

Digital Libraries

**European initiatives in digitisation
and digital preservation**

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i2010 and Digital Libraries: a brief recap

- i2010: Commission strategy for the Information Society
- Pillars on common information space, investment in research and technological change, inclusion
- Flagship initiative on Digital Libraries: digitisation, accessibility and preservation of cultural and scientific information
 - a series of actions creating a framework with work on two fronts – access and preservation



Why a flagship initiative for Digital Libraries?

- Stimulate wider access and use – give all citizens access to their specific and common heritage, in their language
- Need for sustainable methods, systems, infrastructures – guaranteeing access for the future
- New users and demands — creative and economic potential: new audiences, new services, new business opportunities



Outline of presentation

- i2010 digital libraries
 - Context
 - Issues & challenges
 - State of play since last September
 - European Digital Library
- Commission actions
 - Coordination and dialogue
 - Co-funding programmes and projects
- My main challenges – with a particular focus on digital preservation



Context

- Digital libraries work is not new – has been ongoing for 10 years
- New political and general interest, specifically
 - Letter of 6 Heads of State and Government of April 2005
 - Commission Communication of September 2005
- Impact: led to harnessing three levels of action: political, strategic and operational in a framework for action by all stakeholders
 - applied to digitisation, access and preservation



State of play (1)

- Identification of key challenges of legal, financial, technical nature
- Actions at political level:
 - Commission Recommendation to Member States — to tackle challenges
 - Council Conclusions:
 - Clear actions and timeframe 2007 for simple actions such as plans, 2009 for strategies to change framework conditions — all actors involved
 - Confirmation of TEL carrying out the work towards the creation of the European Digital Library



State of play (2)

- Council invites Member States
 - To reinforce national strategies and targets for digitisation and digital preservation
 - To reinforce co-ordination within and between Member States
 - To contribute to the European digital library
 - To contribute to an effective overview of progress at European level
 - To improve framework conditions for digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation
- Council invites Commission
 - to coordinate the setting up of the European Digital Library
 - Support technical work through its funding programmes
 - Prepare grounds for solutions to IPR related problems
 - Set up expert group to steer and monitor progress



European Digital Library – what is it?

- Common, multilingual access point
 - To all types of cultural material from all kinds of cultural institutions, public and private
 - Offers deep and cross-search possibilities
 - Facilitates collaborative approaches
- Targets for all stakeholders to meet as part of operationalising the DL strategy
 - Critical mass of digitised objects by 2008 — searchable and accessible through a single service
 - Steady increase of content towards 2010 — also including objects from archives, museums, private content holders — multilingual access



Commission actions

- Strategic level:
 - High Level Group
 - Catalysing and bringing together initiatives
 - Supporting coordination across archives, libraries and museums
- Technical level: eContentplus, research programme
 - Ongoing projects contribute – DELOS, PRESTOSPACE, BRICKS, MULTIMATCH
 - First body of work on digital preservation – PLANETS, CASPAR and DPE



7th Framework Programme 2007-2013

- Workprogramme 2007-8
 - Digital Libraries and Technology-enhanced Learning (ca 102 MEURO over 2 Calls)
 - Mid-term outcomes – large-scale European digital libraries
 - Features – innovative services; support users in creation, interpretation and use of cultural and scientific content; applies to all formats; and integrating digital preservation features
 - Long-term outcomes – radically new approaches to digital preservation



Some key challenges

- Digitisation
 - Improve processes and add value to content making it “fit for service”, spreading access to digitisation technologies, improving skills and competences across all organisations
 - Network(s) of Centres of competence – leveraging capacity, building excellence, supporting outreach at European level
- Access
 - Bridging digital library research and practice – improved retrieval, search engines and multilingual access
- Interoperability
 - Framework for integrating legacy systems to share metadata and content
 - Longer term framework for 2010 services and beyond



Some key challenges

- Digital Preservation
 - What needs to be done ranges from advanced research to infrastructural and organisational issues
 - Shorter term – seamless integration of digital preservation in institutional workflows & processes
 - Changing nature of digital content – high-volume, transient, dynamic – new characteristics requiring new models and approaches
 - Structuring of research efforts across disciplines – first steps taken with DPE
 - Support cultural institutions in fulfilling their role in the knowledge infrastructures of 21st century
 - Address the wider dimension to digital preservation – essential for the emergence of a dynamic and competitive sector for digital preservation services



Conclusions

- Convergence of political will and technology potential
- The Digital Libraries agenda is complex – but must produce visible results in short-term towards longer term vision
- Implementing this agenda requires common effort at all levels



Further information from

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/...

- “i2010 - Digital Libraries”: [...activities/digital_libraries/](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/)
 - eContentPlus: [...activities/econtentplus/](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/econtentplus/)
- <http://cordis.europa.eu/ist/telearn-digicult/index.html>

Information Day on Digital Libraries and Technology-enhanced Learning research – 24-25 January 2007, Luxembourg



Thank you for your attention

