

Finnish Archival Act and appraisal policies

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Appraisal policies

In its appraisal policy and strategy NAS sets guidelines for NAS sets guidelines for appraisal. The general goal is that permanently preserved records should illuminate:

- core functions, competence, planning, leading and decision-making of authorities
- impact of decision-making upon citizens, groups and environment
- interaction between citizens and authorities
- historical, governmental, social, economical, demographic and cultural development of the nation
- circumstances and changes in the nature and cultural environment of the country.

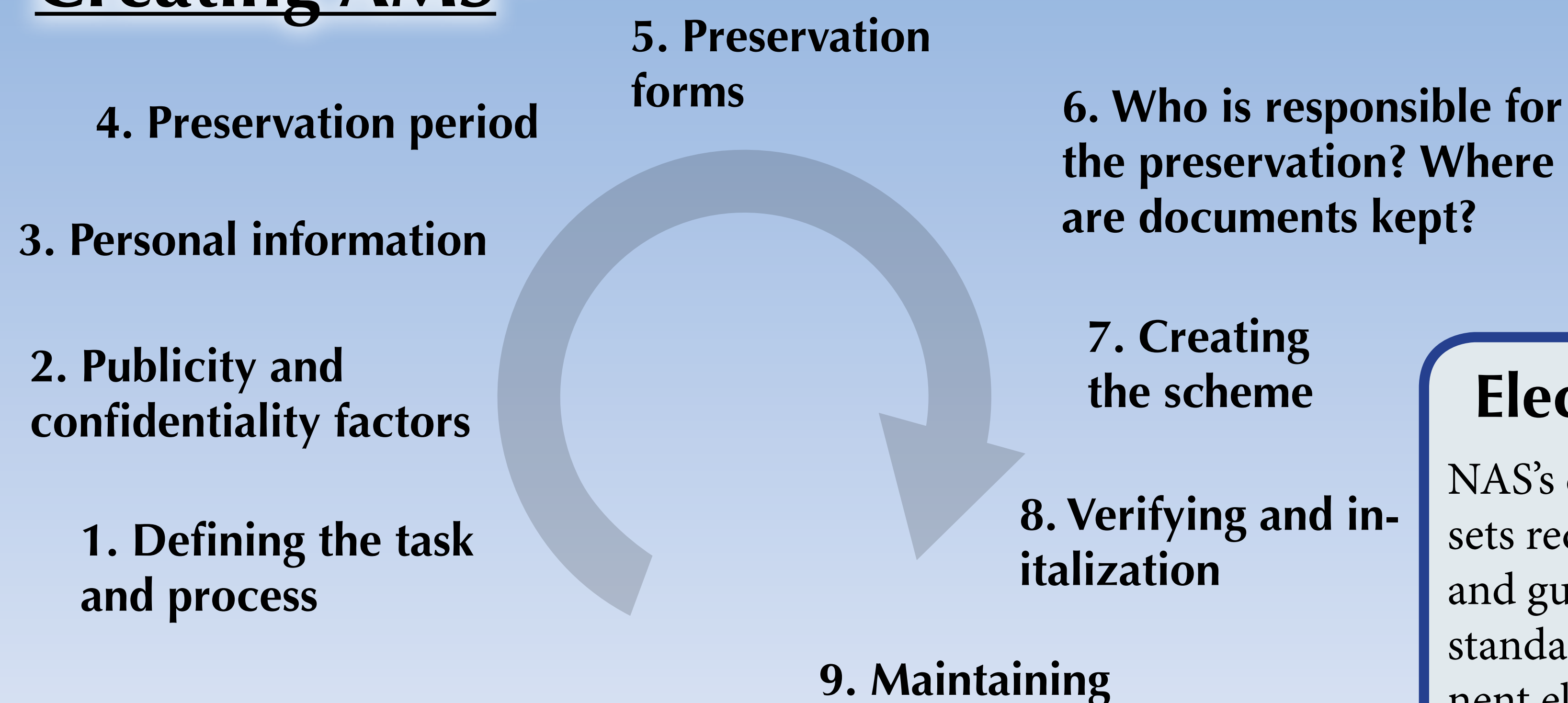
The appraisal strategy provides methodology for the realisation of the policy. It also explores principles and criterias of selection and disposal. The methodology consists of combined macro- and micro-appraisal, proactive appraisal and cooperation with authorities. The approaches that should be considered are record creator, archives, use of information, operational environment and cost factors.

In Finland we have a special continuum approach to recordkeeping - even before a document is created, its place in files, series and fonds is already determined. We emphasise the functional approach to recordkeeping and, therefore, the organisational functions and the record creator are important factors. Also, we don't separate records managers from archivists.¹

AMS – “archives formation plan”

AMS is an essential instrument in document appraisal. Based on guidelines set by the National Archives Service of Finland (NAS), the basic idea of AMS is that organisations create an “archives formation plan” for their documents. The plan covers all the documents in an organisation and sets a preservation period, functional classification and publicity class for them. AMS determines, that permanently preserved documents are first transferred to the organisation's own archive and later on to National Archive or other archive determined by law.²

Creating AMS³



Finnish Archival Act

The mission, mandate and methods of NAS are regulated by Archives Act (831/1994). The Act applies to public administration.

The NAS determines which documents should be permanently preserved. Record creators determine retention periods of other records. That way the retention schedule is created in cooperation between NAS and the record creators. Defining retention periods, record creators should take into account the specific rules and regulations concerning their records. Records may not be disposed of before the National Archives Service has been able to assess the value of their permanent preservation.

The Archival Act does not cover private persons, organs or enterprises but there is other relevant legislation which regulates retention periods of records in private organs and enterprises. Most important laws of that kind are for example Personal Data Act and Accounting Act.

Electronic record management

NAS's decree for permanent electronic preservation sets requirements for electronic records management and guidelines to form eAMS (electronic AMS) and standardized transfer package for centralized permanent electronic preservation in National Archives. They take care of preservation and information services of the transferred records.⁴

Functional class	2.13 Function	5.6 Type of operation	5.6 Type of operation extension	2.15 Type of record	2.6.1 Publicity	2.6.2 Duration of secrecy	2.6.6 Level of confidentiality	2.6.7 Personal information	2.11.1 Preservation period
30	Materials management, community- and environmental cases								
30 00	Materials cases and material politics								
30 00 00	Materials acquisition, sales								
30 00 00 00	Acquisition proposals								
Operation metadata	Incoming acquisition proposal								
Records metadata				proposal attachment	Non-public		IV Limited use	Not included	Permanently
Records metadata					Non-public		IV Limited use	Not included	Permanently
Operation metadata	Report to Secretary								
Operation extension metadata			Preparing announcement						
Records metadata				announcement	Non-public		IV Limited use	Not included	Permanently
Operation metadata	Decision-making								
Records metadata				resolution	Non-public		IV Limited use	Not included	Permanently
Operation metadata	Execution								
Records metadata									

References:

- ¹ Kilkki, J. 2004. Bearmania. Frosting Finnish archival practice with imported archival theory. Comma 1.
- ² National Archives Service of Finland. 2007. AMS-opas. <http://ams-opas.fi/> Viewed 8.7.2011
- ³ Modified from the guide of National Archives Service of Finland <http://ams-opas.fi/ams>
- ⁴ National Archives Service of Finland. 2008. SÄHKKE2: Sähköisten asiakirjallisten tietojen käsittely, hallinta ja säilyttäminen. Decree of National Archives Service of Finland <http://www.arkisto.fi/fi/saehke2-maaeraeys/>. Viewed 13.7.2011