

# ІСТОРИКО-КУЛЬТУРНА СПАДЩИНА ТА УСТАНОВИ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ПАМ'ЯТІ

## Lithuanian State Archives – 100

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Lithuanian State Archives are commemorating their 100th anniversary in 2021. Historically, the documentary heritage of the State of Lithuania began to take shape during the times of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Over centuries, the state has changed, and with it, the system of State Archives. However, its primary function, the preservation and dissemination of the documentary heritage, remains the same. Documents stored in the Lithuanian State Archives being a great reminder of Lithuania's history.

Neurologist Dr Arūnas Vaitkevičius observes, “memory is individual, personal events are important for every human being, however at the same time these experiences are a collective memory - they are not so much for a specific person, but for a certain group of people, say family. Memories from the past can be important to the whole state as well.” “The path of a document is long and complex - it reaches the Archive, and only then the digital or non-digital version of the document reaches the reader. The content of these documents become the factual truth. Which allows to prove one statement or another” [1] – notes one specialist from Lithuanian State Archives.

This article briefly discusses the history of State Archives, from the first established Archive after Lithuania regained its Independence to the current archive system. Over the course of history, the Lithuanian State Archives system has been changed more than once. However, three significant periods regarding the Lithuanian Archives can be highlighted: Lithuania's Independence (1921–1940), the Soviet occupation period (1940–1941 and 1944–1989) and lastly, the period after Lithuania regained its Independence in 1990.

### 2. HISTORY OF LITHUANIAN STATE ARCHIVES

#### 2.1. Lithuanian State Archives (1921– 1940 first half)

Over the course of 100 years, the structure and subordination of archives have changed several times, documents having been moved from one premise to another, and technologies for storing and disseminating documents continuously improving. When Lithuania's council sought to declare Lithuania's Independence from Imperial Germany, questions regarding the preservation of archives and archival documents were raised. It could be suggested that this marked the beginning of modern State Archives. Even before Lithuania declared its Independence on February 16th, 1918, the Lithuanian Council decided to appoint Dr Jonas Basanavičius and priest Alfonsas Petrulis (later joined by lawyer Vaclovas Biržiška) to manage the archives and handle the signed Act of Independence. The necessity to organise the archives stemmed from the fact that while the archives in Kaunas were not damaged during the First World War, they were abandoned at the end of the war. Thus, archaeologist and local historian Tadas Daugirdas encouraged the Lithuanian Ministry of Education to establish a state institution [2], which was responsible for protecting Lithuanian heritage.

In 1919 the State Archaeological Commission was established. The Law of State Archaeological Commission, which was passed on August 18th, 1919, provided a legal basis for the State Archaeological Commission, to establish central and local archives and museums, preservation of cultural and archival heritage. However, in 1921 most of its functions will be handed over to the State Archive. And October 19th, 1921, marks the official establishment of

the Lithuanian State Archive, following a written order of the Lithuanian Republics Minister of Education Kazys Bizauskas, the Statute of the Central State Archives was accepted and a well-known Lithuanian lawyer Kazimieras Oleka was appointed, as Head of the Archives. The Central State Archives took over most of the functions exercised by the State Archaeological Commission, related to accumulation, protection of the archives. The Statute of the Central State Archive stated that the Archive must store and manage all the archives of state and municipal institutions acting before the creation of the Republic of Lithuania, accumulate documents unnecessary for work and archives of liquidated institutions, as well as documents of private individuals and public organizations with state, social and scientific value. The archives were assigned to the Ministry of Education.

In the independent Lithuania, the Central State Archive was managed by K. Oleka (1921-1922), K. Andrejevas (1922–1935) and J. Stakauskas (July 31st, 1935–1940). After regaining Vilnius (1939 October), J. Stakauskas also became Head of Vilnius State Archive. During Lithuania's Independence, the Central State Archive stored 2000 square meters or 6315 linear meters of shelves, with more than 600 fonds and about 0.5 million files. The oldest documents stored was from the 16th century. The archive staff managed the fonds and described the files, issued document copies, extracts, and certificates to individuals and institutions. In 1929 a reading room was opened in the Archives [3]. It is important to mention that over the course of 22 years of Lithuania's Independence, the Archives Act was not passed. While the drafting of the Archives Act began in 1935, even after five years and after 6 drafts, it was not adopted. However, a short and concise act was passed during the Soviet occupation in 1940. The August 19th, 1940 Archives Act primary provision stated that it “manages the organisation of archives in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania, as well as that the property of all the people (which belongs the state), contains all archival (documentary) material throughout the territory of Lithuania (files, books, documents, correspondence, manuscripts, plans, drawings, negatives and positives of photo paintings and films, sound recording material and similar things)”. Thus, the existence of independent Lithuanian archives came to an end.

## **2.2. Lithuanian State Archives (1940 second half – 1990)**

After the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania in June 1940, not only the demolition of the Lithuanian political system and statehood, but the establishment of the Soviet archive system began., the name, status and structure of the Central Archives in Kaunas were changed. In August 1940, the archives were renamed the Central State Archives of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, and in 1941, a decision was made to transfer the Archives to Vilnius. The Archive in Kaunas then acquired the name of Kaunas Branch of the Central State Archives of the Lithuanian SSR. The subordination of the Archives had also changed. Earlier, the institution was subordinate to the Minister of Education of the Lithuanian SSR (direct subordination to the Director of Culture Department), now they were subordinate to the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR. No other significant structural changes were implemented in the Lithuanian archives before the war. However, the establishment of county archives began. A short period of German occupation in 1941–1944 returned the legal regulation of independent Lithuania. The Archive was renamed to Vilnius State Archives and county archives, which were established during the Soviet occupation, collapsed except for Šiauliai and Panevėžys county archives.

From 1940 till 1990, with the exception of the short period of the German occupation, the Central State Archive, which was established in 1921, was called the Central State Archive of the Lithuanian SSR. The Archive started operating in Vilnius in 1941, and, it had branches. On July 23rd, 1944, The Council of People's Commissars of the LSSR adopted a resolution "On the Collection and Protection of Documentary Material of the USSR State Archival Fund". The ongoing Sovietization of the country affected the structure of the archives as well. In 1949 governments considered establishing the Central History, the October Revolution, and Socialist Construction Archives. However, it was decided against. Instead, in 1951 three divisions were established in the Central Archives: Secret Fonds, Historical Document Fonds, October Revolution and Socialist

Construction Document Fonds [4]. Additionally, the Archive began accumulating 1918–1940 Lithuanian state institution documents.

The provision of state storage of visual documents was enacted back in 1940, but its practical implementation did not begin until 1959. The Archives Act adopted by the Council of Ministers of the LSSR in Lithuania legalised the provisions for the storage of audiovisual documents in state archives. After the war, the Commissioner of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR by the August 4th, 1944 order no. 85 “Regarding the instructions of the Introduction of Registering and Management of Photographic Documents in the Institutions, Enterprises and Organisations of the SSR Union” mandated that the archives must accumulate, register and arrange photo documents. Preparatory work in the Central State Archives was carried out in 1955. And the Film- Photo-Audio document departments were created. Instructions regarding the creation storage and use of photo documents were sent to institutions and organisations which were involved in the use and production of photographic documents. In 1965, after the reorganisation and formation of independent archives, four departments were in the Central State Archives established: Document Storage, Accounting and Completion Division, the Scientific-Information Division, the Publication and Document Utilization Division, and the library, which functioned as a separate division. Since January 1st, 1964, 10 branches of the Central State Archive were established, which became the archives of districts and cities and. and this structure remained until 1990. An exception were the branches of the Lithuanian Central State Archives operating in Kaunas and Šiauliai, which were reorganized into central state archives in 1978.

One of the implemented Soviet reforms was the centralisation of the archive system, which stems from 18th century France [5]. While Lithuania was independent, its territorial division was approved. While this was not changed at the beginning of the Soviet occupation in 1940, the Council of People's Commissars of the LSSR on December 17th adopted a resolution “On the Organization of County Archives”. It is unclear when Lithuanian county archives started operating, as their activities were interrupted by the war. However, in 1944-1945 they were fully operating and were collecting surviving files. On September 25th, 1944, the Commissioner of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the LSSR signed the order “On the Restoration of the Activities of the State County Archives of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR”. Indicating that the archives main functions were to collect and manage documents, as well as create an information retrieval system. In 1944 job openings in Šiauliai, Panevėžys, Ukmergė, Marijampolė and Tauragė country archives were approved. While it is unclear exactly when Klaipėda Regional archive started operating, Klaipėda City Executive Committee by the June 1945 (day not specified in the document) Resolution no. 37 ordered that in the span of two weeks, all institutions, organisations, and companies in Klaipėda were to arrange and transfer, documents created in the times of the former Republic of Lithuania as well as “the German occupation times” to Klaipėda City State Archives. Šiauliai Regional State Archives was established in 1944 on the premises of the current Šiauliai University. The Archives were storing and managing documents produced by Šiauliai Town and Šiauliai County institutions before 1918. On January 1st, 1947, there were 19 county archives in Lithuania. The number of county archives increased every year until 1950 when they were already operated in all Lithuanian counties. After the new administrative and territorial division of Lithuania was completed in 1950, district archives began operating. They were transferred to the executive committees of the councils of people's deputies by the April 29th, 1954 order. The archives remained under their authority until 1963 when they became Central State Archive branches. District archives stored documents of local government and other institutions. However, it was decided that documents up to 1944 were to be transferred to the Central State Archives, which has been implemented. The network of regional archives was rebuilt only after the restoration of Independence.

The network of specialised state archives was formed by establishing independent archives from the Central State Archive of the Lithuanian SSR departments. On August 24th,

1956, Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR resolution, it was decided to establish the Central State Historical Archive of the Lithuanian SSR. The new Archive would take certain documents from the Central State Archive of the Lithuanian SSR (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Russian Empire, the period of Imperial Germany occupation) and Vilnius City State Archives. On January 1st, 1957, job openings were approved. The State Historical Archives of the Lithuanian SSR links its origins to tsarist Russia when the Central Archives of the Old Record Books were established in Vilnius in 1852. 1914 during the First World War, over 50% of the archive fonds - the oldest and most valuable were taken to Russia. In 1919–1920, Vilnius and the administration and supervision of the Archives were under Lithuanian governance, which was replaced by Polish governance, and later on, by Bolshevik rule. Under Polish rule, in 1922. the State Archives came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religions and General Education [6]. After Vilnius was returned to Lithuania in 1939, by the USSR, the State Archives in Vilnius was passed to the Ministry of Education, as discussed above. The archive stores documents created until 1918.

During this period, in 1940, the specialised Central Metric Archive was established, which was under control by the Office of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the LSSR. The subordination of the Archive changed several times. In 1987 it was transferred to the Central Board of Archives, and in 1987–1990 it was called the Central State Metrics Archive of the LSSR. This Archive has stored, managed and provided access to metric books, particularly civil status records dating from 1940s.

During the '60s, The Central State Archives collection of video and audio documents kept expanding, thus in 1965, the LSSR Central State Archive of Cinema-Photo-Audio Documents was established. It equipped with a photo-laboratory, document binding and restoration workroom. In 1968 The Ministry of Culture proposed to the Board of Archives to capture famous people in photographs and films, as well as to record their voices. On February 18th, 1969, The Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR adopted a resolution “On measures to better organise the recording of the voice of prominent Soviet and foreign figures visiting the Republic”. The resolution obliged the State Radio and Television Committee to establish a special committee to record the voice of famous people, requested by the Board of Archives. The October 27th, 1966 resolution "On the Work of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Archives in Arrangement and Appraisal of Documents", it was noted that it is expedient to establish the Literature and Art Archives. Thus, in 1968 The LSSR Central State Archive of Literature and Art was established. It marked the end of changes to the Lithuanian archive network until Lithuania regained its Independence.

What started on August 5th, 1940, when the Lithuanian archives were handed over to the Ministry of the Interior of the Lithuanian SSR, continued with the return of the Soviets in 1944. After the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania, all Lithuanian archives were controlled by the Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) of the Lithuanian SSR. Archives were an appendix to the repression system, and from Moscow to the periphery were subjugated to justify political repression. That was when documents of public institutions and other organisations of the former independent Republic of Lithuania were classified. However, on September 21st, 1960, after the archives were reorganised and the Archives Division of the Ministry of the Interior of the LSSR was liquidated, the Archives Board under the Council of Ministers of the LSSR was established, which was reorganised into the Chief Board of Archives under the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR and operated until 1990.

The obstruction of information during Soviet times directly contributed to the falsification of the Lithuanian history and was one of the greatest losses to the Lithuanian archival science. A strict system of classification of the archival fonds of the Republic of Lithuania and the German occupation periods was introduced. Only, Historians who studied the so-called party issues and were familiar with the fonds of the party archives of the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) were looked upon more favourably and had better chances accessing such fonds. Negative attitudes regarding the preservation of Lithuanian history and culture were

clearly shown by authorities. In 1961 when The Lithuanian archives system was released from the Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Lithuanian SSR (former NKVD), the state archives were curated by a special division of administrative bodies in the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Operational work in state archives in 1940–1941, 1941–1960 was considered the most important. Fonds being arranged in a hurry, with many staff and resources allocated [7]. Due to questionable expert conclusions and increasing waste paper supply plans approved by the Council of Ministers, Lithuanian state archives destroyed considerable numbers of documents, including those related to Lithuania's historical past. Only in 1960-1961, the state archives were removed from the waste paper supply plan [8]. During the Soviet occupation, significant archival fonds previously removed from Lithuania were returned – even those which Russians refused to return during the interwar period.

Despite the negative consequences of the structural and organisational reorganisation of archives, a system of document use and storage was formed, which not only facilitated ideological structures but also created conditions for document preservation and historical research [9]. As noted by Dr. Sigita Jęgelevičius, it is symbolic that the Soviet era in the Lithuanian archival system began and ended with adopting archive laws (August 1940 and February 13th, 1990). The first Law would have been significant; however, it did not provide its purpose, as Sovietisation started from the very beginning. The second archive law marked the separation of Lithuanian archives from the USSR archives system.

### **2.3. Lithuanian state archives after the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania from 1990 till today**

In 1990 a new stage in the development of archives in Lithuania began. With its new legal status, structural changes, political and social factors that influenced the directions and tasks of archives. Even before the declaration of Independence, on February 13th, 1990, the Archives Act was adopted. It was implemented on September 1st, 1990. and was valid until December 29th, 1995 [10]. Before the act was passed, on March 11th, 1990, Lithuania declared its Independence. The adopted Law stated that the State Archives Fond belongs to Lithuania. It was also noted that the State Archives Fond documents might not be the object of purchase and sale and other transactions that violate the right of state ownership to such documents. This was done to prevent the USSR from claiming any archival documents. The Law also reinstated those provisions on private property rights to documents. The Law regulated that the document fonds of political, public, denominational organisations and other legal entities and natural persons in the territory of the Lithuanian SSR are the property of these persons [11].

Significant changes regarding archival policies did not begin until 1994. A decision was made to declassify documents held in state archives. 1994 January 25th The Government of Lithuania adopted Resolution No. 44 “On Declassification of Archival Fonds”, by which the General Directorate of Lithuanian Archives, together with the Security Service of the Republic of Lithuania, was instructed to establish the procedure for declassification of archival documents and to manage it methodically. 1995 December 30th, the second Law on Archives entered into force, which established the concept of the Lithuanian Archives Fonds – like any other documents of the State of Lithuania and its historical heritage stored in document repositories of the Republic of Lithuania and included in the Lithuanian Archives Fond, regardless of their source, method, place of storage and form of ownership, composition, ownership, formation of the system of state archives, financing of the said system and etc. [12].

Its current version of the Law on Documents and Archives has been in force since January 1st, 2005, with a number of changes over the last fifteen years. In 2005 the Law Amending the Law on Archives of the Republic of Lithuania came in to force. The object was first expanded by extending the title of the Law by supplementing with a word documents. The concept of the Lithuanian Archives Fond was abandoned, and the concept of the National Document Fond was introduced. This Law regulates that the National Document Fond consists of activity documents of state and municipal institutions, establishments and enterprises, state

authorised persons, activity documents of state institutions and enterprises operating in Lithuania in various historical periods, as well as documents stored in state archives, activity documents of non-governmental organisations, private persons, as well as documents of Lithuanian historical heritage or Lithuania-related documents or their copies received from other countries. The special part of this fond consists of documents of the structures of resistance to the USSR and German occupation regimes, as well as the Lithuanian Communist People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs and other Soviet security and military institutions, Lithuanian Communist Party and its subordinate structures.

Regarding the formation of the Lithuanian state archives system after the restoration of its Independence, it is necessary to distinguish institutions forming policies in the archives and the state archives implementing such policies. 1990 The State Archives System was legalised in the Law on Archives which remained in 1995. following the adoption of the new Law on Archives and in 2005 when the law was recasted. Observing the first twenty years after Lithuania's Independence, it can be said that the system of Lithuanian archives was built upon the system created during the Soviet period. In 1990 the General Directorate of Lithuanian Archives under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania was established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania with the April 18th, 1990 resolution no. 114 "On the Establishment of Certain Departments and Other Services of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania" [13] was entrusted to execute any legal policies regarding the archives. And took over the Central Board of Archives functions, which were abolished from July 1st. Another reorganisation was related to the April 14th 1995 Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 542 "On the Reorganisation of the General Directorate of Lithuanian Archives under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania". And the General Directorate of Lithuanian Archives under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania was reorganised into the Lithuanian Archives Department under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Which is now responsible for the preparation of normative acts on issues of accumulation, registration storage, use and document management of the Lithuanian State Archives Fond and ensuring proper functioning of the Lithuanian archives [14]. The department was headed by Gediminas Ilgūnas, Vidas Grigoraitis and others.

The Lithuanian Special Archive was established by the Lithuanian Archives Department by the October 10th 1995, order No. 50. Regarding the regulations on the Transmission and Receipt of Archival Documents of Special Importance, approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania by the July 14th 1993 resolution No. 526, in November 1995 – February 1996, a special commission for the transfer of archival documents of the former KGB unit of the LSSR transferred all remaining archives regarding the former LSSR State Security Committee (KGB) (about 787,000 files) to the State archives. In April 1997, documents in possession of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania of the former Ministry of the Interior of the LSSR of 1940–1941 and 1944–1991 were handed over.

To optimise the network of state archives, the Lithuanian Central Metrics Archive (The Lithuanian Central State Metrics Archive in 1990–1993), formerly subordinated to the Lithuanian Archives Department, was liquidated and in 2001 merged with the Lithuanian State Historical Archives. The Central State Archive of Film Photographic Documents of the Lithuanian SSR in 1990 became the Lithuanian Video and Audio Archive and in 2002 was merged with the Lithuanian Central State Archives. The same happened with the archives of the Lithuanian Communist Party under the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, which was included in the system of state archives and reorganised on November 17th, 1997, by establishing the Lithuanian public organisation archive, five years later, in 2001, it was reorganised into a structural division of the Lithuanian Special Archives. As for the first decade of regional archive networks, these periods of archival creation were as follows. The branches of the Central State Archive of Lithuania in Alytus, Marijampolė, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, Raseiniai, Švenčionys, Telšiai and Ukmergė, as well as the central state archives of the Lithuanian SSR in Kaunas and Šiauliai, which were operating in Kaunas and Šiauliai, were reorganized into state archives in 1990 and in 1993 they were reorganized into county archives, which housed

documents from the occupation period of the USSR. In 1996–1997, this network was reorganised by establishing ten-county archives located in Alytus, Marijampolė, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Tauragė, Telšiai, Utena and Vilnius. All of them operated until 2017.

It should be noted that other archives were created based on the existing ones. On the contrary, Vilnius County Archives was built from scratch in 1996 because part of the documents was stored in Švenčionys and the remaining ones were held in the Lithuania Central State Archives. The amendment to the Law on Documents and Archives of 2011 abandoned the state archive system. The state archives became one of the entities performing the state administration of documents and archives. There were five central state archives until January 1st, 2017: Lithuania Central State Archives; Lithuanian State History Archives; Lithuanian State Modern Archives; Lithuanian Special Archives; Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art. and regional state archives located in: Alytus, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Marijampolė, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Telšiai, Utena and Vilnius.

One of the most significant changes since the restoration of Independence occurred in 2011 as the state archive system was changed to the entities performing the state administration of documents and archives. Five such entities emerged: The Government of Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Culture, the Chief Archivist of Lithuania, the State Archives and the Council of Archives. The position for Chief Archivist of Lithuania has emerged, who is entrusted with formulating documents and archives and assisting him in implementing state administration in archives and records. Consequentially, the Office of the Chief Archivist of Lithuania, which was established after the reorganization of the Lithuanian Archives Department under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, becomes subordinate and accountable to the Ministry of Culture (previously assigned to the Ministry of Justice). The Office of the Chief Archivist of Lithuania is subordinate and accountable to the Ministry of Culture [15]. It acts as a consequence of the reorganisation of state institutions from the former direct accountability to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. This institution is responsible for forming the state legal framework, drafting laws and Government resolutions, coordinating and submitting proposals for draft legal acts prepared by other central public administration institutions. Additionally, it issues legal acts regulating matters of preparation and management of documents within its competence. Dr. Ramojus Kraujelis was the Chief Archivist of Lithuania from 2011 to 2018. Kristina Ramonienė took his place in 2019, becoming The Chief Archivist of Lithuania. Currently not playing a significant role in archives, the Council of Archives was established in 2011. It is an institution advising the Minister of Culture on the formation of state documents and archive policy and state administration; preservation of the heritage in the archives; efficient use of budget appropriations and other funds allocated to the field of state documents and archives.

To this day, a network of 9 State archives is currently operating. It includes the Lithuanian Central State Archives, Lithuanian State History Archive, Lithuanian State Modern Archives, Lithuanian Special Archives, Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art. Additionally, there are four regional state archives with branches in Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Vilnius. The total area of the storage facilities in state archives is 20 000 square meters, which storing approximately 11 million files. If placed one after another, the line of files would cover 120 km, which is more than the distance between two of Lithuania's largest cities – Vilnius and Kaunas. A new archive nearby is expected to be finished in 2023, contributing another 40 kilometres to the already existing length between the two cities.

The central state archives are divided according to two metrics. The first being the chronological periods of the stored documents: Lithuanian State Historical Archives, Lithuanian Central State Archives and Lithuanian State Modern Archives. The second metric is sets of documents: Lithuanian Special Archives and Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art. It becomes clear that the chronological boundaries are conditional, as the periods of many of the archives overlap. The regional archives were formed by implementing regional policy according to four Lithuanian regions.

The Lithuanian State Historical Archive is the largest and most important place for domestic and foreign documents to be held, a treasure trove of medieval and modern archival sources, dating back to the 13th century and up to 1918 (some of its documents 1918–1940). A fragment of the Liturgical Book, from 1280–1330, is the oldest preserved document stored. Today, the Archive stores documents of all state institutions, denominational communities, public organisations and families from the 16th century up to 1918 (excluding literary and art profile fonds). It also holds the most valuable parchments of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – books of acts of judicial and administrative institutions (about 10,000 books), in which documents date from the 15th century to the 18th century.

This Archive contains the remains of the fonds of the Supreme Tribunal of Lithuania, the Treasury Tribunal, land, courts, city institutions, and confederations. It is worth mentioning that the privilege of the Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland Stephen Báthory from 1579 is preserved in the Archive. Consequentially, the privilege established Vilnius University, the first higher education institution in Lithuania. In 2001, the archives were supplemented with books of metrics, primarily records of the civil status acts, from 1940 to 2000. Thus, the chronological boundaries of the archival documents became comprehensive throughout the 20th century. The Archive participates in the electronic heritage project e-paveldas (e-heritage), containing the digitised content from the 16th–19th centuries. The content reflects Lithuania's historical, political, social and economic situation, captured by the Grand Duchy in 1540–1845. Court records, church records of births, marriages and deaths, archival documents, and civil status records from ancient times to the 20th century are digitised, making it easier to explore family genealogy.

Over 2170 written document fonds, microfilm collections (more than 3 million files in total) from 1918–1990 are preserved in the Lithuanian Central State Archives. Archive also holds photographs from the 19th century, video and audio documents from the 19th century, accessible to the general public. The Lithuanian Central State Archives has a Restoration Department, where records of various periods are restored. The archive fonds forms several complexes. The Republic of Lithuania's archival fonds of civil and military institutions (1918–1940) form the largest group of archival fonds. The personal fonds contains many documents of public and Catholic church figures, lawyers from the interwar period of the Republic of Lithuania.

Additionally, the first president of independent Lithuania, Antanas Smetona's archive, is also stored here. The Archive maintains photographic, film, video and audio documents. There are as many as 400'000 photographic documents (from 19th century to date), including photos, negatives, glass plates, albums, vignettes, slides, digital images. More than 21'000 sound recordings from the 20th – 21st centuries, including records, magnetic tapes, cassettes, compact discs. Video material amounts to 3'000 documents (videos started to be collected in 1988, mostly footage filmed by archive operators), more than 9'000 cinematographic documents (from the 1920s to date). The oldest preserved films appear to be copies of the world's first films made by the Lumiere brothers back in 1895.

In 2013, the Archive was instructed by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Seimas Education Committee to create the State Cinema Yearbook to preserve historical moments, events, contemporaries' thoughts on developing statehood and decisions for future generations. The State Cinema Yearbook has been filmed using an analogue film with longevity. Since 2017, images are captured with a high-definition digital film camera [16]. Besides the 20th century, documents are actively collected even from the 21st century. It should also be noted that these audiovisual documents are subject to copyright and related rights.

The Lithuanian State Modern Archives is currently responsible for collecting documents since the restoration of Independence. After the reorganisation of the Document Acquisition and Recordkeeping Division of the General Directorate of Archives of Lithuania, the Lithuanian State Modern Archives was established (under the Republic of Lithuania in 1993 October 19th by order no. 157). By the same order, the Archive was instructed to accumulate and store the



documents of state government and management institutions, Vilnius local government and management institutions, liquidated and reorganised institutions, permanent storage documents of non-state legal entities created after 1990 March 11th and activity documents of natural persons of enduring historical value [17]. In 1993, the Archive accepted first documents to store of the 1993 election of the President of the Republic of Lithuania. The Archive stores one of the most important documents of the Lithuanian state – the original “Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania” (with the deputies' signatures), which was adopted by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania on 1990 March 11th.” On 2006 March 30th, the Lithuanian National UNESCO Commission approved and recognised the “Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania” with regional significance as an object of documentary heritage and included it in the Lithuanian National Register of the UNESCO Memory of the World Program. Visitors at the Archives can find the collection of documents from the tragic events of 1991 on January 13th. Additionally, election documents of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and municipal, can be observed.

The Archive holds documents of liquidated and reorganised ministries, state power, management, political and public organisations: Lithuanian Sąjūdis, Lithuanian Nationalists' Union, American Lithuanian National Union, Lithuanian citizens Charter, the Independence Party, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, the Lithuanian Christian Democrats, The Union of Modern Christian Democrats, The Lithuanian Polish Union, and the New Union (Social Liberals). Another essential complex of documents in the personal fonds is the political and professional activity records of the 1990 March 11th Act signatories: Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis, Kazimieras Antanavičius, Virgilijus Juozas Čepaitis, Bronislovas Genzelis, Bronislovas Juozas Kuzmickas, Kazimieras Motieka, Saulius Pečeliūnas, Leonas Milčius. Also documents of other persons such as Rūta Gajauskaitė, journalist and politician Algimantas Degutis' political and professional activities, artist Jonas Jagėla, painter Jokūbas Zovė, philosopher Leonarda Jekentaitė – Kuzmickienė, dietician Laisvūnė Petkevičienė, clerical and documentaries of priests Kazimieras Vasiliauskas and Alfonsas Svarinskas. The Archive has been actively accumulating electronic documents since 2012. To this day, 223 files have already been transferred, from which 198 are stored parentally and the number of documents has exceeded 20'000.

One of many of Archive's functions is the supervision of document management. The Archive supervises the implementation of the requirements for the management and use of documents and archives established in legal acts, in the central administration institutions and bodies assigned to it and provides them with methodological assistance in document management. In addition, based on stored documents, it issues certificates, extracts and other documents to confirm legal facts. It spreads the message about the accumulated documentary heritage: documents and valuable information relevant to the history of Lithuania, constantly updating its educational programs for students and society. The Archive prepares exhibitions of the most prominent events in 20 th century's Lithuania. The exhibitions mentioned above uses not only documents from its fonds, also video and interviews are created [34]. For long-term and impeccable work in the state archive system, such employees of the institution were awarded the badge of honour of the Archivist: former Heads of the Document Storage and Information Division of the Archive Irena Kozlovska (2015) and Aldona Naruškevičienė (2018) and former Archive Director Irena Kasciuškevičiūtė (2020).

The Lithuanian Special Archives, formed on the thematic principle, has probably the most extensive collection of documents of the Soviet security structures that survived in the Baltics States. The documents mentioned above reflect the goals, structure and methods of the repressive Soviet apparatus. This fond accumulated in 1940–1941, 1944–1990 from Secret clerical, operational-agency working documents of the KGB central apparatus and territorial subdivisions of the Lithuanian SSR, personal and work files of KGB agents, filtration and special files of the Lithuanian population, inspection cases, criminal cases of persons convicted for political motives, criminal cases brought against terrorist acts against Soviet-party assets and

institutions, counter-intelligence units of the USSR KGB and the Lithuanian SSR KGB counter-intelligence unit, interwar Lithuanian state, public and cultural figures, Catholic clergy, 1941 insurgents, post-war partisans, leaders of anti-Soviet organizations, dissidents, refugees from the USSR, and other persons considered state criminals were kept in operational files. This archive also accumulates and forms a fond of surviving documents of Lithuanian partisans. The documents accumulated in this archive are assigned to a special part of the National Document Fond, which has been discussed earlier. The Lithuanian Literature and Art Archive accumulates, manages and preserves the documents of writers, theatrical artists, musicians, artists and other creators and art critics, teatrologists, musicologists, and state cultural and art institutions, creative unions, societies and public organisations. The Archive is constantly accumulating documents from existing institutions and creators created in the 21st century. In addition, this Archive supervises the document management of cultural institutions. From 2017 January 1st, four regional archives are accumulating documents on the history of a particular region. These archives also supervise the document management of state and municipal institutions operating in their territory. Kaunas Regional State Archive preserves the documents from the 19th – 20th centuries, documents of institutions that once worked in Kaunas province in 1919–1944, documents of municipalities and their divisions, educational institutions, and medical institutions and private companies operating in Kaunas city and county. Among them were the passport cards of the interwar Lithuanian political figures (President Antanas Smetona and his family) and the passport cards of famous writers, artists, and musicians who lived in Kaunas during that time). Activity documents of state and municipal institutions, establishments, enterprises, non-governmental organisations that have operated in 1990 – 2003 and are operating in the current territory of Kaunas County. The Archive has branches in Alytus and Marijampolė.

It should be noted that this Archive stands out in the context of other archives, as it preserves documents of the historical period (until 1918) and the period of independent Lithuania, which is not available in different regional archives. The Klaipėda Regional State Archive holds most of the documents of institutions and companies related to the sea. The archive documents consist of several complexes: the first half of the 20th century (1902–1939) Klaipėda port, Neringa, Olando Kepurė and other photos of seaside areas. The other complex consists of documents of agricultural commissions of Kretinga and Šilutė counties (1940–1941), permanent records of institutions, enterprises and organisations operating in Klaipėda, Palanga, Neringa, Kretinga, Skuodas and Šilutė counties and districts (1944–1990). The Archive has branches in Tauragė and Telšiai.

Šiauliai Regional State Archive preserves documents of literary, technical, cultural, health care, educational, scientific figures who have lived and are still living in the said territory, personal funds that have become the property of the state of the independent state of Lithuania (1918–1940), the Soviet period (1940–1941 and 1944–1990) and the period of Independence (since 1990). Part of the fonds of the period of Independence (since 1990) consists of Panevėžys city, Biržai, Kupiškis, Panevėžys, Pasvalys, Rokiškis districts of the Republic of Lithuania, Panevėžys county (since 1995) functioning and still operating self-government and management, notary, agrarian reform services, agriculture documents of companies and other institutions. The Archive has a branch in Panevėžys.

The Vilnius Regional State Archives accumulates and stores documents of 1940–1941, 1944–1990 and the period of Independence (since 1990), researches and popularises activity documents of state and municipal institutions, establishments, enterprises operated and operating in the current territories of Vilnius and Utena counties, as well as activity documents transferred by non-governmental organizations, private legal and natural persons, which have historical, cultural and practical significance. Also, it ensures the preservation of accumulated documents and gives public access to them. The Archive has a branch in Utena.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Thus, we can say that the principles of document accumulation formulated 100 years ago in state archives have changed only in cumulative forms, but not by raised principles, to accumulate existing state and municipal archives, accumulate unnecessary archives of the state, social and scientific value. Now the state archives are open, modern and strongly contribute to national identity and public citizenship and the knowledge of Lithuanian history. All state archives have reading rooms where archival documents can be examined following the established procedure. Other than those whose use is restricted by Law. Documents of government agencies are available to readers. Documents transmitted to the state archives of private persons or non-governmental organisations shall be provided to readers under the conditions established by the transferor. In the reading rooms, researchers have access to card catalogues, circulars, catalogues, directories, consultations of archivists. Upon request, the Archive can digitise and microfilm documents. Also, computerised workstations have recently been installed, where access to archive databases, Electronic Archive Information System, and Integrated Administrative Services System is provided.

As active participants of the information system, the State Archives of the Republic of Lithuania actively participate in projects dedicated to the digitisation and remote access of documents. To ensure the availability of archives, the Lithuanian Chief Archivist's Office manages two state information systems. In 2011, the Electronic Archive Information System was created and started operating in Lithuania, stimulated by the ever-increasing amount of information stored in documents, registers and information systems, the rising cost of keeping paper documents and the need for a unified National Document Fund information retrieval system. The development of this system made it possible to transfer electronic documents for storage in state archives through information technology, organise their reliable storage, and provide all users with electronic services for accessing electronic documents and information about them. Also, in 2017, a one-stop-shop system was introduced – an integrated administrative system for searching documents stored in state archives and ordering files in the reading room. Registered users of the system may apply for a civil document certifying registration (birth, marriage, death), documents confirming the salary and length of service received, and other electronic services. At the end of 2021, the Electronic Archive Information System update will be completed, and a virtual reading room, virtual access to digitised books of ecclesiastical metrics, and a tool for creating genealogical trees will be made. All this will improve visitors' working conditions and allow researchers to achieve new scientific achievements. Ensuring accessibility and usability for documents in the digital Archive in the records are uploaded to Internet platforms. One of them is the joint portal of exhibitions of Lithuanian state archives, where exhibits on Lithuanian politics, culture and history are published. The 100-year celebration of archives has become another opportunity to stimulate more active interest in the accumulated layers of the state, institutions, and families' history and become even more active information providers to the public.

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