

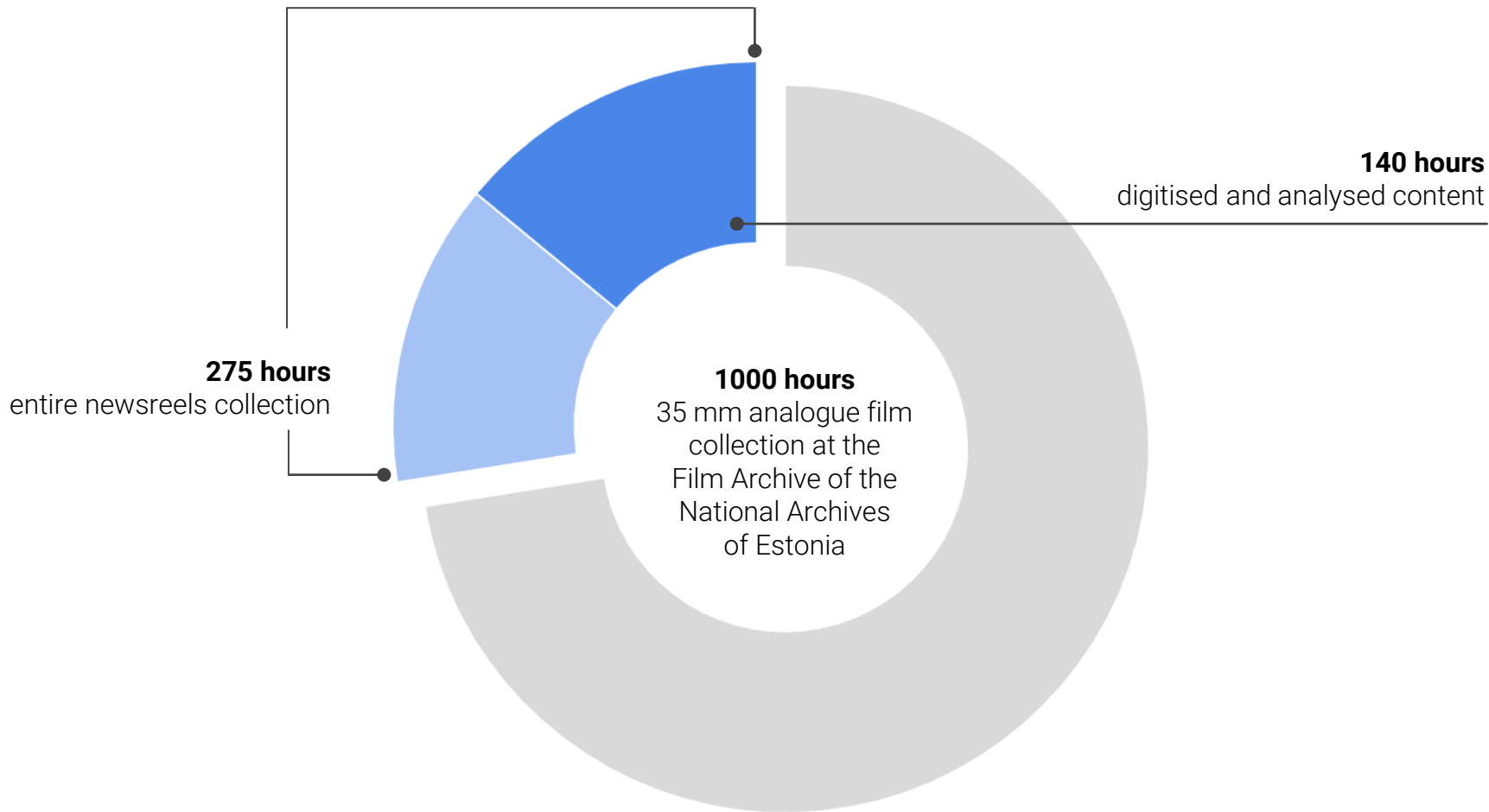


REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

# **Digital expansion of Soviet Estonian newsreels collection: Challenges and new perspectives**

KADI SIKKA

BAAC Conference, 28.10.2022





### “Estonia Film”

1920s

Produced by  
Estonia Film



### “Eesti Kultuurifilm”

1934–1940

Produced by  
Eesti Kultuurifilm



### “Nõukogude Eesti”

1940–1988

Produced by  
Eesti Kultuurifilm, Kinokroonika  
Eesti Studio, Kinokroonika  
Tallinna Studio, Kunstiliste ja  
Kroonikafilmi Tallinna  
Kinostuudio, Tallinna  
Kinostuudio, Tallinnfilm



### “Eesti Kroonika”

1989–1998

Produced by  
Tallinnfilm

1900

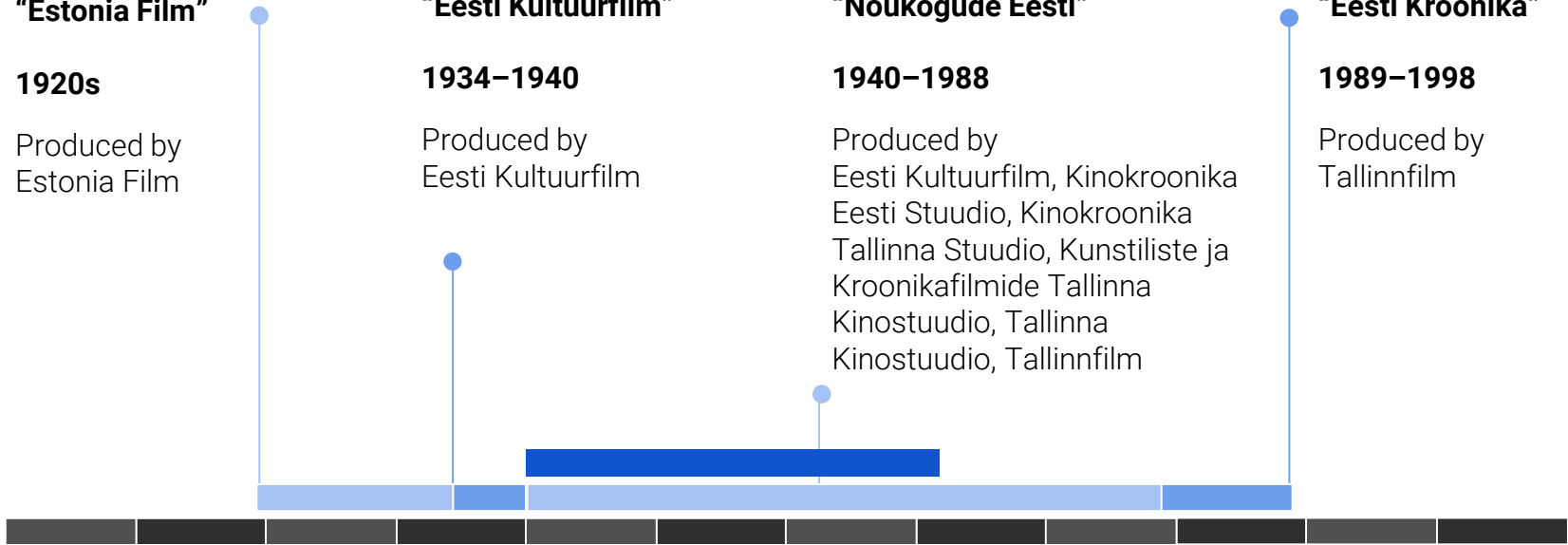
1920

1940

1960

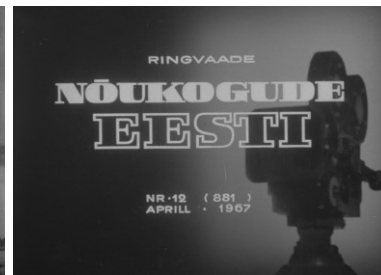
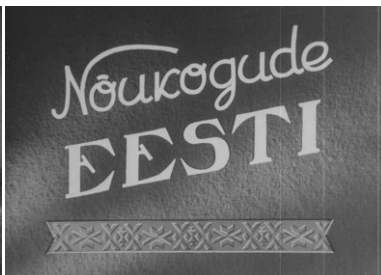
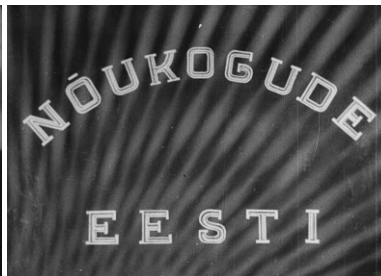
1980

2000













Nõukogude Eesti nr 15  
(1/5), 1949  
[EFA.203.f.621](#)





Nõukogude Eesti nr 36  
(5/6), 1958  
[EFA.203.f.1090](#)



# Digitisation

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- **Action Plan for the Digitisation of Cultural Heritage** (Ministry of Culture, European Union structural fund investments).
- 2020–2023: **140 hours of newsreels** (1940–1972) + **105 hours of documentaries and narrative features** (1940–1993).
- **Partners:** Prasad Corporation Private Limited (India, UK), Ratus OÜ (Estonia), MTÜ Eesti Filmi Andmebaas (Estonia).



Estonian  
Film  
Institute



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

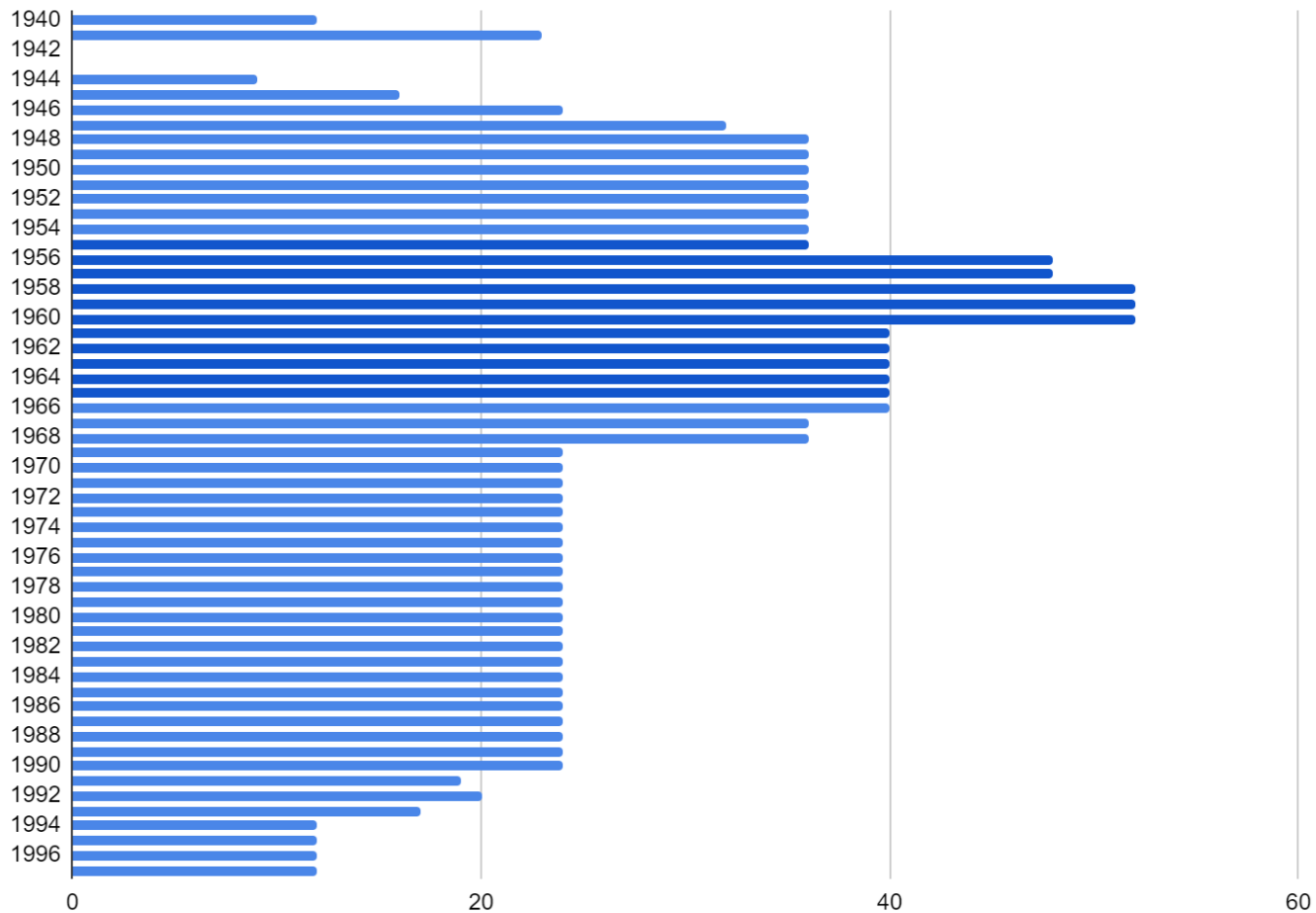




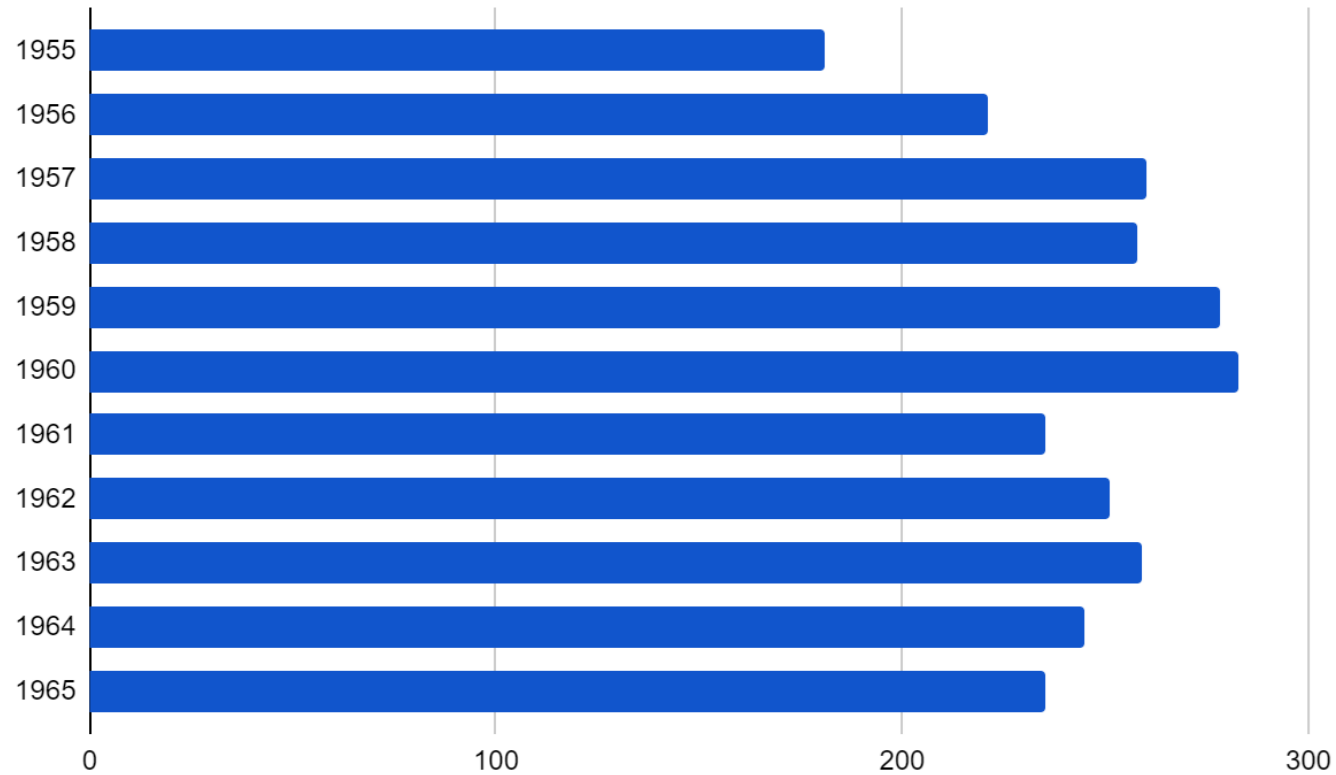
**Heritage!**

- The Soviet Estonian newsreels collection consists of around **1 400 titles** produced between **1940–1988.**
- News stories → thematic newsreels → documentaries.





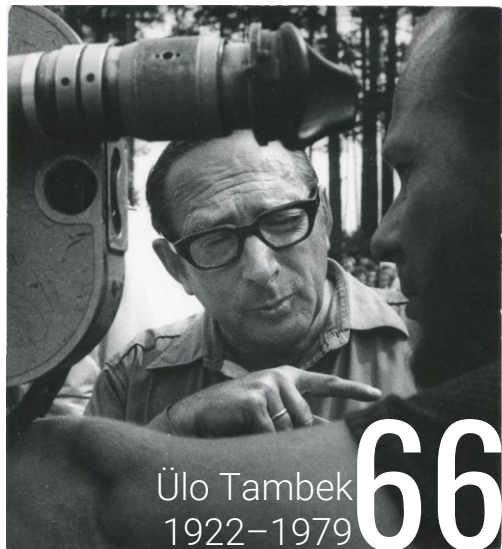
Production of newsreels by Tallinnfilm studio and its predecessors between 1940–1997. Source: FIS, 2022



The number of individual news stories produced between 1955–1965. Source: FIS, 2022



**People behind  
the scenes!**



- **Understanding of technology** and principles of the analog lab workflow.
- Speaking with **authors & technical staff** of the Tallinnfilm studio.



Archival sources

Interviews

Collection  
mapping

Additional  
training

A black and white photograph of a film strip. The film strip is partially unspooled, showing its characteristic sprocket holes on the right side. A large, white, circular graphic is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the word "Film!" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a film canister or a similar object, with some faint, illegible markings. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

**Film!**

# Preparation work

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- Preparation → comparison → conservation
- 4K digitisation in Tallinn (Scanity)
- Four times busier workflow
- Strict schedule
- Large volumes (1000+ reels), complicated logistics

- **35 mm** black-and-white film.
- **Original film elements** of newsreels are physically preserved in Estonia.
- Available elements: **N, P, DP, DN**, including **nitrate and acetate film** from the vaults of the Film Archive in **Tallinn and Rakvere**.



Atlas  
of common  
film degradations

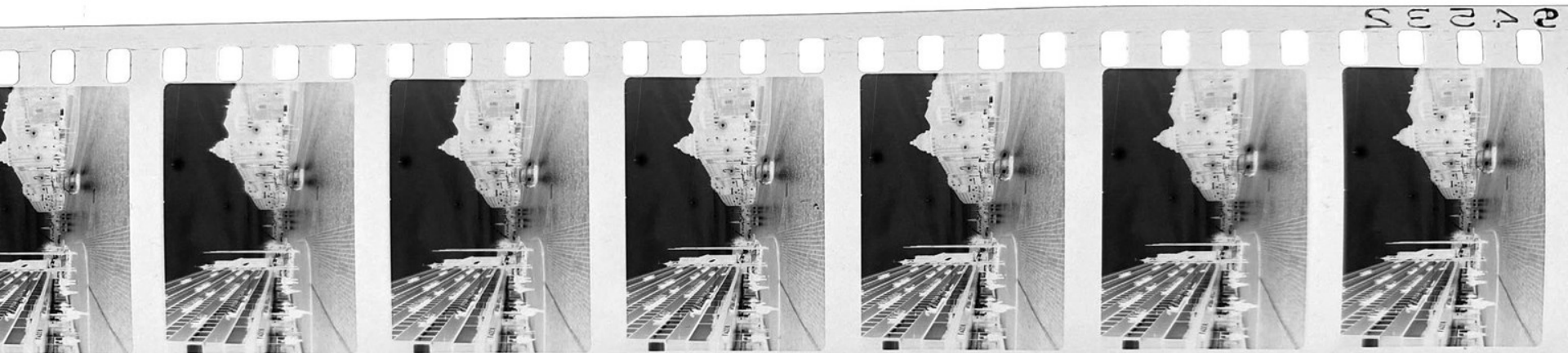
Decision tree  
+  
guidelines

Master thesis:  
Estonian Academy  
of Arts

Research  
project:  
Tallinn  
University

Blog articles





24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

28

strip number (28)

K

Kodak

O

D

A

K

acetate film

S

A

F

E

T

Y

produced in UK (Harrow)

F

I

L

M

perforator number (169)

169

1966

acetate film

Shostka Chemical Factory (Shostkinskii khimzavod)

БЕЗОПАСНАЯ

143 Ш X 3 М 11





## Pildi komplektiosa

**N**  
negatiiv

• terviklik

Tervikluse hindamisel võta arvesse järgmist:

- efektide, kirjade puudumine negatiivil ja nende olemasolu järgmise põlvkonna komplektiosadel;
- negatiivil ei ole värvi/valguse määramist tehtud, mistõttu on digitaalne järeldootlus mahukam (võimalusel eelista master DP-d);
- heli komplektiosa (H, M, P, DP, DN) ja negatiivi identsus, vältimaks hiljem probleeme heli ja pildi sünkroniseerimisel.

JAH

• heas seisukorras

Otsusta liitekohtade arvu ja seisukorra ning teiste digiteerimiseks potentsiaalselt sobivate komplektiosade olemasolu põhjal, kas valik on põhjendatud või on konserveerimine liiga ajamuhukas.

JAH

digiteerimisele

EI

vali teine komplektiosa

EI

vali teine komplektiosa

**DP**  
duubelposiitiv

• terviklik

Tervikluse hindamisel võta arvesse järgmist:

- kas on kindlasti tegemist esimese põlvkonna DP-ga (kopeeritud N+H);
- valgus/värv on määratud, mistõttu hea allikas digitaalseks järeldootluseks;
- juhul, kui muud valiku kriteeriumid on ka täidetud, siis eelista seda, kuna on tõenäoliselt autorite nägemusele lähim representatsioon ja paremas seisukorras kui projitseeritud positiivid.

JAH

• heas seisukorras

Heli olemasolul kasuta seda või vali esmajärjekorras magnetiheli ja järgmisena mõni teine parim optilise heli komplektiosa.

JAH

digiteerimisele

EI

vali teine komplektiosa

EI

vali teine komplektiosa



как Пурш из фильма  
«Укротительница тигров».

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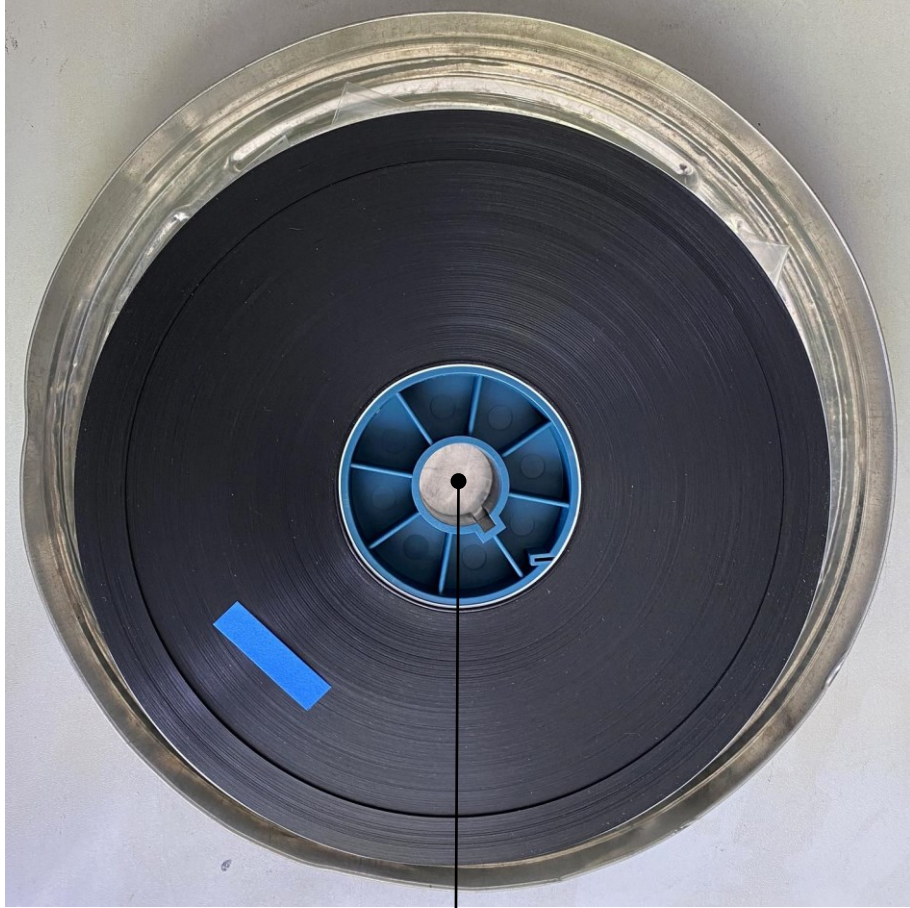
Russian subtitles

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defect of optical soundtrack







vinegar syndrome **stage 0**

Photos: Saara Kruus, 2022



vinegar syndrome **stage 2**



redox blemishes



removal of  
old tape



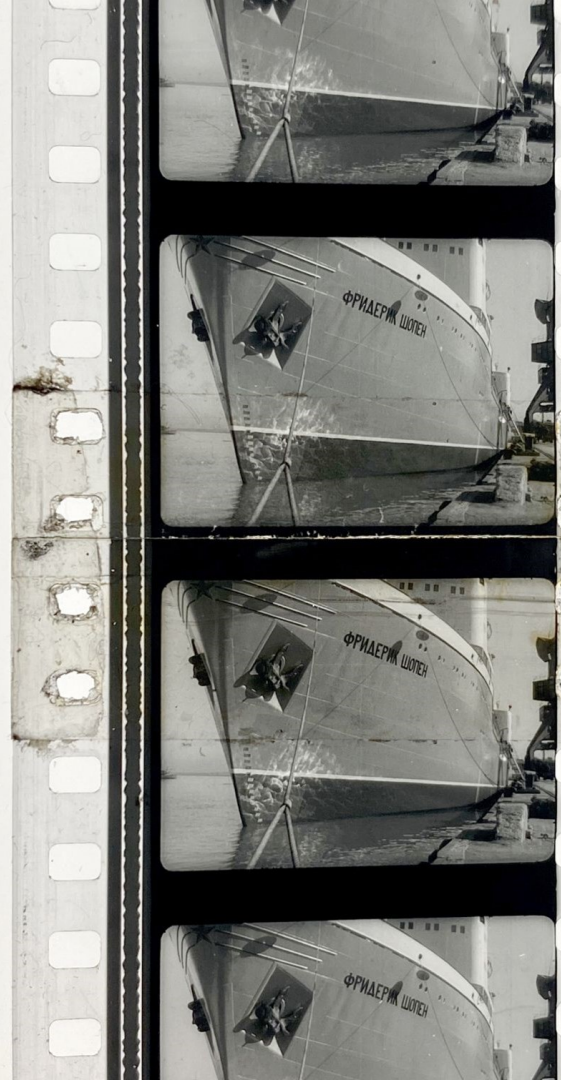
splice  
before & after  
conservation

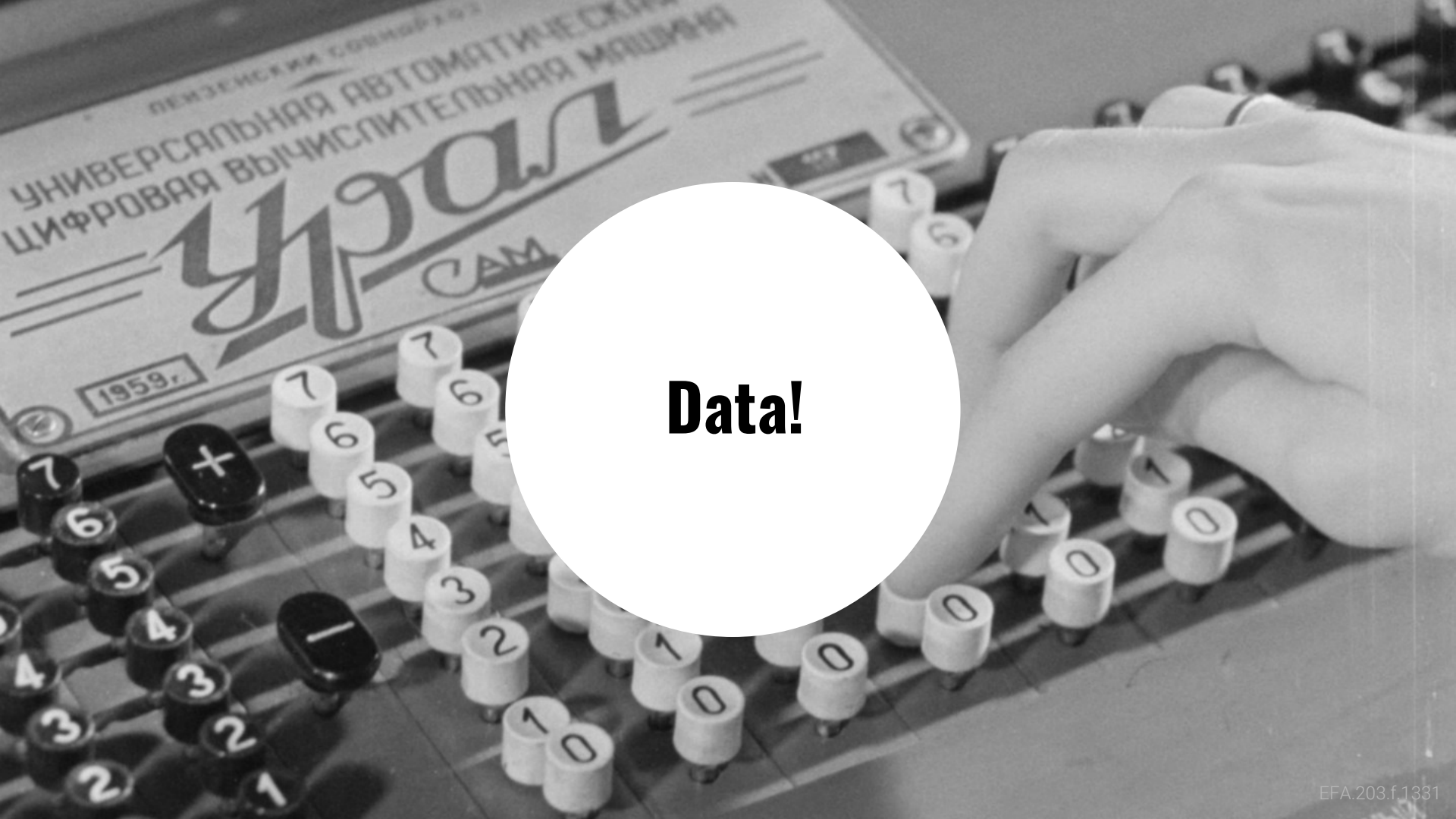


Photo:  
Saara Kruus, 2022



splice  
before & after  
conservation

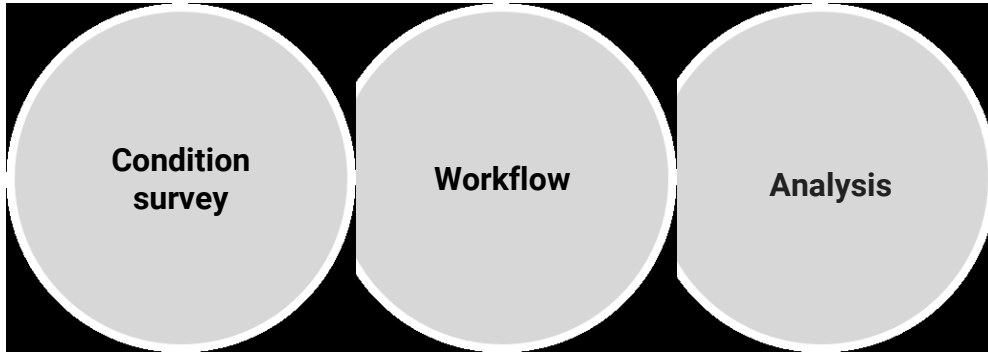


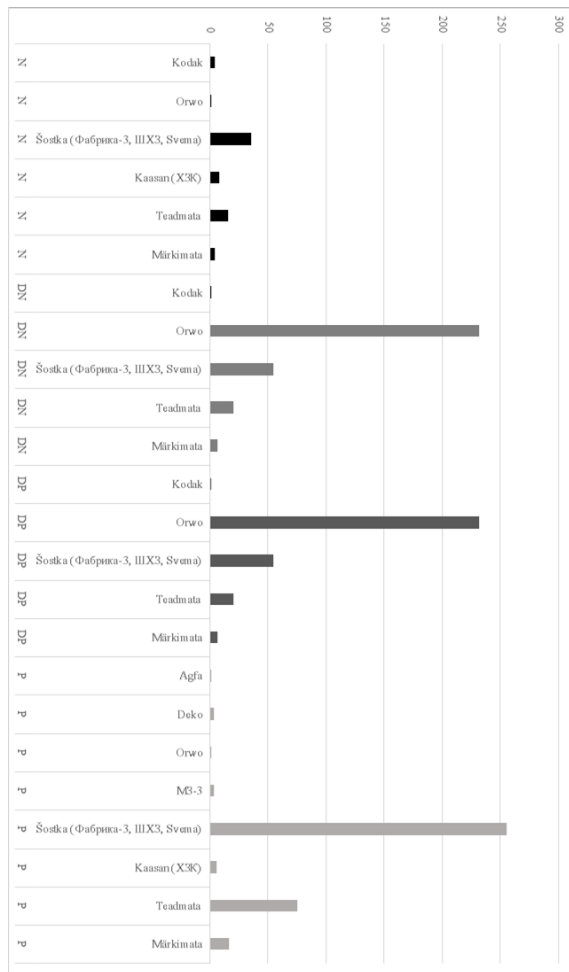


ПЕРМСКИЙ СОВНАРХОЗ  
УНИВЕРСАЛЬНАЯ АВТОМАТИЧЕСКАЯ  
ЦИФРОВАЯ ВЫЧИСЛИТЕЛЬНАЯ МАШИНА  
**Урал**  
САМ  
1959.

**Data!**

- Descriptive and administrative **metadata**
- **Physical characteristics** of each element
- **Degradations**: type, location, extent

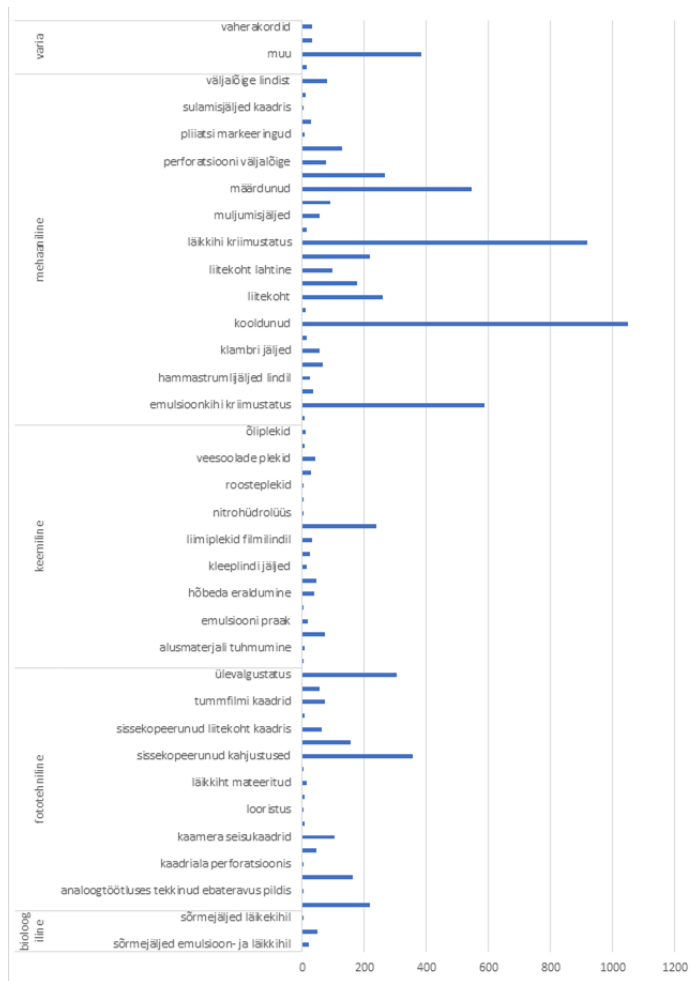




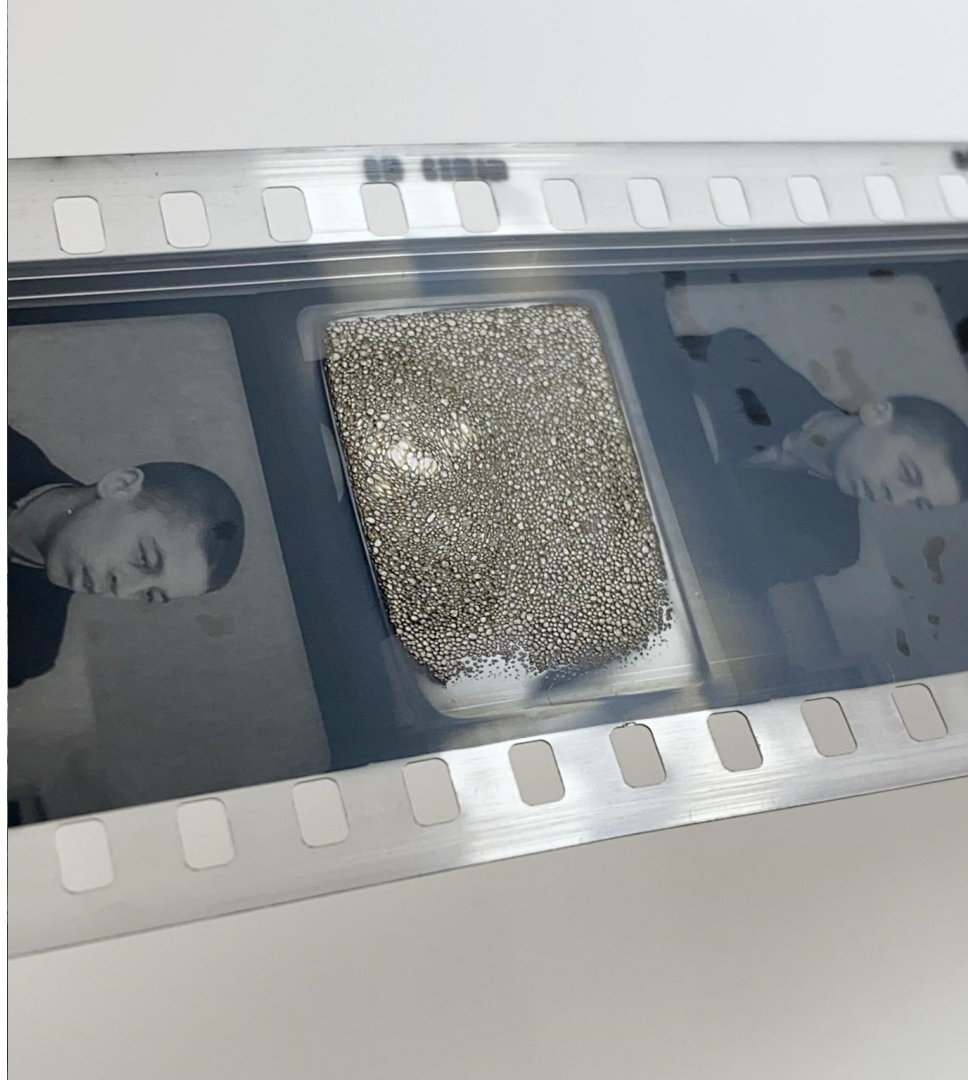
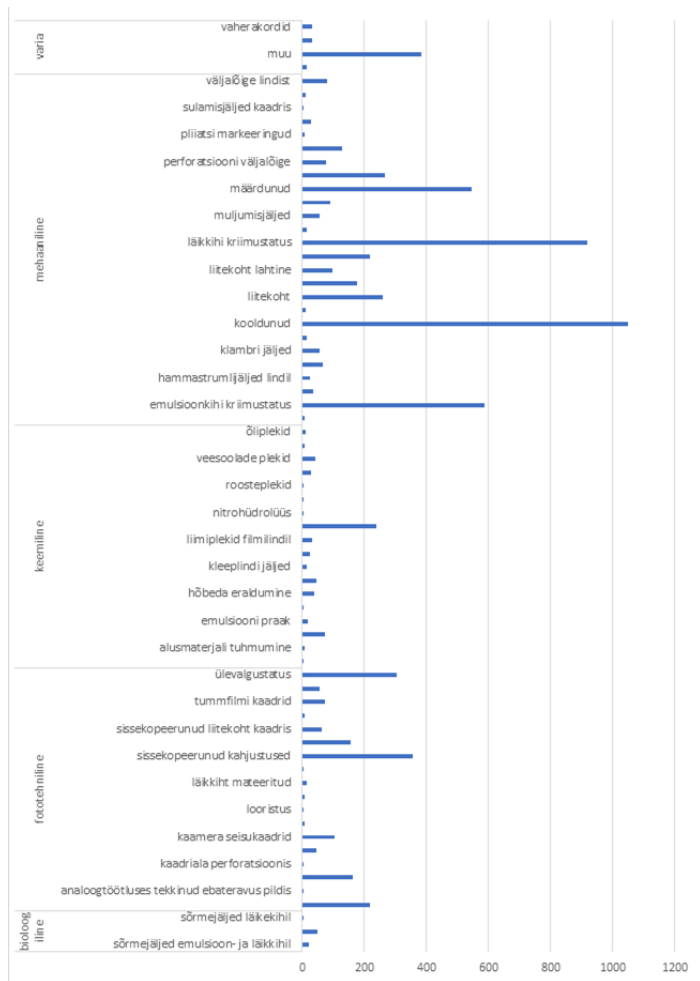
Manufacturers of film stock by film element. Source: FIS, 2022





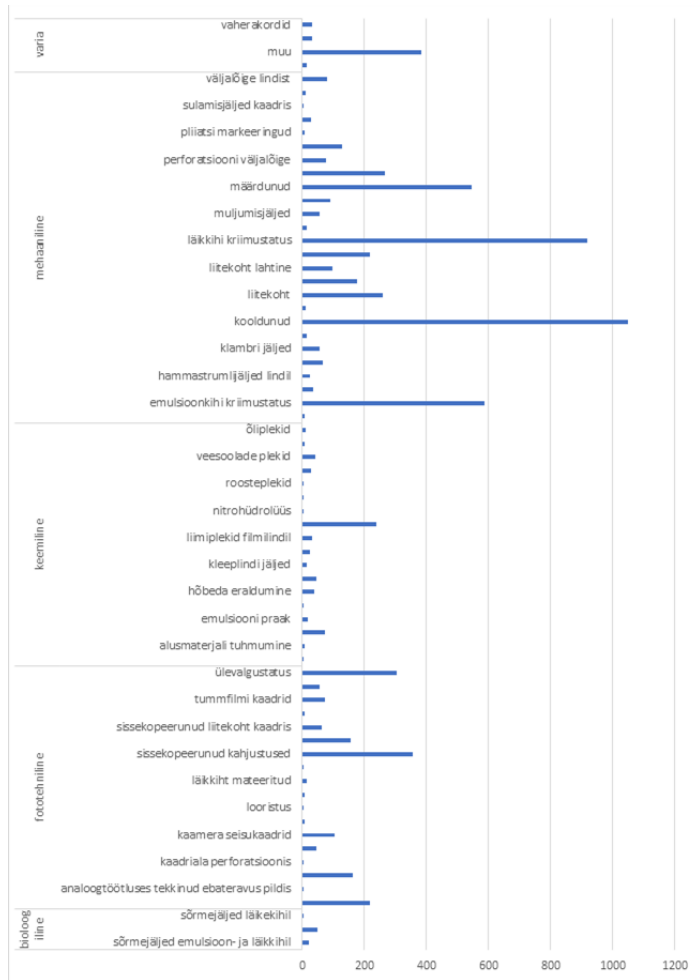


Occurrence of deteriorations. Source: FIS. Photo: Saara Kruus, 2022



Occurrence of deteriorations. Source: FIS. Photo: Saara Kruus, 2022





Occurrence of deteriorations. Source: FIS. Photo: Saara Kruus, 2022



**Access!**

- Archives' platforms  
FIS, Meediateek (database)  
Arkaader (VOD)
- Estonian Film Database  
EFIS ([efis.ee](http://efis.ee))







Nõukogude Eesti nr 11  
(5/6), 1956  
[EFA.203.f.947](#)















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**THANK YOU!**

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BAAC Conference, 28.10.2022