

For immediate release
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Launch of the ARROW Project: Improving the exploitation of creative content

Brussels, 12 December 2008: Today the European Commission and the ARROW consortium made up of 16 partners signed the contract for the launch of ARROW, an acronym for Accessible Registries of Rights Information and Orphan Works towards Europeana. The 5.1 million Euro project co-funded under the European Commission's eContent*plus* Programme involves a broad range of European national libraries, publishers and collective management organisations, also representing writers.

ARROW aims in particular to support the EC's i2010 Digital Library Project by finding ways to clarify the rights status of orphan and out of print works, so they can be cleared for digitisation and inclusion in the Digital Library. It is a project which sets out to realise and test the solutions developed by the European Commission's High Level Expert Group.

The project also seeks to enhance the interoperability of rights information (i.e. exchange of information) between rightholders, agents, libraries and users. Solutions envisaged by the venture include the establishment of systems for the exchange of rights data, the creation of a registry of orphan works and a network of rights clearance centres. Key to achieving this objective is interoperability, standards deployment and stakeholder involvement.

The project initially involves high-level know-how from 16 stakeholders in the book value net in 10 European countries – Italy, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, The Netherlands and United Kingdom. This public-private-partnership includes publishers associations with the the Associazione Italiana Editori as project co-ordinator, national libraries, university libraries, reproduction rights organisations, international organisations, technology developers and ISBN agencies. Further organisations have shown their willingness to support the initial partners at a later part of the project.

The project will last for 2.5 years and will pass through three main phases, starting with the development of the system, including preliminary actions aimed at detailing legal and business models, interoperability issues and technological architecture; followed by the actual set up and design of the right information infrastructure and, finally the solutions will be tested out.

For additional information on the ARROW project, please contact

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Note for editors

ARROW - Accessible Registries of Rights Information and Orphan Works towards the EDL – a consortium of European national libraries, publishers and collective management organisations, also representing writers – working through their main European associations and a number of national organisations – is a targeted project co-funded under the European Commission's **eContentplus Programme** (see http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/econtentplus/index_en.htm) which seeks to help make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable.