The i2010 digital libraries initiative

Europe's cultural and scientific information at the click of a mouse

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The context

- i2010: Commission strategy for the Information society
  - Technological change
  - Flagship initiative on digital libraries
- Letter of 6 Heads of State and Government of 28 April 2005
  - Commitment of European libraries
  - Major digitisation initiatives in the US
- Previous activities at European level
  - Co-ordination and co-funding

The digital libraries initiative

- Launched on 30 September 2005
  - Commission Communication
- The vision: make Europe's cultural and scientific heritage accessible to all
- Structures the initiative and deals with cultural content (archives, libraries, museums)
- Three main strands:
  - Digitisation
  - Online accessibility
  - Digital preservation

Digitisation

- Why digitise?
  - Wider access and use (at present very little material digitised)
  - Preservation
- Cultural and economic aspects
- Fragmented efforts throughout Europe

Online accessibility

Intellectual property rights
- Public domain material
- Towards a 20th century black hole?

Integrated access
- Common access point
- Structured and quality description of the content
- Multilingual

Digital preservation

- Digitisation without digital preservation may become a wasted investment

- Relevance beyond digital libraries

- No policies and programmes in place in most Member States

Steps taken in 2006 -2007

- Online consultation (closing date 20 January 2006)
  - 225 replies
- High level group on digital libraries.
  - Copyright report
  - Scientific information
  - PPP

Steps taken in 2006 – 2007 (2)

- Work towards a common access point – the European Digital Library (EDL)
  - Press announcement 2 March 2006
  - Work with cultural institutions, build on TEL
    - Interoperability, multilingual access
- Commission Recommendation of 24 August 2006
- Range of relevant projects launched under *eContentplus* and FP6

The Recommendation: digitisation (1)

- Create overviews of what has been digitised and what will be digitised
  - prevent duplication
  - promote synergies at European level
- Develop quantitative targets for digitisation
  - stimulate investments in digitisation

The Recommendation: digitisation (2)

- Encourage public/private partnerships to fund digitisation
  - mechanisms to bring partners together
- Set up large scale digitisation facilities
  - Collaboration with competence centers

Funding digitisation primarily responsibility of the MS

The Recommendation: online accessibility (1)

Contribute to the multilingual common access point by:

- Encouraging cultural institutions to make their material available

  - *e.g. through funding conditions*

- Encouraging private partners to make their material available

- Ensuring take up of interoperability standards

The Recommendation: online accessibility (2)

Improve framework conditions for digitisation and online accessibility:

- Mechanisms for the use of orphan works

- Mechanisms (on a voluntary basis) for the use of out of print works

- Overviews of known orphan works and of public domain works

- Identify and remove barriers to accessibility and use of public domain works

The Recommendation: digital preservation (1)

- Establish national strategies for digital preservation

  - organisational approach

  - specific action plans

- Exchange information on strategies and action plans

- Allow multiple copying for preservation purposes

The Recommendation: digital preservation (2)

- When establishing policies and procedures for legal deposit, look at what happens in other MS

  - Avoid widely diverging deposit arrangements

- Make provision in legislation for web-harvesting by mandated institutions

Next steps – cultural heritage

- Work with cultural institutions to arrive at the European digital library
- High Level group (copyright, PPP)
- *eContentplus* programme (call closure 8 October 2007) + evaluation of first call for proposals FP7 (call closed 8 May 2007)
- Support MS in the implementation of the Recommendation

'Scientific information in the digital age'

- Commission Communication adopted on 14 February 2007
  - Major conference in Brussels on 15-16 Feb
- Comes from different policy strands: digital libraries initiative, research policy
- Deals with two key issues:
  - access to scientific information
  - preservation of scientific information

Importance of the scientific information system

- All research builds on earlier work

  – Wider access leads to more innovation, avoids overlap in research efforts

- Role of scientific publications system

  – Essential for careers of scientists: publish or perish

  – Peer review guarantees quality

- EU invests 50 billion EUR in FP7: maximising the impact

A challenge to traditional models

- Declarations on open access
  - Berlin declaration
- New business models (author pays)
- Deposit in open repositories
  - Institution based or topic based
  - Pre-print vs. post-print
  - Embargo period
- Initiatives by funding bodies

A heated debate…

Those who advocate open access:

- Beneficial to the research system
- Triple payment argument
- There is an access problem

Publishers:

- Publishing has a cost
- The present system is efficient
- No undue government intervention that puts the peer review system at risk

Towards a European policy

- Policy development and practical implementation in MS varies widely
  - Access issues
  - No clear policies on preservation
- The Communication aims to organise the policy debate with the Member States and to facilitate the debate between stakeholders
- Announces a series of measures at European level

What will the Commission do?

- Actions through funding programmes
  - Research on digital preservation
  - Data repositories
  - *eContentplus* programme
- Publications resulting from Community funded research
  - 'Author pays' publishing as eligible costs
  - Guidelines on publication in open repositories in specific programmes
- Fact-finding

Conclusion

- ICT is driving change in the cultural and scientific information system

- Huge opportunities ahead to improve access to cultural and scientific information

- As for digital preservation we are only at the beginning of addressing the challenge
  - Think in terms of costs, but also opportunities

- Commission will do its bit to improve access and preservation

Digital libraries:

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