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### News

The Launch! After 3 years of the TEL project and 10 months of hard labour in The European Library Office and from the 9 full participant libraries [www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org](http://www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org) went live on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

The site is operational across 53 targets and covers 150 collections. This represents about 11 million records and digitised objects and items. The collections are accessible via OAI, SRU and z39.50 protocols and make use of a Verity search engine.

Some very beautiful manuscripts, pictures, maps and incunabula can be seen together with music scores, the records themselves and www collections. Demo searches will be available in the 'About us' section in the next two weeks.

### Next Steps

We consider this first rendition of the site to be the Beta version. In order to really load test and determine whether the 'portal in the browser architecture' actually works on this scale we took the plunge and went live. This means that we will have a stabilisation release in late May prior to launching a full scale marketing campaign. This release will also optimise the collections in the default set used for the simple or initial search and will make improvements to the stability and usability of the site. As we are still unsure if users will make optimum use of the site we are undertaking a market usability study, with [IRN-Research](#), to help us prioritise functional development for a major Autumn release.

Following in the footsteps of all good software development we have now discovered some better ways to write the software and this background rewrite will take place between now and July. This partial rewrite will allow us to add in new services with greater ease and overcome the problems we have had with Mozilla compatibility in a more robust manner. A Mozilla version is however very close to release. This will also make the site more compliant with W3C requirements. We are interested in all your comments please send them directly to [Sally.Chambers@kb.nl](mailto:Sally.Chambers@kb.nl) or complete our feedback form.

The European Library is only as good as the sum of its parts and is very dependent on all the partner libraries keeping in the air. We will create an automated system to report both to the library concerned and The European Library Office that one of the libraries of the portal is not accessible.

TEL project site will be turned into an archive of the project and incorporated into a Management and Information site – this site will be split into parts that are accessible to the partners only and information that is of general interest and therefore available to all. This is very similar to the current project site [www.europeanlibrary.org](http://www.europeanlibrary.org) (no THE) but will all be held under the same url and on the same servers.

### New Partners

The management board ratified the vision and mission statements of The European Library, approved the release schedule and marketing plans.

*Vision : Provision of equal access to promote world-wide understanding of the richness and diversity of European learning and culture.*

*Mission : The European Library exists to open up the universe of knowledge, information and cultures of all Europe's national libraries.*

Three more CENL libraries will join The European Library in July 2005. They have been formally welcomed by the Management Board and are the National Libraries of Denmark, Serbia and Croatia. We are looking forward to working with them and bringing their collections into the search capability of The European Library.

### **Snippets**

TEL-ME-MOR [www.telmemor.net](http://www.telmemor.net) has begun all its work packages and The European Library's package Work Package II Developing the Network of Access to European Resources. Robina Clayphan of the British Library, Julie Verleyen, Olaf Janssen of The European Library and myself have embarked on a whistlestop tour of the 10 new member states on a requirements gathering mission. Our first deliverable is due at the end of April – an analysis of requirements. From this we will create individual work plans for each national library and schedule the workload of The European Library Office. It is expected that you will start to see the fruits of this exercise, i.e. real new member state library collections from the end of 2005.

The European Library was on a panel for 'Libraries as Knowledge Centres' at the EUSIDIC Spring Meeting in Brussels at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek – Bibliothèque Royale. The whole meeting was on the subject of Communicating Scientific, Technical and Medical knowledge 2005/2010 and covered how the interests of publishers, librarians and intermediaries may be best served by collaborative approaches

The European Library will be speaking at [ELAG](#) 2005 in CERN 1-3 June and hopes to talk more about the issues of being operational and future developments. Visits are planned for presentations and discussions at the British Library and Helsingin Yliopiston Kirjasto - Suomen kansalliskirjasto, Finland as well as the Biblioteca Nacional de España, Spain.

### **Latest Developments**

Bilateral talks are in process with Google to find out the best way for Google to crawl the data of The European Library for incorporation in their search engine. This is a pilot to discover how useful this route to content would be for the users, the national libraries and The European Library itself. 6 of the 9 National Libraries who have submitted their content will participate in this pilot. After the first stage of discovering what is feasible all the participating libraries will be involved in further conversations with Google etc.

### **Thanks**

Thanks to Bill Oldroyd for the extra efforts he has had to put into the gateway as we changed operating systems, to Michel Koppelaar of the KB, without whom the SRU and OAI gateways would not exist and to Dirk Kramer also of the KB for work on the stylesheets that allow us to show the various diacritics.

### **Help.**

We would like some research and user (non librarian) volunteers to help us with the market survey we need around 50 from each of our current partner countries plus 200 from other countries throughout the world. We would like to conduct the survey via email, so need you to send email addresses to [Sally.Chambers@kb.nl](mailto:Sally.Chambers@kb.nl). Respondents will then be contacted by a IRN-Research during June.

Ciao, Jill

### **Contact Details**

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