



# DARIAH Newsletter

Digital Research Infrastructure  
for the Arts and Humanities

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## Funding Agency Roundtable Meeting

As DARIAH is a Social Science and Humanities Research Infrastructure to be included in the ESFRI Roadmap (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructure), one of its aims during the preparatory phase is to get in contact with national funding agencies from across Europe. To this end, on 8 December 2009, the first DARIAH-organised Funding Agency Roundtable Meeting took place in Oxford in order to inform funding agencies on the progress of DARIAH and to receive crucial feedback. Among the participants were representatives of national funding agencies and also from the European Science Foundation and the EU Commission.

To commence, some short presentations by representatives of DARIAH gave an overview of the whole DARIAH project: its mission, potential services and its

legal and financial structure. Following, Prof. Dr. Gerhard Lauer (Seminar für Deutsche Philologie, Georg-August-University Goettingen, Germany) gave a presentation about the scholarly perspective on DARIAH and the crucial need for a research infrastructure for the arts and humanities.



Participants of the roundtable meeting

The subsequent discussion, moderated by Dr. Max Vögler (German Research Foundation), gave the national funding agencies an opportunity to present their views of DARIAH, to give feedback on the direction that DARIAH has already taken and to advise on the future development.

One issue addressed was the relationship between DARIAH and national infrastructures. This relationship is mutually beneficial: DARIAH can push the development of national infrastructures while at the same time national roadmaps are necessary for the operation of DARIAH under the proposed financial model. The added value of DARIAH for national activities is that it provides a framework for pan-European cooperation and the sharing of work and experience.

In order to ensure that the infrastructure is developing in a sustainable way and meets the needs of researchers, community engagement projects in cooperation with the European Science Foundation are proposed which will provide strong links between the DARIAH infrastructure and the scholarly community.

Some legal aspects of DARIAH were also discussed, such as the legal form ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium) and the funding model proposed by DARIAH, which is based on the existence of a national roadmap for each member country and which incorporates cash and in-kind contributions.

The feedback of all the participating representatives of the national funding agencies was very positive. DARIAH's plan to adopt the ERIC legal form and to establish a proportionate funding model based on an index should consistently provide the flexibility necessary to respond to national conditions. That means that DARIAH is definitely moving forward and in the right direction.

DARIAH will invite the European funding agencies for another roundtable meeting where presentations of success stories within the e-Humanities will play a central role. In this meeting DARIAH will present a draft statute, upon which further - and more concrete - discussions on solutions can be built. Finally, the presentation of a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding on the support of DARIAH is planned as a helpful step for the establishment of DARIAH and the promotion of the project on the national roadmaps.

## Survey on Digital Humanities in Greece



The Academy of Athens recently completed a survey in order to assess Greece's policy on digital research in the arts and humanities. The aim of this survey is to provide feedback to support the strategic aims of DARIAH. It identified potential stakeholders and invited major research and cultural heritage institutions to express their views on the current state of affairs.

The survey was conducted on a desk research basis and by means of an online questionnaire. The main research questions of interest in devising the survey were as follows:

- ◆ Whether Greece has developed a cultural policy for the arts and humanities;

- ◆ If and to what extent are organisations aware of digital humanities as a new methodology;
- ◆ Who are the policy makers;
- ◆ Who are the potential stakeholders;
- ◆ Whether and in what way are institutions willing to contribute to DARIAH;

The survey also reports on Greek Government agencies and their policy with regard to European directives.

As for the implementation of a digital strategy, the survey gives an overview of the Greek research system, provides an assessment of the progress recently achieved in the field of digital humanities and examines its future prospects.

The survey results reveal the views of the interviewees with respect to the existence (or not) of a coherent national strategy in digital research in the humanities. The interviewees recognize the main obstacles for the implementation of a national digital infrastructure and provide an interesting self-assessment regarding Greece as compared to the level of other European countries. They were also asked to evaluate the functional and qualitative level of the readiness of their organisations to support digital research.

In an effort to estimate the awareness of institutions regarding digital humanities, they were asked to provide information on their participation in digitisation projects.

Another question aimed at establishing their main funding sources. In examining views regarding their participation in DARIAH, interviewees were offered a selection of options of ways in which

they could engage (e.g. through access to content or contribution to users' requirements activities).

According to the conclusion of the report, the results of the questionnaire regarding the awareness of the organisations and their willingness to participate in broader initiatives are an encouraging sign of progress, but cannot alone guarantee a promising future for digital humanities in Greece.

The lack of a national infrastructure and a corresponding strategy cannot be overcome without the establishment of a body which will advise key policy makers and focus its efforts on coordination and education.

The Greek Research Infrastructure Network for the Humanities (DYAS) is a new network of universities, research institutions and cultural heritage agencies established to bridge this gap and provide coordination and guidance to digital scholarship in Greece.

DYAS will:

- ◆ Provide a platform for exchanging ideas, knowledge innovation and experimentation
- ◆ Help overcome isolation of researchers and the duplication of research activities
- ◆ Offer a collaborative environment in which research institutions will be able to enhance the quality of humanistic research.

The network will elaborate a proposal for linking the network with the European infrastructure DARIAH and will

engage in a number of dissemination and training activities.

The DYAS consortium aims to build a collaborative national platform for the coordination and dissemination of humanities research at the national level. One of its main targets is to bridge the efforts of institutions and to save efforts and funds by avoiding the duplication of research. At the same time it will set agreed standards to which to adhere.

However, initiatives by institutions need government backing. A comprehensive national digitisation strategy formulated by the Government at a national level is essential. The work is being done on the ground; it now requires the input of government to bring it together into a national policy and a Trusted Digital Repository.

## German Grid Activities Related to DARIAH



In 2005 the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) launched the German Grid Initiative (D-Grid<sup>1</sup>) in order to design, build and operate a network of distributed integrated and virtualized high-performance

resources and related services to enable the processing of large amounts of scientific data and information. Below are some D-Grid updates related to humanities that may be of interest.

### *TextGrid and the Zeno.org Digital Library*

The TextGrid<sup>2</sup> joint project aims to support access and exchange of data in the arts and humanities by means of grid technology. It provides services and tools for collaborative editing, annotation, analysis, and publication of primary and secondary texts.

Recently the TextGrid research group acquired the contents of the zeno.org<sup>3</sup> online full-text library for use in the TextGrid Virtual Research Environment. Zeno.org hosts the largest collection available online of German-language primary texts from antiquity to the beginning of the twentieth century.

Consisting of both works originally written in German and translations, the writings of over 700 authors, 27 dictionaries, and numerous works from philosophy, history, the natural sciences and many other disciplines are included in this collection.

With this acquisition TextGrid will be able to make these texts available for research in a manner consistent with scientific standards (e.g. permanently citable, annotated in TEI XML and with no copyright barriers).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.d-grid.de>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.textgrid.de>. See also TextGrid Summit article in [DARIAH Newsletter No. 2, March 2009](#) (PDF)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.zeno.org>

### ***The WisNetGrid Project***

Another project within the D-Grid initiative is called WisNetGrid<sup>1</sup> ("Knowledge Networks in the Grid"). By directly working together with user communities (e.g., landscape architecture, philology, linguistics) and other projects (e.g. TextGrid, InterLogGrid<sup>2</sup>).

WisNetGrid aims at introducing knowledge technologies into the grid. The resulting knowledge-based research infrastructure framework will form the basis of a semantic grid environment.

One of the major aspects of the project is the provision of a homogenised interface for search and retrieval of data stored in heterogeneous data sources, and thereby creating a global namespace for the integrated datasets. The usage of plug-in mechanisms will allow for easy integration of data sources of any kind.

Furthermore, the project will develop semantic search methods based on ontology technology allowing for the determination of heterogeneously structured datasets located in different data sources.

The first more concrete architecture specifications developed within the project will be available by April 2010 on the project website.

### ***The WissGrid Project***

The main objective of the D-Grid project WissGrid<sup>3</sup> is to establish sustainability

within the organisational and technical D-Grid infrastructures for academic users. For this the heterogeneous needs of a variety of scientific disciplines will be compiled into the development of concepts for the longterm sustainable use of the grid.

There are three key tasks of WissGrid:

1. The development of an operational model for academic grid users. This aims to initiate an academic grid user representation and location independent financing of IT resources for research projects.
2. The success of grid infrastructure is also reflected in an increase in usage. To make it as easy as possible for new communities to enter the grid world a series of guidelines will be published.
3. To support sustainability on the level of the research products, grid-based long-term preservation tools for research data are to be developed.

### ***Grid Seminar***

The University of Goettingen is offering an interdisciplinary practical course, *Grid Technology in the Sciences: Concepts, Methods and Applications*, during the winter 2009 semester. First offered in 2007, the course emphasizes the collaborative nature of grid computing. Both the lecturers and the attendees come from diverse backgrounds and disciplines including computer science, physics, medicine, and the humanities.

The D-Grid community projects involved in this course include:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wisnetgrid.org>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.interloggrid.org>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wissgrid.de>



- ◆ MediGRID<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ High Energy Physics (HEP) Grid<sup>2</sup>
- ◆ TextGrid.

These are all located in Goettingen within the joint grid resource centre GoeGrid<sup>3</sup>. The experiences of the course show that diverse disciplines can be brought together to convey the benefits of grid technology by experiencing varied grid applications in production-like grid environments.

## Cooperation Statement from TextGrid, Wikimedia and Creative Commons

*2,347,703,384 Characters Worth of Culturally-Valuable Texts Freely Available*



TextGrid, Wikimedia, and Creative Commons Germany<sup>4</sup> are cooperating to make an extensive collection of texts freely available.

The research group TextGrid recently obtained the texts of the online library zeno.org with financial support from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.medigrid.de>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hepcg.org>

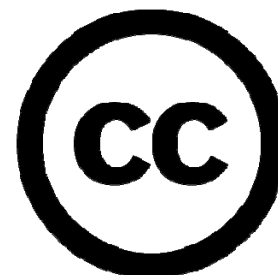
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.goegrid.de>

<sup>4</sup> Legal Project Management for Creative Commons Germany, supported by the European Academy of Computing in Law (EEAR) and the Institute of Law and Informatics at Saarland University (IFRI).

<sup>5</sup> [Press release from the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen on 2 December 2009](#) (in German)

This digital collection is the most comprehensive of its kind in the German-speaking areas and contains texts from the beginning of printing to the first decades of the 20th century.

TextGrid, Wikimedia Germany and Creative Commons Germany are now cooperating in order to make this collection of texts freely usable for the general public. Wikimedia will soon make the collection available with the assistance of TextGrid. Subsequent use of the texts will be possible without restriction if they are comprised of contents that are in the public domain (particularly in terms of the digitised texts themselves).



If additional data for providing access is included (bibliographic metadata, for example), it will be covered under the Creative Commons CC-BY 3.0 license<sup>6</sup>. This license primarily requires the attribution of the licensor and is moreover recognized by the Free Software Foundation as “free license”<sup>7</sup>.



“With the selection of the Creative Commons License, legal certainty will result for every subsequent user of the texts, since in addition to the copyright status of the actual work, the question of ancillary copyright is thereby resolved, and

<sup>6</sup> [Creative Commons License cc-by](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Statement of the FSF on the CC-License types BY and BY-SA](#)

the licensor waives all rights resulting from this protection to the fullest extent possible,” explained Michael Weller of the European Academy of Computing in Law (Legal Project Management for Creative Commons Germany).

Every Internet user will receive free access to the data and can further process and reuse the data holdings as long as the attribution requirement is observed. For projects sponsored by the Wikimedia Foundation, new possibilities emerge: “With free access to the data, the projects carried out by Wikimedia Foundation, such as Wikisource and Wikimedia Commons, and their users can provide and link the works of the collection of texts in their accumulation of knowledge,” commented Mathias Schindler from Wikimedia Germany.

The general public as well as specialized research communities will benefit from this cooperation: “The primary task of the Digital Humanities is no longer digitisation, as it was in the 90s, but instead the methodically innovative development of structured data sets. With this cooperation we will make access to this information possible not only to research communities but also to the general public,” said Dr. Heike Neuroth, TextGrid Project Manager at the State and University Library Goettingen.

During the next three years, TextGrid will prepare the collection for scholarly use (for example, the conversion into TEI, with more extensive markup for more precise research) and make it available in a virtual research environment together with appropriate tools for further processing. Scholarly communities were requested to provide input on

the desired licensing conditions for their research data resulting from this textual foundation<sup>1</sup>.

## European University Cyprus Interview: Dr Charis Xinari



### *What is your understanding of Digital Humanities?*

From what I can understand, this is an interdisciplinary project which brings together computing and the Humanities involving-among others-the digitisation of information and research material in the Humanities.

### *Can you give some examples of your (daily) research regarding Digital Humanities?*

Being a research in the Humanities, specifically in English Literature, means that I rely on good old-fashioned paper for most of my research; I like taking

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<sup>1</sup> [Vote on the Licensing Conditions for Scholarly Use in TextGrid](#) (in German)

notes in my books and like the feel of paper. However, I use the Internet on a daily basis for research purposes. I usually visit publishers' websites to check out new publications, or the webpages of organisations relevant to my research area, and of course library catalogues. It is often a relief to find articles on line and be able to read them in the comfort of your office/home without having to leave the room to have access to the material.

***Which new research questions can be answered by using Digital Humanities methods?***

I am not entirely sure about that. I would imagine that Linguistics is perhaps an area in which these methods may be more useful. Having said that, the digitisation of library archives may open up so many possibilities for research as it will make accessible material that did not use to be easy to access due to geographical restrictions.

***How could the classical/traditional humanities be encouraged to use Digital Humanities methods?***

Through seminars or training programmes; sometimes, those of us in the humanities can be phobic when it comes to new technology.

***Where do you see your discipline in the year 2020?***

I often worry that everything will become digitised and my precious paperbacks will become extinct! On a more serious note, I think that in a few years we will have access to more sources and

more international research thanks to digital humanities projects.

***How could Dariah help to support to develop a European research infrastructure?***

What I would like to see is a huge data base which would give me access to all library holdings in Europe, and perhaps more e-books.

*Charis Xinari is Lecturer in English Literature at European University Cyprus. She researches in the area of post-modernism and Gender Studies with a particular interest in the notion of the body and the formation of gender identity and subjectivity.*

**Focus on DARIAH Partners**

***Introducing the Archaeology Data Service<sup>1</sup>***



The Archaeology Data Service (ADS) is situated in the Department of Archaeology at the University of York in the UK and is funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council and also via project based funding drawn from academia, the European Union, National and Local Government agencies as well as the commercial archaeological sector.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk>



The core objective of the ADS is to support research, learning and teaching with high quality and dependable digital resources. It does this by preserving digital data in the long term, and by promoting and disseminating a broad range of data in archaeology.

The ADS promotes good practice in the use of digital data in archaeology, provides technical advice to the research community, and supports the deployment of digital technologies.

The ADS is also actively engaged in a number of research projects on topics ranging from data mining, to maritime archaeology to the deep linking of heterogeneous datasets in the UK, across Europe and with Transatlantic partners.

The ADS archives and provides access to many thousands of files comprising a broad range of archaeological material in the form of excavation and fieldwork project archives, digital versions of archaeological journals (including the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* and the *Journal of Medieval Archaeology*) as well as numerous resources designed for reference and teaching within archaeology.

The ADS created and hosts a series of *Guides to Good Practice* for the archaeological practitioners on topics ranging from geophysical prospection to Virtual Reality modelling.

A core ADS resource is the ArchSearch search engine that allows the discovery of not only all ADS resources, but also the national monuments records of Scotland, England and Wales and a number of other national and local archaeologi-

cal databases. All material hosted by the ADS is freely available to all for *bona fide* research, teaching and learning purposes and is covered by our terms and conditions of use.

The DARIAH project aims to investigate the creation of infrastructure in the sphere of digital research output preservation Europe wide. Our role in DARIAH is to provide a technical demonstrator by bringing to service a transnational archaeological data-aggregation service based on the ARENA: Archaeological Records of Europe Networked Access demonstrator project originally completed by the ADS with six European partners in 2004.

Although the ARENA portal has now been running successfully for 5 years, the underlying technologies have since been challenged by more sophisticated approaches to interoperability. Under the auspices of DARIAH the ADS is coordinating a second phase of the ARENA project - ARENA 2 - which will take full advantage of web services and a Service Orientated Architecture approach whilst demonstrating that 'legacy' systems (such as Z39.50) can be integrated into this architecture.

The ARENA 2 page has the latest information on partners and supporting projects for this exciting new development.

**Learn more about DARIAH!**

Visit the DARIAH website: <http://www.dariah.eu>

Send us an e-mail: [info@dariah.eu](mailto:info@dariah.eu)

### *Introducing the Institute of Contemporary History*



The Institute of Contemporary History<sup>1</sup> (ICH) is the main scientific institution in Slovenia for the study of the recent and contemporary history of Slovenia and the Slovenes, from the middle of the 19th century onwards. The research work is based on programs and projects and is in terms of subject matter divided into two parts, one dealing with political and cultural history and the history of ideas, and the other with economic and social history.

ICH publishes (since 1960) scientific magazine Contributions to the contemporary history (*Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*), and collection *Razpoznava/Recognitiones* (since 2005).

In 2006, ICH launched Slovene Historiography Research Infrastructure portal – *Sistory* ([www.sistory.si](http://www.sistory.si)). *Sistory* is a research and an education portal of Slovene historiography. It is designed in Slovene and English and aimed at the historiography in its entirety. A digitised database of historiographic literature and sources means the formation of an information

The *Sistory* is divided into two sections. The first, involves digitisation of magazines, e books, scientific analysis, lectures (*Literature*), *Sources* (printed, archive, and data base on dead tolls of the

2<sup>nd</sup> World War), *Biography*, and the *History and School*. The latter is orientated towards younger population, and their perception of history and past, as well as their historical memory.

Besides at students and pupils, it is also aimed as a supplement to regular history lessons in the education system. The second section of the *Sistory* portal provides the Index of Citations (*ZIC*) – the only such index in the Humanities and Social Sciences in Slovenia (with an open public access).

*ZIC* search engine provides those who look for information on Slovene historiography a general overview of historiographical science production and basic information on the content of works quoted.

The *Sistory* portal's objective is the digitisation of historical source material, literature and all the content that most appeals to researchers of Slovene history, to college and university teachers and lecturers as well as students at any level of education. In such a manner defined objectives require collaborations with individuals and institutions that are directly or indirectly engaged in history and historiography.

ICH is a research centre and its role in the digitisation process is thus to focus on researchers' needs and requirements, as well as the presentation to various publics. By doing so, ICH addresses the needs and supports the cooperation between digital centers, ICH programs and research communities.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.inz.si>