

## Improving Library Services

### *Outcomes of EDL project Knowledge Sharing Workshop*

20<sup>th</sup> March 2007

**Developing more web-services, recommending OAI-PMH compliance and using FRBR techniques in The European Library were all recommendations from the EDLproject Knowledge Sharing Workshop. While formulating practical actions to further develop the web services of The European Library portal, the workshop also proved to be a good opportunity for Edlproject participants to work with members of The European Library network in a hands-on setting.**

The Workshop, organised by The European Library Office, took place in The National Library of The Netherlands. By adopting the following actions and recommendations The European Library and its partners aim to improve the quality of the visitors' online experience when searching through the website:

#### **DEVELOPING MORE WEB-SERVICES FOR THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY**

Millions of metadata records, describing physical books and journals, exist in the national libraries of Europe. If the digital versions of these books and journals are not currently available, The European Library provides web-services to help visitors locate these physical items in their local national library. Using OpenURL technology, a web-service, linking the metadata record in The European Library to the same record in the national library's catalogue is provided. Using their "library membership card" visitors can log in to their national library's catalogue and order the physical book or journal. Alternatively, where a document delivery service exists, visitors can purchase the document online.

To develop on these existing web-services, the workshop recommended several service development options. The European Library could develop a standard list of services, including **translations, annotation, localisation, personalisation services**. The possibility of users adding or customising their own services on the base of the standard list was also considered. The users should be able to rate these services and, ultimately, share their opinion through a forum. The European Library was also encouraged to investigate how these services can be provided in different languages.

#### **RECOMMENDING OAI-PMH COMPLIANCE**

In a digital library context, OAI-PMH allows metadata records to be harvested into a central database. Holding this information in a single database means that visitors can search in the resources from many different libraries without having to go through a collection pre-selection before-hand. This "search" pattern is commonly used in search engines environments for example. For this reason the workshop conclusions recommended that every digital collection implemented in The European Library should be OAI compliant.

#### **USING FRBR TECHNIQUES IN THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY**

The workshop participants discussed how FRBR, the system for describing library materials for the web-environment, could be implemented within The European Library. A primary motivation for doing this is to facilitate interoperability of cultural heritage metadata. It was decided to conduct a survey to find out what FRBR activities The European Library's partner libraries are involved in and what FRBR techniques they use. A practical action was to investigate whether FRBR techniques could be used to cluster similar metadata records in The European Library's central index. If a particular book is held by many of the partner libraries the descriptions of this could be grouped together and then the visitor only needs to choose the copy available in her local national library.

According to all participants, the joint meeting was a great success. In sum – it is a clear step towards practical directions to improve the services of The European Library portal.

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**Acronym key:**

OAI-PMH – Open Archive Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting

A protocol that allows digital library metadata to be harvested into a single database. As a result, queries can be launched at once in 2 separate collections that were previously incompatible.

Further information about OAI-PMH can be found at:

[www.openarchives.org/OAI/openarchivesprotocol.html](http://www.openarchives.org/OAI/openarchivesprotocol.html)

FRBR - Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records

Further information about FRBR can be found on the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)'s website: [www.ifla.org/VII/s13/wqfrbr/index.htm](http://www.ifla.org/VII/s13/wqfrbr/index.htm)

Further information about OpenURL can be found at:

[http://www.niso.org/standards/standard\\_detail.cfm?std\\_id=783](http://www.niso.org/standards/standard_detail.cfm?std_id=783)

**Notes for Editors:**

**The European Library** is a service of the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) offering free, item level, access to the combined resources, books, magazines, journals, manuscripts, sound and video archives, both digital and non-digital, from 23 of the 47 national libraries of Europe. It will be the starting point organisationally and technically for a European digital library encompasses museums, archives and other holders of digitised and digital cultural heritage material.

<http://www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org>

**The Edlproject Knowledge Sharing Workshop** took place 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at the National Library of the Netherlands in The Hague. At [www.edlproject.eu/agenda2.php](http://www.edlproject.eu/agenda2.php) you can find more detailed information. The full list of actions and recommendations from the workshop is available at:

[www.edlproject.eu/downloads/Overall\\_ActionsConcl&Recomm.doc](http://www.edlproject.eu/downloads/Overall_ActionsConcl&Recomm.doc)

**EDLproject** is a Targeted Project funded by the European Commission under their [e-Contentplus programme](#) and coordinated by the German National Library. It started in September 2006 and works towards the integration of the bibliographic catalogues and digital collections of the National Libraries of [Belgium](#) , [Greece](#) , [Iceland](#) , [Ireland](#) , [Liechtenstein](#) , [Luxembourg](#) , [Norway](#) , [Spain](#) and [Sweden](#) , into [The European Library](#) . EDLproject also addresses the enhancement of multilingual capabilities of The European Library portal, takes first steps towards collaboration between The European Library and other non-library cultural initiatives, including metadata interoperability, and expands the marketing and communication activities of The European Library service. <http://www.EDLproject.eu>