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INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL MANAGEMENT OF FILES ON ARCHIVAL HOLDINGS OF FONDS AND COLLECTIONS IN THE STATE ARCHIVES IN ZAGREB

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Abstract:

In this paper, the focus will be on the files on archival holdings of fonds and collections and the development of a database, as an aid for their search and use. In this case, the file on an archival fonds or collection contains documentation related to that fonds or collection, which differs in provenance and form. The organization of the abovementioned files and database represents systematic work on creating a comprehensive record on archival records of all fonds and collections stored in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Records of the State Archives in Zagreb for the purpose of achieving permanent and efficient intellectual and physical supervision over said archival holdings. This paper will give an overview of the database and its layout, as well as provide an account of its use in processing of archival records and the possibilities for its further development and upgrade.

Key words:

intellectual management, files, database, records, availability

Izvleček:

Vsebinska in fizična urejenost dosjejev arhivskih fondov in zbirk Državnega arhiva v Zagrebu

Avtor se bo osredotočil na dosjeje arhivskih fondov in zbirk ter na razvoj podatkovne baze kot pripomočka za iskanje in uporabo. Dosje je niz dokumentov, ki se lahko razlikujejo po izvoru in obliki, vendar se nanašajo na isto stvar ali osebo. V konkretnem primeru vsebujejo dosjeji arhivskih fondov in zbirk dokumentacijo, ki se nanaša nanje. Organizacija dosjejev in podatkovna baza predstavljata sistematično ustvarjanje razumljivih zapisov o arhivskem gradivu fondov in zbirk, ki jih hrani II. oddelek za urejanje in obdelavo arhivskega gradiva v Državnem arhivu v Zagrebu, z namenom doseči trajen in učinkovit vsebinski in fizični nadzor nad arhivskim gradivom. Avtor bo podal pregled podatkovne baze in njene sestave, predstavil načine njene uporabe v postopku obdelave arhivskega gradiva ter možnosti njenega nadaljnjega razvoja in nadgradnje.

Ključne besede:

intelektualna ureditev, dosjeji, podatkovna baza, zapisi, dostop

1 Records in state archives

All state archives in Croatia are tasked with keeping records on archival holdings, as well as their creators and custodians, in accordance with valid legal regulation. Those records include lists of archival holdings, finding aids and documentation on archival holdings that is kept in the archives on the grounds of the Law on Archival holdings and Archives (*Ordinance on Record Keeping in Archives*, NN 19/2023). According to this law, archives keep the following records: the Accession Register, the Deposit Register, the General Inventory of Archival Holdings, files on archival holdings of fonds/collections, the Register of Archival Holdings Recorded for Security and Protective Purposes, the Register of Archival Holdings Recorded for Supplementary Purposes, the Register of Restored and Conserved Archival Holdings, the Records of Creators, Owners and Custodians of Documentary and Archival Holdings in the Area of Jurisdiction of the Archives and the Record on the Use of Archival Holdings.

In the State Archives in Zagreb the files of archival fonds and collections are kept and maintained by the Department for Documentation and Information Affairs, while the Department for the Protection of Archival and Registry Material Outside the Archives keeps the Records of Creators and Custodians of Archival Holdings in the Area of Jurisdiction of the Archives. A file is kept for each fonds or collection and, in addition to the basic information about the fonds or collection, it should contain data on the documentation about its transfer to the archives, data on the arrangement and destruction of records, data on preservation of records, data on recording, restoration and conservation of archival holdings, history of the creator, history of the fonds or collection, a bibliography of works about the creator and archival fonds or collection, as well as a bibliography of works published based on the use of the archival holdings. The Records on the Creators and Custodians of Archival Holdings in the Area of Jurisdiction of the Archives contain important information about the creators and the location of the archival holdings of those creators who have ceased to be active. These notices, among other things, include the name of the creator, its headquarters and address, period of activity, classification of its activities, legal status, history of the creator, notification of the activities he performs, organizational structure, connections and the name of the owner of the material.

2 Files on archival holdings of fonds/collections in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings

Given that the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings of the State Archives in Zagreb is located in a separate location from the other organizational units of the Archives, a decision was made to organize files on archival holdings of fonds and collections stored in said department. These files differ from those stored in the Department for Documentation and Information Affairs and the Department for the Protection of Archival and Registry Material Outside the Archives, and their management is not prescribed by the Law on Archival Holdings and Archives or other regulatory documents.

Organization of files on archival holdings of fonds stored in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings was approached after the relocation of the archival holdings to a dislocated location in year 2000, when there were no finding aids for a large part of the relocated archival holdings. In fact, a large part included so called »open-ended« fonds, for which further accessions of archival holdings were expected. Therefore, the creation of the above-mentioned files was started in order to facilitate the arrangement and processing of archival holdings in the first place, especially

taking into account the perspective of future accessions of archival holdings of existing fonds. Over time, files gained an additional role, to serve as a starting point for all professionals in the use of archival holdings of a particular fonds or collection, regardless of whether they have worked on it or are encountering it for the first time. By organizing separate files on archival holdings of the aforementioned Department's fonds and collections, an effort was made to introduce uniform records at the level of the Department, in order to make the process of arranging and processing of archival holdings as efficient as possible and to enable systematic and uniform retrieval of information for accessing and using archival holdings. In this way, the need to contact other departments to find information necessary for arranging, processing and preparing archival holdings for use was removed.

Files on archival holdings of the fonds and collections stored in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings contain data on the accession of archival holdings to the archives, the latest version of the finding aid¹, the location index and printout of data for a specific fonds or collection from the Guide to the Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb², i.e., the Croatian Archival Information System³. The organization of the file of the above-mentioned content is certainly preceded by cooperation with other departments in the Archives, in order to obtain the necessary information, but this is avoided during further processing and preparation for use of archival holdings (unless there was a new accession of archival holdings).

3 Database of files on archival holdings of fonds/collections

In addition to the creation of files on archival holdings of individual fonds and collections stored in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings, the design of the database of the mentioned files was also started. This represents the next step in simplifying access to requested information about a fonds or collection and provides information on the content of all the files in one place. In the specified database, it is entered whether an individual file contains all the required components (i.e., the accession record, the latest version of the finding aid, the location index and printouts from the Guide to the Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb and the Croatian Archival Information System). In addition, the dates of creation or modification of the mentioned components are indicated, in order to ultimately determine the uniformity of the data in different places. Some elements of the database can be elaborated in more detail. Thus, for example, along with the indication of the accession record, a note can also be added on the planned further accessions of the archival

¹ *The latest version of the finding aid is also in the archival repository, next to the archival holdings of an individual fonds or collection, in order to facilitate searching and targeted access to individual technical units when preparing archival holdings for use.*

² *The Guide to the Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb, published in 2010 as an overview of all fonds and collections stored in the State Archives in Zagreb, is also available in electronic form at <http://www.daz.hr/vodic/>. All changes made during the arrangement and processing of archival holdings of an individual fonds or collection are recorded there, and therefore it provides current information about an individual fonds or collection, which may differ from that in printed form.*

³ *The Croatian Archival Information System (HAIS) represents electronic records of all fonds and collections stored in state archives in the Republic of Croatia. It is the latest version of electronic records at the level of the entire state, and is intended for the recording of documentary and archival holdings in state and other archives and in possession of other custodians of archival holdings; of supplementary sources; finding aids and other data about the archival holdings and the creators of the archival holdings, and for maintaining mandatory records in the archives. A large part of the data contained in HAIS was taken from the previous records of Arhinet, and the process of transition to the latest version, i.e., HAIS, is still ongoing.*

holdings. Furthermore, data on the finding aid may include information on its existence in electronic and physical form and on the existence of item (analytical) lists for individual fonds or collections, or individual lower units of description within the fonds or collection. Also, those components that are available in electronic form (finding aids, location indexes, descriptions in the Guide to the Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb and the Croatian Archival Information System) are intended to be linked by hyperlinks to the corresponding electronic document, i.e., online location after the completion of work on the files database, which will consolidate access to all electronically available components of an individual file in one place. The aforementioned database thus provides in one place basic information about the contents of individual fonds' files to all employees of the Department and indicates further work to be undertaken on the processing of archival holdings.

3.1. Database elements

When designing the database of files on archival holdings of fonds and collections of the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings, it was decided that it will include the following elements:

- classification code,
- reference code,
- title of fonds or collection,
- notice on the accession record,
- note on the expectation of further accessions,
- notice on the finding aid,
- note on microfilmed and digitized holdings,
- an indication of the printout from the Guide to the Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb and from Arhinet, i.e. Croatian Archival Information System,
- a notice on the location index,
- a note on further actions to be taken on processing of fonds or collection and
- a note on the uniformity of data in different records.

The classification code is determined in accordance with the classification scheme of archival fonds and collections in the Republic of Croatia. The fonds reference code consists of the country code according to *ISO 3166 - Codes for the representation of names of countries*, the state archives code and the code of the fonds or collection in the Archives. The title of the fonds or collection is determined in accordance with the rules defined by the General International Standard for the Description of Archival holdings (ISAD(G)).

In the notification area about the accession record, the date of the accession of archival holdings is indicated. Related to this is an indication of possible future accessions, which provides basic information about the history of the fonds and information about expected additions, which condition the placement of archival holdings in the archival repository and the organization of work on the arrangement and processing of archival holdings.

In the notification about the finding aid, it was decided to indicate the information about the existence of the finding aid in physical form in the file and in electronic form in

the online system of the Department. It was decided to give notice of the existence of finding aids in both versions in order to, on the one hand, point out the need to create finding aids in electronic form where they are present only in physical form (this concerns primarily finding aids created before the introduction of computers into the Archives), while on the other hand, printing the finding aid in physical form ensures the preservation of data in case of loss of the electronic version. Also, a notice is given on the date of creation of the finding aid.

Furthermore, as a separate sub-element, a notification on the existence of an item or analytical list was introduced, either for the fonds or collection as a whole, or for a single archival unit within a particular fonds or collection. Notifications about items or analytical lists are important for easier searching of archival holdings, but also from the perspective of potential creation of records of all items or analytical lists. This can prove to be especially useful, for example, in the case of item or analytical lists of confiscated assets, which belong to different fonds, and in this way their overview will be consolidated in one place.

In the note on microfilmed and digitized archival holdings, it is indicated which archival holdings of which fonds or collections, that is, of which individual archival units, has been microfilmed or digitized. This is particularly significant from the perspective of planning of work on the digitization of archival holdings and facilitating accessibility for users, since it provides an overview of all digitized archival holdings in one place.

Indications about printouts of data on individual fonds or collections from the Guide to Fonds and Collections of the State Archives in Zagreb and Croatian Archival Information System (HAIS), i.e., Arhinet, also contain a notification about the date of printing in order to indicate the last update of the data in the mentioned records, and for the purpose of monitoring the uniformity of the data about a particular fonds or collection in different records.

The notification on the location index contains an indication of the date of its creation, in order to determine when it was created and whether it corresponds to the current state in the repository. The note area is used to record information about the actions that need to be taken in relation to a particular file (for example, printing of finding aid, creating a location index etc.). Finally, a record consistency note indicates when the data was uniformed across all records in a particular file.

Based on all the above-mentioned information, this database provides an overview of all files and the data they contain in one place, as well as notifications about actions that need to be taken in arranging and processing of archival holdings, which facilitates the process of planning and creating a work program for the entire Department. Of course, the creation of such a database also entails work on its maintenance, updating and adaptation to the Department's needs, along with periodic audits of the status of files and regular introduction of all changes that have occurred, which is the responsibility of professionals who work on arranging and processing of archival holdings of an individual fonds or collection.

A step further in increasing the efficiency of access to information contained in the file on an individual fonds or collection would be the creation of a single file on archival holdings of fonds and collections in electronic form, which would contain data that are now in the records of the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings, the Department for Documentation and Information Affairs and the Department for the Protection of Archival and Registry Material Outside the Archives. Such files could be edited by authorized employees of the aforementioned departments and would be available to all professionals of the Archives. In this way, unified access to all information about the archival holdings of a particular fonds or collection would be provided to all

professionals of the Archives, which would greatly increase the efficiency of all aspects of work on archival holdings at the institutional level - from its supervision at the creator, through accession and processing, to allowances for use. It would also allow all the records that archives are required to keep to be consolidated in one place.

4 Conclusion

Files on archival holdings of fonds/collections in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings of the State Archives in Zagreb began to be organized after the relocation of the Department to a dislocated location, in order to make the work on arranging and processing of archival holdings as efficient as possible. Over time, the need to create a database of the above-mentioned files emerged, in order to provide an overview of their content in one place and access to basic information about a particular fonds or collection.

As auxiliary records, the maintenance of which is not prescribed by law or by-law, the form of file described in this paper and the associated database have proven to be an extremely useful tool in performing professional tasks in the archives, as indicated by many years of experience working with them in the Department for Arranging and Processing of Archival Holdings of the State Archives in Zagreb. In addition, they represent a practical systematic aid for monitoring the uniformity of data in various records of an individual fonds or collection, which the Department is obligated to maintain. This is particularly important from the user's perspective, in order to ensure the provision of consistent and up-to-date information about archival holdings in different places, today mostly available online. Furthermore, in coordination with other departments in the Archives, they provide a starting point for creation of a unique and comprehensive record of the archival holdings of the fonds and collections of an individual archives, enabling flexibility in adapting to the specific needs of the institution, that is, of its individual organizational units.

5 Sources

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POVZETEK

VSEBINSKA IN FIZIČNA UREJENOST DOSJEJEV ARHIVSKIH FONDOV IN ZBIRK DRŽAVNEGA ARHIVA V ZAGREBU

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Datoteke o arhivskih fondih v Oddelku za urejanje in obdelavo arhivskega gradiva so se začele organizirati po preselitvi na oddaljeno lokacijo. Hitro so postale nepogrešljivo orodje pri organiziranju in obdelavi arhivskega gradiva, nedavno pa se je začela tudi izdelava baze podatkov, ki omogoča lažji intelektualni nadzor nad njihovo vsebino in uporabo. Datoteke vsebujejo vpisno knjigo, iskalne pripomočke, lokacijski indeks in izpise iz arhivske ter nacionalnih elektronskih evidenc o arhivskem gradivu. V bazi podatkov so ključne informacije o gradivu, ki ga hrani oddelk, in tvorijo dosje o posameznem fondu ali zbirki, kar olajšuje načrtovanje dela in pregled arhivskega gradiva, shranjenega v oddelku. Poleg tega so navedeni tudi datumi nastanka ali izpisa omenjenih komponent, da se na koncu ugotovi enotnost podatkov na različnih mestih. Nekateri elementi baze podatkov se lahko podrobneje obdelajo.

Pri oblikovanju baze podatkov smo se odločili, da vsebuje naslednje elemente: klasifikacijsko oznako, signaturo, naslov fonda ali zbirke, obvestilo iz vpisne knjige, opombo o pričakovanju nadaljnega prevzema, obvestilo o iskalnih pripomočkih, opombo o mikrofilmanem in digitiziranem gradivu, navedbo izpisa iz arhivskih in nacionalnih elektronskih evidenc, obvestilo o lokacijskem indeksu, opombo o nadaljnjih ukrepih pri obdelavi fonda ali zbirke ter opombo o enotnosti podatkov v različnih zapisih. Elementi baze podatkov zagotavljajo podatke o prevzemu gradiva, iskalnih pripomočkih, digitiziranem gradivu ter nadaljnjem delu pri urejanju in obdelavi arhivskega gradiva za vsak fond in zbirko, zagotavljajo tudi enoten dostop do vseh elektronsko dostopnih zapisov na enem mestu.

Takšna vrsta baze podatkov je tudi izhodišče za ustvarjanje enotnega zapisa arhivskega gradiva v elektronski obliki za vse oddelke v arhivu in za enotni nadzor nad vsemi procesi in nalogami, povezanimi z arhivskim gradivom. To pa bi močno poenostavilo celoten potek dela v arhivu.