Luxembourg

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Introduction

The State of Luxembourg is a representative democracy in the form of a constitutional monarchy, with a certain place reserved for the direct government of the nation. The Grand Duke is the Head of State. The Grand-Duke's freedom from political responsibility is complete and means that ministers are responsible. Any measure taken by the Grand-Duke in exercising his political powers must be countersigned by a member of the Government, who takes full responsibility. In addition, any act that bears the signature of the Grand Duke must first be submitted to the deliberation of the Government. The dynasty of the Nassau family rules over the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg since the 19th century.

- Legislative power is based on the joint action of the Government, the Chamber of Deputies and the Council of State. The Government appointed by the Grand Duke submits its political programme to the Chamber of Deputies, which by a positive vote expresses its confidence in it. The Government enjoys the right of initiative in legislative matters which allows it to submit draft laws. The main function of the Chamber of Deputies, in which the Government normally has a majority, is to pass draft laws (*projets de loi*). The Council of State is obligatory called upon to issue its opinion on the legislation as a whole, i.e. on all the draft and proposed laws presented to the Chamber of deputies, before the deputies vote. The Council of State is consultative in nature.
- The courts and tribunals are entrusted by the Constitution with the exercise of judicial power. They exercise their functions independently.
- The first Constitution was written in 1841, 2 years after the Independence of Grand Duchy.

Work in progress for digitisation

During the last years cultural institutes have become conscious of the problem of long-term preservation and conservation of cultural heritage.
Under the heading of eCulture, the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research took the opportunity to co-ordinate all initiatives that analysed the possibilities to offer easy access to information about cultural heritage to all citizens. The new site will be online at the end of August 2003.
A first initiative to preserve at long term cultural heritage and spread information about it, was called "Common database of cultural institutes" and it had been initiated the last decade. Being confronted with problems of knowledge, experience, resources, staff and funds, the latter project expired after several months only.
At the European Council in Freira (Portugal) on 19 and 20 June 2000, a project called *e*Europe had been adopted; "*e*Europe: An Information Society for all". One of the first steps taken after having launched the project in Luxembourg was to submit an adapted project to the "National Board for the Information Society", which is responsible for the
"*e*Europe/eGovernment/eLuxembourg"
(`http://www.eluxembourg.lu/`) programme.
A first meeting of the Board took place on 3 August 2000. Eight points were given priority, as for example, the participation of all citizens to the Information Society by the means of a digital content of high quality. It goes without saying that new technologies together with a better conservation of European cultural heritage assured by digitisation allows Luxembourg as well as the whole of Europe to spread information about its cultural diversity all over the world (eLuxembourg).

To reach these important goals in the cultural sector means long-term work which starts by drawing up a survey of historic monuments, paintings, etc. as well as its degree of numerisation.
The law of 28 December 1988 concerning the reorganisation of the Government's cultural institutes defines the missions of these establishments. Among others and in the interest of preservation at long term, the study, the conservation and the propagation of the cultural heritage must be ensured.
At the moment several interinstitutional as well as interministerial networks exist in Luxembourg but a co-ordination network is still missing. Therefore it is most urgent to set up a guide of "good practice" projects, which aims to be used first by the cultural institutes and second by all other cultural organisations.
The realization of networks in special fields but also in close contact to other national and international bodies, will contribute to reach the objectives. Priorities must be set on the topics, the procedures, the period of realisation and, most important, the budget. The co-ordination work with public record offices, libraries, museums, departments of cultural heritage, audiovisual centres, cultural associations and foundations as well as with other entities involved in this project, like the national data processing centre or the Ministry of National Education among others, is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research. The National Library (2001) and the National Audiovisual Centre (2002) launched each a project based on eLuxembourg criteria: the conservation of cultural heritage but also its propagation. Following the same lines, the Ministry of Culture also plans to be federating for most of the cultural bodies. Close collaboration and the creation of synergies are the secrets of success. Common goals could be reached in quite a

short time if services were offered like, for example, a cultural agenda, a national ticket booking office, newsletters, recording, national and international collaborations, research facilities, etc. And, in a longer period of time, the digilisation of cultural heritage could be a joint action. In the end, important goals would be reached through the co-ordination of the Ministry of Culture such as the democratisation of culture and its facility of access to all citizens as well as the long-time preservation of the cultural heritage, both build and non-build.

Co-ordination of national networks

So far Luxembourg has no co-ordination network. Several attempts were doomed to failure, often because of lack of financial resources or staff.
At present, new impulses come from different cultural sectors in order to set up the digitisation of cultural heritage by new technologies.

The library sector

The purchase and integration of an electronic research platform is a premise for the numerisation of the publications and other Luxembourgish documents as well as the whole stock of the printed catalogue of the National Library of Luxembourg. This acquisition should also be accompanied by the development of a concept for the control of the numerical documents and a virtual library, and it should be able to offer an educational framework (`http://www.BnL.lu`). The aim of an international co-operation between Swiss Library, National Library of France, German Library and British Library is to allow readers to do their research in the catalogues of these libraries by using the language of their choice.

Other libraries have also engaged important numerisation projects on their cultural heritage. The advantages of this way of procedure are obvious: less damage of originals by handling, easier access to documents even to those formerly inaccessible, exploration of new methods of conservation. A new law should also open up the registration of copyright of numerised documents; therefore the National Library of Luxembourg has to develop precise concept of the collection, conservation and control of these documents and consider a technical and a juridical section.

The audiovisual sector

The digitalisation of audiovisual and photographic cultural heritage is one of the most important tasks of next years schedule of the National Audiovisual Centre. A priority will be given to the recording and the preservation of audiovisual and photographic material as well as to the facility of access of that sector to the professionals and general public. This involves a more or less automatic management of digitalised documents and archives. To develop and to propagate the audiovisual cultural heritage by using the Internet also means to create a contemporary image of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg in more and more computerised society. This ambitious programme should run over five years.

The Museum sector

At present the digitilisation programmes are built up for the National Museum of History and Art (`http://www.mnha.lu`) and the National Museum of Natural History (`http://www.mnhn.lu`). Both pilot programmes should be structured in such a way that most, if not all, of the other museums and art galleries could
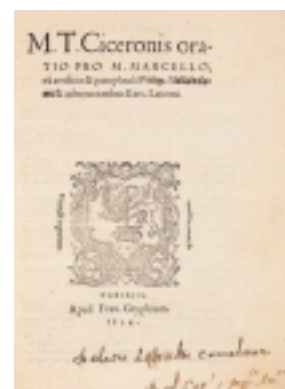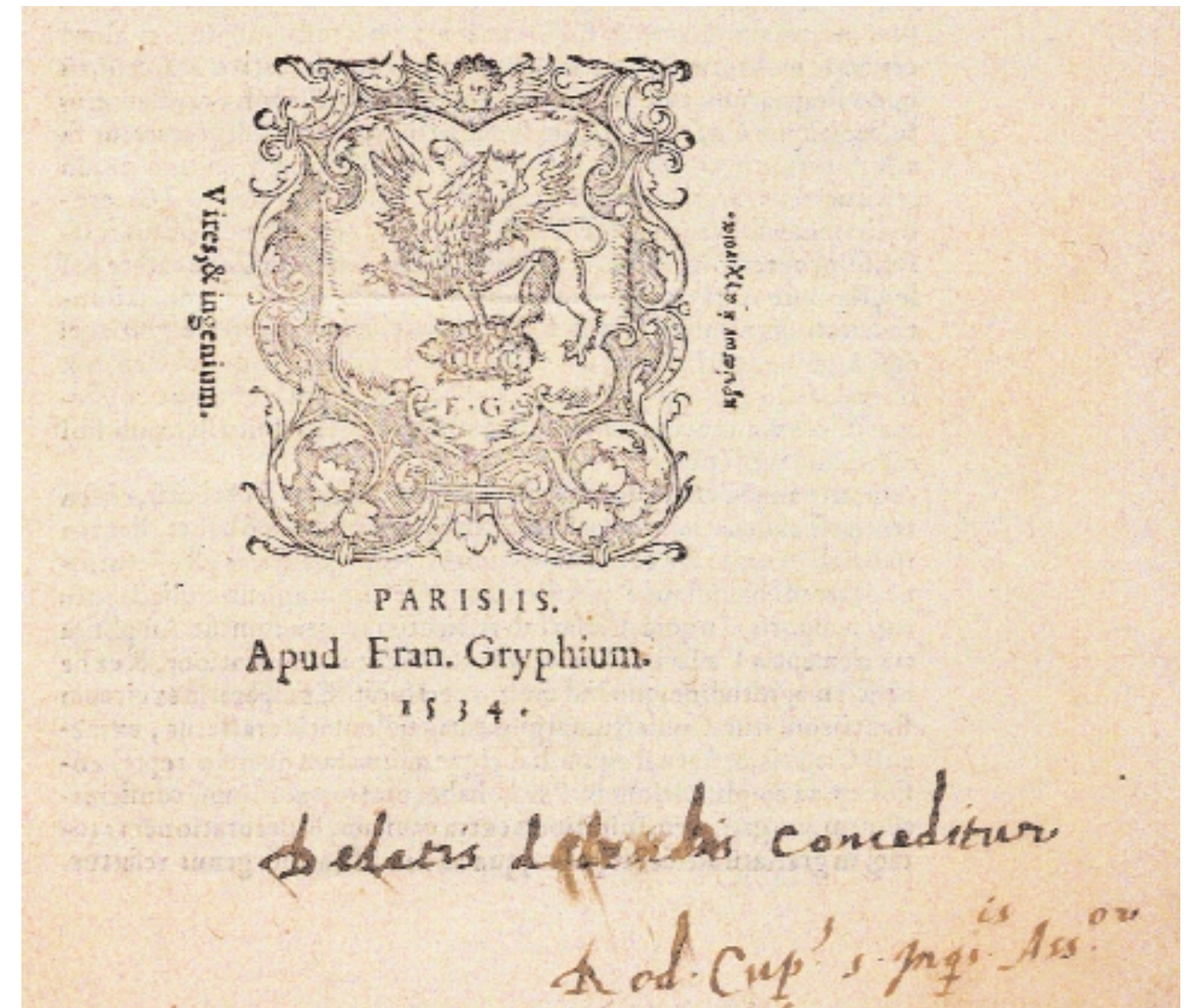
easily benefit from these works. The approach is probably the same as the one was adopted for libraries. As digitisation is used at very different levels, from very good ones to nearly non-existant ones, the inventory of existing material is vital. The creation of an international multilanguage thesaurus is one of the concerns of the National Museum of Natural History. The two national museum work closely together in order to achieve a coherent work and are at the moment leading the "market".

The public records sector

So far, computer network systems are not so well developed in the public record offices. A first step to produce an inventory is on the rails and the principles of Lund were the kick off to the work inside Public Record Office. A participation in the Ministry's project means not only the sharing of experiences and knowledge but also a complete integration of coherent work. Restoration and conservation are common tasks of all cultural institutes. The revision of the actual Internet page (`http://www.etat.lu/AN/`) is a first approach. The National Centre of Literature (`http://literaturarchiv.lu/fr/index.php`) is a scientific research centre focusing on the documentation of literature of Luxembourg. A library and an archive are at the disposal of researchers. This cultural institute also gives fresh impetus to the common digitisation project of the Ministry of Culture.

The monuments and historic sites sector

The Department of the preservation of national monuments and historic sites carried out an inventory of their digitalised material and is developing at this moment a homepage. The result should be accessible on Internet at

the end of this year. The close working together with the other cultural institutes guarantees quality of the expected results as well as important costs reduction. Another idea to be followed up closely is the preservation of monuments or other historic constructions in 3D-format.

The research sector

A main research project is called ENA, European NAvigator. Its aim is to open high-quality information about the history of the European construction, the historical and the institutional evolution to students, teachers, searchers, journalists as well as to the general public, An important digitisation work has begun and first results are already presented on the Web: `http://www.enafree.lu`.
A project called "Living in Luxembourg" is a collaboration between different cultural institutes, ministries, administrations and local authorities; together they are analysing the valorisation of territory. This research project makes it possible to develop an instrument for scientific research and for administrative management of cultural heritage. Collaboration with international partners especially of the bordering countries constitutes an added value (`http://www.fnr.lu`).

The education sector

A pilot project was launched in a secondary school where the students were given portables in order to draw their attention to the possibilities of this instrument in their studies: they learned how to use it as a medium during lessons or for research work, alone or in a team. The working out of an educational method for the integration of the portable in school is being followed up closely.

The computerisation of the Institute for educational and social studies means centralising documentary data bases in order to create a visual library for the institutions of higher education. The development of this expert appraisement is covered by the educational centre called ISERP (Institut supérieur d'études et de recherches pédagogiques).
The installation of an infrastructure with high output for the institutes of education, research and culture is provided by a public establishment.
The Centre of Documentation and Information for Higher Education is looking for an online system that manages the international subsidies for students as well as all information in relation with post-secondary studying.
The research of new methods of learning, the development of expertise in an open, technologically-enriched educational content and the continuous formation of teachers, are the aims of other projects in the educational sector. In general, important efforts are made in order to integrate new computer technologies in schools (`http://www.myschool.lu`).

Co-operation activities

The basic strategy of the Ministry of Culture is to develop an brisk and modern image of the national cultural sector. Therefore the creation of an efficient, modern "portal" that satisfies the expectations of the clients, is a first priority. To reach this ambitious goal, it is vital that the co-operation between ministries, cultural institutes, cultural foundations and associations works at highest level.
An important co-operation was started between the department of Culture and the departments of Higher

Education and Research at the Ministry. As priority was given to educational projects but also to major research ones, the Ministry of National Education was integrated in the working groups.
The preservation of the Luxembourg language is a project under the responsibility of the Permanent Council of the Luxembourg language
(`http://www.crpgl.lu/cortina`).
The studying of the possibilities of easy access to all citizens remains a first priority.
A second one is to explore the existing information, to establish an inventory and to define the possibilities to digitise these information as far as possible following existing standards.
Not only the Ministry of Culture is involved in this project, but also all cultural institutes and most of the cultural associations. To facilitate the access to information remains a big challenge; but also the valorisation of the monuments and other historical constructions under preservation, the intention to favour the communication between the ministries, the cultural institutes and the public in general, plays a most important part. All this should lead to the democratisation of " Culture ".
Based on available inventories, the searchers are also looking for that part of cultural heritage (collections, documents, maps, etc.) which has not been digitised so far: like this, an overview of it all can be established and the possibilities of restoration, if needed, may be analysed in order to guarantee long-time preservation and conservation.

Co-ordination of other national initiatives in connection with eEurope, e-Government, e-Luxembourg, e-Education, etc.

The task force eLuxembourg co-ordinates projects concerning eEurope and information can be found on the

Internet: `http://www.eluxembourg.lu/`
or `http://www.lifelong-learning.lu`.

European and international co-operation

The cultural institutions of Luxembourg are involved in many international networks with their specialised sector (museums, archives, libraries, etc.). The founding of a working group of experts of each cultural sector is initiated. This also enables Luxembourg to take part in international meetings and networks in order to exchange experience and knowledge.

Best practise references

As mentioned before, for the last two years, the cultural institutions started important initiatives in order to open up their cultural heritage to the citizens and to the scientists. These projects have covered many years of hard work but first results can be expected at the end of 2003.