

Report Meeting EC DG Information Society and Media - LIBER Luxemburg, 24/04/2009

Participants: Javier Hernandez Ros (head of unit E4), Pat Manson (head of unit E3), Luca Martinelli, (Policy officer – Digital Libraries - unit E6), Paul Ayriss (LIBER Vice-President), Wouter Schallier (LIBER Executive Director)

The following topics were discussed between the EC and LIBER:

1. Digitisation

LIBER: Finding money for digitisation projects remains problematic for research libraries. Universities usually do not consider digitisation as a main task for their libraries and/or do not have the funding as part of their core budgets. LIBER stresses that EU funding is vital in getting institutions to contribute partnership funding to cover digitisation activity.

EC: Is aware of the problem. Says that funding for digitisation projects mainly has to come from member states, institutions and organisations like JISC in UK. Libraries should develop a digitisation strategy at a national level in order to obtain funding.

LIBER: More and more research libraries look for partnerships with commercial companies in order to digitise their collections.

EC: Published a report on private-public collaboration which contains a set of tools for libraries to make fair deals with private companies (see http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/doc/hleg/reports/ppp/ppp_fi nal.pdf). Stimulates these kinds of partnerships but on good terms. Says that the European Treaty does not allow discrimination on grounds of nationality, thus European citizens should be subject to the same conditions as apply to national ones. Pleads for more openness on the agreements made with commercial companies. Wants to make a collection of private/public partnerships. Refers to projects such as Impact (<http://www.impact-project.eu/home/>), Manuscriptorium (http://www.manuscriptorium.com/Site/ENG/default_eng.asp).

2. Digital preservation

LIBER: Held a successful digital preservation workshop on 17 April in The Hague (<http://www.kb.nl/hrd/congressen/curatingresearch2009/index-en.html>). Wants to continue raising awareness of digital preservation amongst European research libraries. Wants to set up a European federation of trusted archives.

EC: Refers to the EC study on the socio-economic impact of digital preservation. Trusted archives are an important topic: the EC wants to develop further the current embryonic work on conditions for establishing trusted archives. Considers the best approach to marry bottom up initiatives (originating in the research communities) with top down approaches. Mentions the following aspects as major issues: sustainability of digital preservation, certification of trusted archives, roles and responsibilities, ensuring sustainability as a condition for research funding. Agrees that lack of appropriate skills in digital preservation is a problem for libraries and other organisations: mentioned ongoing work to develop a European Masters in digital preservation and curation. Mentions the following projects: Digital Preservation Europe (<http://www.digitalpreservationeurope.eu/>), Planets (<http://www.planets-project.eu/>), European web archive (<http://www.europarchive.org>). Says that Call for European projects

on digital preservation that will be launched in December 2009 (under the ICT theme of FP7) could support initiatives for more concertation. On 28 April, the EC organises a workshop for experts to discuss criteria for trusted archives. LIBER has been invited to this meeting.

EC was aware of and following the National Science Foundation (US)-funded Blue Ribbon Task Force Year 1 Report on economically-sustainable digital preservation at <http://blueribbontaskforce.sdsc.edu/>. PA circulated copies for the attenders. He sits as a LIBER representative on this Task Force as he is one of the members of the LIBER-sponsored LIFE project.

3. Aggregator

LIBER: Mentions its recent initiatives to build an aggregator for feeding TEL/Europeana with content from European research libraries. Asks how the EC sees the sustainability of Europeana.

EC: Europeana is a very important project and all have interest in the success of this project. Until now 80% of the project has been funded by the EC. Funding is secure for the next 3 years (mid 2011). Europeana central office costs currently around 2.5 million euro per year. The EDL Foundation, of which LIBER is part, plans to develop a business model for Europeana after 2011, to be discussed with its stakeholders, including Member States and Commission.

4. Copyright

LIBER: Copyright limitations are a major impediment to achieving a digital Europe. EU Copyright Directive harmonises the rights of rights holders, but not the fair dealing exceptions – which are optional for implementation by Member States.

EC: Within the Commission, DG Internal Market (http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/index_en.htm), is responsible (Tilman Lüder) for the copyright directive. The EC encourages LIBER to approach the DG Internal Market on these issues. Besides, every LIBER member may talk to its member state to request changes that respond to users' needs in research and education. More harmonisation is certainly welcome. Decisions on this Directive can only be taken by co-decision, which means that Parliament and Council need to decide together, and Member States also have properly to implement it. Content industries are reluctant to accept too many exceptions, but often cultural institutions are right holders themselves and do not just give access to their materials. Mentions WIPO (<http://www.wipo.int/portal/index.html.en>).

5. Other topics

LIBER Digitisation Workshop: LIBER has invited a representative from the EC for a keynote speech on 19 October 2009. EC asks for a more specific request and suggests that a case study (e.g. of private/public partnership) could perfectly fit in this slot.