DIGITIZATION OF THE ARCHIVES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The article underlines the role and importance of digitization of the archives of public institutions. For the purposes of the legal provisions, the electronic public service is constituted as a service provided to the public sector, private sector or civil society by a public entity or by a private entity on behalf of a public entity, aiming at the use of information technology skills.

Key words: *digitization; archives; public institutions.*

JEL Classification: *D73, H89*

I. INTRODUCTION

"Archives are not mere repositories of ancient documents, but institutions of scientific research, treasures that legitimize our people in front of the whole world."

Nicolae Iorga

Through the electronic services portal within the National Archives, the optimization and transmission of information of public and private interest to the interested public institutions was carried out, as well as to the private environment, in this case to the citizens.
As objectives were fallowed:
✓ Extending the access of citizens to the documents necessary to solve various problems by using online platforms;
✓ Better management and record keeping of documents;
✓ Increasing the administrative capacity and the interaction of the County Services of the National Archives with the public institutions.(http://arhivelenationale.ro/site/cercetare/cercetare-online)
The electronic services portal within the National Archives provides interested persons with documents of legal value, access to historical documents, but also the possibility to consult the nomenclatures and selection works.
The procedure by which a legal person can obtain information from the category of those listed above consists in contacting the secretariat of the National Archives of Romania (NRA) structure in the county where it operates.(http://portal.arhivelenationale.ro)
We also mention the Project "Digitization of medieval documents from the National Archives of Romania" implemented in 2014-2016 by the Institution of National Archives in partnership with Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca and the National Archives of Norway. The aim of the project was to restore and scan the medieval documents issued until 1600, thus creating an online database of documents of inestimable value for national history.(http://arhivelenationale.ro/site/cercetare/cercetare-online) Within the project, 38,500 archival units were worked on and digitized, being restored in this context1067 of archival units prior to 1600 in the specialized laboratories of the National Archives.
After completing the process of restoring and scanning the documents, the inventory stage took place, after which the metadata was uploaded to the database, thus creating an integrated database within the computer system of the National Archives. The results obtained on the basis of the files of researchers and paleographers qualified in the field were systematized on archives and archival collections.(http://arhivamedievala.ro)

Another major project was the agreement concluded in November 2008 with the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism in Romania (IICCR) for the establishment of the Online Photo Library of Romanian Communism, summarizing photographs from 1921-1944 and 1945-1989. In a first stage,work was done on the basis of an impressive volume of photographs - tens of thousands of photographs in different formats - which have as source the archive of the former Institute of History of the Communist Party, but also photographs from the photo library of Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceausescu.(http://fototeca.iiccmer.ro/despre_proiect) Another essential step is to select the photos that have been capitalized and scanned to create a database of 3500 materials.(www.fototeca.iiccmer.ro)

In order to facilitate the access of researchers and interested persons, we also mention the processing of funds and collections under research through the study room of the Central National Historical Archives. At the level of 2021, funds and collections were added for consultation and capitalization, among which we mention:

✓ Institute-of-Historical-and-Social-Political-Studies-Personalities-background-xv-sec.-XII-XX-Inv.-3544;
✓ Central-Committee-of-the-Communist-Youth-Union-1952-1956-1963-Inv.-3546;
✓ Institute-of-Historical-and-Social-Political-Studies-Moments-from-the-history-of-the-Romanian-people-background-XIII-500-i.Hr.-1978-Inv.-3550;
✓ Fond-familial-Demetriade-1842-1979-Inv. 3551;
✓ Ministry of Finance Inventory Directorate 1948-1949 Inv. 3552.

Within the Central National Historical Archives, 1814 archival units can be consulted online, and at the level of the county archive services a number of 1965 archival units. (http://arhivelenationale.ro/site/cercetare/fonduri-si-colectii/)

II.   DIGITAL LIBRARY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE STUDY OF SECURITY ARCHIVES

One of the files published in online format is represented by the file P 10933, from the Criminal Fund of CNSAS (17 volumes, over 6,000 pages), "PROBLEM AUGUST 23, 1944". (P 010933_002.pdf cnsas.ro) For the study of the files instrumented to the political detainees on the website of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives, the document written in prison by Ioan Mocsonyi-Starcea (1909-1991) - diplomat, private secretary of King Mihai, is considered a reference. Ioan Mocsonyi-Starcea was arrested in 1947 and tried in the Maniu-Mihalache trial. He was later investigated in the trial of Lucretiu Patrascanu and sentenced to 15 years in prison.(Consiliul National pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securitatii cnsas.ro)

✓ Volumes 1-6 of the file P 10933 are constituted by the typed copy of Mocsonyi-Starcea's text.
✓ 1,358 pages found in volumes 7-10 contain the holographic text of these memorialist writings mentioned above.
✓ Of interest is also volume 11 which summarizes data on the arrest proposal of the alleged West German spy Robert Peuker, along with notes by General Ion Eremia, Traian Puiu on topics related to Romania's foreign policy, but also references to the legionary movement.
✓ In volume 12 can be studied documents regarding the act of August 23, 1944.
✓ Information on the preparation of the arrest of Marshal Ion Antonescu can be investigated in volumes 13-16 including originals and copies of Anton Dumitrescu's statements[1]; Victor Radulescu-Pogoneanu[2] and Traian Borcescu.(Consiliul National pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securitatii cnsas.ro)
✓ Volume number 17 sums up data communicated by a series of Securitate agents, during 1963-1967. (P 010933_001.pdf cnsas.ro)

Also on the website www.cnsas.ro can be studied in online format information on the Criminal case file - Reeducation from Pitesti - no. 1114, which includes 24 volumes in which there are statements about the trial of the Eugen Turcanu group from November 10, 1954. (www.cnsas.ro/documente/reeducarea_Pitesti/P 001114/P 001114_001.pdf) The court's decisions aimed at convicting 22 detainees. We can also mention the Criminal case file no. 1126 consisting of 10 volumes referring to the trial of Tudor Sepeanu and the other six officers involved in the atrocities (April 16, 1957). (www.cnsas.ro/documente/reeducarea_Pitesti/P 001126/P 001126_001.pdf)

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[1]Anton Dumitrescu (1902-1992), assistant commander of the Guard Battalion (1940-1944),
[2]Victor Rădulescu-Pogoneanu (1910-1962), diplomat, deputy director of the Cabinet and Cipher Directorate of Minister of Foreign Affairs (1944)

Under the coordination of the specialist and researcher Florica Dobre, in collaboration with the researchers Florian Banu, Camelia Ivan Duica, Theodor Barbulescu, Liviu Taranu are in electronic format vol. I and II entitled *SECURITY Structures - frameworks Objectives and methods.* (Securitatea vol 2.pdf cnsas.ro) In the two thoroughly and well-documented volumes we find information on the organization of the Security, the legislation that organized the functioning and structure of this body of oppression. For example, at the level of 1952-1953 from the structure of the Securitate we mention:

✓ Directorate A - Foreign Information, director – General Serghei Nikonov (Sergiu Nicolau);
✓ Directorate I - Counterintelligence, director - Lieutenant Colonel Szabo Eugen;
✓ Directorate II - Counter-sabotage, director - Colonel Nicolae Stoica;
✓ Directorate VI - Investigations, director - Lieutenant Colonel Francisc Butyka. (Dobre, 2006)

The organizational chart of the Security varied over time, for example in August 1948 4,641 posts were provided. (Oprea, 2002) After 1968, depending on the population of each county, between 170 and 270 jobs were provided. From the declassified archives it results that at the level of each county there were services corresponding to the main central directorates of Security: internal information, counterintelligence, checkpoints, technical-operative, and personnel.(Dobre, 2006)

Another section of interest for knowing the communist period is the posting on the C.N.S.A.S. the List of Security Officers and the List of Security Collaborators. On 6the of January, 2021 are mentioned - 3601 Securitate officers and non-commissioned officers) and 648 Securitate collaborators. (www.cnsas.ro)

In order to understand the legal framework regarding the digitization of documents of public institutions, we can start from *Law 135/2007 on archiving documents in electronic form*, republished in the *Official Gazette no. 138/25 of February 2014*. (www.cdep.ro) Article 3 of that law defines and thus clarifies a number of notions such as: administrator of the electronic archive; electronic archive; electronic archiving service provider; electronic archiving system; holder of the right of disposal over the document.(Microsoft Word - leg_pl148_07.doc, www.cdep.ro)

To create an electronic archive, a series of conditions must be met cumulatively, such as:

✓ Signing the documents in electronic form, with the extended electronic signature of the holder of the right of disposal, hereinafter referred to as electronic signature;
✓ The validity of the electronic signature of the holder of the right of disposal over the document;
✓ Depositing the encryption and decryption key for the encrypted documents that fall under the incidence of the Law on National Archives no. 16/1996, with the subsequent modifications and completions.

In chapter V of the mentioned law we find regulations regarding the preservation of the electronic archive. In this sense, "The archive administrator is obliged to keep the source code of all the programs used for the construction and operation of the electronic archive, in electronically signed and classified files, as the case may be. The administrator of the archive is obliged to submit to the National Archives a copy of the source code of all the programs used for the construction and operation of the electronic archive." (Microsoft Word - leg_pl148_07.doc, www.cdep.ro)

Access to documents in electronic form is an attribute "of the holder of the right of disposition over the document by an act, which will be signed both by the holder of the right of disposition over the document and by the administrator of the archive."(Art. 14. - (1), *Law 135/2007 regarding archiving documents in electronically form,* republicată în *M.Of. nr. 138/25 feb. 2014*)

The Romanian Digitization Authority is a structure with legal personality established in 2020 within the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization. Among the specific objectives of the Romanian Digitalization Authority we mention: "it contributes to the digital transformation of the Romanian economy and society; achieves e-government at the level of public administration in Romania, by operationalizing the standardization and technical and semantic interoperability of information systems in central public administration and implementing the principles of the Tallinn Ministerial Declaration on e-government in 2017; contributes to the fulfilment of the objectives for Romania of the financial assistance programs of the European Union in its field of competence."(www.gov.ro)

In accordance with the specific provisions, a series of basic terms are defined regarding the digitization of public institutions such as: electronic public service; digital transformation; interoperability; cloud. For the purposes of the legal provisions, the electronic public service is constituted as a service provided to the public sector, private sector or civil society by a public entity or by a private entity on behalf of a public entity, aiming at the use of information technology skills.

Digital transformation consists in the use by a public or private entity of the competencies implemented by information technology for the efficient transformation of data and information flows.

Interoperability is the ability of public institutions and authorities to use data and information, through IT systems, within public administration systems, but also within the private sector and civil society.

The shared network of IT resources that can be used quickly and flexibly, reducing managerial effort and interaction with the resource access service provider is called the cloud.(www.gov.ro)

In the projects under implementation we mention:

✓ Computer System for health registers - RegIntermed;
✓ National Information System for Adoption; Integrated Information System for Issuing Civil Status Documents - SIIEASC;
✓ National Disability Management System.

A useful platform in supporting the digitalization of the activities of public institutions is ghiseul.ro in order to achieve interconnections with private payment and service platforms. The events of the last two years have determined at a fast pace and determined by the need to provide and operate the services of public institutions, move to the virtual environment and conduct activities related to the issuance and use of documents and archives by citizens.

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