

# **First Line of Conservation before Digitalisation in Slovak National Archives in Bratislava**

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Where and who we are?

# Slovak National Archives



Drotárska cesta 42  
840 05 Bratislava 45

- The largest and the most important public archives in Slovak Republic
- Its aim is to acquire, preserve, professionally and scientifically process, and make access to archival documents originating from the activities of central government authorities of the Slovak Republic and its predecessors
- Slovak National Archives serves as the main science research and training centre in Slovak Republic specialising in archive studies and conservation, restoration and applied research in the field of archives preservation as well.
- There is about 39 km of archival material in SNA from 9th century till now and about 25 km archival documents in an acidic paper



**Digitálna knižnica a digitálny archív**  
Projekt OPIS2 NP1



available on the Internet <http://dikda.eu>

supported by the ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

## ***Digital library and digital archives (acronym DIKDA)***

***the project was solved at the national level ( in years 2010 – 2015)***

**the main target was to digitalize 2,500,000 objects**

**Slovak National Library (Ministry of Culture SR) – main partner**

**Slovak National Archives (Ministry of Interior SR) – project partner**



4. – 5. May 2017

National Archives of Malta, Rabat

# Position of Slovak National Archives in the project DIKDA

- to digitalize 1,267,400 archival documents (51% of the most important measurable indicator)
- implementation of the project was expected to start in April 2012
- in real it started from April 2014 – until August 2015 (september 2015)
- for digitalizing was chosen **census sheets from 1930 and 1940**  
that were saved in 3180 archival boxes
- 10% of the sheets were damaged – appx 126,700 these were intended for „restoration “ in a very short time – in 17 months (!)



**Staus before project application**

# What were the first steps before digitalization?



we had to remove documents out of the boxes, which wasn't easy, because the sheets have been folded into folders inside the boxes and lot of them was damaged



- The foldered components had spread and immediately identified by the RFID codes in order to maintain order documents.
- The RFID had always stuck in the top right corner of a document.
- Papers for printing RFID were pre-tested.
- Alkaline adhesive had to be used, because it doesn't cause any negative reaction to the original paper after aging
- after labeling the RFID they were screened
- Documents were separated into two parts:
  1. part - were the documents for restoration and directly restored in SNA
  2. part - were undamaged or only slightly damaged documents, where the text was digitalized well.They were moved directly for digitalization.





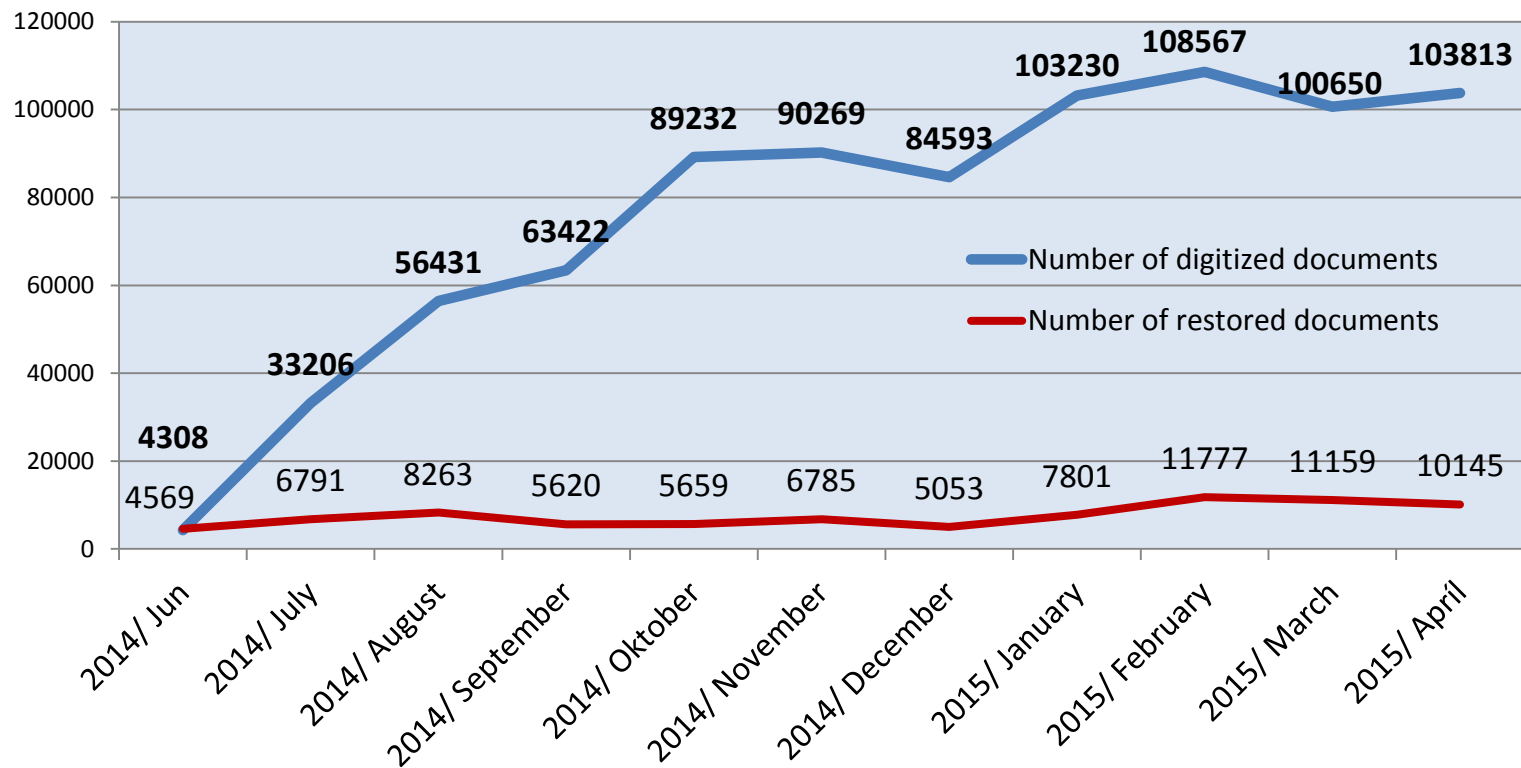
**Befor repair**



**After repair**

- documents were cleaned mechanically before restoration by using a soft cloth and brush
- the bent parts were stretched
- cracks were taped by using Neschen strips and larger areas by Neschen folie - on both sides
- wood-containing paper of documents was not deacidified (Slovak republic doesn't have a non-water deacidification technology )
- they could not use water processes, because many of the inks are soluble in water and ethanol
- restoration was provided by 7 restorers in 17 months.

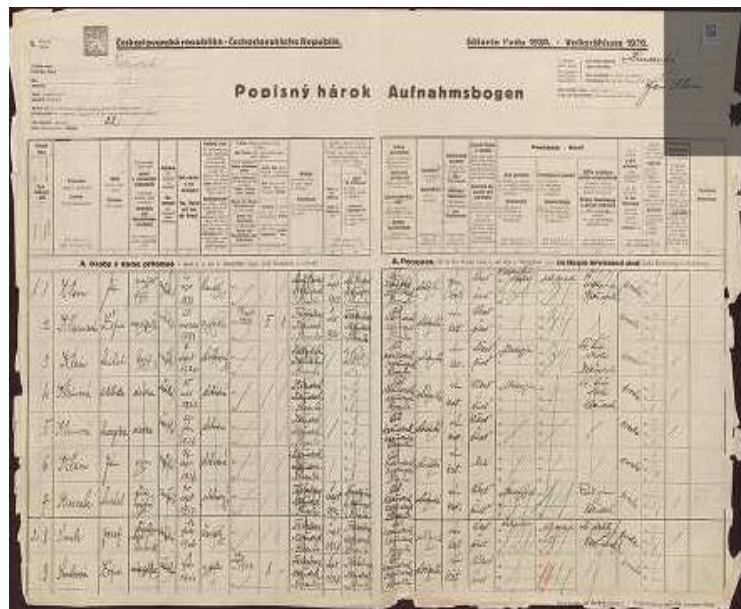
# The process of digitalisation and restoration in number and over the time



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# Digitalized documents - without restoration



Several documents weren't included in the restoration because it wouldn't have been caught deadline of the project.

The documents, which content was easy to read and were only damaged edges, didn't go to restoration.

*We don't not know if they ever will be repaired*



- The documents have been outsourced - digitalize by an external company outside SNA.
- Non damaged documents after digitalization and restored documents after digitalization were completed together. They were packed into new boxes.
- New boxes were made of alkaline cardboard and larger format.
- On the side of each box was glued label with description the archival fund.
- The exact content of the label was: the number of archival boxes, name of district, city, village and all data generated by the system.



SČÍTANIE ĽUDU

**1930**

OKRES:

**TRSTENÁ**

Miestna časť:

OBCE:

**HARBAKÚZ**

**HÁMRÝ**

**HLADOVKA**

ULICE:

**SLÁDKOVIČOVA**  
**SLAVOVA**

.

**1180**

# Pros and cons of the Project DIKDA for SNA

## The pros:

- we have reached experience in mass digitalization
- have digitalized the documents
- 10 % of documents were restored
- we reached 3,800 new archival boxes
- we realized the review of the fund
- we have got 1 work position

## The cons:

- the using the documents has not been possible for more than one year (for research)
- it was not possible to restore all documents
- it was provided only the necessary correction (not complete conservation)
- it was not deacidificated wood-containing paper

# Standard preparation of documents before digitalisation in SNA

- decontamination: the documents were sterilized in ethylene oxide until 2012, nowadays it is partially only in N-butyl alcohol, if necessary
- mechanical cleaning
- reparation of damaged parts  
(protective coating if necessary)
- assigning metadata
- our own digitalisation

(by CANON camera and equipment ATLAS)





**MALTA** EU2017

## 9th Meeting of the European Heads of Conservation

**Thank you  
for your attention**