users (citizens and researchers) to browse and search virtual collections, without a need to know which (physical) museum actually possesses the object. The portal is open for all museums to feed information of their digitised collections to the portal through a standardised xml-interface. The number of items in the database is currently rather limited, since most of the museums are still building their interfaces to the system.
www.suomenmuseotonline.fi

National Archives has opened a search portal to its archival database. Searching the contents of the digital archive is performed by free word search. The search results which can be seen are all the record creators, fonds, series and archival units that are accessible via digital archives. The national archives have digitized only a small part of its material, but the digital archives are constantly growing.
http://digi.narc.fi/

2. Emerging initiatives

The work of National ontology project in Finland has initiated in September 2003. The goal of the project is to create a basis for national Finnish ontologies on the Semantic Web. The work covers research on ontology technology (uncertainty in ontologies, ontology versioning, distributed ontology versions), the creation of central national ontologies from controlled vocabularies, such as the Finnish

Webthesaurus and MASA, the controlled vocabulary used in many Finnish Museums, and application of the results to a number of case problems.
www.cs.helsinki.fi/group/seco/ontologies/

Implementation of National library portal (Nelli) has started. This project was launched in order to find more effective ways of using the material by creating a user interface compatible with the Virtual University gateway. The portal will allow the users to access efficiently a large number of heterogeneous data resources, allow the description of these resources and provide personified services. The digital library application will enable the storage and retrieval of electronic resources, and grouping of these resources into logical collections. The portal application must be interoperable both with the integrated library system and the digital library application, to the extent that the patrons will see a single service.
www.lib.helsinki.fi/finelib/english/index.html

Implementation of the pilot project for long term preserving of digital material has started in Finnish National Archives. Based on the results of the pilot project a national standard will be created for long term preserving of digital for certain type of material. The standard will be binding for the public institutions.
www.narc.fi/sahke/

Nordic Handscape a Nordic cooperation project stated 2004. The project aims to evaluate and develop possibilities of using mobile technologies and location-based digital services for sharing information about cultural heritage. The Finish pilot project will be executed by the National Board of Antiquities.
www.nordichandscape.net

Albert Edefelt, *Children Playng on the Shore*, 1884, oil canvas
The Finnish National Gallery/Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki

Four Finnish research institutions (The Department
of Music Anthropology, the University of Tampere,
Finnish Jazz and Pop Archive, Research Institute
for the Languages of Finland, Finnish Literature Society)
have launched a project which aims at digitising their
sound archives. The question of long-term preservation
is urgent for sound archives, as the carrier for their
holdings, the analogical magnetic tape, is subject
for rapid decay, and as the old analogical technology
is vanishing. The institutes have agreed on certain
common principles for digitising and tried to find
a technology which would be both suitable for the large
amount of data created by digitising sound, and still
economically reachable for each institution.
`www.uta.fi/laitokset/mustut/digiprojekti/`
`frames.htm`

Albert Edefelt, *In the Outer Archipelago*, 1898, oil on canvas
The Finnish National Gallery/Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki