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The European Library is getting bigger *The European Digital Library project*

14 September 2006

The European Library has taken new steps to ensure that all EU national libraries become full participants by the end of 2007.

Thanks to the newly started European Digital Library project (EDL project) a further 9 national libraries are brought into the network. Countries involved are either members of the European Union or the European Free Trade Association: Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain and Sweden. The action will enrich The European Library with up to 100 new collections.

Besides assisting participants to become full partners of The European Library, the project focuses on multi-linguality and sets the first steps towards the establishment of a European Metadata Registry. Furthermore it investigates (potential) digitization efforts. The EDL project is financially supported by the European Commission under the eContentplus Programme.

The European Commission adopted on 24 August 2006 a `Recommendation on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation`. Via this document the European Commission recommends that member states set up digitization facilities (competence centres) and establish national strategies for the long-term preservation of and access to digital material. Member states are also advised to promote a European digital library in the form of a multilingual common access point to Europe's digital cultural material.

As in previous communications the European Commission stated in the recommendation that this access point will be built upon the organisational structure of The European Library.

Notes for editors

The European Digital Library-project

EDL project is funded by the European Commission under the eContentplus Programme, within the area of Cultural content and scientific/scholarly content (http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/econtentplus/index_en.htm). The project started in September and will run for 18 months. More information will be published on the EDL project website (<http://edlproject.eu/>) which will go live at the end of September 2006.

The European Library

The European Library (www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org) is a portal for accessing the digital collections of 19 of the National Libraries of Europe. The European Library is owned by the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) (www.cenl.org) and aims to access digital collections from all 45 member libraries within the next 5 years.

For further details on The European Library please contact:

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Recommendation of the European Commission

The `Recommendation on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation` is part of the 'i2010: digital libraries' initiative. Under its statement the Commission calls on Member States to act in various areas, ranging from copyright issues to the systematic preservation of digital content in order to ensure long term access to the material. For further details please visit:

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/index_en.htm

Additional information –

10th European Conference on Digital Library (ECDL) – Sept. 17-22

"Towards the European Digital Library" is the topic of the next ECDL conference. During this conference Horst Forster, Director of "Content" at the Directorate-General for "Information Society and Media" of the European Commission, will deliver a keynote speech. The European Library will be represented by Eric van der Meulen, Technical Project Manager at The European Library. Mr. van der Meulen participates in a panel session on sustained digital libraries for universal use. For further details please visit:

<http://www.ecdl2006.org/>

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