



TheEuropeanLibrary.org Newsletter

December 2005

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News

Seasons Greetings with a quick update on The European Library before the end of 2005.

We welcome Fernanda Campos, National Library of Portugal as the new chair of The European Library Management Board. Elisabeth Niggemann, National Library of Germany, stepped down when she took over the Chair of CENL. We would like to thank Elisabeth for her tireless and useful support.

In January, The European Library will have 3 new National Libraries joining as full members: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Denmark, Eesti Rahvusraamatukogu, Estonia and Latvijas Nacionālā Bibliotēka, Latvia. Estonia and Latvia are part of [TEL ME MOR](#) and are the first of these project members to join The European Library. This brings the total number of libraries contributing their collections to 15.

The European Library joined DELOS and MICHAEL for a workshop in St Juan les Pins at the beginning of December to consider how to reply to the [DG Information Society & Media's](#) Online Consultation for 'i2010: digital libraries' document. Horst Forster, Director of "Interfaces, knowledge and content technologies-Applications- Information market" in the DG for Information Society and Media, gave an succinct overview of the EC's expectations and timeline, noting that he saw The European Library as an embryo of a European Digital Library. To achieve the goal of The European Digital Library more cooperation between museums, archives, libraries and other holders of digital material was needed, together with agreements on common standards, more digitisation and a solution to multilingual search. The vision of The European Library itself was given and this is to build on what we have, continuing to improve in all the above to make our heritage accessible. The European Library will respond to the communiqué as part of [CENL](#).

The European Library Portal

Release v1.1 went live on 24 November. It is a vast improvement in terms of speed, help, browser compatibility and search capability and allows us now to add in with more ease any future functionality. There is also a new management site, accessible to partners via About Us and For Partners. It is password protected.

The next release is scheduled for April and this will give increased access to subjects and themes from the home page and will have more user functionality.

April will also see a restructured and updated Handbook for new and old partners and a commencement of work on the Metadata Registry. This work aims to clean up the existing registry, making clear what is absolutely necessary for the operation of The European Library and what has been considered, is under review or has been rejected. This work is being undertaken by a subgroup of the Technical Working Group with help from [UKOLN](#) and the [Department of Distributed Systems Computer and Automation Research Institute](#), at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Once we have our own house in order we will look to create, with help from others, a European Metadata Registry.

In January we will also launch the programme to upgrade the Collection Descriptions. The draft NISO standard for Collection Descriptions has been integrated into the portal and now requires all the full partners to comply. We have requested that Collection Descriptions are given in at least English as well the native language but we would like each collection description to be in as many languages as possible. Serbia is winning the race at the moment with its descriptions in Serbian, French, English and German all of which helps the language interoperability and therefore the relevance of the search results on the site.

A new user survey will be conducted on this new version of the site. It will check if the improvements are real and to find out what users want prioritised next. The survey will be live on The European Library in March and we would appreciate any help anyone can give in either completing it or finding 'users' to complete it. For every complete questionnaire, we will as last time, donate 2 euros to [Book Aid International](#).

An alerting system has been created to test remote servers daily for non-response. Each time a collection is seen to be inaccessible it is logged and an automatic message is generated to the relevant persons in the library concerned. We hope this will improve the uptime of servers in different library locations and therefore ensure more constant access to collections.

A version of the Central z39:50/SRU Gateway has been implemented at The European Library. When testing and documentation is complete we will move all the users of the current British Library gateway to this one. At the same time we have developed a local gateway installation package. This again is being tested and documented before release in the New Year. The aim is create a series of local z39:50/SRU gateways in the national libraries themselves. This increases redundancy and allows for local character set variations to be embraced locally.

Next Steps

The first 3 months of 2006 will see a huge push in internet marketing. As well as employing a new member of staff in The European Library Office, who will be dedicated to marketing, we are also using the services of the search engine promotion company [Tribal](#) with the aim of increasing targeted traffic to the site. From January we will have a links page on the site and welcome any one who wishes to link to us and we would be more than happy to give you a reciprocal link. The European Library Marketing Plan will also be updated in line with the 3 year Product Plan that is currently doing the review rounds.

An experiment with some of the National Libraries will take place during the first half of 2006 to incorporate The European Library into their own portals. This is to improve usability for users from within National Libraries so that the collections of The European Library are retrieved alongside the other resources available in the national library. It should also enhance dissemination of The European Library itself.

Within the first 2 months of 2006 all the current partners will be asked to complete a small survey on what they have digitised or born digital that could be additional candidates for The European Library. They will also be asked to give inclusion timings for forthcoming digitisation projects. Together with our knowledge for the New Member States via TEL ME MOR this will give us an overview of the digitally available content from 22 of the 45 CENL Libraries.

The European Library will towards the middle of the year use the accumulated knowledge from its log files to feedback to the libraries what the users are looking for. This feedback loop will help libraries prioritise their digitisation programmes.

Working Groups

All the working groups will meet in the first quarter of 2006. The first is the Technical Working Group that will meet in Paris at the Bibliotheque nationale de France on February 3. This working group will hold a workshop the day before with DELOS to discuss what concrete

objectives the two groups can have for technology and how to include current DELOS network prototypes.

The Editorial Working Group will meet for the first time since The European Library has been operational. This group is crucial to the long term success of The European Library as every member of CENL contributes to the libraries and treasures section of the site. They are responsible also for making sure that their libraries know about and make use of The European Library.

Content Working Group meets in Frankfurt at Die Deutsche Bibliothek on March 6 and the following day is looking to hold a workshop with MICHAEL to discuss means of cooperation.

TEL-ME-MOR www.telmemor.net

Both Latvia and Hungary have been successfully added to the TEL ME MOR test site and work has started on enabling the collections of the Czech Republic. The TMM test portal has been upgraded to version 1.1 and is now ready for all translations of the interface to be undertaken by partners.

And a happy new year, Jill

Contact Details

Jill Cousins Jill.Cousins@theeuropeanlibrary.org +31(0)70 314 0952
Olaf Janssen Olaf.Janssen@theeuropeanlibrary.org +31(0)70 314 0388
Julie Verleyen Julie.Verleyen@theeuropeanlibrary.org +31(0)70 314 0953
Eric van der Meulen eric.vandermeulen@theeuropeanlibrary.org +31(0)70 314 0394
Sally Chambers Sally.Chambers@theeuropeanlibrary.org +31(0)70 314 0134