

The National and University Library of Iceland

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National libraries as other libraries operate in an environment where technological changes are a constant, so it is difficult to see far ahead. The main changes in the next ten years will be that an ever increasing part of the acquisitions and holdings will be in digital format. It means more demands on the library management systems and the development of an infrastructure in order to acquire, use and preserve digital material will be necessary. New service oriented systems for data and information will emerge and national libraries will have to increase the value of their metadata by reuse, cooperation, linking. They will also put more weight on networking with new partners to ensure the free flow of information the information society should strive for. New systems and Web technologies will put new demands on library staff and national libraries will have to take action to educate and train their staff so they will be able to take part in the changes. Matters arising from digital copyright questions will hopefully be solved or at least workable solutions will have emerged so that copyright legislation will not be a barrier to the possibilities of technology and networking. The Open Access movement will expand and have impact on how people think about access to information. Aggregation of electronic resources will give national libraries new roles and they must take the lead as a major authority and efficient partner in the digital world.

The National and University Library of Iceland (NULI) has adopted a new strategy for the years 2009–12 under the name *Access to Knowledge for Everyone*. The achievements of this strategy will presumably be visible in the Library in the next ten years and even longer. The main focus areas are: services to the Library's users, electronic solutions, the harvesting and preservation of

digital materials and collaboration with other parties active in the same sphere. Also, the NULI must be a strong partner in the library and educational system of the country and in the preservation and dissemination of national culture and heritage.

Great changes have taken place in the Library's environment in recent years. The university environment has been completely transformed, including the merger of the University of Iceland and the College of Education in 2008. The Library's legislation has been reviewed but a new bill has not been passed yet. Technology affects working methods and procedures and acquisitions are made in new ways and via new media. As in other libraries, holdings of digital material account for an ever greater proportion of the whole, which makes it vital to develop databases and Web services in order to maintain and broaden access. In addition, the NULI is obliged to provide efficient quality electronic services in accordance with the government's strategy on the information society, *Iceland, the e-Nation (Netrikið Ísland)*.

The library community in Iceland has worked towards common interests in the past years. The NULI is in a leading position among Icelandic libraries and has duties to strengthen and develop collaboration in the field of librarianship. Two of the main pillars of the Library's online services are joint projects or consortia involving other Icelandic libraries, i.e. *gegnir.is* and *hvar.is*.

The online catalogue *Gegnir* is the national library system and is operated by the Icelandic Library Consortium, a private company in public ownership. NULI contributes a large part of the cataloguing work in the system as well as quality management. Over 95% of Icelandic libraries are partners in *Gegnir*. The company is now exploring how it can give better services by building a national portal that gives access to:

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- search machines and Web 2.0 technologies such as awareness services,
- the national bibliography, bibliographical information of library holdings and information from other cultural institutions such as museums and archives,
- digital content of the national library and other partners that own digital content of Icelandic heritage, such as museums and archives,
- national licences of foreign databases and e-journals.

The other project is the Iceland Consortium for Electronic Subscriptions, hvar.is, run by NULI under a service contract with the Ministry of Education. It is a countrywide access portal to electronic databases and e-journals, which Icelandic libraries license, with support from the ministry. The main goal is to strengthen the project and make it sustainable, to work towards more centralized funding, more awareness, and better access to the material through the national portal mentioned above.

In the next ten years it can be predicted that more national online services with the participation of the NULI will be developed. Joint services on a national basis that are likely to emerge are:

- consortium of a national preservation repository. The goal is to build a national trusted digital repository for long-term preservation of published digital material. Also to find new partners in preservation of digital material, i.e. radio, music business, archives, museums, films, photo archives etc.
- consortium of a national repository of scientific research and research data. A small project has already started for theses and publications from the universities, skemman.is. Institutional repositories will also start to develop and will become visible in the national portal.

Retro-digitization of national heritage, for preservation purposes and easier access will continue. Already the NULI gives online access to digital material and the services are now in an extensive development period. These are timarit.

is for journals and newspapers, kort.bok.hi.is for antique maps of Iceland and sagnanet.is for Icelandic medieval literature. It is likely that after ten years, the main bulk of published works in the public domain will be in digital format and accessible on the Web. National services developed with other partners such as museums and archives will probably emerge. Contracts with owners, publishers and rightsholders will be made in order to give access to material in copyright.

Acquisition of born digital material will be of major importance in the coming years. Development of processes and clear definitions of what is to be collected and how, are necessary. Books, theses, newspapers, journals, music and films will be collected in digital format. Services for ingestion of such material will be up and running in the next years and decision regarding access and use in place.

Web archives are a special type of collection of born digital material. The Icelandic Web Archive, vefsafn.is has collected snapshots of Icelandic websites since 2004 in accordance with the law on legal deposit from 2002. It was opened to everybody in September 2009. The collection is limited to .is-domains and a hand-picked selection of Icelandic websites within other top-level domains. Weekly harvests of major media sites are also made and special collections on elections. The Web archive is going to expand in the coming years and it will be interesting to observe the use of this collection.

In order to realize all these developments, involvement in international projects is necessary. Dissemination of Icelandic material through international portals and search engines such as Google is important and connection to The European Library TEL and Europeana is vital. It ensures the use of international standards and procedures but metadata from the library must be made available for those interested to use it. The NULI must be in a leading role to open access to Icelandic heritage and making it visible where the users are.

An English version of the strategy *Access to Knowledge for Everyone – The National and University Library of Iceland 2009 – 2012* can be found on the website www.landsbokasafn.is.