

Moderna
arhivistika

Časopis arhivske teorije in prakse
Journal of Archival Theory and Practice

Letnik 8 (2025), št. 2 / Year 8 (2025), No. 2

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Journal of Archival Theory and Practice

ISSN 2591-0884 (online)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54356/MA>

Letnik 8 (2025), št. 2 / Year 8 (2025), No. 2

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Izdaja / Published by:

Pokrajinski arhiv Maribor / Regional Archives Maribor

Glavna in odgovorna urednica / Chief and Responsible editor:

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Recenziranje / Peer review process:

Prispevki so recenzirani. Za objavo je potrebna pozitivna recenzija. Proces recenziranja je anonimen. / All articles for publication in the conference proceedings are peer-reviewed. A positive review is needed for publication. The review process is anonymous.

Lektoriranje / Proof-reading:

mag. Boštjan Zajšek, mag. Nina Gostenčnik

Prevajanje:

mag. Boštjan Zajšek (slovenščina), mag. Nina Gostenčnik (slovenščina, angleščina)

Oblikovanje in prelom / Design and typesetting: *mag. Nina Gostenčnik*

Objavljeni prispevki so prosto dostopni. Vse avtorske pravice ima izdajatelj Pokrajinski arhiv Maribor.

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Prejeto / Received: 1. 4. 2025

1.04 Strokovni članek

1.04 Professional article

<https://doi.org/10.54356/MA/2025/GJOR9394>

Archival depot of the Historical Archives in Zaječar: modern-day challenges of storage, protection and search of archival holdings

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Abstract:

The article presents the challenges and experiences related to working in the depot of the Historical Archives in Zaječar, focusing on current storage capacities and the integration of modern technologies into the workflow. In addition to describing the current state of the archival depot and the possibilities for expanding storage capacity, it provides an analysis of advantages and disadvantages of different types of archival shelves used in the depot. The article also explores how archivists in Zaječar utilize the "Arhis" information system to improve the efficiency of archival material searches. Although based on the operations of the Historical Archives in Zaječar, discussions in the article offer insights applicable to many archival institutions facing the challenge of balancing existing working conditions with the need for modernization.

Keywords:

archives, archival holdings, archival depot, archival shelves, information technology

Izvleček:

Arhivsko skladišče Zgodovinskega arhiva v Zaječarju: sodobni izzivi hrambe, zaščite in iskanja arhivskega gradiva

Prispevek predstavlja izzive in izkušnje v povezavi z delom v depozu Zgodovinskega arhiva Timoške krajine v Zaječaru, s poudarkom na trenutnih skladiščnih zmogljivostih in vključevanju sodobnih tehnologij v delovni proces. Prispevek prinaša poleg opisa trenutnega stanja arhivskega depozja in možnosti za povečanje skladiščnih zmogljivost tudi analizo prednosti in slabosti različnih vrst arhivskih polic, ki se uporabljajo v depozu. Avtorja raziskujeta tudi, kako arhivisti v Zaječarju uporabljajo informacijski sistem »Arhis« za izboljšanje učinkovitosti iskanja arhivskega gradiva. Čeprav razprave v pripevku temeljijo na delovanju Zgodovinskega arhiva v Zaječarju, ponujajo različne vidike, uporabne tudi za številne druge arhivske ustanove, ki se soočajo z izzivom uravnoteženja obstoječih delovnih pogojev s potrebo po modernizaciji.

Ključne besede:

arhivi, arhivsko gradivo, arhivska skladišča, arhivske police, informacijska tehnologija

1. Decades of challenges in preserving archival holdings and the construction of the archival depot in Zaječar

The development of archival institutions in Serbia has followed an uneven course. With the adoption of a special law, the State Archives of the Kingdom of Serbia was first established in Belgrade in 1898. The development of the archival network across Serbia, through the establishment of local archives, began only after World War II. As part of this process, the Archives in Zaječar was founded, with April 15, 1948, considered as its official founding date. In accordance with the rudimentary regulations of the time, the institution initially held the formal status of an "archival center" and, given its activities, human resources, and spatial capacities, was merely the foundation of what would become the future Archive. (Мијовић [ed.], 1988; Педовић и Јанковић, 2003)

In the post-war recovery period, following the widespread destruction caused by World War II and the frequent lack of understanding for the needs of cultural institutions, the Archives faced numerous challenges in carrying out its mission for decades. One of the institution's most pressing issues, which remained unresolved for many years, was the absence of proper storage facilities that met archival standards. Although the Archival Center in Zaječar had begun its operations, it had no dedicated premises until 1950. Even after acquiring its first workspaces, the Archives continued to operate under inadequate conditions. Over the following decades, the institution was forced to relocate multiple times, further complicating the work of employees responsible for preserving archival materials. In some cases, staff offices were housed in buildings shared with other state institutions. Additionally, for nearly a decade, the archival depot and staff offices were situated in separate buildings, hundreds of meters apart. The premises housing the archival depot for many years suffered from leaking roofs, excessive humidity and mold, failing to provide basic working conditions for employees or suitable preservation standards for archival materials. (Januzi, 2018)

The issue of inadequate storage space for archival materials at the Archives in Zaječar was optimally resolved only at the beginning of the last decade of the 20th century. At that time, the Archives received a newly constructed, purpose-built depot for storing archival materials, added as an extension to the main office building. Construction of the depot began in 1990 and was completed in 1993. Funding for the project was provided almost entirely through the so-called local self-contribution¹. (Pedović, Janković, 2003)

After decades of neglect and a lack of understanding of the Archives' needs, the local community finally recognized the provision of adequate storage space for archival materials as one of its most important investments and priorities. The construction of the archival depot was ultimately included in the local government's investment plan. With the completion of the project, the Historical Archives in Zaječar was provided with long-term conditions for preserving and protecting archival materials.

¹ *In socialist Yugoslavia, self-contribution was a form of revenue introduced based on a decision by citizens in a specific area to achieve clearly defined objectives. Under the legislation of the time, self-contribution could only be implemented through a referendum or a voter assembly to meet collective needs in various sectors. It involved allocating a certain percentage of citizens' personal income. (Pravna enciklopedija, 1979)*

2. The condition of the archival depot and possibilities for expanding its capacity

Local archives in Serbia operate within the territory of one or more local self-governments. The jurisdiction of the Historical Archives in Zaječar includes the city of Zaječar and the municipalities of Knjaževac and Boljevac. Currently, the Archives holds a total of 4,236.70 linear meters of archival material from these local self-governments. (Istorijski arhiv „Timočka krajina“ Zaječar, 2025) The oldest original document in the Archives dates back to 1789, while almost all archival material originates from the period after 1833, following the liberation from Ottoman rule. (Pedović, 2010)

The depot of the Historical Archives in Zaječar is built as an extension of the institution's main office building. It consists of a basement, ground floor, two upper floors, and an attic. The floors of the depot are labeled with Cyrillic letters, starting with "A" while the rooms on each floor are numbered sequentially from 1 onward. Archival material and the institution's library are stored on the ground floor, the first and second floors, as well as on mezzanine levels. Additionally, the ground floor houses a reception room for archival materials, designated for preparing documents before storage after their acquisition. The building does not suffer from leaks or moisture issues. Regarding fire protection, the depot is equipped with fire extinguishers and fire alarm systems. The largest rooms in the building are connected to the city's central heating system and have air conditioning units. The transportation of documents within the depot is significantly facilitated by an elevator with a capacity of up to 500 kilograms, designed exclusively for moving archival materials.

For many years after its construction, the new depot building provided good conditions for storing and preserving archival materials, allowing for the uninterrupted acquisition of large volumes of documentation. The amount of archival material acquired by the Archives over the past decades has varied significantly from year to year, ranging from just a few to several hundred linear meters. As the depot's capacity gradually filled up (Mijović [ed.], 1988; Pedović, 2010; Januzi, 2018),² and given the many challenges archival institutions face in securing adequate storage conditions, the Archives sought to maximize the use of the depot by creating additional storage capacity. Extra archival shelves of various sizes were installed in suitable locations to make the most of the available space.

In the depot, which has been adapted and gradually filled over the years, the issue of capacity utilization has become increasingly pressing in recent years. Over time, the available shelf space has diminished to the point where properly storing even a moderately large volume of newly acquired archival material has become impossible. In such circumstances, due to the obligation to acquire archival materials in large quantities and the inability to store them properly, alternative methods of storage have been initiated. In recent years, documentation has been placed between fully occupied shelves, in hallways, on staircases, or in any available space that could be found. Today, a significant portion of the depot's hallways and staircases is occupied by archival materials. The remaining available shelf space can only store small-scale archival fonds.

Storing archival materials in this manner, dictated by necessity, presents several challenges for archivists. Materials stored this way become disorganized, making searches more difficult and requiring additional physical effort and persistence from staff. Additionally, this situation increases the risk of physical injury to employees while

² In 1988, the Archives stored 962 linear meters of archival material in its depot. By 2010, this amount had increased to 2,470 linear meters. In 2018, the depot held 3,670 linear meters of archival materials, and today, the total has exceeded 4,200 linear meters.

retrieving documents and moving through the depot. Archival materials placed on staircases and in hallways obstruct movement during regular operations and pose a significant hazard in emergencies.

In these circumstances, in 2022, the Archives faced the obligation to receive and store 287 linear meters of archival material from a former large local enterprise from the socialist era. Due to the absolute lack of space in the depot for storing such a large volume of materials, the Archives was forced to seek assistance from the local self-government. As a result, the Archives was offered the use of a building within a former industrial complex that once belonged to one of the largest local factories from the socialist period. With no alternative solution available, the Archives had no choice but to store part of its archival material outside its depot, nearly two kilometers away from its main offices.

The primary cause of this situation is the lack of financial investment in a major infrastructure project such as expanding the archival depot's capacity. This issue is not unique to the Archives in Zaječar. Numerous needs of the archival profession in the country still exceed the scope of financial investments.

Aside from the issue of limited storage capacity, one of the key factors affecting the state of the archival depot is human resources. In general, archival institutions across Serbia face a shortage of staff, which significantly impacts their operations. (*Mišljenje Arhivističkog društva Srbije, 2023*) Similarly, the numerous and complex tasks within the Archives in Zaječar create a pressing need for additional staff. Currently, out of institution's 13 employees, only two permanent staff members handle the duties in the archival protection service ("depot service"), which include receiving, storing, preserving, maintaining, researching, presenting, and issuing archival materials to users. As a result, staff members are constantly forced to prioritize urgent tasks while addressing other, often equally important responsibilities whenever possible.

Given the full occupancy of archival shelves, the storage of documents in unsuitable areas within the depot, and the use of an external facility, expanding the storage capacity for archival materials is a top priority for the institution. Several potential approaches can be considered to achieve this goal.

A viable long-term solution to the storage capacity issue would be expanding the archival depot. However, several obstacles stand in the way of this plan. The institution's courtyard provides limited space for expansion, as the distance between the building and the courtyard fence is no more than seven meters. Consequently, any significant extension of the depot would require enlarging the existing courtyard by incorporating surrounding land. The archival building is located in the wider center of Zaječar, surrounded on three sides by residential buildings, including private houses and apartment blocks (image 1). Given the structure of these surrounding buildings, the level of risk their proximity poses to the archival depot, and the potential space that could be gained, the most practical option for courtyard expansion would be on the northwest side of the depot. However, expanding the Archives' courtyard in this direction would require demolishing private residential buildings adjacent to the institution's fence and providing appropriate compensation to the property owners. From the current perspective, carrying out such a project would present numerous challenges.



Image 1: The office building of the Archives and the archival depot (marked with an arrow) along with the surrounding structures. Available on: <https://a3.geosrbija.rs/> (retrieved 1. 4. 2025).

Since depot expansion does not seem feasible in the near future, the Archives has opted to increase storage capacity by acquiring a system of compact, mobile archival shelves. In 2025, the fifth phase of their procurement will be implemented, funded by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia. However, given the realistic pace of project implementation, the most effective long-term solution to the storage capacity issue would be finding a suitable way to expand the depot building.

3. Archival shelves in the depot: current condition and usage experience

Archival shelves are one of the most important elements in the preventive protection of archival materials. Throughout decades of work in various storage conditions, the Archives has sought, within its means, to adhere to increasingly demanding archival standards regarding storage regulations. To date, the Archives has gained experience working with multiple types of shelving systems. This diverse experience remains relevant today, as both older, traditional equipment and the latest shelving systems for storing and preserving archival materials are still in use in the depot.

According to archival regulations in the Republic of Serbia, archival depots must be equipped with metal shelves for storing archival materials. These shelves can be traditional (stationary, open) or mobile “compact” shelves. (Pravilnik o bližim uslovima za obezbeđenje odgovarajućeg prostora i opreme za smeštaj i zaštitu arhivske građe i dokumentarnog materijala kod stvaraoaca i imaoca arhivske građe i dokumentanog materijala, 2021) The Zaječar Archives depot is equipped with three types of archival shelves: *fixed archival shelves* – permanently installed shelving units, *mobile archival*

shelves – a system designed to optimize space and improve accessibility and *electric compact mobile shelves* – the most modern model, featuring automated movement for efficient storage management.

In most rooms of the archival repository, fixed archival shelves are installed. They are usually arranged in pairs, with a 60-centimeter gap between them to allow staff to pass through. Typically, these shelves consist of four rows and five compartments.³ Since each compartment has a capacity of one linear meter, an average shelf of this type can hold 20 linear meters of archival materials. These shelves offer adjustable compartment heights, which can be useful when storing archival boxes of non-standard, larger dimensions.

This type of archival shelving has both advantages and disadvantages. First, these shelves are much easier to dismantle and reassemble compared to other types of shelving in the archival repository. As a result, with some effort and time, archival staff can handle the dismantling and reassembly themselves as needed. Additionally, installation can be adjusted according to the available space, with customizable width and height to fit specific requirements. Another advantage of this shelving system is the unobstructed airflow between the shelves due to the spacing between them, which helps preserve archival materials in good condition. Furthermore, the system is simple—there are no parts or mechanisms prone to failure. Although some elements may occasionally become deformed, they can be restored to their original state with a certain amount of effort. Despite these benefits, this type of shelving has at least one drawback: the space it occupies. The 60-centimeter gap between each pair of shelves takes up a considerable amount of useful storage space in the repository. In the context of the lack of storage space in the Archives' depot, this feature of fixed archival shelves becomes particularly significant.

The second type of shelving, used in a smaller section of the archival repository, is an older model of mobile archival shelves. This system is compact, allowing sufficient space for movement, with access opening depending on which individual shelf is shifted. The system is bordered at the beginning and end by fixed, single-sided shelves, while the center contains movable, double-sided shelves. A key advantage of this model is its ability to maximize the use of storage space. Additionally, the system is simple, entirely mechanical, and remains free of malfunctions or deformations even after decades of use. Moreover, the effort required to move the shelves is not particularly demanding.

Significantly modernizing the conditions for storing archival materials, the Archives began implementing a project in 2021, with financial support from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia, to procure compact, electrically powered mobile shelves annually. As the project nears completion, one of the largest rooms in the repository will be fully equipped with this type of archival shelving.

This system consists of single-sided fixed shelves at the beginning and end, with double-sided mobile shelves in the center. It operates in two ways: by selecting the activation option on a touchscreen or by pulling an analog handle. The double-sided mobile shelves are equipped with sensors that detect obstacles in the passage. If an obstacle is detected, the system halts movement, and screens on the shelf sides display

³ The archival shelves in the repository are labeled with Roman numerals, starting from I in each room. Within each shelf, rows are marked with Arabic numerals, while compartments are labeled with lowercase Cyrillic letters (a, б, в, etc.).

an error message explaining the issue. The system also features built-in LED lighting, illuminating the passage as it opens.

This modern shelving system offers several advantages. Its compact design maximizes space utilization, which is particularly important given the current working conditions in the archival repository. Additionally, the system is easy to use, as the shelves can be moved effortlessly by touching the screen or shifting the analog handle. This is especially convenient when carrying archival boxes, as it allows for hands-free operation.

On the other hand, this type of archival shelving also has its drawbacks. First, while the system is easy to use, its complex assembly increases the likelihood of potential malfunctions in the future. If such issues arise, archival staff cannot resolve them without intervention or at least detailed consultations with an authorized dealer or service provider. This complexity, along with the system's electric drive, raises its purchase cost, slowing down the process of equipping storage facilities with this type of shelving. Additionally, since the system operates exclusively on electricity, it cannot be used during power outages.

The analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the above types of shelves leads to the question: which of the mentioned models is the most appropriate solution for permanent use? Based on the above, it could be said that the maximum use of depot space, the reliability of the model, and the affordability of the price represent the three most important aspects of the procurement and use of archival shelves. The most appropriate solution should combine the aforementioned aspects. Based on the above, it can be said that the rolling archival shelf system largely meets the conditions formulated in this way - maximum use of depot capacity, minimal possibility of malfunctions and disruptions in operation, as well as the lower purchase price compared to an electrical system, all support this conclusion.

4. Modern technologies in archival work: possibilities for searching archival materials within the "Arhis" information system

The process of digitizing archival materials at the Zaječar Archives has been ongoing for years. Its purpose, among other things, is to facilitate document searches and protect archival materials. The implementation of digital document searches in the Zaječar Archives began with the use of the "Arhis" information system. This program was initially implemented in the State Archives of Serbia and was later adapted and improved to become an essential part of the work of all archival institutions in the country.

The "Arhis" information system encompasses the work of all archival services. On this occasion, attention will be focused solely on program segments that provide employees with the ability to search for information about archival materials in the repository. Currently, only archival employees in Serbia, as registered users of the system, can access information about archival materials from their own archives and other archival institutions in the country through "Arhis". Plans are in place to enable the public to search archival materials through this system in the future.

The entry of data on the contents of archival fonds into the "Arhis" system at the Zaječar Archives began in 2021. So far, information on 23 frequently used archival fonds has been entered into the program, including church registry books from the period before World War II and one personal archival fond. Although the program has so far included data on a minority of archival fonds, this has made future work easier for

employees in one area of operations and reduced the need for direct handling of some of the most valuable archival materials.

Before starting data entry into "Arhis", archival employees conducted a review of the fonds containing church registry books of births, marriages, and deaths. By determining the number of books, sorting them according to their respective archival fonds, and assigning accession number to each book, the archival materials were prepared for processing in the information system.

After logging in, a registered user of the "Arhis" information system is presented with several options in the main menu (image 2), corresponding to different areas of archival work. The search for archival material content is performed by clicking on the "Archival arrangement" option (the third option) or the "Search" option (the penultimate option). To find information about their institution's archival materials, archivists at the Zaječar Archive choose the first-mentioned option, as it provides more detailed information about the contents of the documents.

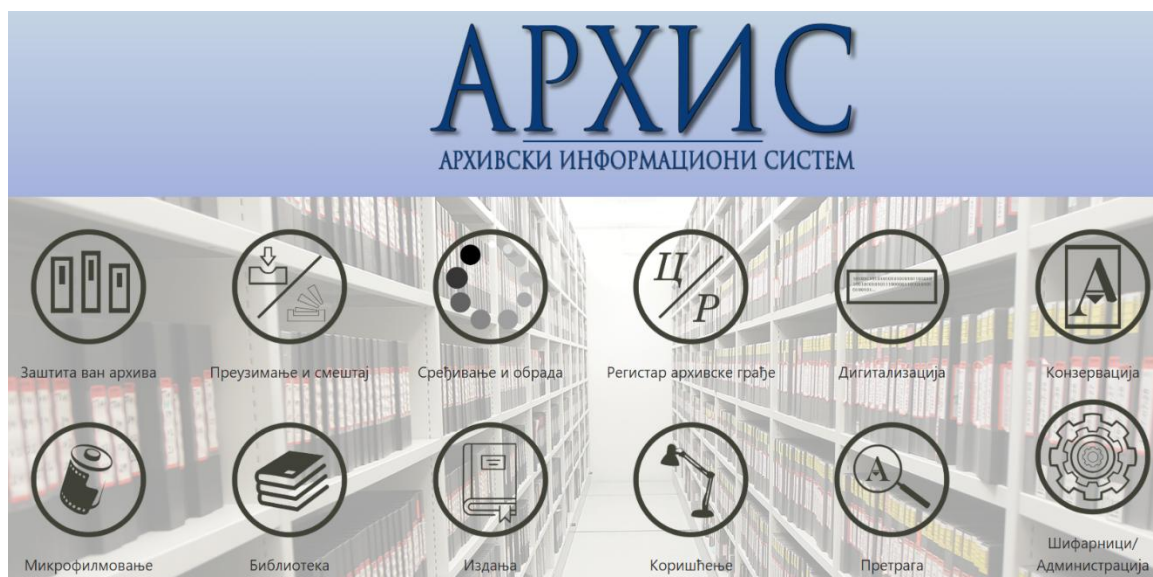


Image 2: The Main Menu of the "Arhis" Information System

After selecting "Archival arrangement" option, the user must enter the name of the desired archival fond in the search field and then select it. The system will then display options for viewing books, documents, boxes, or card indexes within the chosen archival fond. If the "Books" option is selected to access information on church registry books (image 3), some of the displayed details for each unit include a unique system-assigned identifier, accession number, inventory number, book type, description and the time period it covers. A magnifying glass icon at the beginning of the description indicates that the document has been digitized and that its digital copy is available for viewing.

Књиге									
Јединствена ознака	Сигнатура	Инвентар	Подброј	Врста књиге	Опис врсте књиге	Година од	Година до	Распон	Верификација
Садржи...	Садржи...	Сад	Сад	Садржи...	Садржи...	Садрж	Садрж	Садрж	Сад
Q 688.60.5851.0.0.1.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.1.	1	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1876	1881		✓
Q 688.60.5851.0.0.2.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ. 1.2.	2	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1881	1885		✓
Q 688.60.5851.0.0.3.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.3.	3	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1885	1892		✓
Q 688.60.5851.0.0.4.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ. 1.4.	4	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1893	1893	1-397	✓
688.60.5851.0.0.5.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ. 1.5.	5	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1893	1898		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.6.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.6.	6	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1893	1899		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.7.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.7.	7	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1893	1899		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.8.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.8.	8	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1893	1894		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.9.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.9.	9	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1894	1895		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.10.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.10.	10	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1896	1901		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.11.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.11.	11	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1896	1897		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.12.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.12.	12	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1897	1898		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.13.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.13.	13	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1898	1899		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.14.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.14.	14	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1898	1904		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.15.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.15.	15	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1899	1900		✓
688.60.5851.0.0.16.0	ИАЗ, А.8.390, књ.1.16.	16	0	Матична књига	Матична књига рођених	1900	1905		✓

Image 3: Display of Data About Books in the Fond

By selecting the desired book, more detailed information is displayed (image 4). The dialog shows the type of book and its description, accession number, inventory number, subnumber, the name of the archivist who entered the data, the time period covered by the book, the date of data entry, and the administrator's verification mark. At the bottom of the display, there is an important "Notes" field, which archivists at the Zaječar Archives used to record details about the book's content. This field contains information such as the number of entries for each recorded year, the total number of pages in the book, and the names of the places where the individuals whose births were recorded originated. As an example, the image number 3 displays information about a **church birth register**.

Основни подаци	Техничка заштита	Системски подаци	
Врста	Матична књига	Матична књига умрлих	
Сигнатура	ИАЗ, А.8, 390, књ.1.37.	Распон	
Инвентарни број*	37	Године	1876 1886
Подброј*	0	Датум обраде	29.06.2021
Обрадио*	Миљан Ћирић	Верификована	☒
Напомена	1876 (бр.1 до бр.21); 1877 (бр.1 до бр. 153); 1878 (бр.1 до бр. 165); 1879 (бр.1 до бр. 183); 1880 (бр.1 до бр. 185); 1881 (бр.1 до бр. 452); 1882 (бр.1 до бр. 357); 1883 (бр. 1 до бр. 212); 1884 (бр.1 до бр. 330); 1885 (бр.1 до бр.200); 1886 (бр.1 до бр. 115). 170 страна. Обухвата Зајечар, Лубницу, Шљивар, Грљан, Звездан, Гамзиград.		

Image 4: Display of Data on the Selected Book

The "Arhis" information system offers another advantage for the archival repository—searching shelf contents. Under the "Administration" section in the main menu, within the "Storage Locations" option, users can create a detailed structure of the entire archival repository. This structure can include all necessary levels: floors, rooms, archival shelves, rows, and shelf compartments. Since the system allows data entry for all these segments, information about stored archival materials can be recorded at any desired level. **Image 5** illustrates details about a specific shelf compartment, including: type of space, label, numerical designation, start and end years. Additionally, within the **"Content"** field, specific details about the materials stored in the compartment can be entered. The level of detail in the recorded information can be adjusted based on operational needs.

Врста простора	Преграда
Ознака	а
Нумеричка Ознака	1
Година Почетка	1839.
Година Крај	1896.

Садржај

A.1.2.1. Начелство Округа црноречког - Зајечар (1839-1896), 1839-1896 (2 кутије)

A.1.2.2. Начелство Округа тимочког - Књажевац (1839-1896), 1842-1896 (5 кутија)

Image 5: Display of Content of One Shelf Compartment

The recording of church registry books in the "Arhis" information system has brought several benefits to the Archives. First, the revision conducted before data entry corrected previous information on the number of books and the scope of archival fonds. This revision process was also used to assign accession numbers to the books. When entering data into "Arhis", more detailed information about the books was recorded compared to the previously used records in the archival depot service. As a result, the "Arhis" system has become the primary tool for obtaining information about the contents of archival fonds with recorded data. Additionally, the option to add digital images of archival materials allows for direct access to document content in one place. Also, the ability to enter the contents of all storage units of the depot, from the room to the shelf compartment, provides the possibility of significantly facilitating the search of the archival repository.

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POVZETEK

ARHIVSKO SKLADIŠČE ZGODOVINSKEGA ARHIVA V ZAJEČARJU: SODOBNI IZZIVI HRAMBE, ZAŠČITE IN ISKANJA ARHIVSKEGA GRADIVA

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Od skromnih začetkov v zgodnjih povojnih letih pa vse do danes, 77 let pozneje, hrani Zgodovinski arhiv Timočke krajine v Zaječarju let arhivsko gradivo, ki priča o zgodovini vzhodne Srbije. Po več desetletjih, zaznamovanih s selitvami in delom v prostorih, ki niso ustrezali arhivskim standardom, so se pogoji za hrambo in varovanje gradiva v zadnjem desetletju 20. stoletja bistveno izboljšali. Zgrajena je bila namenska stavba za depo, financirana z lokalno samoprispevno pobudo – finančnim skladom, oblikovanim na podlagi odvajanja določenega odstotka osebnega dohodka prebivalcev za namen razvoja infrastrukturnih projektov, pomembnih za lokalno skupnost. Z gradnjo depojske stavbe je arhiv končno dobil možnost, da arhivsko gradivo, priznано kot kulturna dobrina velikega družbenega pomena, hrani v pogojih, ki jih določajo arhivski standardi.

Dolgo let po izgradnji je imel arhivski depo dovolj kapacitet za sprejemanje velike količine gradiva. V zadnjih desetletjih pa se je obseg prevzetega gradiva tako povečal, da je manko prostora na policah začel postajati vse bolj očiten. Danes je depo zapolnjen, tako da ni več mogoče sprejeti niti zmerno velike količine novega gradiva. Zaradi prostorske stiske je bil arhiv prisiljen del svojih fondov namestiti v objekt, oddaljen skoraj dva kilometra od glavne stavbe. Ta nujni ukrep pa bi utegnil privedi do za arhiv neugodnega trajnejšega stanja, da bi namreč tudi v prihodnje del depoja ostal na oddaljeni lokaciji.

Jasno je, da je znatna razširitev kapacitet arhivskega depoja prednostna potreba arhiva. Optimalna rešitev – prizidava depoja – bi zahtevala obsežna finančna sredstva in premagovanje izzivov, povezanih z razširitvijo arhivskega dvorišča. Ker širitev depoja trenutno ni izvedljiva, se je arhiv odločil za postopno nabavo kompaktnih, premičnih polic. Ta sistem postopoma nadomešča tradicionalne fiksne police in omogoča maksimalno izrabo prostora. Ker skorajšnja širitev depoja ni na vidiku, predstavlja stalna nabava kompaktnih polic praktično rešitev, saj ustvarja nove kapacitete za hrambo gradiva.

Arhivski depo v Zaječarju uporablja več tipov regalnih sistemov. Trenutno stanje polic odraža postopno preobrazbo, skozi katero arhiv prehaja. Tradicionalne fiksne police iz leta v leto vse bolj nadomeščajo sodobni, električno vodeni premični regali. Načrtovana postavitev tega sistema v enem delu depoja se zdaj približuje zaključku.

Skozi dolgoletno uporabo različnih vrst polic so zaposleni pridobili dragocene izkušnje, ki bodo usmerjale prihodnje nabave. Na podlagi dosedanjih izkušenj bi morala izbiro arhivskih regalov določati tri ključna merila: največja možna izraba prostora, zanesljivost in vzdržljivost sistema ter stroški nabave. Med različnimi tipi polic, ki so trenutno v uporabi, najboljše izpolnjujejo omenjene kriterije prav premični arhivski regali.

Informacijska tehnologija je v delovanje arhiva vstopila ob uvedbi programa »Arhis«, ki povezuje delo vseh arhivskih ustanov v Srbiji. Uporaba tega informacijskega sistema je omogočila izboljšave pri izvajanju določenih nalog v arhivskem depozitu, saj omogoča hiter dostop do podatkov o gradivu na podlagi že vnesenih zapisov ali z vpogledom v digitalne slike dokumentov. Program omogoča tudi izdelavo celotne strukture depozita in vnos informacij o vsebini vseh enot hrambe, vključno z nadstropji, prostori, policami, vrstami in oddelki. Poleg prilagodljivosti operativnim potrebam in posebnostim vsakega depozita omogoča takšna strukturirana evidenca tudi hiter in podroben pregled arhivskega gradiva.

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Nikola Milutinović was born in 1990 in Zaječar. He graduated and received his master's degree from the Department of History, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Nikola has been employed at the Historical Archives "Timok Region" Zaječar since 2018, working on the protection of archival holdings in the archive (depot). He is the author and co-author of several publications and exhibitions.

Velibor Todorov was born in 1972 in Zaječar. He graduated from the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade. In the field of media, Velibor worked as marketing manager, finance and commercial director and general director of the Radio and Television Zaječar. He became director of the Historical Archives "Timok Region" Zaječar in 2010. Velibor is the author and co-author of several archival exhibitions and publications, as well as the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions in the fields of media and culture.

O avtorjih:

Nikola Milutinović je bil rojen leta 1990 v Zaječarju. Diplomiral in magistriral je na Oddelku za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Beogradu. Od leta 2018 je zaposlen v Zgodovinskem arhivu »Timočka Krajina« Zaječar, kjer dela na varstvu arhivskih fondov v arhivu (depoju). Je avtor in soavtor več publikacij in razstav.

Velibor Todorov je bil rojen leta 1972 v Zaječarju. Diplomiral je na Ekonomski fakulteti v Beogradu. Na področju medijev je deloval kot marketinški manager, finančni in komercialni direktor ter generalni direktor Radia in televizije Zaječar. Leta 2010 je postal direktor Zgodovinskega arhiva »Timočka Krajina« Zaječar. Je avtor in soavtor več arhivskih razstav in publikacij ter prejemnik številnih nagrad in priznanj na področju medijev in kulture.