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on Research Infrastructures

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Background (initiatives)

- **ESFRI**: European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures
large-scale **intergovernmental** initiatives
(icebreaker; telescopes; spallation source; bio-banking etc.)
- **EU Portal on Research Infrastructures**
“à vocation Européenne” (<http://www.riportal.eu/public>) self-nomination of
existing RI's + validation
- **ESF Member Organization Forum “Medium Sized RI's”**:
focused on **research councils**



Background (framework conditions)

- Advances on **legal framework** (management, access, IPR) at member state level, not considering smaller scale coordination needs
(**ERIC** – European Research Infrastructure Consortium, 28.08.09:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/eric_en.html)
- Poor involvement of **scientific communities** (assessing needs and potential of RI's for triggering new science)
(see: **ERA Expert Group**: “World Class Infrastructures for the ERA”:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/pdf/ri_era-expert-group-0308_en.pdf)



Overview over Proposal

(focusing on perceived Academies' concerns)

Context:

- Creating networks of **distributed infrastructures**
(expert hearing to understand the need for a counterweight to ESFRI and an Academy complement to ESF activities → statement)
- **Focus on researchers' needs**
(stakeholder workshop as follow-up to ERA report → statement)

Case Studies:

A. **Digital Humanities** as Research Infrastructures

(→ survey and report; template for collaborations)

B. **Biodiversity** research and Natural History Collections

(→ musea; databases etc.: interact with OECD, ICSU/CODATA, NSF, ESFRI/SciColl) (→ product: survey & recommendations)



Example of background for case study

A. **Digital Humanities** as Research Infrastructures

(→ survey and report; template for collaborations)

Q: *What added value from an Academy initiative to DARIAH?*



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

1. The Academies' Programme

The **Academies' Programme** is a worldwide unique research infrastructure programme in the humanities. As of 2009 it comprises *171 research projects* at *9 German scientific academies* (including the Leopoldina) with *204 working groups*.

Focus of the programme: → **all disciplines of the humanities**

The Programme is administered by the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

2. The aim of the Academies' Programme:

- promotion of basic research in the humanities
- edition of fundamental works (which build the prerequisite for further research)

3. The projects of the Academies' Programme

are integrated in European and international scientific networks.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

4. The German Academies would like to develop the Academies' Programme to an **European Infrastructure Programme for the Humanities** with the following subjects:
 - European History
 - European Culture and its Diversity
 - Common European Heritage and European Identity

In the coming-up years we will try to submit an **application** for the implementation of a comparable European Infrastructure Programme at the **European Union** and would be glad, if ALLEA would support us in this matter.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

5. One of the major challenges for the Research Infrastructures in the Humanities is electronic publishing, because the practices of usage have crucially changed. The book is no longer the **preferred medium**, today it is the **internet**.
6. The humanities have to participate actively at this development, because the **internet reaches new target groups** that have so far not been attracted by books.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

7. This **development can be proven**, when one compares sales figures of books and numbers of page views in the internet:
 - While the **sales figures of books** are *stagnating or declining*, the **number of page views** is *strongly rising*.
 - The ratio is meanwhile 1: 100 to 1: 1000.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

8. **Two examples** for this development from the Academies' Programme:

- ▶ In the first couple of days after the accomplishment of the “**New Edition of Mozart's Works**” two years ago, **more than 4 Mio. page views** could be registered.
- ▶ The **hittitology** is worldwide a very small discipline; of the edition in book form only 250 copies have been purchased, but the internet-portal has about **12.000 page views** per month.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

9. Therefore we have developed **a four-column-system**:
 1. **Retrodigitalisation** of all research results, which to that day only had been published in book form.
 2. The works of all **running projects will be digitalized** parallel to the edition in book-form.
 3. Only those projects will be started, which provide a **concept for digitalisation from the beginning**.
 4. Guarantee of **long-term availability, storage and updating of data** in the Internet.



A. Digital Humanities as Research Infrastructures

10. The **long-term and up-to-date availability of data** is the **major future problem**, because the technical prerequisites are changing every couple of years:
 - There have to be developed **common tools and international standards**, which make it possible that electronic data can be converted easily in new systems and so be in the long run available for users.



B. Example of background for case study 2:

Biodiversity research infrastructures and collections related to Natural History:

- **academies** own small collections, incl. those linked to explorers (examples: Humboldt; Lisbon Academy; Bulgarian Academy: at least three related musea);
- **global data centres** (ICSU, CO-DATA) create high thresholds for small data-sets, similarly:
- **biodiversity RI's in ESFRI and ESF** emerging activity on “Scientific Collections”, need reminder to include complex data sets on historical biodiversity (link to research is lacking);
- recommendations of **OECD Global Science Forum**;
- concerns of **NSF and others that smaller owners** not covered



Thank you very much for your attention.