



ECP-2007-DILI-517009

EuropeanaLocal

Annual Report

1 June 2009 – 31 May 2010

www.europeanalocal.eu

Deliverable number/name	<i>D1.7</i>
Dissemination level	<i>Public</i>
Delivery date	<i>4 November 2010</i>
Status	<i>Final</i>
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eContentplus

This project is funded under the *eContentplus* programme¹,
a multiannual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable.

¹ OJ L 79, 24.3.2005, p. 1.

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 3

2 SUMMARY..... 3

3 EXPECTED RESULTS 4

4 MAPPING AND NORMALISATION 4

5 HARVESTING AND INGESTION 5

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION 5

7 TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER..... 6

8 DISSEMINATION AND AWARENESS RAISING..... 6

9 CONSORTIUM MEMBERS AND THEIR ROLES..... 8

10 FURTHER INFORMATION..... 9

1 Introduction

[Europeana](#) has become the flagship activity in Europe's Digital Libraries Initiative. Its creation as a common multilingual access point to Europe's distributed online cultural heritage, including film material, photos, paintings, sounds, maps, manuscripts, books, newspapers and archival papers, is an important milestone work in the Digital Agenda. During 2010, by about the time of its Rhine release, over 12 million items (metadata records) had been ingested and indexed and a pronounced movement toward full representation of content from all EU member states is well under way. During 2012, in addition to continued ingestion of content, work will continue to develop a rewarding user experience at the Europeana.eu interface and perhaps even more importantly to enable the re-use of its content in the user's own digital environment or that of individual cultural institutions through APIs, leading up to the Danube release in 2011.

[EuropeanaLocal](#) is one of a family of additional Best Practice Networks and other projects, funded under the European Commission's eContentplus programme to provide content to Europeana and to assist its development in other ways. The main objective of Europeana Local is to demonstrate the potential inherent in the enormous amount of digital content sourced by Europe's cultural institutions at *local and regional* level, in the first instance, primarily by ensuring the availability of a substantial amount of it through Europeana.

European Local started work on 1 June 2008. This report covers the second, middle year of its operations, until the end of May 2010.

2 Summary

EuropeanaLocal has built on existing networks of local institutions in consortium that represents 26 countries with broad ranging experience of the cultural sector, digital libraries, standards; and aggregation services. They include a heterogeneous range of organisation types including: a Ministry of Culture, national libraries, national museums, national and regional agencies, regional cultural agencies, public libraries, local museums, a research foundation, a regional digital library provider and some private sector organisations. What they have in common is that they were already or planned to be – a provider, and in many cases an aggregator of local and regionally sourced content. They are in effect exemplifiers of the potential in each country.

By the time of the Europeana Rhine release, some 3.5 million items (about 27% of the total content available through Europeana) had been provided through these partners. The potential of local/regional sources may be better appreciated when this figure is extrapolated to all cultural institutions in Europe, especially when viewed in the context of predicted continued growth in digitisation at local and regional levels in the years to come.

EuropeanaLocal is working to support the Europeana Foundation, which is overseeing the development of the Europeana service, to establish simple, efficient and sustainable business, governance, administrative and technical processes through which local and regional institutions can easily make their content available to Europeana during and after the project. In line with this, EuropeanaLocal has enabled its aggregators and individual content providers to make their content available for harvesting, indexing, enriching and other operations by Europeana and any other service.

EuropeanaLocal partners are committed to compliance with the key Europeana standards, technologies and infrastructure such as the Europeana Semantic Elements (ESE) and the forthcoming Europeana Data Model (EDM) and OAI-PMH repositories, thereby contributing to the interoperability of content within Europeana.

In the second half of its duration, European Local is also seeking actively to contribute to the goal of a sustainable European infrastructure of metadata aggregations – a vitally important development for the future of Europeana - which include local and regional content in each participating country, building on the existing starting points, which vary quite widely between countries. In effect, Europeana Local partners in almost every country are either: already a major national or regional aggregator of local content; or where none exists, they might become the national or regional aggregator of local content; or their main task is to ensure that the local and regional content they have aggregated becomes part of a larger aggregation.

The organisation of a national stakeholder meeting is one of the main mechanisms to this end. By the end of May 2010, some five such meetings (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Portugal and Sweden) had been organised with considerable impact, whilst others including Austria, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain and UK had set firm dates for summer and autumn 2010, with the remainder expected by Spring 2011.

3 Expected results

The expected results of the project include:

- the establishment of a network of regional OAI-PMH compliant repositories that are highly interoperable with Europeana
- inclusion of all EuropeanaLocal content in the Europeana service.
- and the aggregation of content at levels which makes sense in terms of local conditions and which complements the existing and planned Europeana network.

4 Mapping and normalisation

A strong base of knowledge was gained through the preparatory work carried out in the first year of EuropeanaLocal which included content, metadata and infrastructure surveys and the subsequent installation and population with metadata and testing of the repository software selected earlier in each location. By the end of the year, the great majority of Europeana Local partners were able to build on this base by mapping the elements from the metadata formats in use locally to the Europeana Semantic Elements (ESE)², a Dublin Core-based application profile which provides a generic set of terms that can be applied to heterogeneous materials, providing a baseline to allow contributors to take advantage of their existing rich descriptions.

Following that, a normalisation process was carried out by Europeana to enable machine readability. Guidelines on metadata and normalisation were produced by the Europeana office to assist content providers with the preparation of their data, which explain in more detail the use of the elements and the mapping process.

² <http://version1.europeana.eu/web/guest/technical-requirements/>

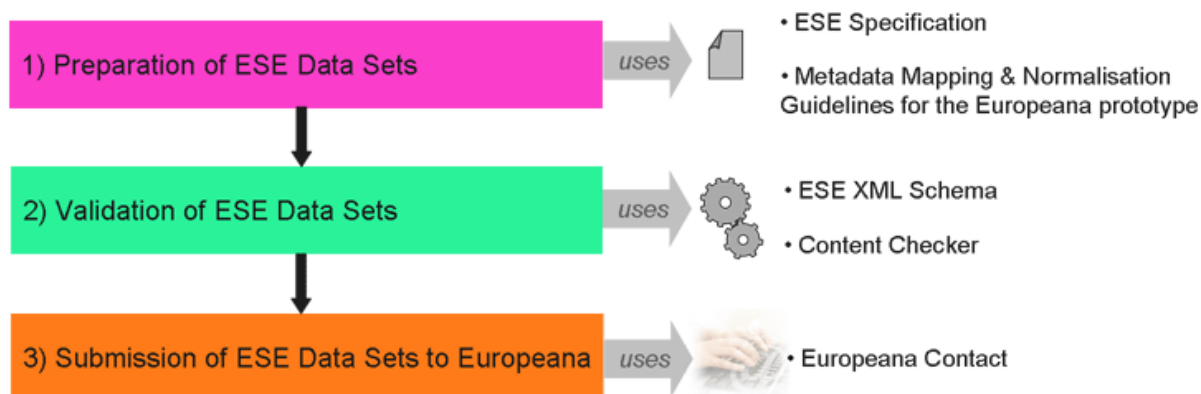
In undertaking this work, partners were able to use a ‘Content Checker’³ tool provided by Europeana. This is a test and validation environment that consists of the Content Ingestor where providers upload their data and the portal that allows them to search and browse these data as if they were using the real Europeana.

Europeana Local was the first project to make use of the Content Checker and therefore acted as a ‘test bed’ for Europeana and the other Europeana related projects and for any organisation contributing content, especially the huge number at local and regional level.

5 Harvesting and ingestion

The second year saw the launching of the main implementation phase of the project according to the timetable and plan established as part of the project’s technical workshops. By about the end of the first half of 2010, the content had been harvested by Europeana from some 20 of the partner countries, with most of the remainder expected during the rest of 2010. Many of the partners’ whose content was ingested during the period leading up to the Rhine release will continue to make available new content, either from their own collections or from existing and newer providers which they have aggregated, as Europeana Local gains momentum in each country. It is expected that most partners’ metadata will be reharvested by Europeana at least once before the end of the project in May 2011.

Steps to provide content:



6 Monitoring and Evaluation

European Local has established an Evaluation Working Group (EWG) which meets in conjunction with the Project Management Board (PMB) to develop and implement processes and mechanisms to monitor quantitative and qualitative aspects and also assess the impact on the content providers, at key points in the ‘lifecycle’ of content on its journey from source to Europeana. These are providing invaluable evaluative data which is then fed back to Europeana and other interested parties to provide an important source of information which can be used to inform modifications and further developments. Experimentation with an ‘Events Log’ a tool designed to track the amount of content available from each partner at

³ http://version1.europeana.eu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=add6d3c5-26f9-4a49-aa9b-39d28e814e25&groupId=10602

each key stage of the supply process, was a particular feature of the second year. Further refinement of this tool is currently underway.

7 Training and knowledge transfer

One of the main goals of EuropeanaLocal is to make it easier for institutions at local and regional levels to contribute their rich content to Europeana. Knowledge and skills are integral to this and the project has undertaken a range of training and knowledge transfer activities during its first two years.

An initial set of training workshops took place in Bratislava and London during the first year of the project and a further technical workshop took place at the Europeana Local mid-term meeting in Poznan, December 2009. The second set of training workshops was postponed slightly July 10 in order to fit both EuropeanaLocal and Europeana timescales. Their aim is to share experiences, good practices and problems encountered throughout the process of implementing OAI-PMH metadata harvesting infrastructure and the ESE format in partner's collection management systems. Their aim was also to cover current developments in Europeana and to look at semantic web and content enrichment opportunities.

A Technical Guidance manual remains available together with an online help desk service provided by the project's two technical partners (AVINet and EEA).

8 Dissemination and awareness raising

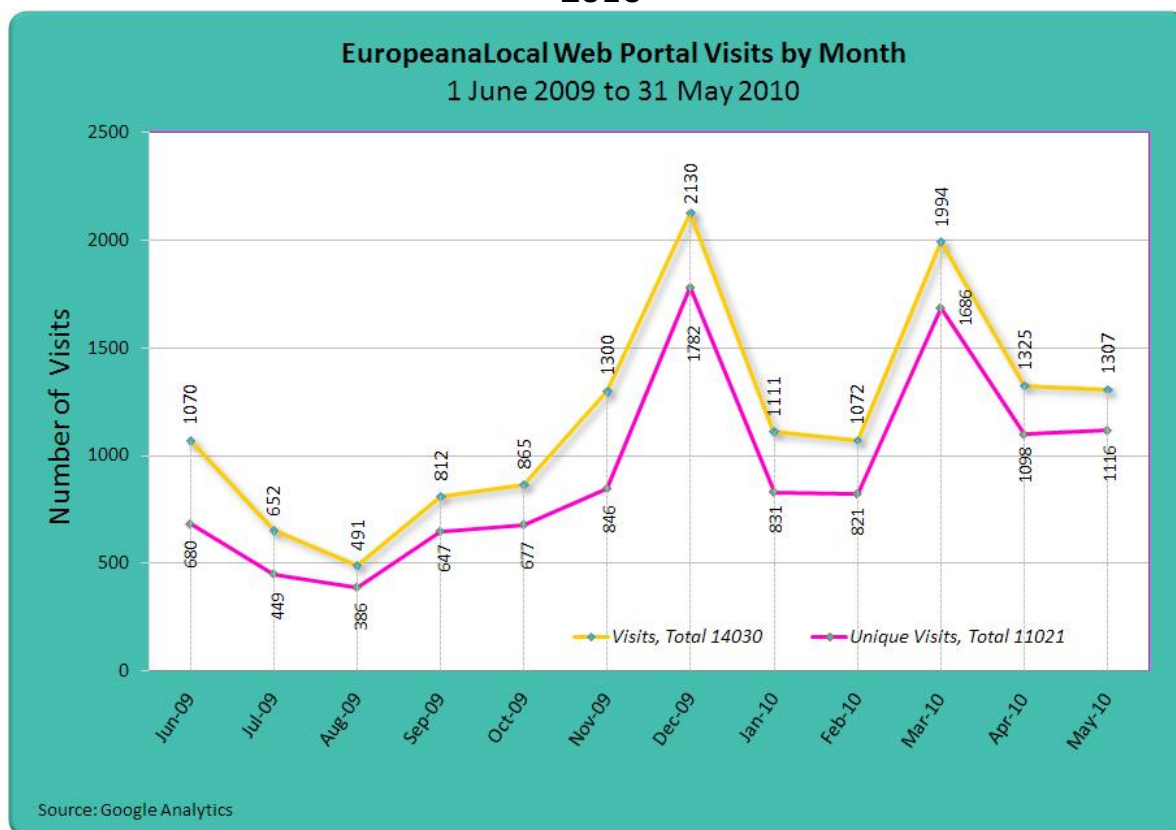
Dissemination and awareness raising remains a vital component of the work of EuropeanaLocal. Key mechanisms for understanding and participating in Europeana, such as the Aggregator Handbook⁴ and the Public Domain Charter⁵ have been actively promoted to its constituency by Europeana Local.

A project website www.europeanalocal.eu has been established and has been continuously developed in line with Europeana branding and design guidelines. A further redesign and polishing of the site is planned for Year 3, in order to optimise its impact on the stakeholder community for local and regional content. This is underpinned by a substantial database for content distribution, currently numbering well over 1000 people and expanding continuously. Visits to the site have continued to rise steadily. Although much of the interest in the broad range of Europeana activities – with which Europeana Local is now very well integrated – is drawn off by the main Europeana site, further efforts are planned to refine the Europeana Local site for its specific audience.

⁴ http://www.group.europeana.eu/web/guest/provide_content

⁵ http://version1.europeana.eu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=d542819d-d169-4240-9247-f96749113eaa&groupId=10602

Total Visits and Unique Visits: 1 June 2009 to 31 May 2010



The EuropeanaLocal management team has focused much of its resources in participating by invitation in its own national meetings, frequently alongside representatives of Europeana. Equally country partners have participated in a number of national and international events to promote their experiences more widely. A workshop on “Harvesting metadata: practices and challenges” was organized by Europeana Local at the ECDL 2009 conference in Corfu in September 2009 <http://www.ecdl2009.eu/>.

End users have been involved in the validation of the work of EuropeanaLocal through the establishment of a user testing group in each partner region. These are being called upon to carry out structured usability testing of Europeana specifications and interfaces at various key stages of the project. A study to assess the impact of EuropeanaLocal on users and content providers will be designed and implemented during the final four months of the project.

Europeana have set up a number of cluster groups to help co-ordinate activities across the by now large number of Europeana and Europeana ‘family’ projects. European Local has participated in each of them including, for example that on Communications.

9 Consortium members and their roles

Participant name	Country	Role in the project
Sogn og Fjordane County Municipality	NO	Co-ordinator
Stichting European Digital Library	NL	Technology, standards and business model provider
MDR Partners	UK	Project manager and scientific co-ordinator
Public Library 'Pencho Slaveykov' (Public Library of Varna)	BG	Regional content co-ordinator
Cyprus Research and Educational Foundation	CY	Regional content co-ordinator
Cross Czech a.s.	CZ	Regional content co-ordinator
Roskilde Kommune	DK	Regional content co-ordinator
City of Helsinki	FI	Regional content co-ordinator
Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin	DE	Regional content co-ordinator
Veria Central Public Library	GR	Regional content co-ordinator
Békés County Library & Human Service Centre	HU	Regional content co-ordinator
An Chomhairle Leabharlanna	IE	Regional content co-ordinator
Regione Marche	IT	Regional content co-ordinator
National Library of Latvia	LV	Regional content co-ordinator
DIZI UAB	LT	Regional content co-ordinator
AcrossLimits Technologies Ltd.	MT	Regional content co-ordinator
MDA (Europe)	UK	Regional content co-ordinator
Instytut Chemii Bioorganicznej PAN	PL	Regional content co-ordinator
Fundacao Museu Nacional Ferroviario	PT	Regional content co-ordinator
Biblioteca Judeteana "Octavian Goga" Cluj	RO	Regional content co-ordinator
Slovenské Národné múzeum (Slovak National Museum)	SK	Regional content co-ordinator
Narodna in Univerzitetna Knjižnica	SI	Regional content co-ordinator

Stiftelsen Länsmuseet Västernorrland	SE	Regional content co-ordinator
EEA s.r.o.	SK	Technical implementation support
Asplan Viak Internet AS	NO	Technical implementation support
Angewandte Informationstechnik Forschungsgesellschaft mbH	AT	Regional content co-ordinator
Provincie Limburg	BE	Regional content co-ordinator
Eesti Rahva Muuseum (Estonian National Museum)	EE	Regional content co-ordinator
Conseil Général de la Gironde	FR	Regional content co-ordinator
Stichting Brabantse Regionale Geschiedbeoefening	NL	Regional content co-ordinator
Ministry of Culture, Spain	ES	Regional content co-ordinator
ABM-Utvikling	NO	Technical and service adviser

10 Further Information

You can keep you up to date with progress on this major initiative if you register with the project website. You will then receive copies of the news bulletin and other information. We encourage you to visit the [EuropeanaLocal](#) website where you will find information on who our local and regional partners are, all our activities and the suite of technical reports and guidance that the project is developing for use by those interested. Please don't hesitate to contact us, either using the form on the website or directly.