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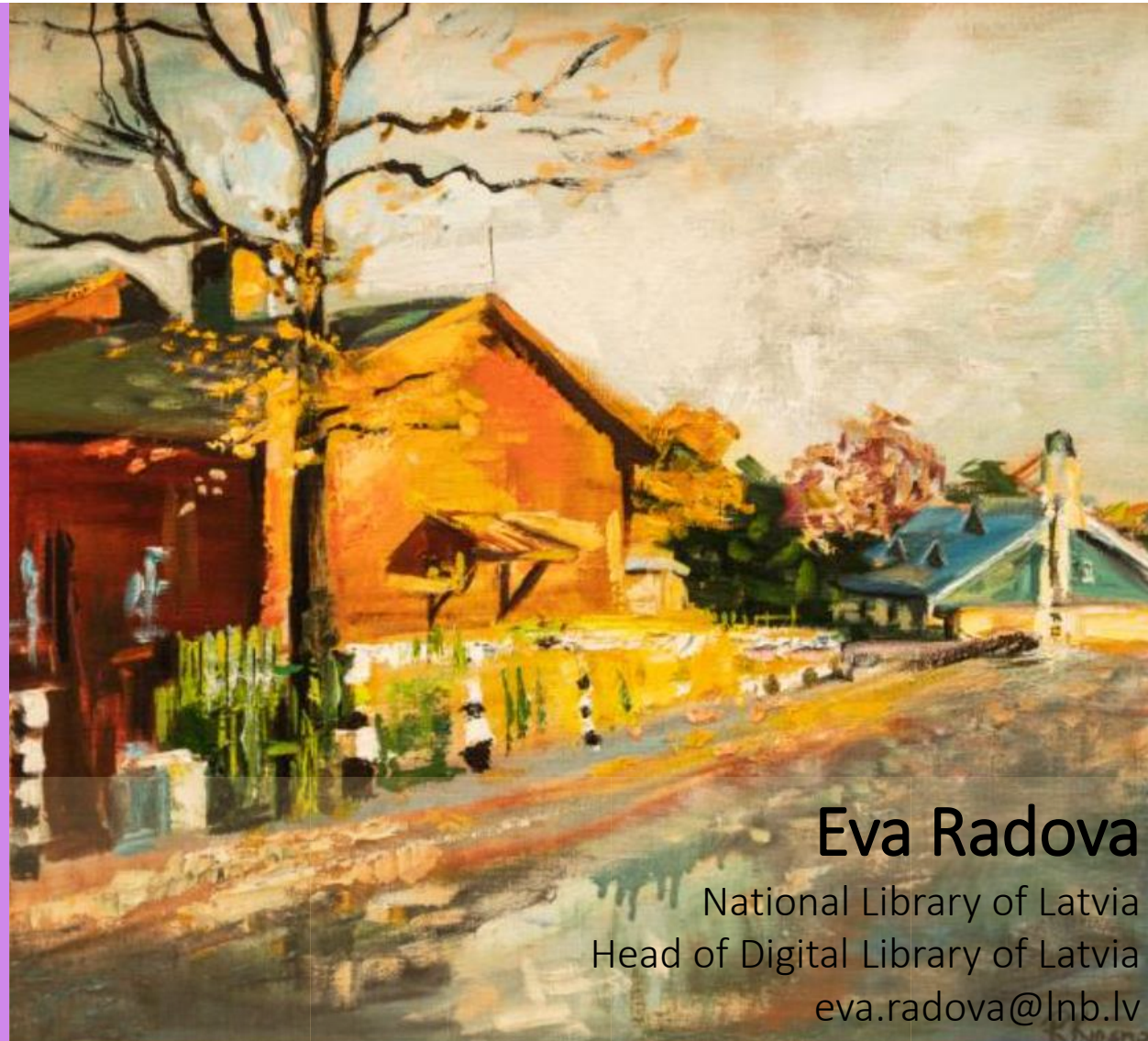
The Digital Library of Latvia and its Role in Regional Development:

Lessons from Latvian Regional Libraries



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Head of Digital Library of Latvia
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Latvia and National Library of Latvia

Context

Population ~1.9 million

Heritage

Deep roots in folklore, choral singing, and the preservation of the national language

The Mandate of The National Library of Latvia

central repository of published heritage
promoting cultural memory
providing digital cultural heritage platform

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Digital Library of Latvia

enables you to search over 3.8 million digital objects of Latvia's cultural heritage content in the collections of more than 700+ partners - archives, museums, libraries, organizations and individuals

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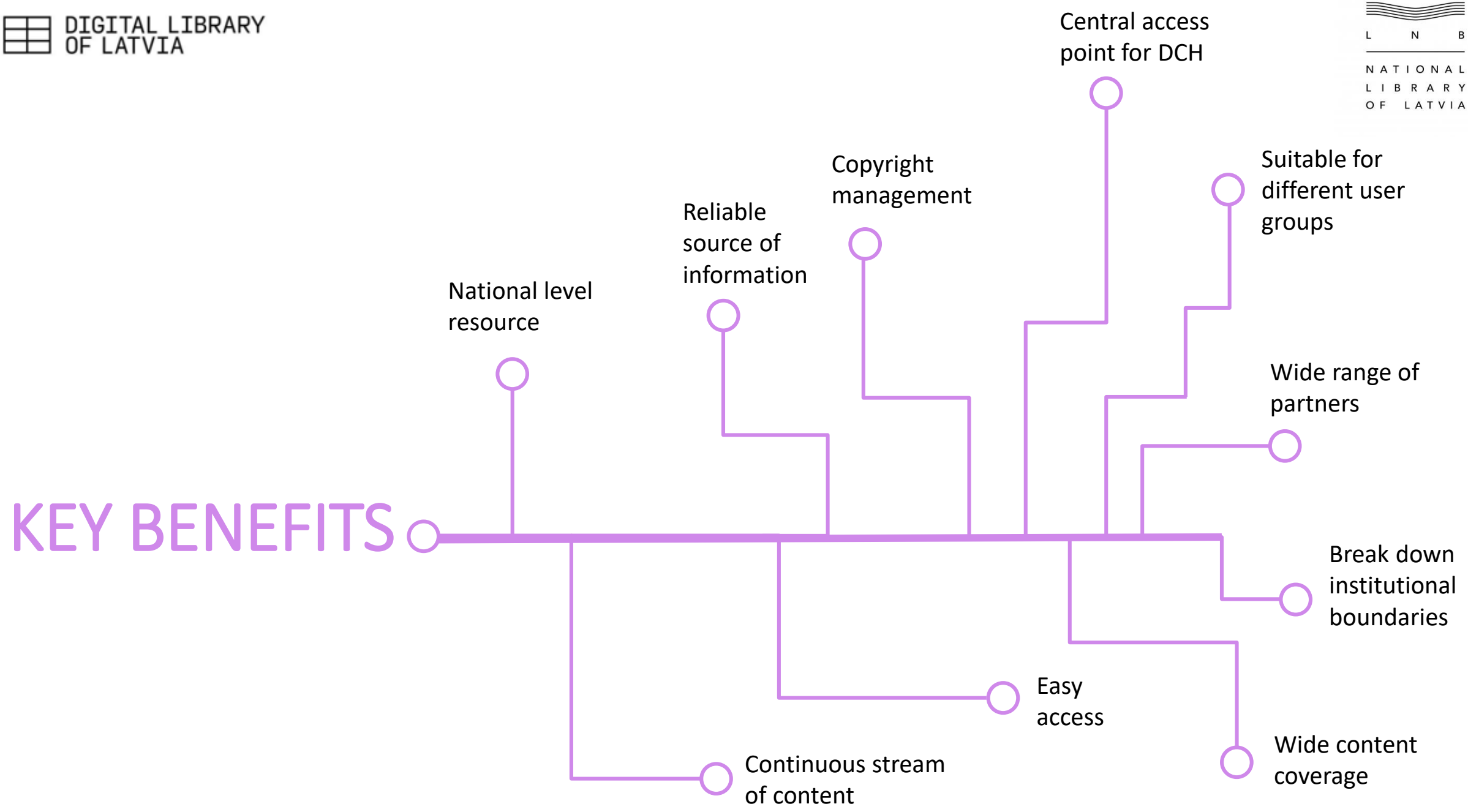

periodika.lv
gramatas.lndb.lv
zudusilatvija.lv
industria.lndb.lv
dziesmusvetki.lndb.lv
others

CULTURAL SYSTEMS

redzidzirdilatviju.lv

Digital archive of audiovisual, photo and audio documents of the Latvian State Archives of Audiovisual Documents

nmkk.lv Joint catalogue of the national museum collection

filmas.lv Latvian Film Portal

diva.lv Portal of digitized video and audio recordings

nematerialakultura.lv System of Intangible Cultural Heritage

mantojums.lv System of Cultural Monuments

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DIGITAL OBJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

REFERENCE DATA SYSTEM

Unified knowledge organization system for describing and structuring digital heritage

COPYRIGHT MANAGEMENT AND LICENSING SYSTEM

DIGITAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PLATFORM

- Simple search, advanced search and full-text search
- Search using synonyms and reference data entities
- Registered users have their own workplace
- Information sharing
- Service “Digitization on demand”
- Collections created by experts
- Stories and educational materials
- Guidelines and recommendations for professionals
- Links to useful resources

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Cultural Treasures of Europe

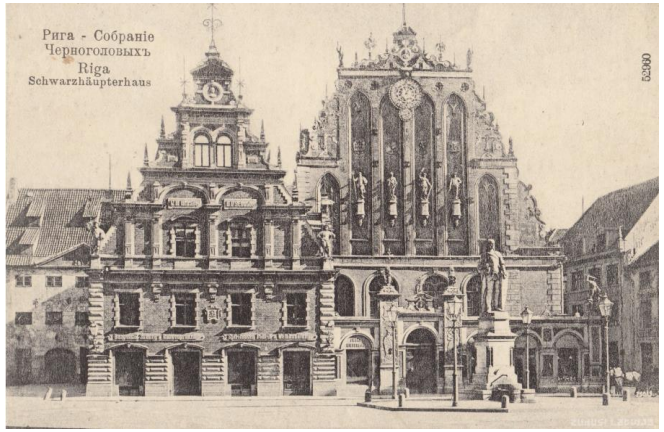
Archive of the Riga City Theatre

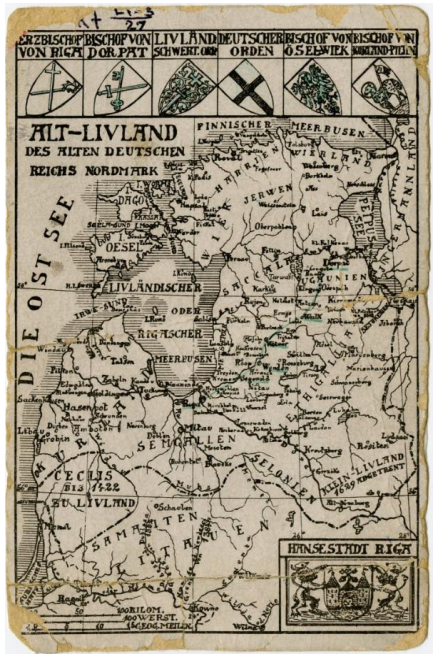
Richard Wagner's period in Riga

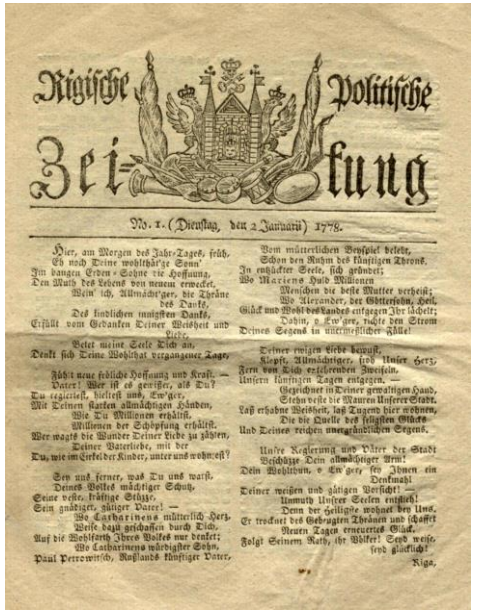
Rigasche Zeitung newspaper in Riga (1778-19190)

Records of Riga Town Council

Maps of Livonia and Hansa period







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Fragmented Digital Landscape

Sporadic digitisation initiatives
No unified digital ecosystem for regional cultural heritage

Regional Libraries

preserve unique local history sources, essential for both regional and national heritage

Challenges
- Project-based digitisation efforts
- Lack of digital infrastructure
- No long-term storage solutions
- Limited visibility and accessibility of digitised content
- Inconsistent metadata practices
- Digital objects often remained hidden in local catalogues

Needs
- Centralised platform for storage and access
- Shared standards and workflows
- Capacity building in digitisation and digital curation
- Integration into national and international digital heritage space

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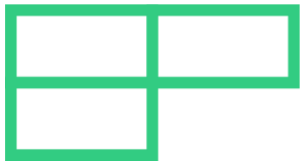
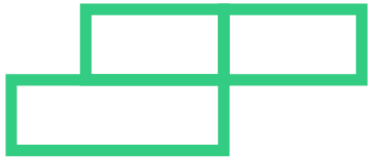
From Project to Workflow

The strategy of Latvian libraries (2023–2027) promotes digitisation, long-term preservation, and broad access to cultural heritage, aiming to break down institutional silos

The National Library of Latvia



coordinates the digital platform



provides guidance

supports competence building

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Cooperation and Building Capacity

A coordinated, multi-level engagement model to support regional libraries in digitization and integration into the Digital Library

Goal

- Strengthened digital competences in regional libraries
- Alignment of practices across institutions
- Increased participation in the national digital ecosystem

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Capacity Building activities

Knowledge

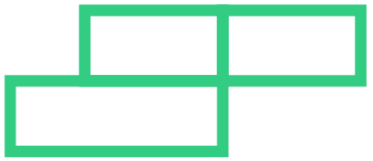
Digital Library of Latvia (DLL)

Digital Object Management system (DOM)

Metadata

Copyrights

Practice

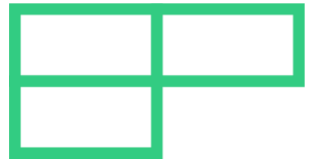


Digitisation workflow

Hands-on workshops

Case-based learning

Support



Consultations

Expert guidance

Continuous collaboration

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Digital heritage day 2025

DIGITĀLĀ KULTŪRAS MANTOJUMA DIENAS 2025:

digitalizācija, autortiesības un MI izmantojums

2025.gada 16.oktobris
Liepājas muzejs,
Kūrmājas prospekts 16/18, Liepāja

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LATVIJAS NACIONĀLĀ BIBLIOTĒKA

LIEPĀJAS MUZEJS

DIGITĀLĀ BIBLIOTĒKA

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Services for Regional Partners

Content & Access

- Content preservation and long-term storage
- Access through the Digital Library
- Promotion and visibility of collections

Technical Integration

- Metadata mapping and data import
- Support for Digital Object Management system (DOM)
- Quality control of digital content

Capacity & Support

- Training and consultations
- Ongoing partner support
- Usage statistics and collection monitoring

Rights & Governance

- Copyright and access rights management
- Agreements and cooperation frameworks

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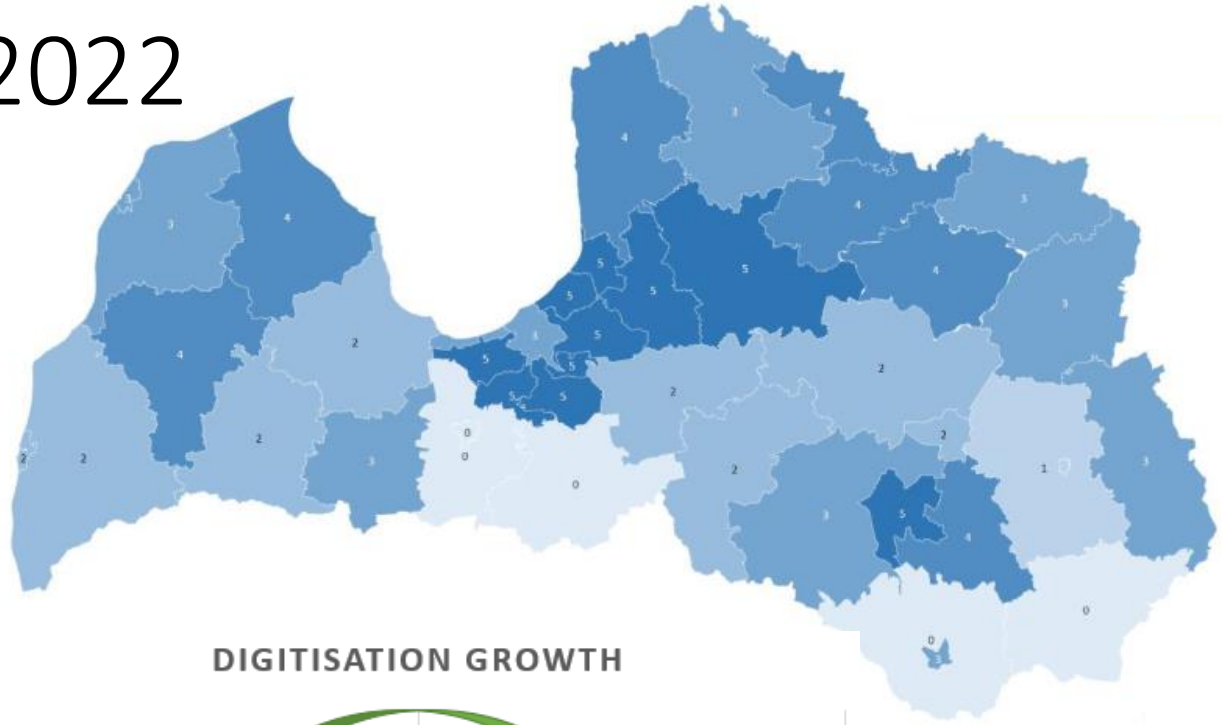
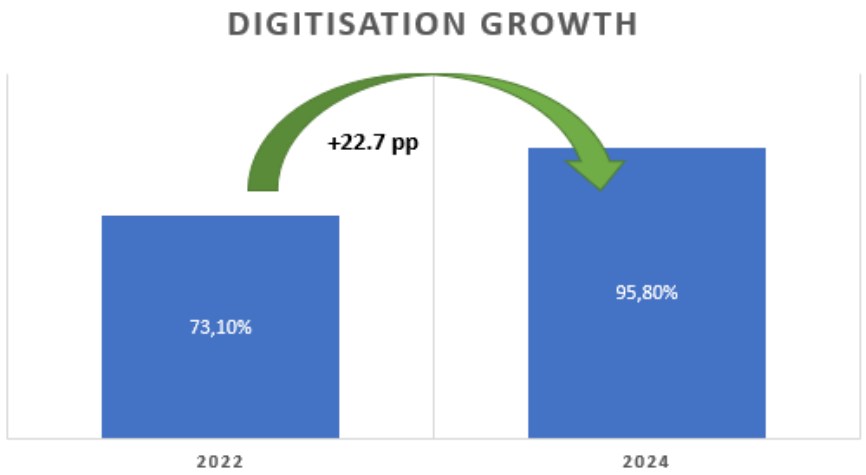
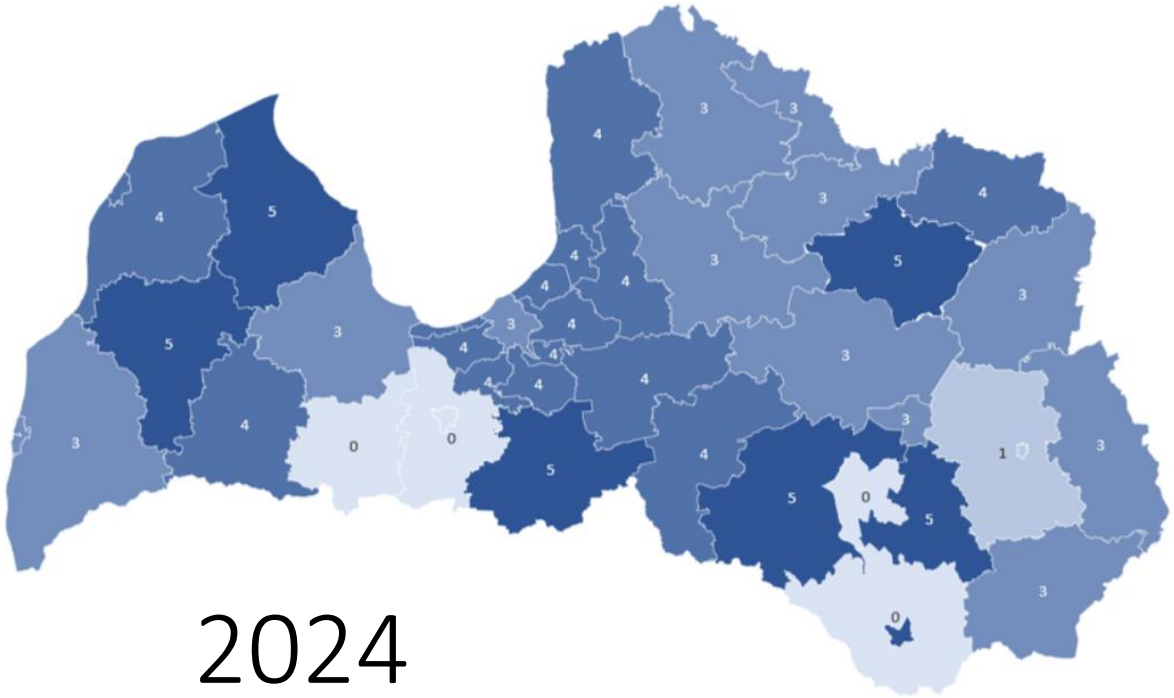
Expansion of Digitisation in Regional Libraries

2022







2024

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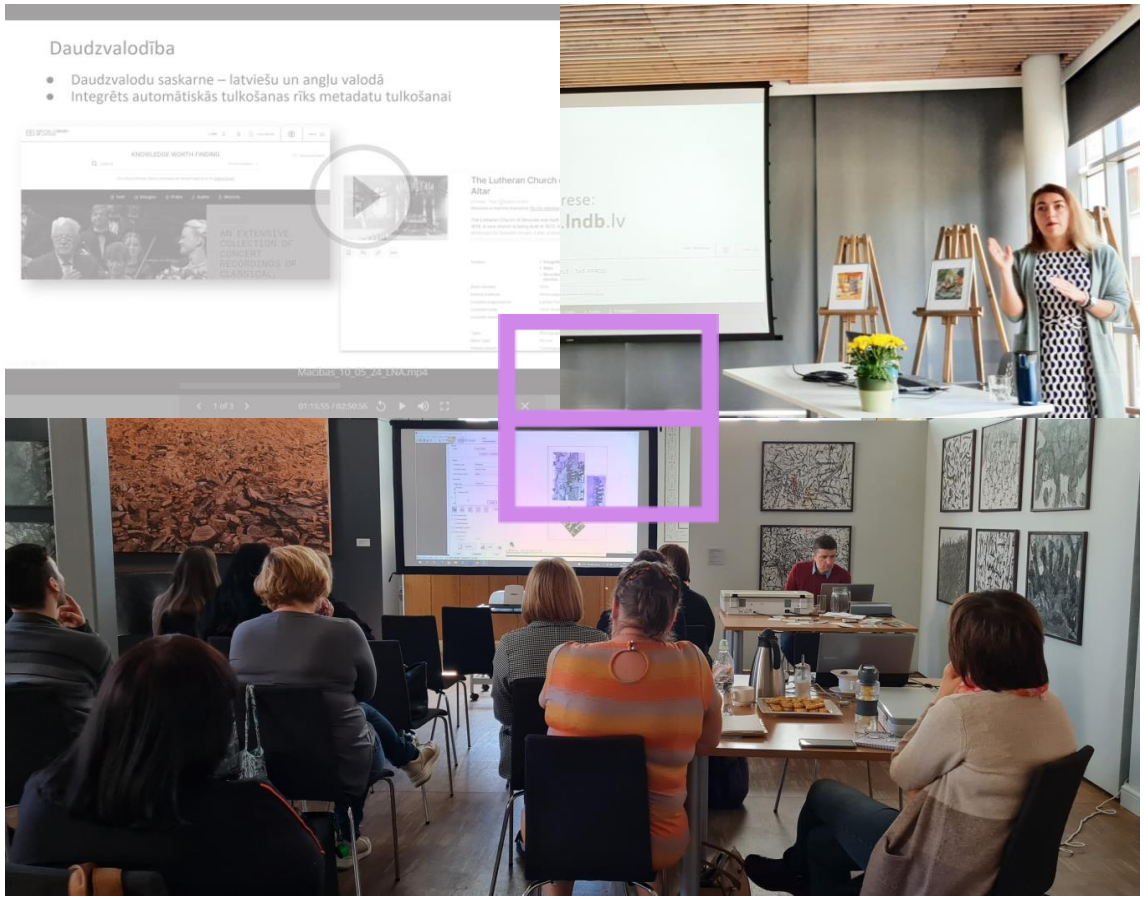
Transformation in Numbers

23% increase in digitization activity
95.8% of regional libraries participating
70% create high-resolution files (TIFF)
87% creates professional metadata
150+ trained librarians
17 regional digital collections

Digital library enriched with 5000+ digital objects from regional libraries



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Global Access to Local Treasures

Valmieras novada kultūrvides materiālu krājums

Kolekcija 426

Talsu novadpētniecība

Kolekcija 398

Gulbenes novadpētniecība

Kolekcija 1139

Pierīgas novadpētniecība

Kolekcija 139

Daugavpils telpā un laikā

Kolekcija 275

Preiļu **novada** kultūrvēsturiskais mantojums

Kolekcija 675

Kuldīgas **novada** kultūrvides materiālu krājums

Kolekcija 1391

Bauskas **novada** bibliotēku novadpētniecība

Kolekcija 128

Jēkabpils novadpētniecība

Kolekcija 253

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Regional Digitisation Competence Centers

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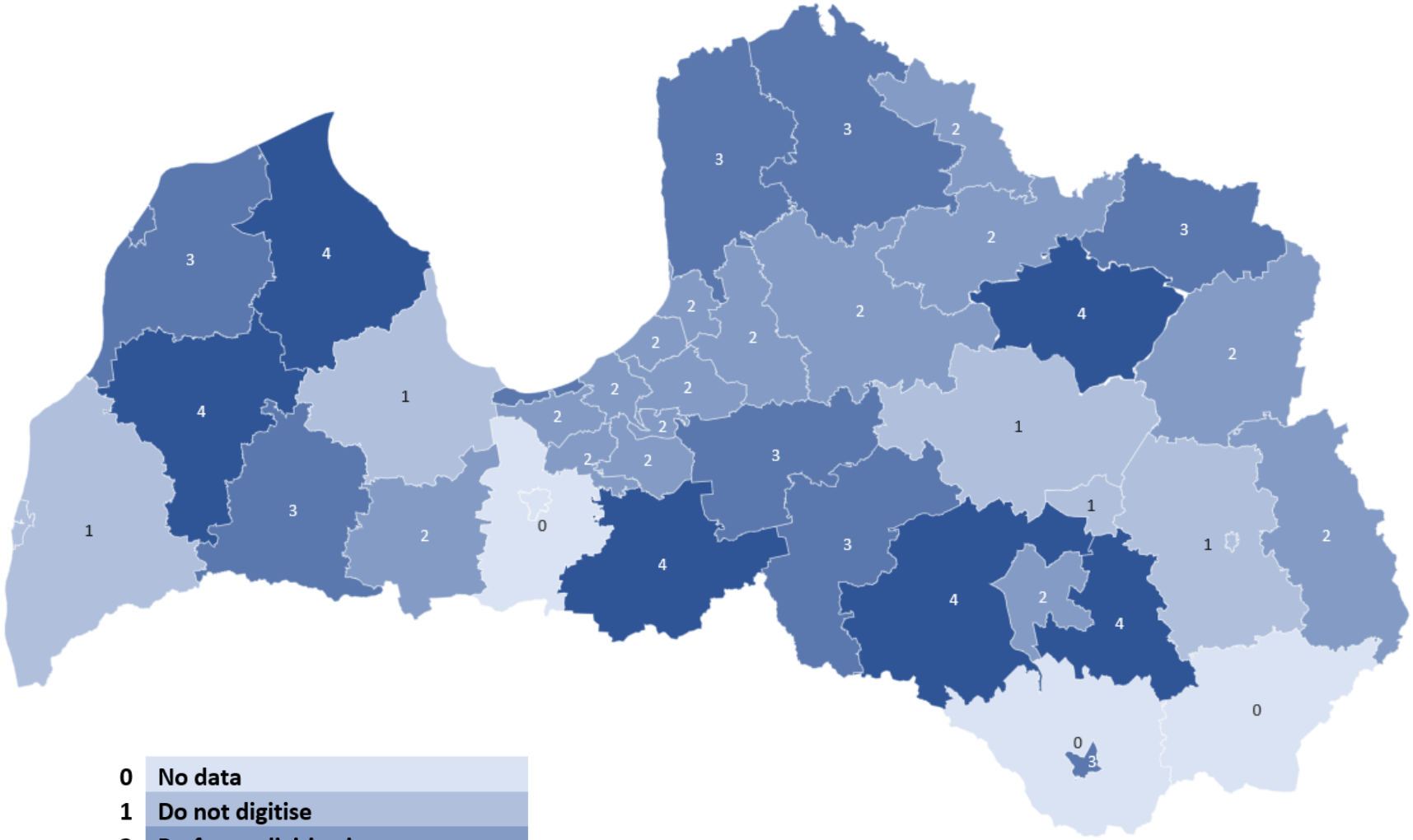

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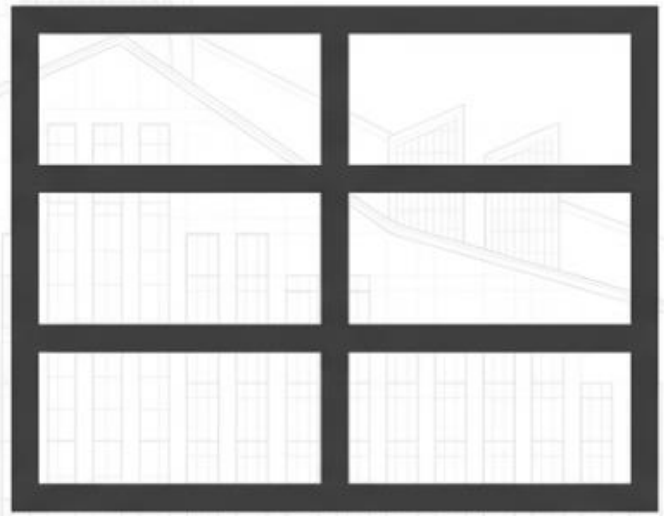

The Digital Library is not just a repository; it is a catalyst for regional development.

Eva Radova | Head of Digital Library of Latvia | National Library of Latvia