



The European Thematic Network on the Digital Public Domain
<http://communia-project.eu/>

COMMUNIA is a project funded by the European Commission within the eContentplus framework, consisting of a network of organisations conducting high-level policy discussion and strategic action on all issues related to the public domain in the digital environment.

The COMMUNIA Thematic Network aims at becoming a European point of reference for theoretical analysis and strategic policy discussion of existing and emerging issues concerning the digital public domain - as well as related topics, including, but not limited to, alternative forms of licensing for creative material; open access to scientific publications and research results; management of works whose authors are unknown (i.e. orphan works).

Coordinated by the NEXA Research Center for Internet and Society of the Politecnico of Torino, Italy, this 3-years long project expects to provide policy guidelines that will help each stakeholder involved - public and private, from the local to the European and global level.

In its first year of activities, the Project held four live events: the kick-off meeting (Turin, September 2007); two workshops, in Turin (January 2008, on technology and the public domain) and Vilnius, Lithuania (March 2008, on the ethical foundations of the public domain); and a widely attended and influential conference in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium (June 2008, on the assessment of economic and social impact of digital public domain throughout Europe).

An increasing level of user participation and awareness in any aspect of the Project was also experienced, thus leading to the activation of the first three Working Groups (on Education and scientific research, Libraries and archives, The public sphere) and the first Network enlargement consisting of five new influential network members, including two organisations based in the USA.

In regard to its online activities, the COMMUNIA website became a major information hub, providing frequent updates about the Project activities and important events/news around the world, along with a large section including material produced at each event - abstracts, articles, presentation slides and MP3 audio files are available for free download, released under 'open content licences', mostly a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.

A main mailing list ("COMMUNIA announce") provides about two updates monthly, with basic information about COMMUNIA activities and events, and other information. There are also other mailing lists for internal matters and open discussions on various aspects of digital public domain worldwide.

The next events already scheduled are two workshops (Amsterdam, 21-22 October 2008, Geneva, 23 January 2009) and the 2009 COMMUNIA Conference (Turin, June 2009).

For more information, please check our website: <http://communia-project.eu/>

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