

Heritage FILING SYSTEM

The roots of the heritage filing system in the current Czech Republic date back to the late 19th century. At that time, the Archaeological Committee for Science, Literature and Art started issuing the List of Historic and Cultural Heritage in the Kingdom of Bohemia; the project, launched in 1897, was led by local conservator A. Podlaha. After the establishment of Czechoslovakia, the State Photometric Institute was founded on January 1, 1919; its purposes included record-keeping of the historic and cultural heritage, monitoring and photographing the assets, and making their copies in order to create the archive of photographs, plans and casts of heritage assets. In total, 52 districts were monitored in the Czech lands, i.e. about a quarter of the current Czech Republic territory. The lists, made under the supervision of the heritage experts until 1937, are still admired for their quality and responsible approach to the description of the heritage fund.

In 1958, pursuant to Act No. 22/1958, on cultural heritage, the State Institute for Heritage Care and Nature Protection (SÚPPOP, 1958–1990) was established, following up on the activities of the previous institutions – State Heritage Institute (1950–1951) and State Heritage Management Office (1952–1958). The mission of the new institute was to create the methodological, research and information background for heritage care and nature protection. SÚPPOP also took over the documents (photographs, plans, studies etc.) of discontinued institutions. Shortly after the establishment, the institute began to supervise the development of State List of Immobile and Mobile Cultural Assets in each region (hereinafter “The List”). Until the mid-1960s, the basic set of about 30,000 heritage sites was development, to be focused on. As for mobile assets, the List only included objects owned by the state, churches and organizations, not personal property.

The Act No. 20/1987, on the national heritage care (valid as of January 1, 1988) established the central filing system – General List of Heritage Assets of the Czech Republic (hereinafter “General List”), taking control of the assets included previously in the List. Just like the old List, the General List also consisted of a registry and a filing cabinet, in which every asset has its unique number, registration card, photo documentation, and, in case of immobile sites, also the cadastral identification, including the position in the map. The General List also includes attachments with copies of statements declaring cultural heritage sites, the original List and other important documents regarding the cultural assets, national heritage sites, heritage reserves, heritage zones, and protection areas. This filing system is still functional, even though it was transformed to the electronic form, easily accessible at pamatkovykatolog.cz.

The General List now contains almost 89,000 registry numbers; however, this doesn't mean the number of items, which is much higher. That's because the heritage sites were listed as single items: for example, the Prague Castle only has one entry, and its furniture and equipment has a single one too. The number of sub-items in special detailed lists is almost 2 million.



NATIONAL HERITAGE INSTITUTE

