

# MINERVA Progress Assessment Plan

## Introduction

This section introduces and outlines the objectives and progress of the strategic progress assessment (the 'assessment') of the 'Coordinating Digitisation in Europe' initiative (the 'initiative').

This assessment is funded by the Irish and Italian presidencies, in order to renew the focus of the work of the initiative and to provide a starting point for plans for a future roadmap, as envisaged by the forthcoming Netherlands presidency.

## Assessment Background

The progress assessment is an initiative of the Irish and Italian presidencies. The Coordinating Digitisation in Europe initiative has been underway for some years. The political, economic and technological context has changed dramatically since the original Lund meeting and since the establishment of the NRG. Many of the original aims of the initiative have been met, while the importance of others has increased or decreased over time. New priorities have emerged, as experience across Europe has grown.

A review of progress to date and the identification of new opportunities and priorities was seen as a very worthwhile exercise. This would allow a common view of the successes of the Coordinating Digitisation in Europe initiative to date, as well as providing an opportunity to lay some foundations for a new roadmap. What was required was a comprehensive look back over the initiative so far, and the identification of landmarks in the road ahead. As a result of this requirement, the Irish and Italian presidencies have engaged an external consultancy organisation to carry out this progress assessment and review, and to work with them and with other NRG members to map out some initial points for the future, which can contribute to the ongoing and planned work of subsequent presidencies

## Assessment Objectives

The core objectives of the assessment are as follows:

- to assess the overall progress of the initiative
  - against the Lund Action Plan
  - in light of presidential report conclusions and actions lists;
- to highlight successes and concrete results of the work to date;
- to identify outputs of the initiative which have

particular value in terms of their applicability and impact for national and European cultural projects and initiatives;

- to suggest new avenues to be explored and opportunities for further work at the European level. These opportunities could subsequently be explored by sub-groups of the NRG, for example in the form of further projects; they could also lead to new objectives for the NRG and the MINERVA project.

## Material Reviewed

The assessment has reviewed an important set of background documents, as well as the written evidence of the work carried out by the initiative. In addition, the assessment team has interviewed several key players in the NRG and in the EU services. The material reviewed can be divided into two categories:

1. background material which set the context and the objectives of the initiative and
2. material which has been produced as a result of the initiative, which describes the progress made towards fulfilling the objectives.

The background material reviewed includes the following documents:

- Council Resolutions
- Lund Principles
- Lund Action Plan
- Stated objectives of the initiative as per the European Commission Services websites
- MINERVA project technical annex and workplan documents
- NRG meeting reports and conclusions, which typically include action points to be addressed by the NRG.

The material which presents the progress includes the following documents:

- NRG annual reports and conclusions, describing progress made towards various Lund Action Plan objectives
- The NRG Global Report 'Coordinating Digitisation in Europe', as published by the European Commission in 2003
- MINERVA deliverables and handbooks
- MINERVA activities reports (of seminars, conferences, etc.)
- Websites and online services created by, or affected by, the NRG

As noted above, the paper research has been supplemented by interviews with individuals, at the national and institutional level, who are deeply involved in online cultural heritage and digitisation.

## Approach

The assessment has followed the following life-cycle:

1. it has collected background and objectives material (primarily documents)
2. it has collected results material (documents, websites and interviews)
3. compare the two, identified highlights and successes and opportunities for further work.
4. provided an interim report which was circulated at the Parma NRG meeting.

A final report is anticipated in April 2004.

The focus of the assessment and analysis is on concrete results, which have a demonstrable impact on the cultural landscape and which underline the effect of the work of the initiative on the development of eContent and the contribution of cultural heritage to eEurope.

### *Steering Group*

The assessment is managed by a steering group, as follows:

Italy: Rosella Caffo and Antonella Fresa

Ireland: Anne Grady and Annette Kelly

Netherlands: Marius Snyders

European Commission: Bernard Smith

## Results to Date

An interim report was published and circulated at the Parma NRG meeting. This presented the results of the paper research up to the date of the meeting. This research has been supplemented to keep track of the progress of the NRG and the MINERVA project in the intervening months.

Since the NRG meeting, a number of interviews with NRG members and with the Commission services have taken place. These have enabled the assessment team to explore various topics in a free-form, discursive manner as well as to gain a clear picture of the impressions that the initiative has left upon some of its most active participants.

The interim report produced a range of draft results which led to a good deal of feedback from across the NRG, the MINERVA project and the initiative. This feedback has been taken into account in the drafting of the first version of the final report, which is currently under way.

## Future Plans

A final report is anticipated by April 2004. This shall focus on two important aspects of the initiative – its achievements to date, in the light of its published objectives and the Lund Action Plan, and the most appropriate and productive way forward.

The final report shall combine many of the interim research results with the important feedback received to date, as well as the results of various discussions and interviews. A draft report for feedback will be circulated to the NRG, via the steering group. The final report will then take this feedback into account.