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CONTENT

David Workshop Digital Archiving, Leuven November 30th 2000.

State of play vis-à-vis project:

Report 1: *The permanent preservation of digital government data: the situation in the Flemish institutions and archival services*

Report 2: *The Digital archiving of the electoral register*

Seminar

Agenda

DAVID WORKSHOP DIGITAL ARCHIVING, LEUVEN NOVEMBER 30th 2000

The first 'Digital Archiving' workshop took place in Leuven on November 30th. The high turnout of 106 participants exceeded the expectations of the DAVID staff. The success of this workshop confirms the results of our survey, namely that the archival services are in urgent need of additional information and specific guidelines.

We hoped to come up to the high expectations of all those participants with a very full programme and, indeed, there were no fewer than eight speakers. Mrs. Schoups of Antwerp City Archive opened the day with an explanation of the objectives of the DAVID project, thereby giving the official starting-signal for the DAVID project to the outside world. Then Roeland Verhaert made a final contribution as a member of the DAVID project team with a presentation of the results of the survey he had carried out in the previous months. Prof. Dumortier explained how the digital signature, which is best known as a security technique for electronic communication, can play an important role in the archiving of electronic documents. As the last speaker of the morning, Peter Horsman talked about initiatives that have been taken to date at home and abroad with regard to digital archiving.

After lunch Kees van der Meer sketched a picture of the standards that are important in archiving electronic files, after which Jan Engelen explained why it is the XML standard that is creating such high expectations for the future. Finally, two case-studies: the electronic agenda and decision-making system of the City of Antwerp was explained in greater detail by Willem Vanneste and to round off the day Mart Bakker talked about practical experiences with digital permanency in the city of Rotterdam.

A question and answer and a discussion session rounded off the programme for both the morning and the afternoon. The real upshot was that the archive function must be firmly embedded in those

institutions that produce records for archiving. This will require some adjustment both on the part of the institutions and the archives. The relativity of standards, action plans and reference models needs to be emphasized repeatedly. All these are useful, but they have to be made part of a procedure or strategy.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the speakers who helped make this workshop possible. We intend to organize more such workshops in the future.

You will find the slides of the workshop presentations on our DAVID website.

STATE OF PLAY VIS-À-VIS PROJECT

Report 1: VERHAERT R., *The permanent preservation of digital government data: the situation in the Flemish institutions and archival services*. Antwerp, 2000

On the strength of a number of surveys carried out during the course of 2000, an assessment was made of the current situation vis-à-vis the archiving of digital documents in Flanders.

Flemish government institutions follow the digital evolution in their day-to-day working. Scores of measures are taken to ensure that work with digital documents runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible. However, when it comes to their long-term preservation, it appears that for important documents staff switch over *en masse* to printing. As a result of this and because of a lack of contact with the administrations, Flemish archive-administering institutions archive scarcely any digital documents in their digital form at all. Moreover, the formulation of theory also lags behind and there is a huge demand for legislative measures and procedures.

You will find the full text of the report on the DAVID web page.

Report 2: VAN DEN EYNDE, S. and BOUDREZ, F., *The digital archiving of the electoral register*, Antwerp, 2000.

The finishing touches are currently being put to a report on the digital archiving of the electoral register. A study is being carried out into whether the digital archiving of the electoral register is possible within the legal framework. Furthermore, specific guidelines are being drawn up about the way we can archive the electoral register. A similar archiving method can be used for static archive records with a fixed structure.

Seminar 'Law and IT'

As part of the seminar 'Law and IT' available as an optional subject to Law students (second and third licentiate), six students make up the 'electronic archiving' group. This subject was covered for the first time in the seminar organized as part of the DAVID project. The results will soon be published on our website.

AGENDA*Planned documents:*

01/2001: Report 3: VAN DEN EYNDE, S. AND BOUDREZ, F., *The digital archiving of the electoral register*

02/2001: report juridical framework

02/2001: inventory of digital files Antwerp with archival assessment

Website:

The DAVID website is constantly being added to and updated. In addition to all the reports, it will soon include a new page with links.

Newsletter:

Next Newsletter: end February 2000