



## Story

# What's the future for EU's online library Europeana?

**You can now access books, journals, films, maps and so on from across Europe via the EU's online library, Europeana. It's a great idea but it's not all plain sailing: web copyright rules are not the same in all EU countries, there are issues about paying for items that are still under copyright and should there be a minimum standard for content? The Parliament will debate a draft report on the issue by German Green MEP Helga Trüpel Monday evening (19 April) and is likely to adopt it Tuesday.**

The report drafted by Ms Trüpel asks for more and better content on Europeana while respecting intellectual property rights. It also wants better promotion of the library among the broadest possible public and "urges the Commission and member states to take all necessary steps to avoid a knowledge gap between Europe and the United States of America and to ensure full access for Europeans to their own cultural heritage".

The Parliament's legal Committee has also called on the Commission to submit a legislative proposal on the digitisation of "orphan works" (whose ownership is unclear), which would put an end to the current legal uncertainty for the remuneration of rights holders.

German Green Helga Trüpel will draft parliament's report. "We have to find means to encourage member states to provide more funding for digitisation...My big political goal is to achieve the balance between making books available and rewarding the authors. Google scanned a lot of books under copyright and then the authors complained and went to court," she told us.

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"Europeana might never be as rich as Google Books, because it will not be financed through advertisements," she said. "But it is very important for us to show that there is another possibility: to do it with public funding. If we want to defend our European social model and go for cultural diversity, we need Europeana."

## What is Europeana?

It was launched on 20 November, 2008. Europeana is a multi-lingual online collection of millions of digitised books, journals, films, maps, photographs and music from European museums, libraries, archives and multi-media collections. It is accessible to every citizen with an internet connection. It also preserves the items for future generations.

Europeana's collection has doubled since its launch and there are now more than 6 million items. The aim is to have 10 million digitised objects by the end of 2010.

### Europeana

- currently has 6 million digital items
- includes paintings, maps, photos, books, newspapers, letters, music, radio broadcasts, films, TV broadcasts
- funded by the European Commission and EU countries
- hosted by the National Library of the Netherlands

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