

The National Archival Heritage and the General Inventory

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This article deals with a Czech legal institute called The National Archival Heritage, its significance in legislation, and the archival records registration in the Czech Republic. Such an institute is nothing of a novelty, and is not a Czech particularity either. The concept has been developing since the 1950s. Similar concept of the archival records definition exists, e.g., in Poland (*Spis zespołów*), Slovakia (*Afondy*), as well as in other countries in Europe. However, the most significant progress in this composed system is most likely to occur in the Czech Republic. The article talks about the basic features of this tool, its role and genesis.

The Concept of the National Archival Heritage

Act No. 499/2004 Coll., on archiving and filing service, and the law amendment, in wording of later regulations, defines the basic terms of archive legislation, which are documents and archival records¹. The document has been defined as: "Any piece of written, image, sound or else recorded information, either in analogue or digital form, created by an agency or delivered to them", whereas "archival record is a document that from its period of origin, contents, provenance and external traits aspects, as well as its permanent value set by its political, economic, legal, historical, cultural, science or informative significance has been selected for the permanent preservation in the public interests, and filed in the archival records registration; among archival records are also seals, stamps or other material possession related to archive fond or archive collection, which has been from its period of origin, contents, provenance and external traits aspects, as well as its permanent value set by its political, economic, legal, historical, cultural, science or informative significance selected and filed in the registration"². Therefore the Czech archiving legislative distinguishes common documents and archival records that are defined by two basic constitutive features: They have undergone a process of selection of archival records (either in the appraisal process or beyond it), and have been filed in the archival records registration. Therefore, neither their ownership and location (in archive, museum, or owner) nor their form (analogue/digital), and the

¹ Act No. 499/2004 Coll. on Archiving and Records Management and on the Amendment of Selected Acts. Issued in 173/2004 Coll.; the text is available on <http://aplikace.mver.cz/archiv2008/sbirka:2004/sb173-04.pdf>.

The annotated wording of the law came out as Special supplementum 2, "Archivní časopis" 55 (2005).

² *Ibidem*, section 2, art. 1, letters e) and f).

like, are essential but only the fact that they are kept in the archival records registration.

However, what should be stated is that both of the two conditions must be satisfied: the selection and registration. The first of them might arise from the legislative provision. This specifically concerns the archival records that are in care of research institutions (such as museums, galleries, science-research institutes and universities), but not those that have arisen from their production, that is those ones acquired by acquisition, usually collection-compiling activities. As the law stands, these archival records are considered to be selected in the regime beyond the appraisal process³.

The National Archival Heritage that this article points out is defined in §16, which says: "After the archival records selection the documents selected as archival records are filed in the archival records registration" and "the archival records that are registered in the territory of the Czech Republic form the National Archival Heritage." Therefore, the institute of the National Archival Heritage (*Národní archivní dědičství*, mentioned below as *NAD*) is the institute of the archival records registration⁴.

In broad terms, it is the property register related to a specific sort of property: archival records. Archival records do not automatically have explicitly estimated value in the form of price; it is set, if necessary, by a legal expert *ad hoc* (insurance, damage action, and the like)⁵. The archival records are not kept in files according to the act on bookkeeping⁶ but to the act on archiving. No less far-reaching consequences has filing the archival records registration from the regime aspect, which are archival records subjected to.

The Archival Records Protection and Use

Once the archival records registration is filed, they are provided with the basic protection according to the act on archiving, and are under the regime created for them. In Section 23 there is a codified ban on the transfer of the state or legal entities ownership of archival records to another person. It is not allowed to transfer them to a foreign country unless specific government regulation. The right to use these archival records might be waived and granted to an individual or legal entity provided it is approved by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic⁷.

The Act, Section 22, states the rights and obligations of archival records owner or holder. The owner of an archival record enjoys the right to free expert help provided by the National Archive or state regional archives, and they may ask the state for contribution in the connection with the statement of documents as archival records and the care of them⁸, on the other hand they have an array of obligations defined in Section 25:

³ *Ibidem*, section 11, art. 5.

⁴ *Ibidem*, section 16, art. 1 and 2.

⁵ *Act No. 36/1967 Coll.*, on experts and interpreters, as amended.

⁶ *Act No. 563/1991 Coll.*, on accounting.

⁷ *Act No. 499/2004 Coll.*, section 23, art. 1, 2 and 3.

⁸ *Ibidem*, section 24, art. 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Owner or holder of archival records is bound to:

“(a) take proper care of an archival record in analogue form; to serve this purpose they are obliged to keep an archival record in good condition, protect it against damage, devaluation, destruction, loss and theft, and use it in such a manner that corresponds to its condition,

(b) create a replica of the document in digital form selected as archival record in a data form as specified in implementing legislation, and to hand it over with no delay to the National Archive or digital archive for storing after the selection process,

(c) prior to any intended transfer of the ownership of archival records or entering into agreement on its care immediately notify the National Archive or authorized state regional archive.”⁹

These obligations are understood as universal; provided the archival records are given custody based on a written agreement on custody they are automatically transferred to a custodian. If the owner is not capable of carrying out their obligations the National Archive or an authorised state regional archive gains custody of those archival records for a fixed period. The owner re-acquires that archival record immediately after the reasons for a change in care passes¹⁰.

The Act on Archiving also governs a transfer of the ownership of archival records, codifies giving the Czech Republic the first refusal to buy archival records unless it is the transfer between close persons, co-owners, ecclesiastical legal entities in the same Church or religious society, or the transfer to a territorial self-governing unit, qualified legal entity, or state enterprise or state allowance organisation. In such a case the law defines mechanism for making a written bid to the Czech Republic, carrying out a check on archival records by authorised staff of the National Archive, the Archive of Law-Enforcement or a relevant state regional archive for the purposes of the archival record description or making its picture used in a purchase agreement draft, its requisites, and a possible termination of the first refusal if the Czech state's procedural term time expires¹¹.

One of the most important provisions applying to the archival records protection concerns the archival records export. It is only allowed to export archival records from the Czech Republic territory with the Ministry of the Interior's permit issued for a fixed period, and on the archival record owner or holder's request. Such a permit might be issued for a fixed period, and only for exhibiting, conserving, restoring, or scientific examination purposes. Archival record owner or holder is obliged to bring archival records back to the Czech Republic territory within the fixed period set by the Ministry, and prevent damage on them. The Ministry does not issue any export permit unless the conditions applying to the archival record custody and protection have been satisfied, and the archival records condition allows that. In order not to fail to observe the regime conditions, the Ministry of the Interior might

⁹ *Ibidem*, section 25, art. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, section 26 and 27.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, section 28.

also issue a demand for a guarantee paid by an owner or holder. The Ministry keeps records of the issued permits that allow to export archival records from the Czech Republic territory on file, and check whether they are brought back to the Czech Republic territory with no damage¹².

For the practical use of archival records, naturally, it is the provisions in the Act that are important since they govern the ways to consult archival records, to exhibit them or make abstracts, transcripts and copies. Let us mention just a few of the procedural rules that are among the most significant ones. It is only allowed to consult archival records on request, and provided the conditions set by law and in a research code laid down by every archive in accord with the sample research code issued by the Ministry are satisfied. Consulted in archives are those copies of archival records that are for use of user's work. It is only allowed to consult original archival records provided no copies of them have been made. However, if a copy exists, the original archival records might be only consulted with a permit given by the archive, which have custody of them, and for a legitimate purpose.

The archival records in archives having custody based on the agreement on custody might be consulted under the conditions set by law and research code, and the agreed terms. Archival records in digital form are consulted through a national portal or portals providing access to them. Among the reasons to refuse consulting is the archival record physical condition that rules it out. Archival records must not be put on display unless their state allows that, and only under the conditions that ensure their protection and care set by law. The archival records under the Czech Republic's ownership might be exhibited in accord with provisions included in the loan agreement or written record. Archive founder is bound to stipulate provisions in the loan agreement or written record applying to a display and amount of insurance, in accord with a special legal regulation. That loan agreement or written record includes a list of archival records, and account of their state¹³.

The NAD Development

The genesis of such a composed institute, the National Archival Heritage, was rather complicated. The first legislative standard modifying the sphere of archiving in Czechoslovakia in the post-war period was the Czechoslovak Republic government's decree on archiving of 1954¹⁴. It established a legal institute of the Integrated State Archival Fond, which was in possession of all documents that were the property of state, and documents of their legal predecessors selected in accord with the directives on destruction procedure, and which had been designated as archival records. It was a brief, insufficient and imperfect one reflecting a high level of nationalization in socialistic Czechoslovakia, and the state's effort to centralize maximum amount of information and subject it to control.

¹² *Ibidem*, section 29.

¹³ *Ibidem*, section 39-41.

¹⁴ *Regulation no. 29/1954 Coll. of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic on archives of 17 May 1954*. The Regulation was published in volume no. 17 1954 of the Collection of Laws on p. 103. The text is available at http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008_sbirka_1954_sb17-54.pdf.

In 1974 it was replaced by the first act on archiving that specified the definition of archival record more exactly, as well as broaden it, so also records of municipalities and individuals would be included¹⁵. The term Integrated State Archival Fond was replaced by the term Integrated Archival Fond (Czech abbrev. *JAF*). The export of archival records from the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was imposed a ban unless permitted by the Ministry of the Interior. The Act also empowered the Ministry of the Interior to issue a series of operating instructions. In the terms of *JAF* structure, instruction no.10 on how to administrate archival records would assume a key importance¹⁶.

After highly important shift in society in 1989 there was urgency to amend the existing act. The solution was found in the amendment of the 1992 Act on Archiving¹⁷. It strengthened the position of archives as part of the public service supervising the archival records selection, searching for, verifying and certifying official records for the government bodies or citizens, and conducting related administrative proceedings¹⁸. This brought to bear pressure on the archival records quality improvement, since it had become imperative to identify which of the documents were subjected to the regime in question, and administrative decisions. The amendment of 1992 allowed archives to operate in that period of transition in the 1990s, however, it failed to largely solve an array of problems; it was just a question of time when a new act would be brought in.

That new one was *Act no. 499/2004 Coll.* on archiving and records management, and on some acts amendment¹⁹. It codified the basic principles of the Integrated Archival Fond registration management that had developed by that time, and whose development process would be called the National Archival Heritage (*NAD*) registration. Not only archives were obliged to manage the *NAD* registration,

¹⁵ *Act of the Czech National Council no. 97/1974 Coll.*, on archives. The Act was published in vol. 18/1974 of the Collection of Laws on p. 0333. The text is available at <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008/sbirka/1974/sb18-74.pdf>.

¹⁶ Instruction of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Socialist Republic No. 10, on the method of keeping registries of archival records.

¹⁷ *Act no. 343/1992 Coll.*, amending and supplementing *Czech National Council Act no. 97/1974 Coll.*, on archives. The Act was published in vol. 72/1992 of the Collection of Laws on p. 1978. The text is available at <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008/sbirka/1992/sb072-92.pdf>.

¹⁸ In the Czech legislation, administrative proceedings mean the procedure of an administrative authority that is aimed at rendering a decision that establishes, changes or abolishes the rights or obligations of a specific person in a certain matter, or that declares, in a certain matter, that such a person has or has not rights or obligations. Administrative proceedings in a broad sense also include procedures aimed to enforce an administrative decision, procedures aimed at issuing a statement, certificate or notice, procedures aimed at concluding public-law agreements and procedures aimed at issuing a measure of general nature. Administrative proceedings are governed in the Czech Republic particularly by *Act no. 500/2004 Coll.*, the Code of Administrative Procedure, which stipulates the general procedure in administrative proceedings, which is applicable unless other laws stipulate a special procedure.

¹⁹ *Act no. 499/2004 Coll.*, on archives and records management and amending some other laws. The Act was published in vol. 173/2004. The text is available at <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008/sbirka/2004/sb173-04.pdf>. The commented wording of the Act was published as Special Annex 2, "Archivni časopis" 55 (2005).

but also cultural-research institutions (such as museums, galleries, libraries, scientific-research institutions and universities) that provided care of archival records, but also owners and holders due to the restitution process and immense diversity of types of archival records ownership in the Czech Republic. Codified was also a manner of archival records excluding from the *NAD* registration. Most of the issues had been elaborated at length in *Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll.*²⁰, which, however, would undergo an array of amendments governing the sphere of digital archival records registration, as well as ones on technical storage media, which related to a series of amendments to the act on archiving reflecting the establishment of the National Digital Archive as part of the National Archive in Prague, owing to the new methodology for the 2012-2013 National Archival Heritage general inventory, which would be completed in the Czech archives²¹. The registration units had come a long way before they became firmly established in legislative, which was accompanied by methodical progress coming to climax by today's up-to-date version of the *Methodical Instruction on the National Archival Heritage Records Management*²².

Character of Archival Records Registration

The National Archival Heritage registration is primary, secondary and central. This regulation reflects a technological character of the registration management, which is run in information system administrated by the program PEVA, and created by the Department of Archives Administration and Records Management of the Ministry of the Interior. It is an immense and stable, fifteen-year-developing desktop application, but not an online system²³. The primary registration is being continuously updated. The data for the secondary and central registrations are collected in certain intervals, once a year, at least. The Department of Archives Administration and Records Management has been planning to solve the online *NAD*

²⁰ Decree No. 645/2004 Coll., implementing some provisions of the Act on Archives and Records Management and amending some other laws. The Decree was published in vol. 220/2004 on p. 22637. The text is available at <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008/sbirka/2004/sb220-04.pdf>.

²¹ For more on the development of legislation, see Michal Wanner, *Interim Report on the Development of the Archives legislation in the Czech Republic*, in "Atlanti. Review for modern archival theory and practice-Rivista di teoria e pratica archivistica moderna-Revija za sodobno arhivsko teorijo in prakso" 20 (2010), p. 207-218.

²² *Methodical Instructions no. 1/2012 produced by the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Archives Administration and Records Management by the Regulation No. 645/2004 Coll.* that enacts selected articles in the Act on Archiving and Records Management and the Amendment of Selected Acts in the *Regulation no. 213/2012 Coll.* (Ref. No. MV-73402-1/AS-2012).

²³ Oskar Macek & M. Wanner, *Automatizovaný informační systém archivů ČR, vývoj, stav a perspektivy*, "Archivní časopis" 51 (2001), 1, p. 1-13; O. Macek & M. Wanner, *Automated Information System of Czech Republic Archives*, in *Archives in the New Age. The Strategic Problems of the Automatization of Archives* (ed. by E. Rosowska), Papers of the International Archive Conference, Warsaw, September 28-29, 2001, Warszawa, Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych 2002, p. 64-71; M. Wanner, *Registers of Archive Fonds (Archive Groups) in the Czech Republic and Information Systems in Czech Archives*, Amsterdam, Archievenblad, Uitgave van de Koninklijke Vereniging van Archivarissen in Nederland 109/7 September 2005, p. 22-25.

registration for long, however, a way of its implementation in the money and technical terms has not been discovered yet. Nevertheless, the selected data that are essential for researchers are regularly added into the Web application *Archive Fonds and Collections in the Czech Republic* on the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic's Web pages²⁴.

The basic registration unit is an archive fond, archive collection or their portion, or a single archival record. The *NAD* primary registration, which includes increase and decrease in archival records, and the *NAD* registration sheets and register of finding aids, is managed by archives and cultural-scientific institutions that take care of them²⁵. The Act states that owner or holder of archival records in analogue form, which are stored outside archive, and whose *NAD* primary registration is managed by a relevant archive, is obliged to present essential data for the registration management on request²⁶. The primary registration of portion of the *NAD*, which does not belong to the care of archives or cultural-scientific institutions (archival records in analogue form are traditionally called archival records stored outside archive), is managed by the National Archive²⁷ or state regional archives²⁸ in accord with their jurisdiction.

Provided a document in digital form has been selected as archival record, then it is filed as archival record, and its replica is stored in the National Digital Archive or other digital archive. For the purposes of care of archival records in digital form, a replica is understood as a range of traits identical to a document in digital form it derives from²⁹.

The secondary *NAD* registration that belongs to care of archives or cultural-scientific institutions, which includes the *NAD* registration sheets and register of finding aids, is managed by the National Archive or state regional archives in accord with their jurisdiction. Archives and cultural-scientific institutions are obliged to provide the archive managing the secondary registration with the data from the *NAD* registration sheets and archival aids, and to send them duplicates of their finding aids. The secondary registration is, in fact, a technical tool that serves to amass data for the *NAD* central registration³⁰.

The *NAD* central registration that includes *NAD* registration sheets and register of finding aids is managed by the Ministry of the Interior, particularly the Department Archives Administration and Records Management. The archives and

²⁴ O. Macek & M. Wanner, *Webová databáze archivních fondů a sbírek archivů ČR již půl roku v provozu. Zamyšlení nad prvními zkušenostmi*, "Archivní časopis" 52 (2002), 4, p. 211-215; O. Macek & M. Wanner, *Báze archivních fondů a sbírek České republiky - geneze, stav a perspektivy*, "Slovenská archivistika" 36 (2003), 2, p. 202-209; M. Wanner, *Information Systems of Czech Archives*, "INSAR – Information Summary on Archives" 10 (Summer 2005), Brussels, Secretariat-General of the European Commission 2005, p. 2.

²⁵ *Act No. 499/2004 Coll.*, section 16, art. 4.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, section 25, art. 2.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, section 46.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, section 49.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, section 16, art. 3.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, section 16, art. 5.

cultural-scientific institutions managing the primary registration are obliged to provide the Ministry with the data from the *NAD* registration sheets and finding aids, and to send duplicates of their finding aids³¹.

Any of the *NAD* registrations are stored as hard copies or on technical storage media, or in a combination of both, and are presented in the identical forms³². In practice, only the registration in form of hard copies with signatures and stamps of owners, data processors or directors of archives remain in the *NAD* primary registration, the secondary and central ones are stored in a digital form.

Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll. governing some provisions in the *Act on Archiving and Records Management*, and some acts amendment, in the wording of *Amendments no. 192/2009 Coll.*, and *213/2012 Coll.*, and *Methodical Instruction no. 1/2012* on the *NAD* registration sheets management also modify some details of the procedural method in case of the archival records delimitation among archives, sharing data among single levels of the registration (including formats and schemes), the archival records removal from the *NAD* registration, measuring archival records, a way of filling in singular entries, rules of how to name archival fonds, and the like³³.

The Exclusion from the *NAD*

The law allows the Ministry to agree to removal from the *NAD* registration when proposed by the archive founder only in:

“(a) archive fond or archive collection from the reasons of their importance re-evaluation,

(b) archive fond, archive collection or archival record from the reasons of their destruction; understood as destruction in case of archive fond, archive collection or archival record in digital form is also damage to their contents, loss of their legibility, or metadata essential for manipulation with archive fond, archive collection or archival record in digital form

(c) archive fond, archive collection or archival record from the reasons of handing them over to a foreign country.”

The proposal to exclusion from the *NAD* registration is submitted by entities managing the archive fond, archive collection or archival records primary registration. Requisites and procedural details of the method for the removal from the *NAD* registration are described in legislation³⁴.

³¹ *Ibidem*, section 16, art. 6.

³² *Ibidem*, section 17, art. 1.

³³ *Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll.* that enacts selected articles in the *Act on Archiving and Records Management and the Amendment of Selected Acts in amendment no. 192/2009 Coll.* and no. *213/2012 Coll.*, section 1,2 and 9.

³⁴ *Act no. 499/2004 Coll.*, section 17, art. 2.

The NAD Registration Structure

The NAD registration consists of the NAD registration sheets and registers of finding aids, and accounts of their external or internal changes³⁵. The oldest in the terms of history is the NAD registration sheet, which provides complete information on the current state of a particular archive fond. The external or internal changes document single changes applying to an object archival records in time, but also serve as a tool for updating data in the NAD registration sheet. The external change monitors the changes that have occurred to archival records in the relevant archive fond in relation to archive or cultural scientific institution managing the primary registration, to another individual or legal entity, e.g. agency, owner or another archive or cultural-scientific institution. The internal change measure changes that have happened to archival records in the relevant archive fond within the archive or cultural-scientific institution managing their primary registration, e.g., in archive processing, re-evaluation of their importance or their destruction. The internal and external changes registration facilitates to discover the extent of change in the data about archival records in the relevant archive fond or archive collection, when and why the change has taken place. The records on finding aids are only added to the NAD registration. They might be managed and created separately. This mostly refers to processing finding aids collection³⁶.

Each of the registrations mentioned above has own structure of data. The system is internally interconnected, and uses common dial-plates. Since the data from the external and internal changes registration primarily serve to update the NAD registration sheets, it is the structure of the data in the NAD registration sheets and registers of finding aids that are stated to suit the purpose.

Registration sheet always contains

- a) the number of archive or cultural-scientific institution from the dial-plate of archives managing the archive fond primary registration; it is not stated in archival records listed under letter (b),
- (b) the number from the archives dial-plate the archival records are filed under; these are archival records that do not belong to the archives or cultural-scientific institution care in the relevant archive,
- (c) the data on the archival records owners or holders, provided the archival records are stored outside archives or cultural-scientific institutions,
- (d) the number of registration sheet, which is unique and constant in the relevant archive or cultural-scientific institution,
- (e) the name of archive fond or archive collection,
- (f) the registration status of archive fond, which indicates the relation of the archive or cultural-scientific institution managing the primary registration of the archive fond, to the registered archival records,
- (g) the time span of archival records in the archive fond or archive collection,

³⁵ *Ibidem*, section 16, art. 3.

³⁶ *Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll. that enacts selected articles in the Act on Archiving and Records Management and the Amendment of Selected Acts in amendment no. 192/2009 Coll. and no. 213/2012 Coll.*, section 3.4.5.

- (h) the date of the registration sheet filling in and signing, or the date of the last change in the registration sheet
- (i) the data on access to the archive fond accessible for consultation
- (j) in the archival records in analogue form the length of the archive fond in running meters
- (k) in the archival records in digital form their size in bytes
- (l) the state of the archive fond preservation as to extent: completeness, physical condition; in the damaged archive fonds also the description of that damage,
- (m) the number of a thematic group registration and thematic description of the archive fond,³⁷ when the groups of thematic registration are general, superordinate terms as to the meaning summarising the common traits of a certain type of the archive fonds (e.g., self-government),
- (n) the place of provenance of archival fond and place of its storing,
- (o) the registration units of archival fond³⁸,
- (p) the overview of the finding aids on the archive fond,
- (q) the data indicating whether the archive fond contains a historical-cultural relics or national cultural relics³⁹,

³⁷ The terms indicating common features of a certain type of archive files. As a rule, any terms semantically superior, more general than the names of individual funds and collections. The advantage of these groups is that by using them we can collectively look for the files in the archive group without knowing for example, exact name of the archival fond. For example, State Conservation Management ranks with the group. 020200 Political governance after 1850, cf. *Methodical Instructions no. 1/2012 produced by the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Archives Administration and Records Management by the Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll.* that enacts selected articles in the *Act on Archiving and Records Management* and the *Amendment of Selected Acts in the Regulation no. 213/2012 Coll.* (Ref. No. MV-73402-1/AS-2012), ch. V, art. 5 letter ecc).

³⁸ Registration Units are basic, universal units for counting and recording the quantity of archival records. Generally, they refer to their material form. In some cases, they consider diplomatic categories, the form of their storage, and the like. The Registration Units have been effective in the Czech archival practice, and the most common terms ever used. They have been created to allow easy and first-sight identification of a particular archival file or individual archival records. The Registration Units have been developing: their definitions have been more precisely specified, and added to by storage media, and the like. The primary task of the registration units is to ensure registers of the National Archival Heritage. For more details on registration units: M. Wanner, *Registration Units - Specific Standardization Tool of Czech Archives*, "Scriinium" 68 (2014), p. 65-78.

³⁹ The concept of cultural relics (the current archival cultural relics) and national cultural relics was created with the aim to ensure protection and promotion of the most important archival records. An archival record, archival collection, archival fond or comprehensive parts thereof which, with regard to the period of origin, content, form, agency or external signs, are important for general, national or regional history, history of technology or culture, or, with respect to uniqueness or originality or to other types of singular features, their significance is exceptional for society, may be declared as an archival cultural relic; in respect of sets of archival records, their content and factual unity is taken into account. Decisions on declaring archival cultural relics are made by the Ministry of Interior on the basis of applications lodged by the archives where the archival records are stored, archives maintaining them in the NAH records or their owners. The Government of the Czech Republic may declare the most important archival cultural relics as national cultural relics.

- (r) the name of the archive fond agency in the original language, earlier or other names of the agency, the period of the name usage, and other data on the archival records owner,
- (s) the overview of internal or external changes related to the relevant archive fond with dates
- (t) the data on the archival records selection in the appraisal process or beyond it
- (u) the data on archival records that belong to an archive fond stored in other archives or other cultural-scientific institutions, or stored outside archives or cultural-scientific institutions,
- (v) the data on literature concerning the archive fond dealing with its contents and history, as well as edition from the archive fond,
- (w) the date of archival record storage in the archive, and the data on the prospective limitation of the archive fond access arising from agreement on custody, provided the archive funds are stored in the archive on the custody agreement,
- (y) the data on archival records owners, and the date of the agreement conclusion, in case the archival records are agreement-stored outside the archive or cultural-scientific institution managing their primary registration,
- (z) the date of the archive fond relay and the place of its storage, and other data in case the archive funds have been physically relayed to owners,
- (aa) the name of a registration sheet processor
- (bb) the name of a registration sheet operator when managed in digital form,
- (cc) the symbol of archive fond if established for the archive fond⁴⁰.

The primary, secondary and central registers of finding aids consists of

- (a) the number of the archive managing the primary registration of archival records described in finding aids (mentioned below as “archive with archive fond”)
- (b) the registration number of finding aid from the archive with archive fond; this number is unique and constant in the relevant archive,
- (c) the name, or names, and surname of an individual or legal entity having archival records in custody or possession, provided they are finding aids describing archival records stored outside archives or cultural-scientific institutions,
- (d) the number of archive that files a duplicate of finding aid, provided it is the finding aid duplicate registration
- (e) the unique registration number of a finding aid duplicate from the archive administrating the registration of the duplicate, in case it is finding aid duplicate registration,
- (f) a sort of finding aid in accord with Appendix No. 2, Regulation 645/2004 Coll,

Special rules apply to the protection of these archival records and making them available (cf. sections 21 and 22 of *Act No. 499/2004 Coll.*). Cf. M. Wanner, *Národní kulturní památky v archivnictví*, “Veřejná správa” 12 (2008), Supplement, p. IV-VI; Idem, *Základní kameny kulturního bohatství*, “Veřejná správa” 21 (2012), p. 16-17; Idem, *Nové archivní kulturní památky: Dramatické osudy rukopisů*, “Veřejná správa” 17 (2014), p. 14-15.

⁴⁰ *Regulation no. 645/2004 Coll.* that enacts selected articles in the *Act on Archiving and Records Management and the Amendment of Selected Acts in amendment no. 192/2009 Coll. and no. 213/2012 Coll.*, section 6.

- (g) the name of finding aid
- (h) the time span of archival records described in finding aid indicating the period the archival records described in finding aid come from
- (i) the year of finding aid origin
- (j) the form of finding aid creating
- (k) the data on supplements that do not have a special name, introduction and imprint,
- (l) the number of the thematic group registration that define archival records described in finding aid,
- (m) the name and surname of the finding aid processor (processors),
- (n) the place of provenance of archival records described in finding aid
- (o) the number of the registration sheet or registration sheets under the archival record described in finding aid are filed in⁴¹.

The NAD General Inventory

As stated above, the *NAD* primary registration is managed continuously, the *NAD* secondary and central registration is updated once a year. Yet, a general inventory of the *NAD* is conducted in ten-year periods, more or less, in accord with the tradition and legislation. The aim of these inventories is to discover the precise extent of the National Archival Heritage (*Národní archivní dědictví*, abbrev. *NAD*), compare the physical condition of archival records with the *NAD* registration recorded in the PEvA system, specify the existing data and add new ones to gain the true picture of the *NAD* extent and structure. The *NAD* general inventory also aims to assess the physical condition of archival records, at least estimated quantification of that condition by the number of registration units and the *NAD* registration state improvement where imperfections have been revealed during auditing activities.

The fundamental importance in general inventories lies in specified, re-defined and added registration units whose definitions are adopted as a direct outcome of the working group's methodical performance. The core of the work is formed by the data transformation into a new format of the PEvA program, and subsequent re-examination, specification and addition of a number of newly defined registration units. The basis modification in accord with these newly defined registration units also presents the implementation of the state that is usually fixed in amended legislation.

Taken as an example might be the *NAD* general inventory of the 2012-2013 documents that has been just completed, which reacted to the amendment of Regulation No. 645/2004 Coll., (Regulation No. 213/2012 Coll.) and the outcome of the widened working group for the new *Basic Rules for Archival Records Management*⁴². The newly specified registration units helped open up a large

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, section 7, art. 2.

⁴² *Základní pravidla pro zpracování archiválií* (kolektiv pracovníků pod vedením Michala Wannera), Prague 2013; basic characteristics of English given by the author in the study *Basic Rules of Archival Processing, or the Evolution of the Czech Archivists' Bible*, "Atlanti, Review for modern archival theory and practice-Rivista di teoria e pratica archivistica moderna-Revija za sodobno arhivsko teorijo in prakso" 23 (2013), 1, p. 87-97.

spectrum of valuable archival records, which deserve attention, as they are the object of researchers' interest, and are in danger of theft (e.g., ancient prints). Part of the new registration units also reflects the start of the new digital environment.

Another part of the *NAD* general inventory related to finding aids; the records on finding aids have been transformed into a new dial-plate. Earlier finding aids have been added to by requisites, in some instances reinterpreted or modification of existing finding aids. These changes reflected the definition of new types of finding aids, resp. redefined the existing ones, and reinterpreted some types of earlier finding aids in accord with the principles established in legislation. The new data in the PEvA program indirectly facilitated introduction of the National Portal of the Czech Republic's Archives that had been built⁴³.

The general inventory is conducted on the basis of the updated archive legislation, and is initiated by the Department of Archives Administration and Records Management of the Ministry of the Interior⁴⁴. It is conducted in the National Archive, Security Services Archives, all State Regional Archives, Archives of Local Government Units, specialized archives, private archives and security archives⁴⁵. It is also taken in cultural-scientific institutions. All owners and holders of archival records stored outside archive are obliged to make the *NAD* inventory as well.

Elaborated methodology is created for every particular general inventory⁴⁶, which adapts data, its length (the last one was 1.5 year in length), or theoretical possibilities of its postponement from the legitimate reasons (but within one year), the basic principles and rules, suggestions on working methods (tasks allocation, work timing, groups organisation, tools of data collecting, database tools transformation, form of storing in computerised systems, and the like), possibilities of the research regime, the method in the sphere of archival records acquisitions, the archival records delimitation, loans of archival records, specific terms, and organisation for data loading. The methodology also includes the precise definitions of registration units and finding aids, principles that apply to recording archival records level of processing, principles applying to archival records measuring (their length in running meters, size in bytes and their multiples in archival records in a digital form), archival records physical condition recording, new registration units and checked length into the existing finding aids recording, and the like. During the *NAD* general inventory, the Department of Archives Administration and Records

⁴³ Jiří Bernas & M. Wanner. *Long-term preservation of digital records in the Czech Republic and the National Digital Archives project*. "Atlanti, Review for modern archival theory and practice-Rivista di teoria e pratica archivistica moderna-Revija za sodobno arhivsko teorijo in prakso" 21 (2011), p. 101-111.

⁴⁴ General inventory is declared in accordance with section 44, letter i) of the *Act no. 499/2004 Coll.*

⁴⁵ Cf. section 46, art. 2, letter e); section 49, letter i); and section 52, letter n); section 53, art. 3, letter d); section 55, art. 1, letter j); section 57, letter h) of the *Act No. 499/2004 Coll.*

⁴⁶ For example, *The General Inventory 2012-2013* is regulated by the *Guidance of the Department Archives Administration and Records Management of the Ministry of the Interior* to carry out the General Inventory of the National Archival Heritage in the Archives of the Czech Republic in 2012–2013 (no. j. MV - 127762-51 AS-2011), available at <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/metodiky.aspx?q=Y2hudW09Mg%3d%3d>.

Management of the Ministry of the Interior provides all participants in the general inventory with consultations, and solves issues that have not been solved yet, which encourages fresh initiatives for the methodology specification.

Finally, every archive writes account of the general inventory completing, which includes data about the inventory start and finish, the amount of spent time (during the working weeks), an overview of the used data, and the names of those engaged in the inventory compiling. The account includes appendixes and a CD-R disc of the *NAD* updated primary registration in the relevant archive, control statistics, which presents the PEVA program output, and outputs alike relating to the place of archival records storage, and their position in the registration, the survey of damaged registration units, the list of the rest archival records that have not been found with the name of archive fond (archival records description, name of archive fond, number of the *NAD* registration entry), and the archival record function within an archive fond – inventory number, signature, number of a box. and the like). At disposal is also a description of the archival records that have not been found.

The outcomes of the general inventory are statistically evaluated by the Department of Archives Administration and Record Management of the Ministry of the Interior, and are usually published in archive periodicals⁴⁷. At the regional level, and the level of single archives they serve to make the archival records management more effective.

The *NAD* Extent

The regular updating and general inventories raise awareness about the archival records in the Czech Republic. Out of dozens of data, I only present those essential. At the moment, there are 169,422 archive fonds and archive collections in the Czech Republic that are 798,808.52 metres in length in total. From the overall number of archival records, 61.41 per cent stored in the Czech archives have a finding aid, the rest of them have not been processed yet. Filed are 66,266 finding aids of all types, either in analogue or digital forms.

End

Finally, one more piece of information. The National Archival Heritage concept celebrates the 60th anniversary of its foundation. The fact alone shows that it is a useful institute of the Czech archiving that has become common. However it traces its heritage back to the centralisation relating to the communist era in Czechoslovakia, it has proved effective also in the democratic environment, more over it has survived the decentralisation of the archive net in the Czech Republic. Therefore in a larger measure, it might also be a source of inspiration for foreign countries.

⁴⁷ The last report of this kind was the publication Josef Hora & M. Wanner, *Jednotný archivní fond v roce 2002. Nové poznatky o struktuře JAF po generální inventuře v roce 2001*. "Archivní časopis" 53 (2003), 1, p. 1-11.

The National Archival Heritage and the General Inventory

(abstract)

This article deals with a Czech legal institute called The National Archival Heritage, its significance in legislation, and the archival records registration in the Czech Republic. Such an institute is nothing of a novelty, and is not a Czech particularity either. The concept has been developing since the 1950s. Similar concept of the archival records definition exists, e.g., in Poland (*Spis zespolów*), Slovakia (*Afondy*), as well as in other countries in Europe. However, the most significant progress in this composed system is most likely to occur in the Czech Republic. The article talks about the basic features of this tool, its role and genesis.