

## Statement

on the 14th International Conference *Colloquia Jerzy Skowronek dedicata*,  
organised in Warsaw on 22-23 May 2014 on

### ***Collecting of archive resources in the digital world of the 21st Century***

The scientific conferences of Central and Eastern European state archives were initiated in 1995 by General Directors of the State Archives of Poland and Russia Professors Jerzy Skowronek and Vladimir Petrovich Kozlov. The scope of ongoing political changes presented many challenges for archives which could be overcome more easily through archivists' cooperation and exchange of experiences. The 13 previous conferences held in 1995-2005 and 2012-2013 focused on the role of archives in the times of political transformations after the collapse of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe, the issues related to archives and archive resources of the communist party, private collections, archives of international organisations, archive resources on non-traditional media, documentation of communist agencies of repression, common archival heritage of Central and Eastern European states and nations, the role of archives in the information society as well as the challenges related to the introduction of new IT technologies to archival practice.

The subject of the 14th conference, which the Head Office of the State Archives prepared once again in collaboration with the Institute of National Remembrance, were the problems of collecting archive resources in the 21st century digital world. The ongoing process of computerisation of various aspects of life, and primarily of public administration, as well as the increased importance of the internet pose a question as to whether the methods and approach to collecting archive resources by state archives that have been developed for paper (traditional) documentation are still valid. An answer should be found to such emerging problems as: what influence do various forms of collecting electronic documentation have on archival collections and their role?; does to-date approach to appraising and selecting documentation needs changes, particularly in relation to mass individual documentation?; should archives collect data from the Internet?; to what extent should archives be guided by the "right to be forgotten" in the process of appraising documentation?; will paper still be required as a durable medium?; and is information inseparably and durably linked to the medium?

Over 108 participants came to the conference from countries, including: Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The conclusions of the conference debates include:

- significant and important changes have been observed in the area of creating and collecting documentation. These consist in computerisation of administration, development of new ways

of collecting information in the form of large databases and clear dominance of electronic documents over paper-based ones;

- new forms of electronic documentation and new forms of its storage require a change in the approach to its appraisal and selection, while “the right to be forgotten” and to-date archival principles also need to be taken into account;

- the new approach to the problems of documentation appraisal should be accompanied by a reflection on how to assess information needs of the emerging knowledge society;

- there is a constant need to exchange experience and knowledge related to different aspect of collecting various forms electronic documents in archives, ensuring their integrity, the role of electronic signature in archival practice and other related issues;

Having appreciated the significance of international meetings under the *Colloquia Jerzy Skowronek dedicata* formula as a broad platform of contact and cooperation, the participants agreed that it would be desirable to organise further such conferences. It was also suggested that the 2015 meeting should be devoted to the relation between archives and the social environment in contemporary world.