Lithuanian Central State Archive started implementation of the project „Lithuanian documentaries on the Internet" on May, 2010. The Archive has received of about 2,7 million Euros for this project from EU Structural Funds.

The objective of the project is the preservation of Lithuanian documentary heritage by digitisation as well as its accessibility for everyone via the Internet. The result of the project – digital archive of Lithuanian documentaries and it's access in the Internet.

There are about 8.600 titles of Lithuanian films stored in Lithuanian Central State Archive. It is almost 46.000 film tapes. The number of films stored in the archive grows every year as filmmakers give their films, Lithuanians who live abroad send unique old tapes and so on. Archival films show the development of Lithuanian cinema since the second decade of the XX century till nowadays. Users can find a big collection of Lithuanian chronicles from 1919-1940, newsreels from German occupation time during the Second World War, documentaries created in Lithuanian Film Studio and Lithuanian Television in 1946-1990, first Lithuanian feature films, works of nowadays filmmakers.

Now some part of Lithuanian documentaries stored in the Archive is not accessible to users because of the poor film tapes conditions. It became difficult to screened old Lithuanian films. On the other hand, the Lithuanian documentary heritage is not equally accessible to all Lithuanian people or to the wider EU and world communities because only few people can physically visit the Archives and use its documents during working hours.

When we have been preparing the documentation for this project, the main question was what films should we digitize and make accessible via the Internet. As you know the publication of films can be restricted by the copyright laws. So we decided that the best solution would be to choose the films which are in public domain. According to Lithuanian laws public domain starts after 50 years from the production of films.

During the project the Archives expects to digitize and transfer to the Internet 1.000 titles of Lithuanian documentaries, created in the period 1919-1961. In the project website every user will be able to see the collection of Lithuanian chronicles from 1919-1940, newsreels from German occupation time, the documentaries created in Lithuanian Film Studio and Lithuanian Television in 1946-1961, the newsreels „Soviet Lithuania" and „Lithuanian Pioneer".

Project is oriented towards the researchers from different spheres (scientists, filmmakers, journalists) as well as the broader general public. For some time we are noticing that people come to the Archives just to watch old films. It is becoming as some kind of leisure spending form. With the possibility to see films via the Internet the requests for old Lithuanian films should rise much more. On the other hand, with the digitization of films we will safeguard the unique content of them.

As I've already mentioned, the project started on May, 2010. By the end of 2010 a new equipment for film tapes preparation to digitization has arrived in the Archive. Now we have new film rewinding tables; film viewing table CINE8; ultrasonic Cleaner LIPSNER-SMITH. Such kind of equipment was implemented in Lithuania

for the first time. Working with the new equipment we have already prepared all 1000 titles for the digitization by now.

At the beginning of 2011 the new digital storage facilities have been made in the Archive. Here we have the equipment for digital storage and Internet access – disk storage system, tape library and so on. The new facilities are equiped with modern air conditioning, fire extinction and monitoring systems.

On May 2011 the new equipment for films digitization has been installed in the Archive. It consists of image scanning equipment ARRISCAN, sound digitizing equipment SONDOR, the softwares DIAMANT and ADOBE PREMIERE for digital restoration and editing. Such film digitization equipment is also the only one in Lithuanian and in Baltic States.

The new information system or database of the project was created this year according to the new European standards – „CEN 15744:2009 Film identification – Minimum set of metadata for cinematographic works" and „CEN 15907:2010 Film identification. Enhancing interoperability of metadata. Element sets and structures". These standards have been accepted by Lithuanian standartization department as the English versions of Lithuanian standards.

After the implementation of the project the part of Lithuanian documentaries heritage will be in the virtual space. As we digitize films in 2K resolution and keep all the original scanned material, the digital content will cover about 250 TB – it would be 22 millions of high resolution photos. Every Internet user will have the possibility to search digitized films and their metadata in Lithuanian and English; to watch these films or to order digital films copies.

Because of different technological problems and corruption of new equipment the implementation of the project will not end as we planned. It was planned to end the project in October of this year, but now we plan to prolong it till the April of the next year. Despite this the Internet website www.e-kinas.lt is already created. There are slightly more than 100 titles of films with their descriptions in Lithuanian and English. You can already make a search and view those films.