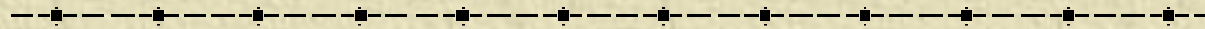


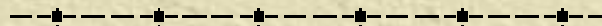
Latvian National Library Project-a 21-st Century Challenge and Oportunity



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Latvian National Library Foundation

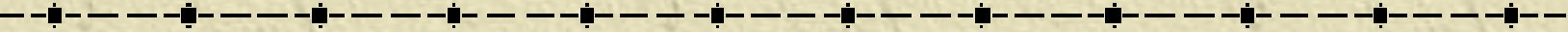


Information Society – a Given or a Goal?

Availability of information differs:

- ✦ individually
- ✦ occupationally
- ✦ socially
- ✦ regionally

The Value or the Price of Information



Information is a resource

It has great value for the needs of:

- ✦ all stages of education
- ✦ professional growth
- ✦ good business
- ✦ successful governance

Good things are not for free

Information has a market value

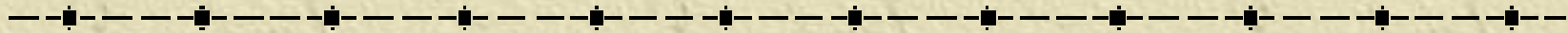
It has a price

It has turned into a commodity

Somebody has to buy (subsidize) it:

- ✦ individuals
- ✦ governments (central or local)
- ✦ service providers

Information must be available in order to have



- ✦ qualified labor resource
- ✦ high competitive ability locally and internationally
- ✦ high living standards
- ✦ democratic, civic and inclusive society

Latvia – member of the EU

-
- ✦ Membership has opened new opportunities
 - ✦ And new challenges
 - ✦ Access to information and competitiveness
 - ✦ Government's initiatives

The Government Policies in the information sector

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National Development Plan

National Programme

Concept of e-Latvia;

Concept of e-Governance;

Local Governments Information System Concept;

School Information System Concept;

Library Information System Concept

All of them have **libraries** in them as end service providers

LNL Project – largest national project of the 21st century

- ✦ A spacious, original new building for the needs of the National Library– **the Castle of Light**
- ✦ Modernization of all public and academic libraries and uniting them in a network of data exchange, union catalogue etc. – **the Lightnet**
- ✦ Construction of **a modern book repository**



The Castle of Light

and

The Lightnet

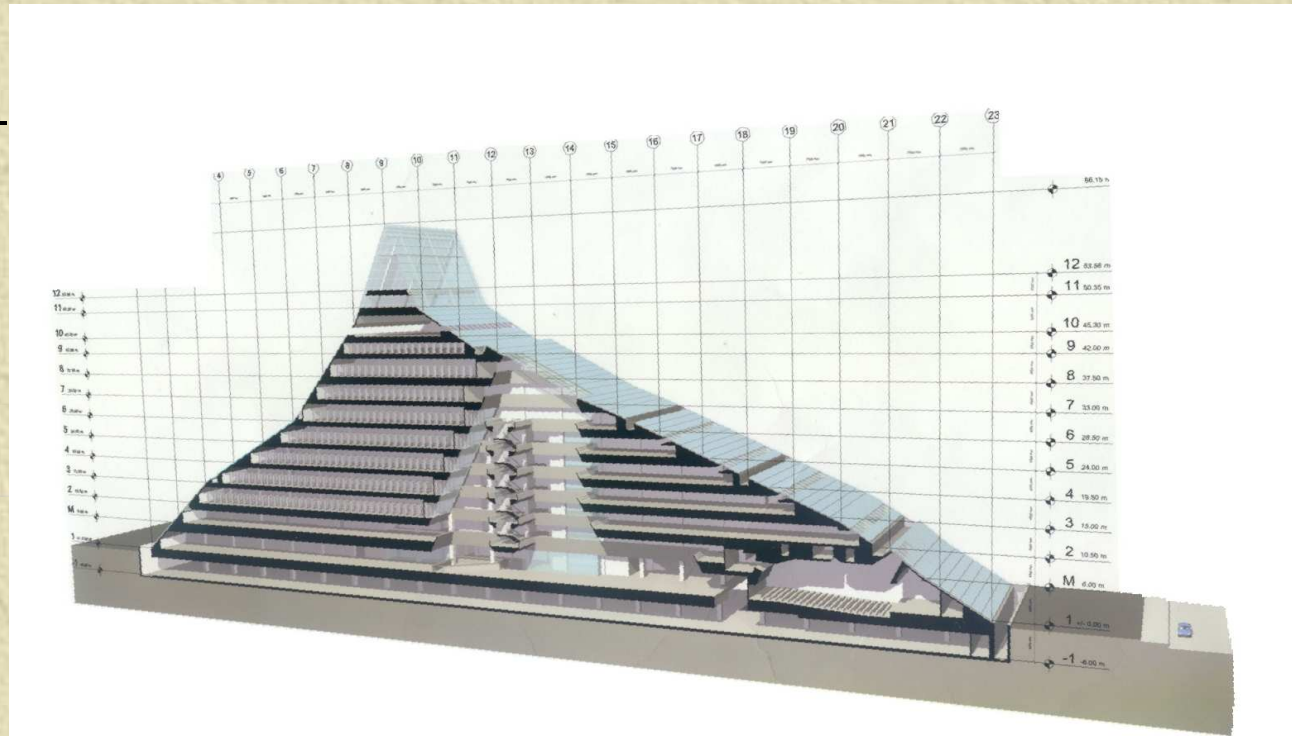
Castle of Light or National Library



Designed by Gunars Birkerts, a famous Latvian born
American architect

Supported by UNESCO General Conference in 1999

Castle of Light or National Library



Area	45 000 m ²
Work stations	1 200
Printed items	6 mill.units
Costs	119 mill. USD
Conceived to be the Heart of the Lightnet as well	

Lightnet

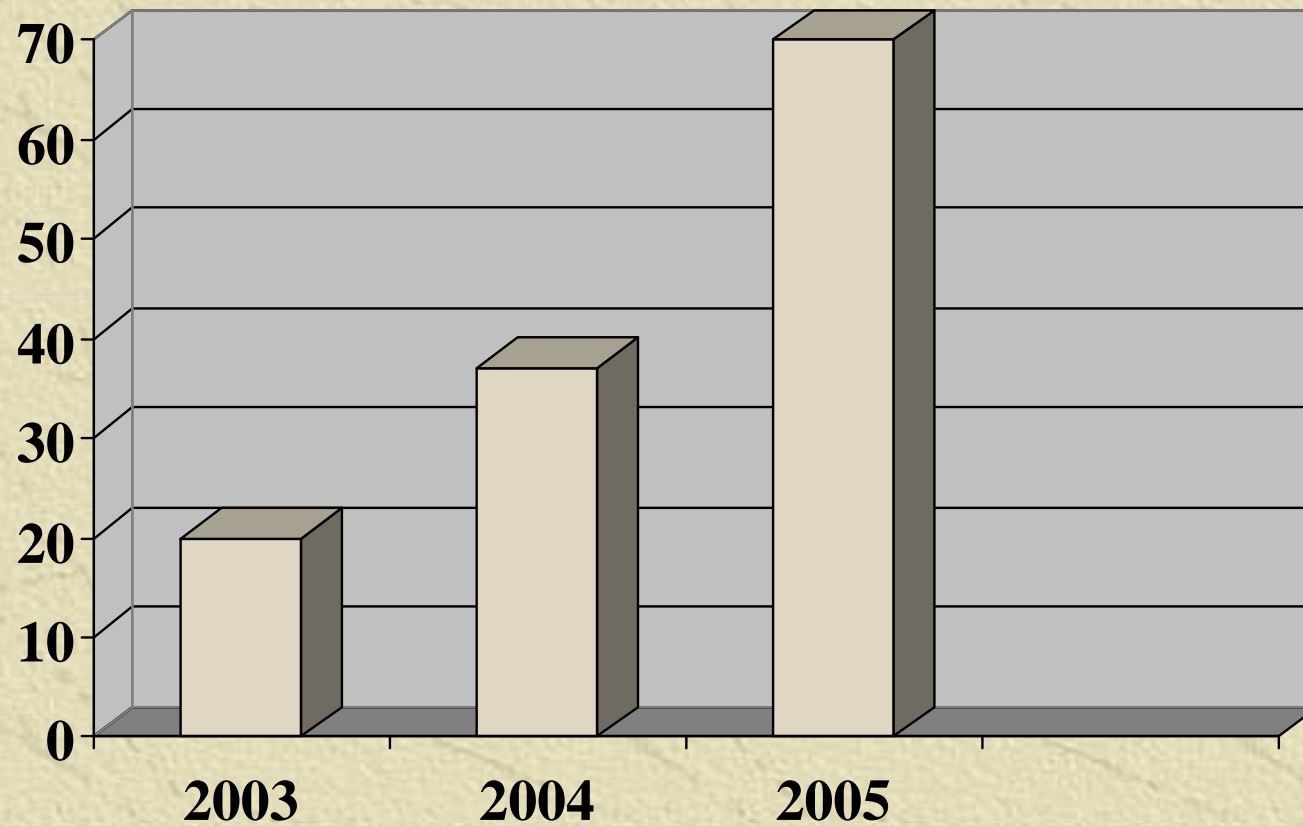
-
- ✦ 1000 universal information delivery points (public libraries)
 - ✦ Minimum 5 PC fitted work stations per library
 - ✦ The Internet
 - ✦ Modules and programming for data exchange and compatibility
 - ✦ Training of staff and users
 - ✦ Digitally and electronically born content creation (Union catalogue, bibliography, home pages etc)
 - ✦ E-governance and e-commerce services available
 - ✦ Costs – LVL 12,7 mill.



There are roughly 1000 public libraries and 1000 school libraries in Latvia.

Currently more than 400 existing local communities are being reformed into +/-100 with several servicing points remaining in

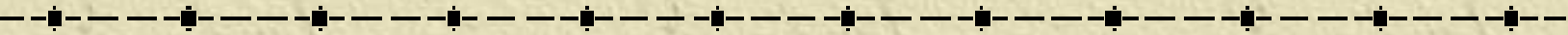
Availability of the Internet in Public Libraries (Percentage)



Why is this project difficult for Latvia?

-
- ✦ It demands a huge lump of the budget
 - ✦ It is a long-term project and Everybody expects improvement next morning at breakfast time
 - ✦ People want money spread per capita not invested in infrastructure
 - ✦ And politicians pretend they can do both
 - ✦ It needs permanent commitment but the average government longevity in Latvia is a year or less

Therefore



A special law on the implementation of the project was adopted which defines:

- ✦ The components;
- ✦ The deadline;
- ✦ The commissioning authority;
- ✦ The supervisory authority;
- ✦ The sources of finance nationally and internationally.
- ✦ The fund-raising entity

Why is this project feasible for EU money

-
- ✦ It is essential for the end user in every rural community and all social groups
 - ✦ It is part of national policy planning
 - ✦ It has a special law on implementation
 - ✦ There is an elaborate project for both components
 - ✦ It is managed and supervised well
 - ✦ There is an independent public fund-raising entity working in close cooperation with the commissioning authority

When implemented, the project will let every user:

-
- ✦ Use the library portal, union catalogue and national and international data bases
 - ✦ Place a search/order for books or publications at all levels (local, regional, national, international)
 - ✦ Obtain universal information service (government, local municipality, EU etc.)
 - ✦ Use the internet for private, professional, academic etc needs
 - ✦ Carry out e-banking, e-commerce etc.
 - ✦ Have the assistance of a specially trained librarian

When implemented, the project will

- ✦ Provide facilities for availability of culture and information, as well as preservation of heritage
- ✦ Be a step forward in setting up information society
- ✦ Promote regional cohesion
- ✦ Foster a socially inclusive society
- ✦ Raise competitiveness of
 - ◆ each individual
 - ◆ Every community
 - ◆ All Latvia
 - ◆ the whole Baltic Sea region

Thank you for attention!

