

Summaries in English

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S COLUMN

Lacking a head

Helle Ruusing, editor-in-chief of the Riigikogu Toimetised, Chancellery of the Riigikogu Information Service information adviser

Signs of the impending global economic crisis could be seen for many years, but did not receive sufficient attention. It was more convenient and pleasant to hope that, if a phase of economic decline did set in, it would not prove a very serious one. Now things look different. No one ventures predictions any longer about how protracted the decline might be. Instead, we tend to see the other extreme: the negative news has a snowball effect. Today people are tied to banks either through loans or investments. Losses in the money market affect many people, and as a result governments quickly leapt to the support of the financial sector. To-day's economy is a global one, and the crisis, which started in affluent Western countries, will inevitably reach developing countries as well, with the potential of causing major social problems there. An unstable China would already be a very serious problem.

There is probably not a single country in the world not wracking their brain over how to keep the crisis under control. The greater the impact of the recession on ordinary citizens, the greater the call for protectionist behaviour from governments. Politicians everywhere must inevitably take into account their electorate's interests.

All of the above holds true for Estonia, too. We have truly had a rough time in the last year over our inability to adequately assess our situation. Even such authorities as the Ministry of Finance and Eesti Pank issued incorrect economic growth forecasts. The ruling coalition has also wrestled with balancing the budget, just like the cart-pulling swan, pike and crayfish in Krylov's fable. The Estonian government has not sent out very clear messages as to what measures it plans to apply in a deepening crisis. Estonian entrepreneurs, who currently stridently criticize the public sector, have not made the right decisions, either, despite enjoying a very favourable economic climate for years. The economic crisis will not be resolved solely by a new Employment Contracts Act or austerity in the public sector, even though both are necessary. Politicians will evidently have to put together more systematic plans, whether it is the adoption of the euro, flexible work marketplace, administrative reform or other measure that is considered necessary. Neither should it be forgotten that all plans should be explained to the public. The economy heals itself in times of crisis; unlike entrepreneurs, politicians have a responsibility for the functioning of the state.

Goodwill and readiness for cooperation could be keywords both within Estonia and abroad. The temporary state of lacking a head will be supplanted by order and organization, one way or another. Much of the price of achieving it depends not only on the state and the government but above all, people's ability to adapt to new circumstances.

In this issue, Andra Veidemann writes of her experience as cultural attaché in Moscow in an essay, "The Russian experience". The reader will also find a conversation circle on the topic of the economy. The participants were Eesti Pank's Chairman of the Supervisory Board Jaan Männik, University of Tartu professor of International Business Urmas Varblane, prime ministerial economic advisor Kalev Kukk and Member of the Riigikogu Taavi Veskimägi. Supreme Court adviser Liina Kanger analyzes judicial practice in claims for damage on the basis of the State Liability Act. There is also talk of political culture, the situation with general education, the possibilities of direct democracy, procedures for calculating parental benefits, Neighbourhood Watch and the activity of the Supreme

Council of the Republic of Estonia. Member of the Riigikogu Igor Gräzin writes about Eurorealism, and Mati Raidma draws security lessons from the Georgian conflict.

ESSAY

The Russian experience

Andra Veidemann, Estonia's Cultural Attaché in Moscow 2006–2008

When she accepted the challenge of being appointed Estonia's cultural attaché in Moscow, the writer was aware of all of the risks and historical baggage as well as the possibilities represented by Estonian-Russian relations on the political and cultural front. Feeling extreme sorrow at what the relations had become, she adds that all of the cultural figures with whom she met also regretted that Estonian and Russian intelligentsia have lost sight of each other. Thus, as the first priority, the writer focused on bilateral cultural relations between Estonia and Russia – indeed, everything associated with the primary function of cultural representative. The other important field she concentrated on was cultural relations between Russia and the European Union, which actually proved much more complicated than one would have imagined, as the European Union still lacks a cultural policy as such. The third priority was relations between Estonians and with their compatriots in Russia; and fourth of course, she naturally had to deal as a liaison for Finno-Ugric relations. Listing the biggest success stories, the writer begins with the Estonian cultural festival in Tomsk, in which she took part after she had already left the service of the Ministry of Culture. The other big triumph in her post can be considered to be the establishment of close and promising cultural ties and cultural exchange between Tallinn and Moscow's Yugo-Zapadnyi (southwest) okrug, where the writer had many pleasant meetings and whose cultural leader Nina Bazarova became her principal guide to Moscow and the Russian cultural bureaucracy as well as leading her to many important contacts.

POLITICAL FORUM

Economic crisis

Global crisis heals economy

RiTo conversation circle

On 26 November, the Riigikogu Toimetised summoned four economic experts around one table to talk about the financial and economic crisis and, on its background, the current state of the Estonian economy. The participants in the conversation circle were Eesti Pank's Chairman of the Supervisory Board Jaan Männik, prime ministerial economic advisor Kalev Kukk, University of Tartu International Business professor Urmas Varblane and a Member of the Riigikogu, Taavi Veskimägi (Pro Patria and Res Publica Union). RiTo editor-in-chief Helle Ruusing asked the questions and made a selection from the responses. The participants acknowledged that the world's banking system had reached a situation where trust and balance had been lost and banks were not keen on loaning money neither to each other, nor to companies and individuals. Estonia's specific problem is the fact that private consumption and general domestic consumption were very high in the interim period, and thus the economy became overheated. The result: major workforce shortage, major rise in wages and high inflation, as a result of which Estonia, among other things, has not thus far been able to meet the criteria for transitioning to the euro. The participants in the conversation circle were all in favour of rapid transition to the euro, as this would provide a significant stimulus for the Estonian economy. Belonging to the euro zone would give investors more confidence as far as coming to Estonia with their money is concerned. Among other things, the participants in the conversation circle expressed the opinion that the current developments in the European economy should make the European Commission and European Central Bank think very seriously about the proper way to enlarge the euro zone. The current euro model is actually based on the

message that one should get rich, and then get the euro. In effect, the message that Estonia has been given with regard to the transition to the euro is equal to the message a number of recognized experts gave Estonia in the early 1990s, when it had regained independence, saying that Estonia should put its economy in order first, then transition its own currency. But now, with the adoption of the euro postponed into the distant future, experts feel perhaps there is no longer any point in Estonia talking about unilateral adoption of the euro as an administrative decision, but that it will take place spontaneously. People will simply start keeping their savings in euros and conducting their transactions in euros – much as in the early 1990s, when the Soviet rouble was still the official currency in Estonia, and people started hedging currency risks by amassing various foreign currency.

European Union

Eurorealism déjà vu

Igor Gräzin, Member of the Riigikogu (Estonian Reform Party), Ph.D. in law

The writer believes that five years ago, eurorealism meant the ability to see the dangers from overambitiousness and centralization of the European Union, but today realism means that the hazards lying in store for the European Union in future must be assessed soberly. If we leave aside the programmes and projects that can in actuality be carried out on the national level, hovering over the European Union like finery – what we are left with is a message that cuts to the crux of the matter: the future of a united Europe is in danger. One need not look very far for examples. differences in the issue of the Russian and Georgian war, differences in Kosovo policy, constant attempts to create a smaller and more elite European Union within the larger EU, opposing economic policies (from socialism to free market), the search for any sort of special status in relations with Russia, the continuing unchecked growth of the administrative apparatus and finally, the drop in competence indicated by the behaviour in the current economic situation. Based on the above, the writer believes that instead of devoting attention to wall-to-wall European Union reforms, eurorealists could start quietly contributing to the creation of a pan-European energy system. And as part of this effort, to implementing the principle that, at least in energy matters, Russia is counterbalanced by one and only one European Union, the solidarity of whose members cannot be measured in barrels of oil or cubic metres of gas.

Internal security

Non-military lessons of the Georgian conflict

Mati Raidma, Member of the Riigikogu, Estonian Reform Party

Looking back at the events in Georgia and thinking about Estonia, the writer finds one clear common denominator – the state's weakness in responding to a critical situation, which actually stems from the fact that no one believes in the likelihood of anything similar happening. The Riigikogu has also got its work cut out for it if the situation is to be improved. Insofar as analysis of the Georgian events is still ongoing, the author leaves the military analysis to the experts in that field, constraining his piece to the linkage between internal security and national defence, the influence of information in contemporary conflicts and the ability of the state to react adequately to challenges. Among other things, he draws attention to the need to make the work of parliament more active in the framework of the European Union and NATO. The clumsiness of the international response to the Georgian conflict gives no reason for optimism that there is a different, more rapid process in store for some other conflict. It must still be shaped. The reason is simple – the likelihood of such events had been ruled out in today's Europe.

CONSTITUTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Supreme Court analyses

The requirement of compensating damage on the basis of the State Liability Act

Liina Kanger, administrative law analyst, Supreme Court

The article presents generalizations from an analysis of judicial practice entitled “The Requirement of Compensating Damage on the Basis of the State Liability Act”, conducted by the Supreme Court’s Legal Information Service. The object of study of this analysis, which focused on state liability requirements, were rulings made by administrative and county courts in 2006 and 2007. The sample consisted of 95 decisions made by courts of the first and second instance, which were studied in the light of Supreme Court practice. The goal of the analysis was to provide an overview of the secondary requirements of state liability and examine issues pertaining to interpretation and application arising in the case of each requirement. Generally speaking, the analysis allows an optimistic evaluation to be given to Estonian judicial practice in the field of state liability. Fortunately, the court decisions also reflect that in Estonia, it is possible for persons to receive compensation for damage caused by the state. Noteworthy is the interpretation, in conformity with European Court of Justice practice, supporting broadening the legally extremely restricted opportunities in domestic law for compensating damage if the damage was incurred in the course of judicial proceedings.

STUDIES AND OPINIONS

General education

The state of general education: a primer for future framers of education

Viive-Riina Ruus, emeritus professor, Tallinn University

Imbi Henno, Chief Specialist of Natural and Environmental Sciences, National Examinations and Qualifications Centre

Priit Reiska, professor of Didactics of Natural Sciences, Tallinn University Institute of Mathematics and Natural Sciences

The article gives an overview of the academic results of students at Estonian general educational institutions in comparison with international results, and describes the risks posed to Estonian general education. The international comparative studies TIMSS (Trends in Mathematics and Science Study) and PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) are the most authoritative and global educational studies. Estonia joined these studies only recently. The results of the studies force one to acknowledge that Estonian general education is a case of contradictions. On one hand, our students’ academic results are remarkably good in international comparison, but on the other hand students show signs of fatigue and boredom, often tend toward violence and use unconstructive coping strategies, and students’ psychological well-being at school is on a poor level. A large number of these aspects can be attributed to changes in the school as an institution and the scholastic atmosphere in recent decades, most described by schools’ narrow spectrum of values, with the overwhelming priority being placed on academic success and a shortage of trust in relations between students and teachers. From the standpoint of educational policy, the conflicts set forth in the article show that a systematic approach to education is needed and that equilibrium must be retained between the various aspects of education.

Direct democracy

The possibilities of implementing direct democracy in Estonia

Ero Liivik, adjunct lecturer, Estonian Public Service Academy; doctoral candidate, University of Tartu

A number of Estonian political forces have recently expressed the position that the public (“people”, “citizens” etc) must take greater part in political decision-making processes on both the state and local government level. Usually the proposals have been justified with the need to reduce “alienation of power”, to counterbalance the power that has become concentrated in the hands of the ruling elite, and so on. The proponents believe that in such a situation, direct democratic mechanisms such as ballot initiatives and referendums should be explored. What should be noted is the fact that even though valid legislation provides for a number of direct democratic options, the proposals do not stress using them, but rather setting forth new methods or combining the existing ones. The article introduces and analyzes the proposals and discusses whether direct democracy might have a statutory role in Estonian democracy. The analysis shows that direct democracy is not some universal method for a good solution to the “problem” of power; but that in today’s complex society, it is in fact problematic to implement direct democracy, and more likely to create conflicts.

Organized crime

Criminal networks

Risto Pullat, police chief, MA

The author notes that the latest research confirms the previous assessments of experts: the prevailing form of criminal collaboration is a network of personal relationships that criminals successfully use to commit crimes. Criminal structures can serve economic, social as well as quasi-state purposes. Quasi-state criminal structures support illegal economic activity by creating and establishing behavioural rules and resolve disputes in a given region or market. The results of the empirical study conducted by the author confirmed that a large part of the “trust fund” of Estonian organized crime also intervenes as arbiter in various types of conflict situations. To sum up, organized crime is a complicated social phenomenon with a notable influence on the economy and politics, and thus those criminal networks that are able of influencing international decisions and reap gains from favourable opportunities in the field of business field should receive more attention from internal security authorities.

Parental benefit

Calculation of parental benefit for persons employed during parental leave

Mirjam Allik, adviser, Economic and Social Information Department, Chancellery of the Riigikogu

The current scheme for calculating parental benefits for working parents is poor, as it creates situations where the benefits may become reduced by several thousand kroons if the beneficiary earns only one extra kroon. The problem becomes deeper as wages and benefits increase. A new model is needed, one that would provide more even results. Calculation of parental benefits for working parents should not create a situation where a parent has no motivation to work or where any income over the useful limit is paid out “under the table”, after the end of the parental benefit or in some other manner. Thus, above all, the scheme for calculating the parental benefit is based on the principle that income should not, in any case, be reduced while the person is receiving parental benefits, because if total income were to decrease while the person is working, there would be no incentive for people to work.

The drop in parental benefit should be even and the rate at which the benefit is reduced should depend on how much parental benefits a person is receiving. For those who go to work and are receiving a smaller allowance, the size of the allowance drops at a slower rate, in order to encourage them to work more and better provide for parents with lower incomes and their families.

Political parties in action

Involving youths in the activity of parties: the example of the 2005 local elections

Priit Kallakas, postgraduate student in comparative policy, University of Tartu

The current stabilization or even decline in party membership indicates the end of a mass party era. Political parties are facing problems recruiting members and potential candidates. The downtrend in membership is forcing political parties to pay more attention to their youth organizations and attract possible members already at an early age. In order to create a future political elite, parties have to motivate young members first of all to sign up for local elections. Placing young candidates on a party list may not be the key element for winning the elections, but it does show whether a party is engaged in systematic development work within the organization and looking ahead towards future campaigns.

The thesis examines candidate selection in six of the largest parties in Estonia during the 2005 local election. The main purpose is to compare youth representation in party lists and in parties' regional boards, which are the main candidate selection bodies of Estonian political parties. In order to analyze the future potential of the parties and the effectiveness of youth work, I presented comparisons on demographic, geographical and on party's platform dimension.

A close study revealed that youth representation in parties' lists is higher in larger municipalities where more effective party offices and political youth organizations exist. In conclusion it can be said that the results of the research confirmed the writer's hypothesis. The proportion of youth involvement in parties' regional boards affects youth representation in party's election lists.

Political culture

Estonia's political culture: basic values

Leif Kalev, Director of the Institute of Political Science and Governance, Tallinn University, Associate Professor of State Theory and State Law

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There is extremely little information in Estonia's cultural sphere regarding both the content of the political culture and the characteristic traits of political culture in Estonia. Nor, to the knowledge of the writers, has any Estonian-language scientific article been published. There are a greater number of newspaper articles, but understandably they do not contain much space for a more thorough treatment of the topic. This article, which treats of the political culture in a scientific – analytical – vein attempts to fill this gap. In the international scheme of things, Estonian political culture is fairly special, even though there are number of elements that are characteristic of other post communist countries: weak civic culture, low level of trust in institutions, overemphasis on the nationalist component etc. Due to the focus on the weakness of community and survival values (the stress is on materialism and utility, not on self-expression) Estonia's political culture does not offer fertile ground for development of an open participatory society. Individualism tends to take precedence along with intolerance toward other types of opinions and a low ability to look for social consensus. At the same time, an asset of Estonian society is its small size and fairly egalitarian mindset, which has led to fairly good opportunities for the creation of a participatory society based on horizontal networks. Much also stands behind political will and setting of political goals: whether the priority is the economy, or whether there is room alongside it for consistent development of democratic mechanisms.

The Family Act

Family Act draft law and society's development: more harmony or growing conflict?

Jüri Kõre, Associate Professor in Social Policy, University of Tartu, PhD

Considering the social momentousness of the issues dealt with in the new draft Family Act that has been introduced in the Riigikogu, the Chancellery of the Riigikogu commissioned an analysis of the social implications of the draft Family Act from the expert group at the University of Tartu's Institute of Sociology and Social Policy. The author of the article briefly summarizes the findings and emphasizes that the draft law is in harmony with key social changes in Estonian society – democratization, individualization, expanded negotiation-based decision-making etc. At the same time, analysts draw attention to the risks from changes, especially ones related to changes in marital property relations. Changes related to children are generally considered relevant, as the changes deal with children as more of an active social subject and lend greater consideration to children's interests. Based on the fact that a number of the principles in the draft Family Act are significantly different from society's core values and social practice, experts say it is essential to publicize them actively within various society groups. Among other things, specialists have discussed the possibility of compiling, instead of a new full law, an amendment act to the current Family Act – as long as some of the basic principles in the current draft law (such as the change pertaining to property law) are left out of the draft law.

European policy

Estonia in the working groups of the European Union Council of Ministers

Vahur Made, Vice Director of the Estonian School of Diplomacy

The Estonian School of Diplomacy was commissioned by the Riigikogu to conduct a survey on Estonia's representation and participation in the working groups of the European Union's Council of Ministers. The full-text version of the study, including an electronic survey form and results, along with the list of those orally interviewed, can be accessed on the Riigikogu website at <http://www.riigikogu.ee/?id=46186> (Estonian-language link). The study's conclusion identified issues on which the Riigikogu's European Union affairs committee could in future focus the attention of Estonia's political decision-makers. Estonia's representation in the European Union, including the Council of Ministers working groups, is described most precisely by the category of member state strapped for resources. Estonia's EU coordination is centralized, operating through the State Chancellery's European Union secretariat. Estonia's representation in Brussels is undergoing reform. To this point, the activity of Estonia's permanent mission to the EU was coordinated solely by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but in future, the State Chancellery will start coordinating the COREPER I fields and the foreign ministry will be in charge of the COREPER II fields.

The main institution through which Estonia influences the European Union's decision-making process is the European Union Council of Ministers. Estonia's capability to influence the legislative process in its beginning phase – in the European Commission – is weak and there does not appear to be any vision of how to make cooperation with the EC closer and more effective. In conclusion, the authors of the study suggest that the Riigikogu's European Union affairs committee should focus the attention of political decision-makers on strengthening Estonia's institutional role in the early stages of the European Union decision-making process. For this purpose, they recommend investigating possibilities for making Estonia's connections to the EC closer as well as analyzing the effectiveness of Estonia's representation on higher levels of the Council of Ministers (in COREPER and on the ministers' level); to consider how to increase the everyday contacts between the ministries and the European Commission and other EU member states

(ministries' lobby officials); to discuss with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs possibilities of strengthening the benefit factors of Estonian embassies located in the capitals of European Union member states (especially Paris, Berlin and London) with regard to Estonia's participation in the EU decision-making process; and to pay attention to the need to strengthen Estonia's high-level political representation in the European Union. Attention must also continue to be paid to raising Estonia's analytical capacity to conduct impact analysis for EU legislation, including considering the opportunities of intensifying cooperation between ministries and other government authorities on one hand, with universities, research institutions and think-tanks on the other hand. Among other things, Estonia's preparations to assume the presidency of the European Union in 2018 could contribute to the above.

CIVIC SOCIETY AND STATE AUTHORITY

Neighbourhood Watch

From brutal crime to a strong civic association

Tiina Ristmäe, Managing Director, NGO Estonian Neighbourhood Watch

Lauri Tabur, member of the Management Board, NGO Estonian Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch, conceived in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, reached Estonia on 2 May 2000, when the first Neighbourhood Watch cooperative agreement was signed in the Nõmme district of Tallinn. Three days later, the foundation was laid for the NGO of the same name, to spread the new idea throughout the country. The first Neighbourhood Watch know-how was obtained primarily from England, where the programme was launched in the 1980s and where 10 million residents now take part in it. Today we have reached the point where we can share our knowledge with others. One of the special qualities of neighbourhood watch in Estonia is the cooperative agreement. This is a four-party agreement, in which the local government, police, NGO Estonian Neighbourhood Watch and the neighbourhood sector agree on how they will act jointly to increase security in a certain area. High-profile and official signatories are a sign to the population that the heads of various organizations also acknowledge and value their efforts.

Open space method

The open space method as a working method of the Riigikogu's Green Party faction

Mikk Sarv, spokesperson, Estonian Green Party

Open Space, a method articulated and implemented by the US management consultant Harrison Owen, is modelled on the spontaneous coffee breaks that take place at conferences, where anyone can join or leave a discussion, based on their interest. The Estonian Green Party has used Open Space since the very first meetings held to establish the party. A conference devoted to the first anniversary of the party, held on 1 December 2007, was also held using this method and was the origin of the idea to support the activity of the Riigikogu's Green Party faction with different open spaces regularly held on a variety of topics. Open Space discussion starts with a topic that concerns all the people involved in the discussion. The discussions have been held in a number of places over Estonia, the range of topics has extended from ecotourism to the issues facing energy conservation to direct democracy and the future of education. To sum up, we find that the meeting with people monthly in an open and constructive atmosphere helps maintain the party's reputation and base and attracts new members.

HISTORY OF THE PARLIAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia

The foreign policy activity of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia,

1990–1992

Ülo Nugis, President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia, 1990–92, Member of the Riigikogu, 1992–2003 and President of the Riigikogu, 1992–95

The writer stresses that the primary framer of the decisions to restore Estonian independence was the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia, elected in March 1990 as the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, for the first time on democratic grounds, which played a decisive role in shaping the state's foreign policy and promoting international ties and seeking diplomatic recognition. A trail was blazed, and it was followed by succeeding elected parliaments. The Supreme Council was at the time the sole governing body whose decisions had international accepted force and ensured restoration of independence. Had it not been for the Supreme Council, the other institutions and popular movements would not have been able to bring Estonia out of the Soviet Union peacefully and without bloodshed. This applies to the Congress of Estonia and the Estonian Committee as well, which had taken themselves out of the game by boycotting the Supreme Council elections. Perhaps the leaders of the Estonian Committee would have been prepared to send their negotiating delegations to Moscow, Washington and Brussels as well, but they were nobodies on the international level. The writer states that the people of the Estonian Committee were not known or respected abroad in the way in which the Supreme Council members were respected, as they lacked a legislative mandate.

Estonia's choices

Rein Järlik, member of the August 20 Club

The last century placed Estonia repeatedly in front of difficult decisions. The writer recalls that even in the years in which we nurtured the hope in light of the collapse of the Soviet Union that we would again enjoy independence, the decisions were not easy or simple. The nationalist radicals saw the Soviet institutions of authority, including the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, merely as the occupation's tool, and believed the Republic of Estonia could be restored only by the Congress of Estonia, as the representative body elected by its citizens. The pragmatic forces also made restoration of the Republic of Estonia their credo, on the example of the radicals, but considered the most realistic path to achieving it to be continuing to act within the limits of the authority given to them by the constitutional powers of the period, so that it would not be possible for Moscow to ignore Estonia's political decisions. The majority of the people saw precisely the Supreme Council as the actual restorer of sovereignty and supported all relevant acts adopted by that body. Indeed, on 20 August 1991 at 11:04 pm, the decision on restoration of state sovereignty was adopted on Toompea. Time thus showed that the parliament of the people the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia, elected in March 1990 in the form of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, did not betray the hopes of the people.

LITERATURE AND DATABASES

The National Library of Estonia's research and development activities

Janne Andresoo, Director General of the National Library of Estonia

For most of its history, the National Library of Estonia, which marks its 90th anniversary, has played a leading role in the research and development activities of Estonian libraries. With Estonia's accession to the European Union, cooperation with European libraries and universities has increased. One of the most important undertakings is the participation in the creation and expansion of the European Library, a pan-European information portal. In the last ten years, the development of the National Library has been affected the most by the compelling growth of information and communications technology. One of the

most important areas in the development activity pursued at the National Library has been the development of the e-Library, which encompasses a wider sphere of activity – from the digitization of vulnerable texts to archival of online publications and long-term preservation of digital materials. For instance, the DEA (dea.nlib.ee) – an integrated database for digitized Estonian periodicals – and the DIGAR (digar.nlib.ee) – an archival effort in the field of digital archiving. One of the most important development projects is the creation of the National Library's information portal. In 2009 the library would like to offer its readers the possibility of conducting all information queries pertaining to electronic resources through one environment.

The preservation and dissemination of our cultural legacy by way of the e-Library are functions where smooth cooperation and good partnership with other institutions in both the Estonian and international area have decisive importance.