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## A Gateway to European Newspapers Online: Increasing awareness of shared European history and culture

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### Abstract

Paper presents details of the project “A Gateway to European Newspapers Online” with special focus on participation of University library “Svetozar Markovic” and National Library of Turkey in it. European Newspaper project is a CIP ICT-PSP Best Practice Network project aiming at aggregating metadata on digitized newspaper content for Europeana and grounding basis for more efficient execution of newspaper digitization projects in the future. Three year project worth just over 4 million euros started on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. Project’s kick off meeting hosted by the project coordinator Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin gathered representatives from 17 institutions partnering in the project including some of the Europe’s leading libraries from 12 countries. By providing a rich diversity of newspaper materials in different languages and alphabets project aims at grounding basis for a more comprehensive outlook at European shared history and culture. By making available newspapers from various European countries accessible through the unique Europeana portal the projects enables users to compare historic perceptions at different countries on the news and articles about exciting events and cultural turning points.

The project main goal is to survey existing collections of digitized newspaper materials and to aggregate metadata on them making Europeana one of the greatest portals for accessing historic newspapers. Besides this project aims at refinement of existing collections of digitized newspaper materials by translating image materials into full text ones by means of OCR (Optical Character Recognition) and OLR (Optical Layout Recognition) for article recognition. Metadata standardization is high on the list of project goals since variety of metadata formats are currently in use describing digitized newspaper materials and in order to improve access to such content, common standards need to be adopted. Project also aims at providing better displaying capabilities and more clear access conditions to digitized newspaper materials. Multilingual and multicultural nature of Europe creates challenges if one is to provide users with easy and seamless browsing experience when exploring collective European historic newspaper pages collection. To overcome this challenge is to translate newspaper pages into living, vivid experience of multilingual and multicultural continent with fragile but rewarding

collective history and culture. In this challenge lays the importance of the project “A Gateway to European Newspapers Online” and hope that by 2015 a more rich perspective on historic events may be gained by easily accessible newspaper collections from all over Europe.

University library “Svetozar Markovic” and National Library of Turkey are the only two partners in the project from the region of South Eastern Europe and from non-EU countries. By adding to linguistic diversity of newspaper collections and by bringing in the distinctive cultural perspectives on historic events that may be interpreted from digitized newspaper materials these institutions strive to increase the added value of the project.

The National Library of Turkey was established with the intention of becoming a center for a national network of knowledge and information. It contributes to cultural development, economic growth, and creation of a knowledge society in Turkey. The National Library of Turkey is determined in increasing its Europeana contribution and playing an active role in development of this single, direct and multilingual gateway to Europe’s cultural heritage that promote cultural diversity and creative content across Europe. The paper will provide details on the National Library of Turkey content provided for the project comprising 418.000 images from newspapers and almanacs.

University Library “Svetozar Markovic” is the central library for the University of Belgrade, the University of Arts and the main library for all other university-level and specialized libraries in Serbia. Its previous participation in EU funded projects is specific for its multicultural and multilingual mark. The library has already provided Europeana users with collections of old and rare books from Ottoman collection and collection on Alexander the Great comprising some of the first entries of full text in Arabic, Ottoman Turkish and Persian in Europeana. The paper will provide details on the University Library “Svetozar Markovic” content provided for the project comprising 387.000 images from 13 newspapers.