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A Lot of Music for a Mere Pittance

Horová, Iva; Šír, Filip
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A Lot of Music for a Mere Pittance

The Sound Documents Landscape in the Czech Republic

Iva Horová

NTK

50°6'14.083"N, 14°23'26.365"E
Národní technická knihovna
National Library of Technology

Filip Šír



NATIONAL
MUSEUM

Czech Sound Documents “Landscape”

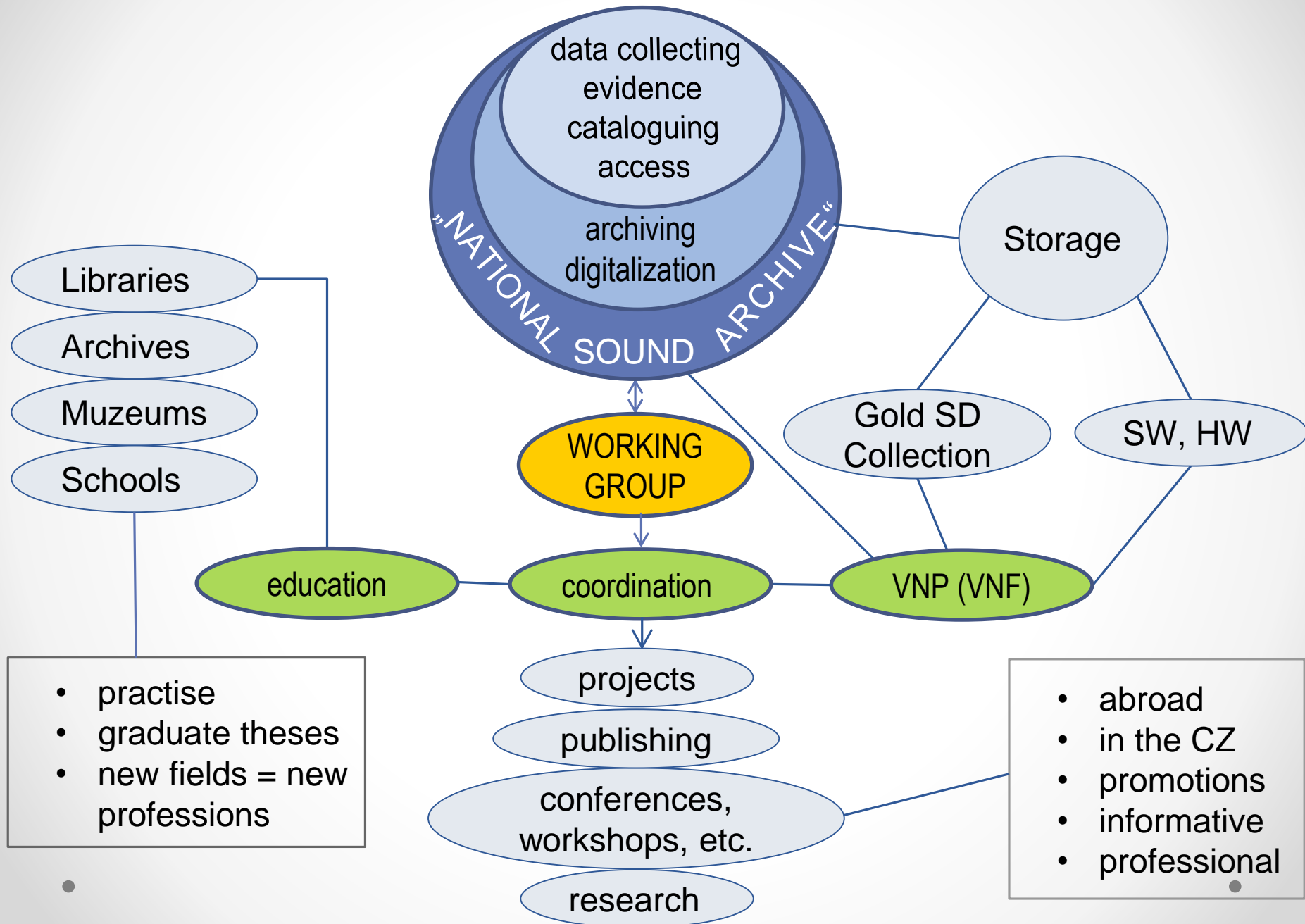
Content:

- Short overview of sound history in the CZE
- The attempts to establish National Sound Archive
- The results of its absence
- Who we are and what we have achieved
- SWOT
- What we have and what we can do
- Future?

Brief history of sound in CZE

- Strong tradition of gramophone industry from early 20s century in our country
- 1891 First known sound recordings on wax cylinder on Czech territory
- 1901 First known recordings on gramophone disc in Czech language
- 1923 Czech Radio (originally called Radiojournal) first broadcasting
- 1930 First Czech recording companies (ESTA and Ultraphon) are established
- 1928 – 1934 Czech Academy of Sciences a project aimed at recording contemporary performers, politicians and music
- 1932–1935 – Heavy taxation on imported recordings forces companies to form Czech branches
- 1946 Nationalisation of Czech recording industry, Supraphon = the unifying label
- 1951 vinyl (SP) records introduced in Czechoslovakia
- 1961 stereo LP records introduced in Czechoslovakia
- 1963 last shellac records are manufactured in Czech Republic
- 1991 – New legal deposit law defines
- 2012 - VNF started the “new age”

Element's Schema of Sound Document Landscape



Czech National Sound Archive?

- NSA never existed in the Czech territory
- Lack of a central institution provided complex care of audio documents as a part of national culture heritage

Several attempts at establishing:

- 1910 - Prof. Zubatý effort within the Czech Academy of Sciences to establish a phonoteque like in Vienna
- 1932 – Karel Čapek calls for establishment of “...a national discotheque...”
- 1997–1999 – Meetings of interested parties (libraries, museums, archives, publishers, broadcasters and collectors are aiming to establish a National Phonotheque either as an institution or at least as a database and a platform for cooperation

Why we have not Czech NSA yet?

Why it failed to build up nor by our ancestors, nor by the current generations?

Reasons not just financial:

- SD have not been and are not a priority in our care
- more complicated to process it
- inconsistencies in processing and approach to it
- poor communication and cooperation between different institutions
- difficulty sharing data and technology
- absence of the central register of collections + impossibility to agree on it
- lack of national strategy and policy
- no strong personality

Consequences of that absence

- no institution fully responsible for the sound documents
- no one trying to win this important role
- end of life of many sound carries and no awarness of it
- no policy of preservation
- no methodology and standards
- lacks necessary institutional support
- inaction on many levels
- currently no government support
- problems with money = less manpower
- no skilled young people
- no chance to reach out for international level

The current situation

- Despite the described substantial negative facts, a lot has happened and is still happening in our SDs Landscape.
- However, still almost exclusively the activities of enthusiasts and volunteers, who trying without state or significant institutions financing and support to bring

“A Lot of Music for a Mere Pittance”

- Let's look more closely at what has been successfully completed and what tasks have been currently being solved.

State Cultural Policy

- Until 2015 this issue was not included in **ANY** official strategic Czech documents
- same in the newly formed National Cultural Policy for 2015-2020

Change:

- thanks to group of interested individuals in cooperation with the Czech Central Library Council
- thanks to The Moravian Library which was active in this case (as a logical continuation of its previous activities)
- new chance: incorporation of a new special part for SD into

“Plan of Implementation of National Cultural Policy for 2015 - 2020”

“Preservation of National Audio Heritage”

3.3.2.A: Conception of protection and accessibility to audio documents as **an important part of cultural heritage**

3.3.2.B: Creating a **methodical and digitization centre** for saving audio documents at the The Moravian Library in Brno in cooperation with the National Museum (CMH)

3.3.2.C: Provide **long-term storage** for preservation **and accessibility** of audio data within the sectional LTP system of the Ministry of Culture

Systematic Preservation Policies

- the most important result is an elaboration of the Concept for the Protection and Accessibility of Audio Documents in the Czech Republic
- the draft of the Concept was written in the spring of 2015
- prepared by a narrow core of WGPAAAD
- the document describes all the basic areas of related problems
- indicates the direction for their solution
- is freely available on the VNP website and awaits further elaboration and implementation
- The question of who will take up this task still remains?

Who is active



INSTITUTION?



WORKING GROUP?



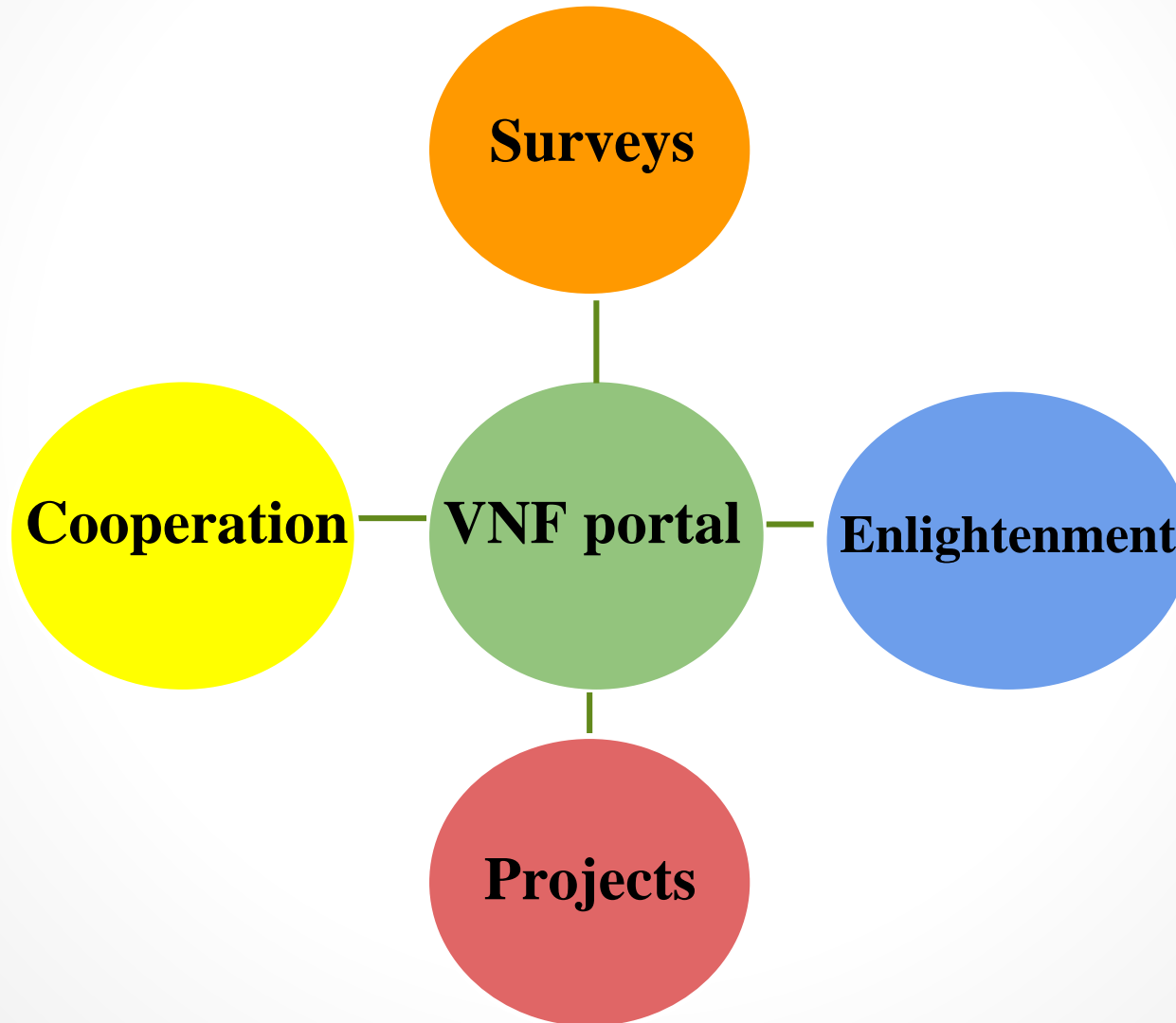
TEAM!

Czech “Team”

Established the official Working Group for SD, but:

- only a handful of them are really active
- still low bus factor
- involves student volunteers
- cooperation with students is not limited to surveys
- infiltrates into new institutions: see how successfully
- strive for dialogue with the Ministry of Culture
- repeatedly appeals mainly to libraries
- have expanded considerably radius towards cooperation at the international level

Our real „Landscape“



Recent important activities

- **TC03 domestication and terminology**
- **acquiring other institutions - step by step**
- **new Sound Labs in National Museum**
- find more supporters and stakeholders
- conducted a survey of collections
- participate in supervising and consulting students' theses
- **students take care about promoting on social networks**
- initiate projects in order to support cataloging
- creating conditions for digitization in national grant programme
- specific international cooperation

Surveys

- no similar surveys were previously carried out in the CR
- first checking of collection and state of it's evidence
- over 6,000 libraries and other heritage institutions
- the methodology is similar to the British research
(using a questionnaire survey by Google Form)
- yet still we do not have complete results
- made by students = voluntaries
- no money for it
- it is a very important stage
- creates the basis for further directions preservation of audio documents

What we have achieved

- first comprehensive discography book:

Czech catalogue of recordings issued by the record company ESTA,
1930 - 1947

- enrichment VNP
- Grant under Ministry of Culture - methodology, seminars
- attendance at many conferences

2016: ARSC, GHT, Inforum, Grey Literature, IASA, BAAC

- tutorials and workshops - 12 x in 2016
- publishing many articles....
- workshop leaded by Dietrich Schüller in Prague
- more foreign contacts

Virtual National Phonothèque

- **VNP is the main core of the SDs Landscape in the CZE**
- portal to serve as an integrator of all information about SD
- collects metadata from all type of institutons
- deduplicates multiplay records
- displays data about location, owners and physical statement
- offers direct links to digital libraries etc.
- allows the use of value-added services
- a platform for dialog accross different subjects



VNP (2)

News in 2016:

- including the digital collection = Czech TV
- unfortunately not permanent technical support
- Currently we have a total of 24 participants
- 12 new participants (from IASA 2015)
- Around 500 000 metadata records
- bibliographic metadata increased by 30 %

VNP (3)

Audience Overview

Jan 1, 2016 - Sep 13, 2016

Compare to: Jan 1, 2015 - Sep 13, 2015

Email Export Add to Dashboard Shortcut


 All Users
+0.00% Sessions


 + Add Segment

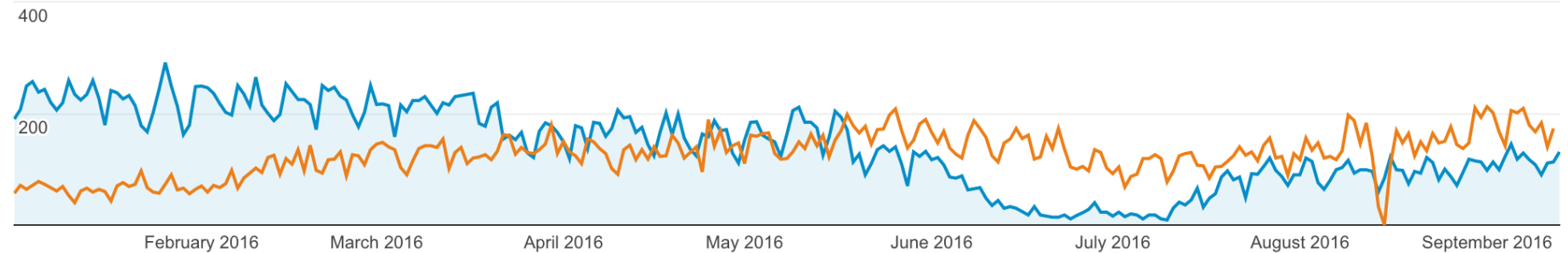
Overview

Sessions VS. [Select a metric](#)

Hourly Day Week Month

Jan 1, 2016 - Sep 13, 2016:  Sessions

Jan 1, 2015 - Sep 13, 2015:  Sessions



VNP (4)

Sessions

12.94%

36,441 vs 32,265



Users

14.26%

29,488 vs 25,808



Pageviews

-8.56%

102,298 vs 111,878



Pages / Session

-19.04%

2.81 vs 3.47



Avg. Session Duration

-17.49%

00:02:09 vs 00:02:36



Bounce Rate

6.52%

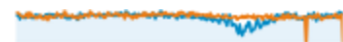
64.82% vs 60.85%



% New Sessions

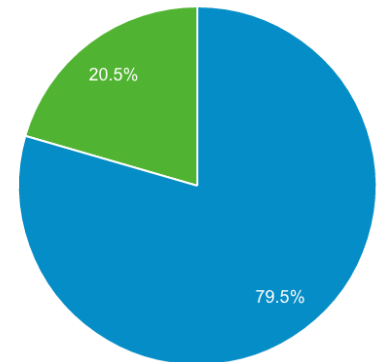
-0.18%

79.45% vs 79.60%

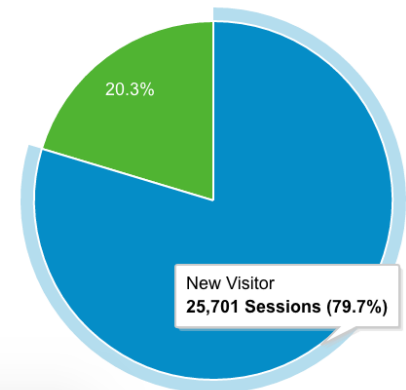


■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor

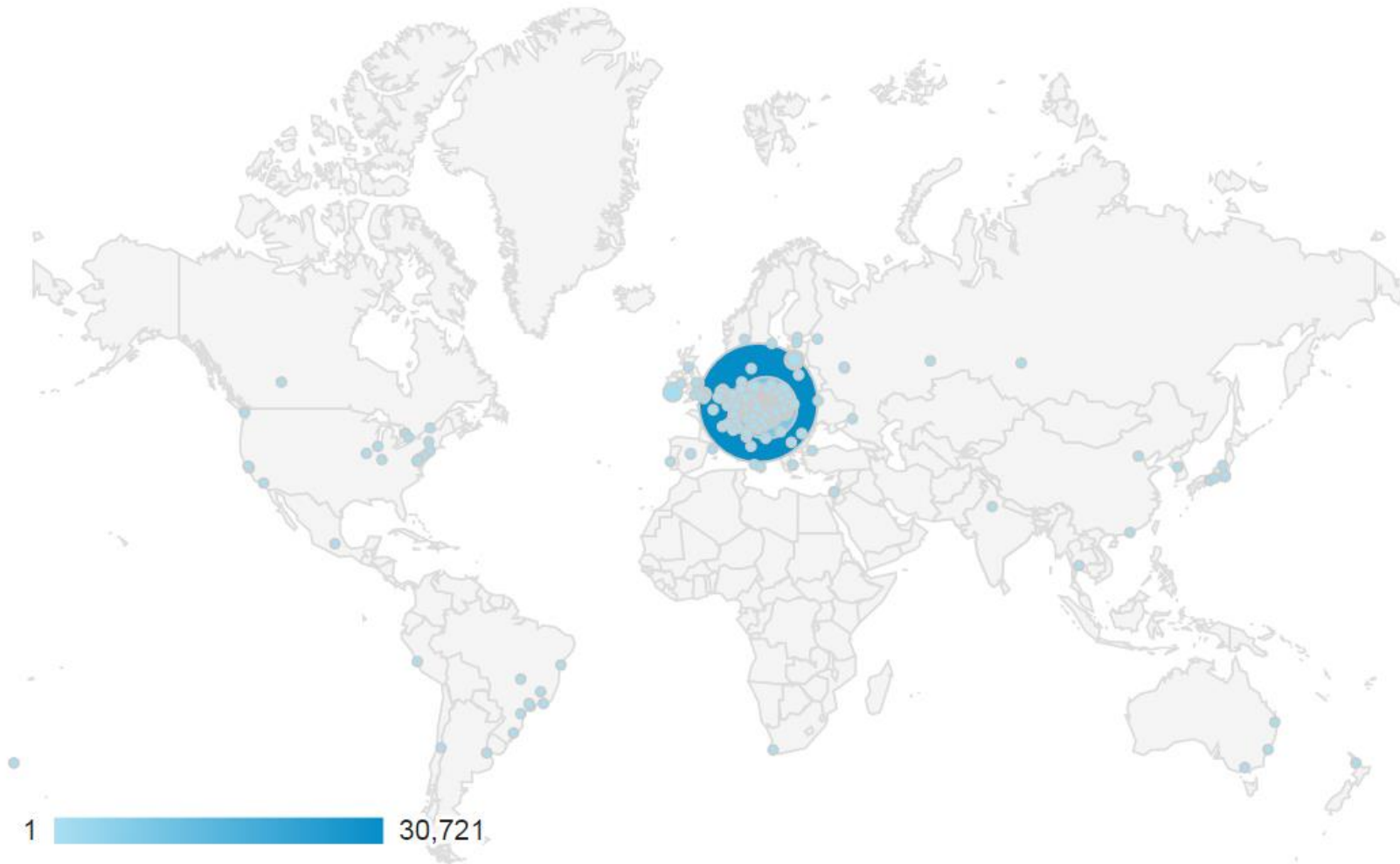
Jan 1, 2016 - Sep 13, 2016



Jan 1, 2015 - Sep 13, 2015



VNP (4)



Other activities

- Standardization: working on: TC03, LTP standard for sound, terminology ...
- prepared new guidelines to support cataloguing
- grant programs: try to prepare conditions for sound documents
- promoting: social networks, banners, ...
- education, 2 new graduate thesis
- cooperation abroad - IASA DC : IBD project

A new contribution to the history of the Czech sound

GÖSSEL, Gabriel, ed. a ŠÍR, Filip, ed. **Recorded Sound in Czech
Lands, 1900 – 1946.**

- about 50 pages - in English only
- cover the history of the Czech sound industry
- Czech collector
- the book is out just now

Gala book launch will be held
at the Czech Embassy in Washington
this Thursday!



SWOT analyse



STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

STRENGTHS

- Virtual National Phonoteque
- Digital Library KRAMERIUS
- Certified methodology for audio digitizing
- Conception for ...
- A team of enthusiasts and their motivations
- Experience with projects
- Technical assurance - SW and HW
- Initiating a dialogue with the Ministry of Culture

WEAKNESSES

- No support from the State and Institution
- Staff – bus factor
- Zero substitutability
- Not defined organizational "structure"
 - (competence, accountability, coordination)
- Promotions
- There is no automated workflow
- Low level of processing collections

OPPORTUNITIES

- Extensive production of SZ in the CR
- Prospect of delivering data to Europeana Sounds
- National Subsidy programs
- Ongoing exploration collections
- Kramerius appl. already knows also sound
- A new working group dealing formats
- Mobile user friendly interface of Kramerius

THREATS

- Physical degradation carriers
- Obsolescence of sound technical equipment
- Knowledge leaves with icons from the field
- Inability to agree (institutions, departments, methods, processes, people ...)
- Financing
- readiness subsidy programs?
- register digitization - doplnit co je s ním
- Copyrighted works can only be accessed in the building

What now?

- *trying to find new volunteers and to involve them*
- **trying to find a new conceptual model solution**, which objective is to protect national cultural heritage
- *trying to find a functional solution via a distributed model encompassing different institutions*
- any chance to get involved institutions with a various focus?
- including commercial entities?
- conditions to establish functioning models and processes of cooperation?
- without large subsidies?

??? Is it possible to succeed ?

Ministry of Culture

- policy
- strategy
- money
- supervisor

National Museum

- coordination
- methods, guidelines
- digitalization
- education

National Library of Technology

- national digital library of sound documents
- national digital library of literature for sound documents
- archiving of
- edukace

Ministry of Education

- to be helpful

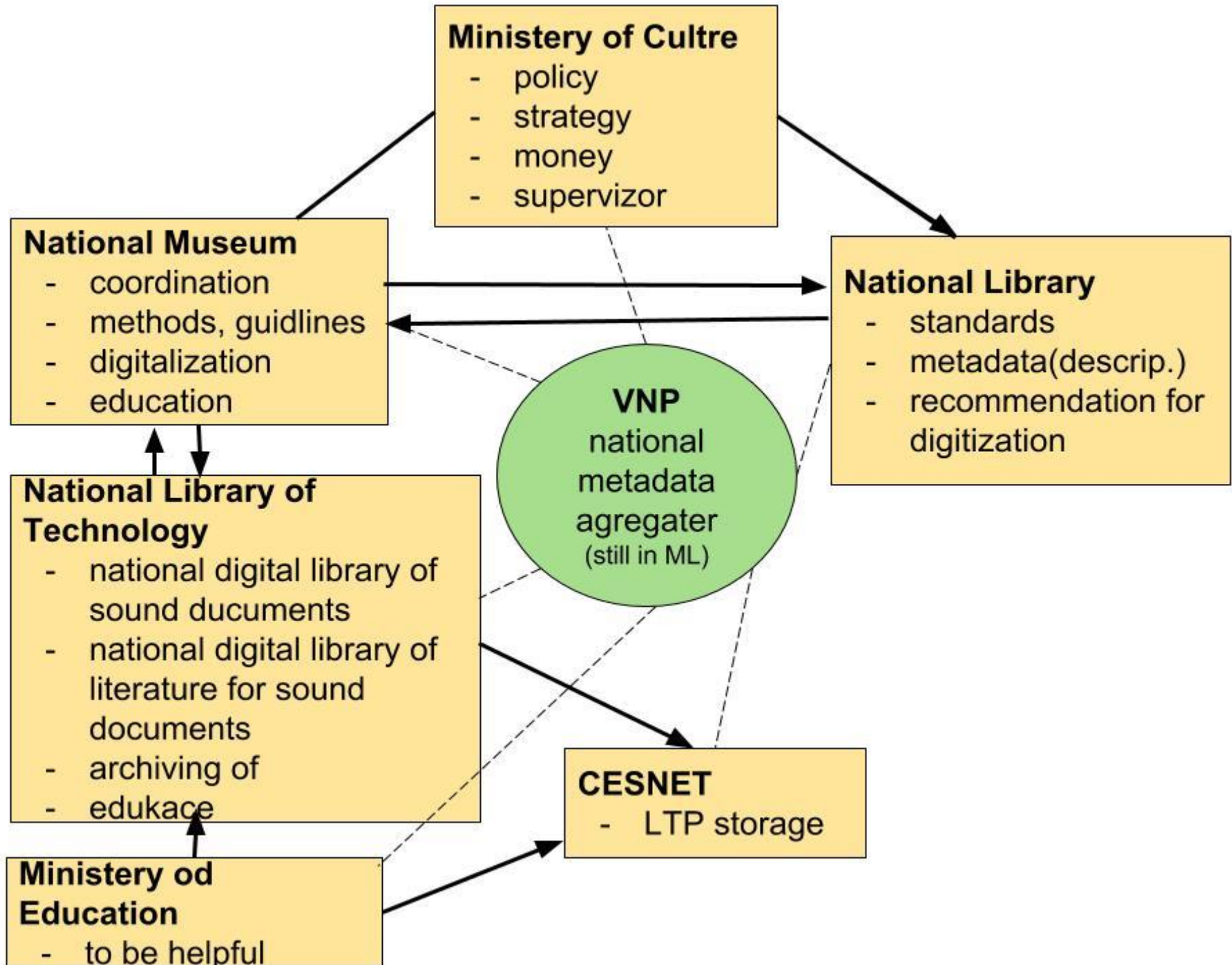
National Library

- standards
- metadata(descrip.)
- recommendation for digitization

VNP
national
metadata
agregater
(still in ML)

CESNET

- LTP storage



Future?



- seems we stand at a crossroad
- ready to leave MZK, but....
- starting to negotiate about VNF future hosting
- starting to think about new version of VNP portal
- trying to prepare “politic” conditions in NLT and NM
- trying to establish functioning models of cooperation
and of sharing responsibility
- trying to prepare a set of related projects
- trying to divide competencies between the persons of the team
- ready to gain more and more participants into VNF
- **ready dont give up !**



Any questions?

Thank for your attention!

iva.horova@techlib.cz

filip_sir@nm.cz

Lord Kitchener
Wants You was a
1914 advertisement
by [Alfred Leete](#)
which was
developed into a
[recruitment poster](#).
Wikipedia.org

