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## **i2010: Digital Libraries**

### *Contribution from National Library of Sweden*

It is most positive that the European Commission have taken this initiative with “i2010: Digital Libraries”. The challenges are great. To digitize the rich European cultural heritage on a large scale presents a step forward from a democratic point of view but also for education and research. The initiative offers support for the digitalisation work which has begun in the European countries and can hopefully lead to the expansion of and increase the speed of the process.

Aside from the document highlighting this important area of development we see a strength in that i:2010 takes an broad overview and unites the differing stages – digitalisation, provision of access and the long term digital preservation. These technical challenges are woven in their turn together with: financing, where there is need for appropriate support to initiate digitalisation on a large scale, organisation, where coordination within the European Union and globally is necessary, and the legal aspect, copyright. The European Commission is in close contact with respective countries Governments, European organisations and the different countries institutions to enable the important role of coordination on a wider front.

Whilst we give the programme’s central idea our firm support it is important to point out that the intent must be followed by tangible actions. This is particularly valid for the aspect of financing, which is fundamental for the attainment of the objectives on a larger scale. The differing national institutions that carry out the digitalisation work will never achieve mass digitization without comprehensive economic funding over and above that which is provided by current frameworks. The European Commission, Governments and other research financiers have a large responsibility for ensuring the provision of satisfactory economic support.

In addition to these general and all-encompassing viewpoints on the document we would like to give the following answers to the questions the European Commission posed in connection to “i:2010 Digital Libraries”.

## **Digitization and online accessibility**

*1) What additional measures could be taken at national and European level to encourage digitization and online accessibility of material in all European languages?*

A robust increase in economic investment on both a National and European level is the best action for increasing the pace of the European digitization process. It is now important to move on from development and coordination to the creation of comprehensive content.

It is also of central importance that the various ventures that the European Commission and the Governments give support to are coordinated, for example, through the use of wide spanning organisations such as CENL.

*2) What measures could be taken to promote private investments and new business-models such as public-private partnerships for digitising and making historical collections accessible?*

Public institutions already collaborate – in the form of purchase of competence and complete products plus participation in shared projects – using private companies for product development, etc. This joint work can naturally be further developed. Outsourcing of certain processes such as mass digitalisation is another area where the private sector has a role to play.

Furthermore the companies can create added value to the material which is digitized.

*3) What measures of a legislative, technical, organisational or other nature, could facilitate the digitization and subsequent accessibility of copyrighted material, while respecting the legitimate interests of authors?*

The most important measure is to make national implementations of the copyright directive, which will permit the study of copyrighted material on monitors in public libraries. (Voluntary agreements with publishers of newspapers and journals are not an option as their rights usually are restricted to printed editions.) Another important measure would be to give government support to national plans for digitization principally directed to the educational sector at all levels but also to the interested general public.

*4) Is the issue of orphan material economically important and relevant in practice? If yes, what technical, organisational and legal mechanisms could be used to facilitate wider use of this material*

It certainly is. Much material, which earlier was published on paper, is now only published and available in digital form via Internet. New patterns of communication and publishing are developing with a substantial impact on our societies. The number of institutions, enterprises and individuals publishing is multiplying through the new media. It is therefore important that the deposit laws and the responsibilities and tasks of national libraries and national archives will be revised and adjusted to the new situation. Also copyright and integrity legislation should be revised to reduce the restrictions of long term access to digital information.

*5) How could public domain material and other material available for general use (voluntary sharing) be made more transparent and widely known in order to facilitate its online availability for subsequent use?*

The best way to visibility is to get the material registered in publicly available, online bibliographic databases. In order to achieve this, a legal deposit scheme for this material is the first step, because national libraries cannot afford to register large amounts of online materials on pure chance (if not collected, it might disappear just after registration). To make such registration as cost-effective as possible, it should ideally be achieved in co-operation between national libraries and producers of the material. This has already been demonstrated to work very well in the experience of the Swedish national library with voluntary deposits.

Even copyright protected material may be registered in a bibliographic database and gain better visibility this way, even if the contents of the registered resource cannot be freely disseminated. Notwithstanding current copyright legislation, use of the resource itself may be offered on specified, stand alone workstations within the national library building.

### **Preservation of digital content**

*6) What priority measures – in particular of an organisational and legal nature – should be taken at national and European level to optimise the preservation of digital content with the limited resources available?*

Legal deposit legislation that covers both static and dynamic online resources is urgently needed at national levels. Such legislation needs to empower the receiving organisation to require producers to deliver in certain formats and without encrypting or copy-preventing measures. Enforcing and upholding legal deposit schemes, as well as comprehensive, long time registration operations, require competent and stable organisations. The national libraries are the logical focal points for these activities, and they also have a tradition of working together to common standards.

Co-operation between national libraries and national archives should be developed in building national repositories of digital information and developing methods and tools for long term preservation and access to the information.

*7) Is there a risk that national legal deposit schemes lead to a multiplication of requirements on internationally active companies? Would European legislation help avoiding this?*

Not necessarily and probably not likely. There is a theoretic possibility that the same material be required by several national libraries, but that should not necessarily lead to any noticeable increase in workload for the producer, as the delivery routines may be, and must be automated.

*8) How could research contribute to progress on the preservation front? Which axes of work should be addressed in priority by the forthcoming Specific Research Programmes as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme?*

As is emphasized in the accompanying paper, research on tools for automatic analysis and for indexing will contribute. This automatic analysis should cover formats, extent, character standards and other technical qualities as well as contents. A common format registry for general access to and availability of standardized, technical data, from the format version to the technical equipment used to produce a resource, is urgently needed. The PRONOM project (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom/>) in the UK is a good start, but we need to ensure that such a project can stay operational and develop.

There is a need to provide keepers of digital repositories with solutions that enhance end-user accessibility to documents and contents over time. These include (as is expressed in the PROTEAN proposal under FP6 IST-2005-2.5.10)

- developing tools for analysing systems and digital resources as to their preservability
- automating the ingest of digital resources into the digital repository
- automating the digital preservation decision-making and processing workflow
- enhancing digital content
- automating and customising the access to digital repositories according to end-user requirements
- strategic models and certification for organisation of digital repositories and professional role of curators
- methods for design and implementation of AIS (archive information management system) based in the OAIS reference model standard
- bringing the end-user perspective into digital preservation strategies and into the organisation of work in a digital repository through innovative methods of user requirements analysis.

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