

## MICHAEL: Multilingual Inventory of Cultural Heritage in Europe

The goal of Michael is to set-up, validate and launch an online pan-European service to enable European cultural heritage to be promoted to a worldwide audience. Michael will contribute to the objectives of the eTen programme and the eEurope 2005 Action Plan by implementing a common inventory of digital cultural heritage in France, Italy and UK.



The MICHAEL project has developed an electronic system to access, manage and update existing digital records of Europe's collections, including museum objects, archaeological and tourist sites, music and audiovisual archives, biographical material, documents and manuscripts. Drawing on a system developed earlier by France's Ministry of Culture and Communication, it also allows users to enter new data.

MICHAEL's key attraction for the public is its multilingual online service, which makes it possible for users to search, browse and examine digital cultural collections stored on different servers throughout Europe, via a single point of access.

MICHAEL culminates several progressive efforts to scan, photograph and otherwise enter cultural records into digital data bases. It promotes standards, best practices and guidelines for digitisation that were originally proposed by the National Representatives Group, appointed by the Member States to implement the Lund Principles defined in Lund, Sweden, in 2001. It also follows up on ideas developed in the IST-funded MINERVA and MinervaPLUS projects. MICHAEL eases cross-research and enquiries, but does not directly provide copyrighted material. For example, if a user is looking for the Mona Lisa, he will get a description of collections that include images of it. MICHAEL provides the link to those collections.

The current MICHAEL service already includes multilingual online material coming from more than 3000 British, French and Italian collections, presenting catalogue information describing archaeological sites, books, manuscripts, buildings, paintings, or sculptures present in European museums, archives and libraries. Its open source software is available for improvements and customisations to any new country interested in joining the network.

The target audience includes students and researchers, who find MICHAEL attractive because of its wide scope, its powerful search and retrieval functionality and the enormous body of rich cultural content that it makes available. Browsers and potential tourists are attracted to it by the easy web-based user interface, by the availability to find cultural information based on the location of the original material and by the aesthetic beauty of the material presented. MICHAEL has been acknowledged as one of the two pillars of the future European Digital Library, together with the TEL project, run by the Conference of the European National Libraries.

### Technical Details

#### Project ID card

- Funded under: eTen
- Area: T1 - eGovernment
- Total cost: €34.01m
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- Project reference: ETEN-510733
- Execution: From 01/06/2004 to 31/05/2008
- Project status: Closed
- Contract type: eTen ID eTen Initial Deployment

#### Links

- <http://www.michael-culture.org>

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#### Participants

Coordinator: MINISTERO PER I BENI E LE ATTIVITA CULTURALI, ITALY

#### Participating partners:

Organisation	Country
MINISTERO PER I BENI E LE ATTIVITA CULTURALI	ITALY
MINISTERE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION	FRANCE

<b>ASSOCIATION DEDALE</b>	FRANCE
<b>AMITIE SRL</b>	ITALY
<b>THE MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES COUNCIL</b>	UNITED KINGDOM

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