Digitization of libraries and archives in Bulgaria
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Area: 4,333 km²
Population: 269,760
11 Municipalities
Problems identified in Bulgarian libraries:

- Partial initiatives without following a strategy or plan (because they are missing);
- Lack of national policy for preservation of the heritage through its digitization;
- Lack of fund for digitization;

Positive actions:

Several digitization projects that are carried out small European funds.
Results from the research of Bulgarian library – information association, 2013:

- Modest digitized volume (1/4 from the libraries digitize; 5% digitized);
- Does not exist national digital register;
- Lack of national coordination of digitalization processes;
- The obligations of libraries, the state, and the private sector are not clearly allocated;
- Budget for digitization activities in 87% of the libraries - 0,00 BGN. (OR EU funds)

The situation in 2018 remains unchanged and comes from the fact that does not exist a national policy. The percentage of digitized objects I increased – from 5% to 10%.
The situation in Regional Library - Pleven:

Digitization in the library is at an initial stage. Digitized books related to local history – periodicals and books. The entire local periodical, published until 1945, owned by the library, has been digitized and available online. The library digitized also 20 books issued until 1945. In terms of technics – the library owns quality hardware (scanner) and skilled staff.
Positive actions in the State archive:

- Existence of a work plan at national level;
- Existence of a work plan at local level;
- Common system for digitization of the archives

Problems identified in the State archive:

- Old and depreciated hardware;
- Work on interoperability.
Since 2014 entire digitization process in State Archive Agency (SAA) is performed and managed by the Information System of State Archives (ISSA). Two apps have been developed for the ISSA:

1. For attaching digital images
2. To retrieve digital images and their metadata as well as archival descriptions from higher levels in XML format in accordance with the most widely used international standard for archival description Encoded Archival Description (EAD).

Using of ISAA ensures:

- Effectiveness of the process
- Data security
- Wide and easy online access for users to digital copies, with two levels of access: internal and public
- Participation of SAA in European project APEx
APEx comprises national archival institutions from 33 European countries
Scanning hardware used:

Bookscanner “Bookeye 3”, format A1 – 1 piece, which is insufficient and requires the transport of archival documents from all over the country in Sofia.

Scanners used within the country – Microtek ScanMaker 9800, were delivered during the period 2008 – 2012. The oldest of them are already depreciated and very often require repair and prophylaxis, which necessitates an interruption of work.
To improve and standardize the quality of metadata, detailed methodological guidelines are applied, developed in following normative documents:

- Concept of building a digital archive;
- Requirements for the digital representation of archival documents - digital master objects;
- Instruction for verification of digital master objects;
- Instruction for making corrections on digital master objects;
- Instruction for creation of digital master objects with MICROTEK SCANMAKER 9800XL – reflex scanning;
- File name scheme for digital images for digital objects from the digital archive of the SAA.

The selection and preparation of metadata for all archival documents, scanning and importing them into the ISAA is done by the archives in the country that store them.

The quality control of the digital objects is fully controlled by the Directorate "Digitization, Restoration, Conservation and Microfilming".
The SAA system offers three-step access to part of the digital content created by regional archives:

1. From the website of the relevant Regional Archive
The SAA system offers three-step access to part of the digital content created by regional archives:

2. From the website of SAA through ISSAA

![Screenshot of ISSAA website](image-url)
The SAA system offers three-step access to part of the digital content created by regional archives:

3. **Archive Portal Europe**, where exist archive documents from Bulgaria. The Agency provides in the data portal (archive descriptions and digital objects/images) in the portal's basic format XML according to EAD standard.
Currently provided and published by the SAA as a content provider on the APEx portal is as follows:

- Classifications/diagrams of documents in the state archive of the State Agency for SA: 6 pieces
- Archive descriptions from all levels of description - "Fund", "Inventory", "Archive unit" and "Document": 90 875 pieces
- Digital images: more than 74 000 pieces
- Digital objects (entirely digitized documents): totally 12 492 pieces
- 29 descriptions of State Archives from the System of SAA
- Translation of the interface of the portal into Bulgarian language.
The digital collection of the State Agency Archives is called “The Archives Speak” and includes:

- Collection "Politburo Protocols of the Central Committee of Bulgarian Communist Party (1944 - 1989)
- Collection "European Community in Bulgaria"
- Collection "Police files of prominent personalities before 1944"
- Collection "The People's Court 1944 - 1945"
- Collection "The Wars of Bulgaria (1878 - 1945)"
- Collection "PhotoArchiv.bg"
- Collection "ArtArchiv.bg"
- Collection "Old Jewish Books"

At the end of December 31, 2017 the collection “Archives Speak” contains 81 790 entirely digitized archival documents with relevant metadata = 259 976 pieces of digital images (pages of archival documents). All this represents about 13-14 TB of information.
These data have been accumulated from 2008 until now, as since 2014 preparation and management of processes, storage, distribution and use of digital objects has been done entirely through the ISSAA.

The base is in a continuous process of supplementing and updating. The complete, up-to-date, and concentrated database of the Digital Archives of the SAA is fully available online only in ISSAA - both for Agency staff and for all users, without the need to enter, go and jump between different sites and platforms.

All public images has lower, Internet-friendly resolution and without limitation of access and without being compromised by watermarks and other software measures and interventions and within the context of the whole reference book with archive descriptions of SAA.
Conclusions:

- Although there is no state policy on the digitization of cultural heritage, the Archives State Agency has developed a strategy for the digitization of its own fund;

- This strategy is implemented through annual plans, which are sent to all regional directorates;

- Despite the outdated technique and the lack of staff, the digitization is in a process;

- ASA is the most advanced institution in terms of digitization of their fund in Bulgaria.
Collaborative Digitization of Natural and Cultural Heritage

Project summary

Digitization and digital technologies became an integral part of people’s life and economy’s development. However, it is acknowledged that most natural and cultural values that are unique or can actually be seen in a single place, are not subject to digitization yet. This hampers the access to

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