



LIGUE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES EUROPÉENNES DE RECHERCHE
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Manuscript Librarians Group

Lithuania – Backgrounds

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Introduction

Lithuanian libraries have old traditions of storage and preservation of handwritten documents. The Vilnius University Library, the Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania are the three major research libraries of the country, where such documents are preserved. Recently several manuscript departments were founded at public libraries. One of the largest and most significant manuscript departments has been established at Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Panevėžys County Public Library.

Vilnius University Library

Oldest library of Lithuania, founded in 1570. Its collections contain nearly 6.0 million physical units of documents, including approximately 276,700 physical units of handwritten documents, making up 304 different collections, ranging from the 13th century to the present day. The independent Manuscript Department was established in 1967. Handwritten documents are included in the general online catalogue of the Library, containing a separate [manuscript catalogue](#). The Library was the first library in Lithuania that has successfully launched and implemented document digitization projects.

Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Vilnius

The Manuscript Department functions as an independent subdivision of the Library since 1941. The overall library holdings amount to 3.8 million physical units, including 266,700 units of handwritten documents, distributed among 391 collections, comprising documents dating from the 11th c. till now. Handwritten documents are not included into the general library catalogue, a special online [bibliographical database](#) is created. The card catalogue is also available for users; card catalogues of some individual collections are available as well.

Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, Vilnius

The National library was established in 1919. Its holdings amount to approximately 6,8 million physical units. The Manuscript Department functioned as an individual department during the years 1971-2000, since then as a part of the joint Rare Book and Manuscript Department. The collection of handwritten documents comprises more than 80,300 units of documents, ranging from the 14th c. till today, divided into 215 separate collections. Handwritten documents are

included into the general library catalogue. They are accessible at the electronic catalogue of the [Lithuanian Integral Library Information System](#) (LIBIS). The card catalogue is also available for users.

[Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Panevėžys County Public Library](#)

Functions since 1921. Its holdings of documents amount to over 0.5 million physical units. Handwritten documents collected and kept in two particular departments:

- the Manuscript Department, established in 1991, aiming to contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage of the Panevėžys Land, and holding over 14 thousand units of documents divided into 136 collections, ranging from the second half of the 19th c. till the present day. The documents of the Manuscript Department have been included in the general library catalogue since 2006, therefore their records can also be accessed at the electronic catalogue of the [Lithuanian Integral Library Information System](#) (LIBIS). The card catalogue is also available for users.
- Juozas Miltinis' Cultural Heritage Studies Centre (established in 1996), containing more than 800 units: documents, related to activities of Panevėžys Drama Theatre during the period of 1932-1998 and to [Juozas Miltinis](#), its stage director. A separate card catalogue is available.