Searching through historic newspapers from 23 European countries.

As part of the Europeana Newspapers project ¹, The European Library² developed a historic newspapers browser³ that enables users to perform full-text searches in millions of historic newspaper pages.

“For the first time in history we have the opportunity to do transnational comparative research on the basis of big data!” says Toine Pieters, digital humanities researcher from the University of Utrecht.

The prototype interface has undergone usability testing in spring 2014. On the basis of the recommendations received, The European Library simplified the search page and made it possible to browse the content⁴ by date, newspaper title and geographic map. Before the end of the project a further usability study will be carried out to test the improvements made.

While the amount of content in the browser continues to grow rapidly one can already explore 1.8 million historic newspaper issues and perform full-text searches across 7 million pages. By the end of January 2015, the browser will contain around 30 million newspaper pages from 25 libraries in 23 European countries. Users will be able to search:

- full text of more than 10 million historic newspaper pages
- named entity recognition in Dutch, German and French to enable searches of names of people and geographic places
- metadata records of over 20 million historic newspaper pages.

“Having access to newspapers from across Europe….allows us to look for circulation, not only for origins: to study routes rather than roots, to work on what we call transliteratures.” says Amélie Sanz, researcher and professor of comparative literature and cyber culture at Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

Moreover one can explore the historic newspapers as well as millions of other cultural heritage items at Europeana.eu⁵, which recently embedded the historic newspaper viewer. The viewer is also available through The European Library for other cultural heritage institutions to embed in their digital environment.

"For researchers, such as historians, journalists, fact-checkers and genealogists, Europeana Newspapers will be the most important portal to consult historic newspapers in Europe. A source of great importance in construction.“ says Eric Hennekam, archive specialist, member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and visiting lecturer at the faculty of journalism of the University of Groningen, VU University Amsterdam and the Flemish Mediacademy.

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¹ http://www.europeana-newspapers.eu/
² http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/
³ http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/newspapers
⁵ http://europeana.eu/
Historic newspaper content from the following libraries is available and constantly growing:

- National Library of France
- National Library of the Netherlands
- Dr. Friedrich Teßmann Library
- National Library of Estonia
- National Library of Finland
- National Library of Latvia
- National Library of Poland
- National Library of Turkey
- Austrian National Library
- Berlin State Library
- State and University Library Hamburg
- University Library of Belgrade
- National Library of Wales
- National Library of Bulgaria
- National Library of Czech Republic
- National and University Library in Zagreb
- National Library of Belgium
- National and University Library of Slovenia
- National Library of Portugal
- National Library of Romania
- National and University Library Iceland
- National Library of Spain
- National Library of Luxembourg
- National Library of Slovakia
- National Library of Serbia

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Information:

Project website: http://www.europeana-newspapers.eu/
TEL Historic Newspapers: http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/newspapers
Europeana: http://europeana.eu/

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