

Nordic National Archives as Digital Infrastructure

Joint Statement by the Directors General of the Nordic National Archives

Nordic societies depend on data for decision-making, public services and the development of artificial intelligence. At the same time, trust in information is being challenged as machine-generated content increases and its origins are not always clear. The more society relies on data, the more important authentic, verified and enduring information becomes.

National Archives are receiving and managing increasing volumes of digital public-sector data. This is a transformation whose policy and administrative implications are still taking shape. The Nordic countries' digital maturity, institutional trust and tradition of open government provide an opportunity to make trustworthy public data a foundation for AI.

Trustworthy AI. AI requires high-quality, authentic and legally governed data. As the use of information becomes increasingly automated and agent-based, machine-readable data held by National Archives becomes part of society's active data flows.

Efficient public administration. Consistent, machine-readable data reduces duplication and enables more effective use of information across administrative boundaries and in research.

Resilient democracy. Democracy requires a trustworthy and verifiable information base. National Archives ensure the preservation and accessibility of authentic information.

Security and preparedness. Information security requires both availability and protection from unauthorised access. Data sovereignty requires that the management and preservation of society's essential data are secured. National Archives' data holdings form part of critical digital infrastructure.

The Nordic National Archives consider it important to advance the following objectives:

1. The changing role of National Archives in managing digital information is reflected in the development of their operations and governance.
2. Archiving is integrated into public-sector digital data flows from the early stages of the information lifecycle, enabling information to be transferred, preserved and reused in automated and interoperable ways.
3. National Archives are recognized as carrying critical information in strategies for public administration, research, digitalization, AI and preparedness, and, where appropriate, in legislation.
4. National Archives actively contribute to national and European policy and regulation on data, information management and AI, and promote common Nordic positions.

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