



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Digital Content and Cognitive Systems

Cultural Heritage and Technology Enhanced Learning

**Summary Minutes of the
NUMERIC study – Framework workshop**

Wednesday, 2 April 2008

**Euroconference Room
Euroforum Building
10, rue R. Stumper
Luxembourg**

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**NUMERIC study – Framework workshop
Luxembourg, 2 April 2008**

AGENDA

- (1) **INTRODUCTION:**
Welcome and house-keeping
- (2) **CONTEXT:**
Why it is important to measure the pace and cost of digitisation and brief overview of previous research together with a justification for the framework approach
- (3) **APPROACH:**
Description of the framework and discussion of this in the context of individual countries
- (4) **ACTION (RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIME-LINES):**
Guide to the steps required to implement the framework - description of the roles and expectations of those attending the workshop
- (5) **INSTRUMENTS:**
On-line survey instruments, approach to sampling, definitions, emerging estimates and statistics to provide an impression of the framework outputs
- (6) **PARTNERS:**
The professional associations / Cultural Ministries / Central Statistical Offices / Eurostat - Coordination of the approach reconciling the requirements of professional and Ministerial needs for information
- (7) **IMPLEMENTATION:**
Questions and answers on the implementation of the framework
- (8) **SUMMARY:**
Confirmation of the framework approach and timelines; measures, definitions, classifications; sampling scheme and adoption in other surveys; responsibilities and collaboration; intent to adopt the framework

1. INTRODUCTION

Patricia Manson (European Commission) welcomed all participants to the workshop. The huge interest was mentioned (almost 60 participants from 26 out of 27 Member States) and the hopes that this will be translated in practical support for the carrying out of the necessary work that needs to be done at Member States level.

The context of the study is i2010, the Commission's strategy for the Information Society, and more specifically the i2010 - digital libraries initiative. This initiative has three strands of action: digitisation, online accessibility and digital preservation. A key goal of the initiative is also to support the creation of A European Digital Library (entitled Europeana), which will offer a unique online resource to Europe's cultural heritage from one access point.

To realise this, the Commission, Member States and institutional stakeholders will have to deal with a number of challenges. These are financial, organisational, technical and legal in nature. An example of the legal challenges is copyright and how to digitise 20th century works so that our digital world does not have a black hole at its centre. And, as for the financial challenges, the investments needed are large. This means shared strategies and approaches, and mobilising funding — public and private.

The Commission is addressing these issues at different levels — political, strategic and technical — with the various stakeholders. At a political level, the issues were brought to the attention of the Council through a Communication and a Recommendation, which set out a series of measures for the Member States. The Council adopted on 13 November 2006 Conclusions which act on all the measures in the Recommendation. These conclusions show the agreement of all Member States to work together towards a set of common goals, within prescribed timescales. The conclusions also call for a better coordination between Member States.

Some of the goals required by the Council that are relevant for the NUMERIC study cover the reinforcing of national strategies and targets for digitisation; stimulating of cultural institutions to digitise their content and to make it available through the European Digital Library; and the contributing to an effective overview of progress at European level.

The Council asked the European Commission to assess overall progress, and Member States, therefore, have agreed to regularly report to the European Commission their progress on the different elements of the Commission Recommendation. The NUMERIC study can be seen as an important quantitative contribution to this reporting and the overall assessment of progress in digitisation in the Union. The study, therefore, has a strategic and political relevance — in the short term to deliver a first baseline, and in the longer term to showcase to politicians what is happening already and where work still needs to be done.

Aims of the NUMERIC study

Marius Snyders (European Commission) then explained in more detail the goals for NUMERIC. The NUMERIC study is a two year study that was commissioned by DG INFSO, Directorate Digital Content in Luxembourg and started in May last year. It is working towards a framework of standardised methods for the collection and analysing data on digitisation in the European Union, to be able to better identify (1) the total

European effort, (2) to make international comparisons, and (3) to stimulate further digitisation.

Reliable measures (statistics) could better inform the way in which the digitisation process is managed in Europe. Questions are arising about the budgets and funding involved: How much has been spent, and what did this result in? Questions also exist about the efforts taking place: for example just how many institutions are digitising heritage materials? And questions are arising about the impact and the actual quality of activities in digitisation: For example, what proportion of collections is actually being made available online after digitisation?

Many more questions could be asked, and the institutions and policy makers managing the digitisation actions require the appropriate statistics to better inform their plans. Therefore, the Institute of Public Finance that was contracted by the European Commission to carry out the study, started a desk research activity to identify and collect relevant data on digitisation in all the member states, available sources, existing statistics, indicators and concepts, definitions and classifications that should apply for determining the eventual statistical framework.

The study team also has been testing out a basic framework, based on the information that was compiled over the six months of desk research. So it has tested questions like: What can we measure with the available data? For all countries? And what more is still needed in order to start the further collection of data?

This NUMERIC information workshop is to make necessary refinements to the basic framework based on the feedback of the participants — and also to look into the near future and see what information and support will be needed from the Member States to bring in the right amount and the right configuration of data on which actual estimates on progress can be based.

Within the timeframe of the study, the workshop is especially important as afterwards the study team will start with the actual data collection until January 2009 and, as a result, is expected to come up with a full statistical analysis for the EU including national comparisons regarding progress, trends, costs and impact of digitisation. This will not be possible without the active involvement and support of those persons attending the current workshop. The study team will then organise another workshop, around the same time in 2009, to present to the Commission and others the findings, as well as recommendations, in order to give a structural follow-up to the data collection exercise in Europe. For example, by Eurostat, the national statistical agencies, the various cultural associations at European level.

2. CONTEXT

Phillip Ramsdale (NUMERIC study team) took the group through a brief overview of previous research, what was learned and how this has influenced the framework approach for the study.

Zinaida Manzuch (NUMERIC study team) then presented findings on research experience. She concluded that:

- Previous digitisation surveys have been mostly snapshots with no attempt to establish a continuous series of measures capable of describing either trends or progress from a baseline;
- These studies attempted to trace the perspective from the top-down (policies that relate to institutions in common) and bottom-up (management information needs for the institutions). Although, both focus on the need for resources, both failed to define consistent measures for either financial or technical resources;
- Previous digitisation surveys have concentrated on collecting qualitative rather than quantitative information, and consequently few hard measures from which policies can be better informed have emerged. Consistent definitions are required for measures that indicate relative priority and value for policy determination;
- There were no uniform approaches on how to classify digitised collections. Few studies have successfully been able to relate the way in which digitised outputs can be compared with the analogue collections. Often outputs are recorded as digital files, images, pages or collections, making meaningful analysis impossible. Setting common input/output guidelines is the single most important requirement in establishing a successful statistical framework. The units for measuring these differ for each domain and type of material in collections;
- Project objectives reveal different levels of aspiration in the digitisation work being pursued. The basic level would suggest that an institution ignores the social or cultural benefits of digitisation beyond its own organisation; an intermediary level would refer to digitisation for online access and preservation of the materials; and the highest level of development sets out to exploit the digitised collections by developing educational, tourism, research and other such benefits;

This had led to the Study Team concluding that:

- More focus was required on indicators of user needs, usage of materials, accessibility and usability of digitised content should be more visible in digitisation surveys and treated as important components of digitisation progress. Information used in the framework should be supplemented by sources of data other than those deriving from sample surveys. Simplicity and clarity of definition was required in the survey approach. However to verify any estimates, of the overall scale of digitisation activity and expenditure, and what is gained by the investment, a representative sample of institutions would need to be surveyed in all countries.

3. APPROACH

Phillip Ramsdale explained that a general framework had been designed but not yet finalised, pending input from Member States present at the workshop. The workshop was instrumental in fine-tuning the approach, based on consensus and the practical consideration of those present and knowledgeable of the specific circumstances prevailing in the their own countries.

The overall approach was described as follows:

- Step 1** Verify the total number of cultural institutions in each country, and identify those that were relevant in the sense that digitisation of their collections will significantly enhance access to the country's cultural heritage. The assistance of those attending the workshop would be required to amend the initial estimates that formed part of the study's "Foundation database" of institutions, and a pro-forma (computer assisted tool) would be distributed following the workshop for this purpose.
- Step 2** Select a representative sample of relevant institutions to include in a survey to be conducted in the second half of the year (2008) to collect data that could be used to infer estimates of the total digitisation activity for each country.
- Step 3** Confer with the study team to agree the sample selected and decide whom should manage the survey. The alternative to the relevant government department conducting the survey existed in the capability of the study team managing the survey centrally. However, the support of those present at the workshop would be necessary to coordinate such activities at national level.
- Step 4** Survey results to be analysed and used to inform modelling assumptions adopted by the study team / national ministries to estimate the total digitisation efforts, achievements, expenditures and investment in future digitisation plans.

It was stressed that this framework was reliant on using as much statistical information that already existed or was being collated within the NUMERIC and other studies to provide a "Foundation database" describing the universe of cultural institutions upon which these estimates would be based. The purpose of the sample surveys was to better inform the estimates, given the current paucity of consistent data that currently existed. Hence the need for a common survey approach across all European states.

A discussion followed around the design of the framework in the context of individual countries. Key points were raised as follows:

There is a need to refine the definition of relevant institutions. It was confirmed that Natural History collections were included providing they were housed in the same institutions covered by the European Group on Museum Statistics (EGMUS). Some participants suggested that there are peripheral domains which should be included in the questionnaire i.e. Monuments. For example, France has over 100,000 monuments and objects digitised, and it was argued whether these should be counted as a separate domain.

It was agreed to integrate monuments into the framework, providing their incorporation would not undermine the successful implementation of the approach across the core collections described in the basic consultation questionnaire. However, it was noted that the study specification is clear about the core objectives and caution should apply in considering any other materials. Criteria to apply included whether it can be incorporated into the framework statistically accurately and measured relatively easily. It was concluded that a separate but complementary process for surveying institutions responsible for monuments may be necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the core framework.

Denmark observed that Broadcasting did not appear to be considered within the questionnaire. It was confirmed that this domain was counted under the audiovisual materials.

The issue of duplication was discussed. Digitised items within museums and archives are likely to be a hundred percent unique. There was more scope for potential duplication within audiovisual institutions and libraries where perhaps sixty to ninety percent of the analogue collections are similar.

It was decided that all material should be counted as some institutes collaborate and others do not. It is still measuring digitisation whether or not it is duplicated. There would be scope to estimate the degree of duplication implicit in the statistics after the data collection phase.

The Netherlands asked whether the study is counting both public and professional users, i.e. open and closed access. It was confirmed that both should be included and it was agreed guidance notes around the issues raised should be drafted.

It was raised that there are several organisations carrying out similar pieces of work at this time and it was asked whether there could there be a more international approach to avoid multiple information requests. It was confirmed that there is ongoing involvement with other organisations, including the professional associations interested in monitoring the activities of their member institutions.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINES

The next steps required to implement the framework were outlined and a description was made of the roles and expectations of those attending the workshop.

The study team is responsible for EU coordination and this includes the provision of:

- Advice to those acting as coordinators in their country and / or for their domain, as well as those persons implementing the sample surveys, if these are different;
- Web and e-mail distribution of survey instruments;
- Collation, validation and analysis of survey and other data;

Country contacts (those attending the workshop as representatives of their country) are responsible for coordination within their Member State, and this includes:

- The identification of relevant institutions in their country;
- Sample selection for the survey;
- Translation services, when required, to better communicate the questionnaire and definitions;
- Providing help with queries as they arise from survey respondents;
- Chasing late survey response.

In the instances when several Country contacts represent different individual domains, then a lead is required to act as overall coordinator for the country.

It was expected that Ministries / Central Statistical Offices would have the option to:

- Act as country contact (Study team manage the survey); or
- Entirely manage the framework in their own country; or
- Distribute the survey for the study team to manage (or any variation of these three).

A decision should be taken and the study team advised accordingly, which of these approaches would be taken for the country concerned.

To ensure that unnecessary duplication of effort would arise and that institutions could be satisfied that the framework was effectively coordinated, it was proposed that the Professional Associations representing institutions at a European level would be asked to:

- Incorporate the Framework questions in their own surveys; or
- Adopt the Framework questionnaire as their own survey; or
- Endorse the Framework survey and encourage members to participate.

The detailed timetable for identifying relevant institutions to include in, and then implement the sample surveys was discussed. The time-lines proposed for 2008 are:

APRIL -	Framework adapted to account for workshop deliberations
MAY -	Identification of relevant institutions Translation of questionnaires
JUNE -	Selection of sample institutions Circulation of questionnaires
NOVEMBER -	End of the response phase

5. INSTRUMENTS

Proposals were presented for making available the survey instruments on-line, including guidance on the approach to sampling, definitions, emerging estimates and statistics to provide an impression of the framework outputs.

A study database had been compiled including estimates of the current number of institutions in each country. This “Foundation database” had been assembled from data and deriving estimates from many sources (as described on the study web-site). This provides some initial estimates of the number of institutions in each country. Experts present in the workshop were asked to amend for their country and furthermore consider how many of which were really relevant to the study. A guidance note will be circulated on undertaking this exercise, and a computer assisted tool (spreadsheet model) provided. This in turn would provide guidance on the necessary sample size by type of institution, so that all countries could approach the selection of institutions to include in the surveys in a standard manner.

The previous survey conducted by the study team in the autumn of 2007, (“pathfinder survey”) had been completed by 60 institutions to test the approach including definitions and questions. The lessons learnt have enabled the study team to design the latest questionnaire that had been distributed for consideration at the workshop.

Roswitha Poll (member of the NUMERIC study team) spoke about the NUMERIC definitions, and questions employed in the survey. The proposed digitisation statistics were intended to:

Show costs and effort; Give a true picture, even via sampling; Show the present state and anticipated future trends; Derive from available information (or readily estimated information by the institution); Cover all types of material.

There was a discussion around the sampling process. The following issues were raised:

The proposal to select at least 30 relevant institutions was not considered proportionate to the size of each member state. It was felt that the advised sample size should be capable of adjustment to reflect the relevant number of institutions in each country. It was agreed that the sample quota would need to be higher than 30 in many countries in order to provide a representative selection for the country. The point was reiterated that the selection should, focus on the relevant institutions but these also included some smaller organisations and many not prominent at national level, but servicing regional or sub-regional areas.

Guidance notes around sampling will be drafted to provide a more pragmatic approach that could be informed by local discretion and knowledge of the institutional map in each country. The spreadsheet tool (referred to above) would be linked to this guidance.

It was noted that copyright issues are not material to the study, as it is measuring digitisation regardless of availability.

The Austrian expert suggested including a question about plans for long-term preservation. It was confirmed that the survey asked institutions to provide copies of their digitisation plans, where they existed and that these would exemplify preservation policies. The issue of preservation was taken to be implicit in the digitisation efforts of most institutions, but it was also noted that the test survey, undertaken in the previous year, found that their aspirations for preservation were indivisible from those to widen access to the materials.

There was a general perception that the consultation questionnaire focussed on materials in libraries more prominently than the collections held by other domains. It was agreed that the questionnaire should be seen to reflect the fact that items held in libraries may also be kept by other types of institution (and vice versa) and to rationalise the types of materials and reorder them to achieve a better presentation accordingly.

6. PARTNERS

The necessity to co-ordinate the approach so as to reconcile the requirements of professional and ministerial needs for information was endorsed. The professional associations / cultural ministries / central statistical offices / Eurostat etc. were recognised by all to be important stakeholders in the NUMERIC framework and that every opportunity should be taken to collaborate so that institutions are not overloaded with too many information requests.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibilities:

Those present and representing individual member states resolved to accept the responsibility for co-ordinating the framework in their own country (see 4, above). Each would consider the most practical approach for managing the sample surveys and advise the study team accordingly upon receipt of the guidance notes.

Timetable:

It was observed that it would be helpful to avoid a heavy workload in June, as there could be less involvement from some institutions due to the summer holidays. The proposed timetable (see 4, above) had been designed to keep in step with the study specifications but if proved impractical for delivery in certain countries, consideration will be given to varying the time-lines providing the outcomes of the study can be delivered in early 2009. It was further noted that keeping to the proposed action targets added value to the efforts of those other countries who maintained the timetable to help secure a successful implementation of the framework.

8. SUMMARY

The group confirmed their unanimous intent to adopt the recommended framework. All were thanked for their input and support, and the meeting was closed.

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ACTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP

1. All participants to provide suggestions for improving the questionnaire (form of questions and / or definitions) and email these to NUMERIC@ipf.co.uk in sufficient time to allow the study team to finalise the standard form before the end of April, 2008
2. The study team to review the sampling approach and issue guidance by the end of April 2008, in order for Country contacts to identify relevant institutions and design the sample selection (during May 2007).
3. Where more than one representative attended the workshop per country, one to inform the study team who will act as the principal coordinator for the country. (Where any representative does not wish to be listed on the NUMERIC web-site as a Country coordinator, then they should specifically inform the study team accordingly.)
4. The principal country contact to liaise with colleagues and complete the pro-forma (computer assisted tool) for verifying the number of institutions in each country during May 2008. Appropriate consideration should also be given to the number of relevant institutions, and the pro forma returned to the study team by the end of May, 2008.
5. The pro-forma (computer assisted tool) also provides guidance on how many institutions of each type are recommended to select in the sample. A list of those institutions so selected by country contacts should be provided to the study team by the end of May.
6. The principal country contact is asked to let the study team know by the middle of May, which is their preferred approach for implementing the sample surveys in their country (see 4, above – either to administer themselves or to support the study team) and to confirm the timelines.
7. The slides included in the presentations made at the workshop should be circulated to all participants and posted to the [NUMERIC website](#).

PARTICIPANTS

NAME	ORGANISATION
1. Mr Pavel ANTALIK	Ministry of Culture, Slovakia
2. Mr Aidan CALLAGHAN	Institute of Public Finance, UK – NUMERIC Team
3. Ms Cleopatra CHRISTOPOULOU	Ministry of Culture, Greece
4. Ms Maria Elena CORTES RUIZ	National Archives, Spain
5. Ms Claire CREASER	Loughborough University, Leicestershire, UK
6. Mr Michal CUDRNAK	National Gallery, Slovakia
7. Mr Bruno DIETSCH	Ministère de la Culture et de la communication, France
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20. Mr Börje JUSTRELL	National Archives, Sweden
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32. Mr Marco DE NIET	Digital Heritage Netherlands, Netherlands
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36. Mr Patrick PEIFFER	National Library, Luxembourg
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48. Ms Sirkka VALANTO	The National Board of Antiquities, Finland
49. Ms Regina VARNIENE	National Library, Lithuania
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