



R&D and the European National Libraries

R&D – Research and Development – are crucial activities to shape the potential of cultural institutions, to enable them to create innovative cultural heritage and ICT solutions and to become competitive in the European arena. This is one of the assumptions, which inform a report recently published by TEL-ME-MOR.

The report, building on an initial analysis focused on the national libraries in the New Member States, examines **the current state-of-the-art in the domain of cultural heritage and ICT in all member libraries of the CENL.**

Some of the main recommendations made in the report are:

- **Libraries and other memory institutions** should be acknowledged as **R&D players** on the European level.
- Transparent and sound methodology for **monitoring the quality of R&D activities** of national libraries (and of other memory institutions) and their achievements should be established and promoted in all EU Member States.
- Existing R&D networks of competence should **consider and exploit knowledge** and experience **available at the national libraries in the New Member States.**
- There is a need **to develop a culture of collaboration with users** in the national libraries, encouraging their active participation during all stages of the development of digital library services.
- **User-centred solutions** should become key criteria for evaluating and funding R&D initiatives.
- National authorities and libraries should take appropriate actions to face the **lack of a critical mass of digitised cultural heritage content in Europe.**

The report, entitled '*Research Activities of the European National Libraries in the Domain of Cultural Heritage and ICT*' can be found on the TEL ME MOR site at: <http://telmemor.net/results.php>.

TEL-ME-MOR (*The European Library: Modular Extensions for Mediating Online Resources*), is contributing to achieving the vision of the European digital library by supporting the 10 national libraries from the New Member States, that are partners in the project, in becoming full members of The European Library, an initiative, established under the aegis of the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL), providing unified access to the electronic resources of the main European National Libraries as well as to other library services. The project also aims to encourage participation of the national libraries of new member states in research and development initiatives.

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