

Europe's national libraries and CENL commit to collaboration and mutual support as they build on the legacy of The European Library

- TEL services to be discontinued from 31 December 2016

The European Library (TEL) was launched by the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) in 2004 as the union catalogue of European national libraries and has since become a web portal and open data hub for national library data in Europe. Its success led to the Commission asking CENL to set up what became Europeana. The European Library has disseminated library data in a variety of ways to promote its wider use. TEL has been the biggest provider to Europeana, a digital platform for cultural heritage funded by the European Commission, bringing in more than 11 million records from European libraries. Access to this data will continue through Europeana.

The decision to no longer contribute to the collective subscription model for TEL was made by CENL at its Annual General Meeting in Bern in 2015, and a review of alternative service models followed. The review recommended that TEL services should be concluded by the end of 2016.

Individual national libraries' needs have become increasingly diverse since TEL was launched by CENL in 2004 and the subscription model for data aggregation offered by TEL no longer offered the best option for all national library members.

CENL and Europeana have worked closely together to preserve TEL's assets in advance of its closure.

TEL aggregation services for libraries will be stopped and the TEL portal, which gives access to both bibliographical and digital data sets, the TEL Linked Open Data set, and TEL digital exhibitions, will be frozen on 31 December 2016, with no subsequent updates. This allows the TEL Newspapers collection to continue to be accessible and serve as a starting point for the launch of the Europeana Newspapers channel in due course. Europeana will also continue to provide aggregation services to individual libraries with no alternative aggregation routes to Europeana.

The closure of TEL frees up CENL resources to establish a new form of collaboration and mutual support between pan-European national library members. CENL will create a new set of collaborative and networking opportunities across Europe in line with its strategic priorities to 2018: improving the stewardship and management of collections by sharing information, identifying best practice and supporting members; improving the visibility and impact of services; developing member libraries' skills and professional capabilities; improving the sustainability of Europe's national libraries as organisations through effective advocacy, partnership and collaboration with other organisations; strengthening CENL as an organisation to enable it to do more to support its members.