

Belgium

Jean Moulin
Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO)

Debbie Esmans
Flemish Ministry for Culture, Youth,
Sport and Media

Isabelle Dujacquier
Ministry of the French Community of Belgium

Alfred Belleflamme, N. Fryns
Ministry of the German-speaking
Community of Belgium

A. DIGITISATION AND ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY

A1. Progress on the systematic gathering of information about current and planned digitisation of books, journals, newspapers, photographs, museum objects, archival documents, audiovisual material and the availability of overviews of such digitisation in order to prevent duplication of efforts and promote collaboration and synergies at European level.

Initiatives exist at Community and federal levels, each entity being responsible for its own institutions.

In the future, the Michael service, the results of the study Numeric commissioned by the EC and the statistical data produced by EGMUS could also help completing the existing overviews.

The website of the Agency of Arts and Heritage and the website on e-culture of the Departement of Culture, Youth, Sport and Media of the Flemish Community provide an overview of the digitisation projects funded; this overview gives an indication but not a complete insight on how digitisation is proceeding in Flanders. Some other national or regional overviews exist due to initiatives such as the Archiefbank Vlaanderen, Move, the Flemish Art Collection and the Flemish Cultural Heritage Site. Organisations such as the Support Point for the cultural heritage sector, FARO and the still to be organised Flemish Heritage Library will play a part in avoiding duplication of efforts.

The Heritage Preservation and Exploitation Program (*Plan de préservation et d'exploitation des patrimoines* – PEP's) that has been adopted by the Government of the French Community in October 2007 plans the creation and the development of a portal site, to provide for an inventory, a directory of institutions and initiatives and an overview of the progress of digitisation projects, per sector and for each involved player. Amongst the first planned activities, an inventory of the institutions and collections/funds to be digitised will be set up.

The German-speaking Community is currently creating a Cultural Heritage portal (art collections owned by the Community, architectural monuments and sites, and archaeological records). One of the purposes of the portal will be to provide a systematic archiving of scientific digital data. The museums will be involved in the project in a second phase.

The Scientific and Technical Information Service (STIS) of the Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO) operates a portal called Digipat which is devoted to the federal cultural heritage. The portal provides information and links on the progress of the Digitisation Plan of the federal scientific and cultural institutions and on the European initiatives. Digipat is currently under reconstruction and it is planned to set up in the coming months an overview of the current and planned digitisation of documents and materials held by the federal institutions.

The Royal Library, the Interuniversity Council of the French Community (CIUF) and the Flemish Research Libraries Council (VOWB) are planning to run a survey (inventory) on all digitisation projects in Belgium in the library sector. It would be yearly updated, and coordinated with other initiatives in this domain taken by other bodies in order to avoid duplication of efforts.

A2. Progress on the development of quantitative targets for the digitisation of analogue material in archives, libraries and museums, indicating the expected increase in digitised material which could form part of the European Digital Library and the budgets allocated by public authorities.

The 1st phase (2005-2008) of the Digitisation Plan of the federal scientific and cultural institutions has set clear priorities for the distribution of the financial means (15 mio Euro) among the various documents and materials: 25% of the total budget of the Plan will be allocated to the digitisation of the national newspapers which will be a major contribution

of Belgium to the European Digital Library. This huge amount of 3 million pages, digitised before the end of 2008, represents only 3% of the total estimated amount of pages of the Belgian newspapers. The other main priorities are: the digitisation of important archival documents and monographies (25% of the budget); the achievement of the digitisation of the library catalogues (16% of the budget); the digitisation of a selected set of photographic plates, film negatives, photos, drawings held by museums (15% of the budget). The selection of the priorities was made on the basis of a comprehensive preliminary study of all the collections and by consensus among all the federal institutions concerned.

The Flemish Ministry for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media does not – until now – set quantitative targets for the digitisation of analogue material. There are, for the moment, no sufficient budgets to allow such quantitative targets and such a coordinated approach is still in its start-up phase. In Flanders cultural heritage institutions are funded in such a way that the institutions make decisions and set out goals individually for their digitisation. In other words, there is no top-down model in setting quantitative goals on this subject.

A3. Progress on partnerships between cultural institutions and the private sector in order to create new ways of funding digitisation of cultural material.

An agreement has been reached between the Library of the University of Ghent and Google to digitise a part of their collections. The central catalogue of the Flemish public libraries has been linked to the central database of the book trade via data exchange and using the same front-end system. People can now consult both systems and get a “borrow-or-buy” option. The public libraries have also started constructive talks with the book trade sector on the issue of a digital depot. A partnership with the Dutch Digileen project was concluded. Collaborative research projects in the IBBT (Interdisciplinary Flemish Institute for Broadband Technology) and the projects funded by the Multiannual Information Society Support Programme (2001-2008) of BELSPO bring different public and private actors together in this domain. These research projects do not specifically deal with digitisation itself but rather with the applications or services linked to digitised material.

Recently a research project concerning the long-term preservation and distribution of audiovisual material has started in Flanders. This project is 80% funded through the Institute for the promotion of Innovation by Science and Technology in Flanders (IWT-Flanders); 20% of the funding comes from the partners in the project which are as well public as private actors. The search for partnership between the public and private sectors to fund the digitisation process is part of the remit of the General Delegate to Heritage Preservation and Exploitation of the French Community. Specifications of the calls for tenders for the digitisation of various collections included in the 1st phase of the Digitisation Plan of the federal scientific institutions have been worked out after a broad consultation of the private sector. A wider and long-term collaboration with the private sector is being sought in the context of the preparation of the 2nd phase of the federal Digitisation Plan. A consultation of the market has been launched in order to have more insights in the real potential for such a PPP.

A4. Progress on the set-up and sustaining of large scale digitisation facilities.

There were constructive discussions in the Flemish Community on this topic between the political and administrative actors of the Ministry for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media and the Ministry for Economy, Innovation and Science in order to see how to proceed in the future. The structural outcome of these discussions is still to be determined. The above mentioned research project concerning the long-term preservation and distribution of audiovisual material will also look into the sustainability of the proposed model. This issue will also be discussed within the framework of the preparation of the 2nd phase of the Digitisation Plan of the federal institutions, more precisely the improvement of the collaboration between the various institutions (archives, libraries, museums, film archive) and of the sharing of their expertise, and the potential contribution of PPP's.

A5. Progress of cultural institutions, as well as publishers and other rightholders to make their digitised material searchable through the European Digital Library. Describe in particular the progress on the application of common digitisation criteria by cultural institutions and, where

relevant, private companies, in order to achieve interoperability with the European Digital Library and to facilitate cross-language searchability.

A Belgian interface to Europeana, called EDL-Net-Belgium, was created in January 2008. It currently includes representatives of: the Royal Library (in contact with the other federal institutions, in particular the State Archives); the Flemish Consultation Platform EDL-Net (archives, museums, libraries) and the Commission of the university libraries of the French Community (the archives and museums of the French Community will also be contacted). Both the Royal Library and the Flemish Platform are partners of the EDL-Net project funded by the eContentPlus programme and the interface will help coordinating and harmonising the Belgian contribution to the European network. The possibilities of central gateways still need to be looked into more closely by the various partners.

The new Cultural Heritage Act under preparation in the Flemish Community, the new Heritage Preservation and Exploitation Program of the French Community and the next phase of the Digitisation Plan of the federal institutions will help developing an operational and organisational framework. They will focus, in particular, on the cooperation of the different sectors, the sharing of best practices (quality care) and standardisation issues (the alignment with international standards). Different research projects deal with standardisation and interoperability issues, some of them being directly linked to the EDL (in particular through partners which are also involved in EU projects).

A6a. Progress on mechanisms to facilitate the use of orphan works.

A6b. Progress on mechanisms to facilitate the use of works that are out of print or out of distribution.

A6c. Progress on the availability of lists of known orphan works and works in the public domain.

A6d. Progress on the identification of barriers in your legislation to the online accessibility and subsequent use of cultural material that is in the public domain – and the steps taken to remove them.

Consultations on the issues of copyright were held since August 2007 with the Belgian Intellectual Property Office. Representatives of the Ministries of Culture

of the Communities (+ the university libraries) and of the Federal Science Policy Office (+ the Royal Library and the Royal Film Archive) were also invited in two meetings of the Belgian Advisory Board on IPR (section: Copyright and neighbouring rights). This body comprises experts from the academic and professional worlds, representatives of the entitled beneficiaries, of the consumers' organisations and of the federations of enterprises.

The aim of these meetings was: 1) to identify the main specific issues related to copyright and neighbouring rights; 2) to investigate in which framework (legal: existing or new; regulatory; codes of practices) these issues in relation with digitisation, digital preservation and online accessibility could be best handled in Belgium. In particular, the issues of orphan works, out-of-print works and legal deposit were discussed and a detailed list of existing legal means and of possible future options has been established. A report on the outcomes of these discussions is currently under preparation and still needs to get final approval of the Advisory Board on IPR. Additional discussions occur at Community level, e.g. a preliminary document on *status quo* was set up in Flanders.

Just to mention one example of a current pragmatic research in another field, the Flemish project Pokumon will look into some rights clearance issues for the online dissemination and archiving of multimedia performing arts and classic music.

B. DIGITAL PRESERVATION

B1. Progress on national strategies for the long-term preservation of and access to digital material. Describe the organisational approach, indicating the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved as well as the allocated resources. Describe the specific action plans outlining the objectives and a time-table for the specific targets to be met.

In Flanders, in the cross-domain initiative of the Ministries for Culture, Youth, Sport and Media and Economy, Science and Innovation the aspect of long-term preservation has been taken into account. Long term planning is, in other words, being taken up. The Flemish government is working on concrete

outcomes through funding of the recently started research project (almost 4 mio Euro funded) concerning the long-term preservation and distribution of the audiovisual material (2008-2009).

The French-speaking Radio-TV Broadcasting company (RTBF) has also worked out a strategic plan, still requiring funding, aimed at digitising its radio and TV archives over a period of five years and at providing long-term access to them.

Long-term preservation aspects would also be addressed during the 2nd phase of the Digitisation Plan of the federal institutions.

B2. Progress on exchange of information with other Member States on your strategies and action plans.

Exchange of information happens mainly through EU-projects and the participation to the Member States' Expert Group on Digitisation and Digital Preservation.

B3. Progress on legal provisions for multiple copying and migration of digital cultural material by public institutions for preservation purposes.

Multiple copying for preservation reasons is foreseen in Belgian law; nevertheless some issues on

DRM-clearance could form a challenge and might need further legislative work.

B4. Progress on policies and procedures for the deposit of born-digital material. Please note how you are taking into account developments in other Member States in order to prevent a wide divergence in depositing arrangements.

In the framework of a new law adopted on the 19th of December 2006, the Royal Library is now beginning to collect and store also microfilms as well as off-line electronic publications such as CD-ROM's, CD-I's, DVD's, etc. in the Legal Deposit of Belgium. On-line publications are not yet included. The full implementation of the law requires additional resources and the definition of dedicated operational procedures. Those procedures are expected in the following weeks. A Flemish research project on the legal aspects concerning the e-deposit by the eDavid non-profit organisation can also be mentioned.

B5. Progress on legal provisions for the preservation of web-content by mandated institutions.

No progress to be reported by Belgium.