EFG1914: PUBLIC PROGRESS REPORT – Year 1

Source: Deutsches Filminstitut, Collection Wolfgang Filzinger

This report covers the activities and main results in the first year of the film digitisation project EFG1914. The project started on 15 February 2012 with the aim to digitise and give online access to 654 hours of film – both non-fiction and fiction – related to the First World War. In addition to the digitisation of the moving images, 5'600 film-related objects, such as images, posters, programmes and periodicals will go online in the course of the project and will help contextualise the videos. EFG1914 runs for 2 years until 15 February 2014 and consists of a consortium of 25 European partners, 20 of which are film archives and therefore content providers.

The EFG1914 project has four main objectives:

1. Digitise films and film-related material from and about the First World War in high quality (HD or preferably 2K)
2. Give online access to the digitised material via the European Film Gateway and Europeana to web files in Standard Definition
3. Build a Virtual Exhibition that highlights selected films and non-AV objects
4. Provide support and learning opportunities for film archives with regard to digital work flows and handling of high-quality master files (DPXs)

While most of the films to be digitised actually stem from the period 1914-1918, EFG1914 also includes digitisation of films that were produced shortly before World War One and that cover events directly leading up to WWI, such as the Balkan Wars. After the end of the war in 1918, the suffering and hardships of it were the subject of many films produced post-war. It is also in the scope of the EFG1914 project to give online access to a selection of those films. The archives contributing to EFG1914 are located in 15 different countries, many of which were major participants in WWI (Germany, Great Britain, Italy, France, Serbia, etc). In addition, archives from WWI-neutral countries are also represented in the consortium. The project thereby ensures that content representing view points of different countries are included.

The films to be digitised in the scope of the project are of special importance and value because they constitute a major part of the moving images from the 1910s that have survived in European film archives until today. About 80% of the film production from that time is estimated to be lost because films were either destroyed directly after their exploitation in cinemas ended or – if they were kept – were destroyed during the Second

World War. Some got otherwise lost. Digitising and giving online access to a critical mass of the remaining films from that period will considerably simplify the viewing, locating and re-use of this material for a wider audience. Where before researchers had to make appointments with archives and travel to view films on site, through EFG1914 they can now see those films from their home or work place for the first time. All digitised films and film-related content will be made searchable via the European Film Gateway (www.europeanfilmgateway.eu) and Europeana (www.europeana.eu). A selection of especially relevant or interesting films will also be featured in a small Virtual Exhibition focusing on themes related to WWI that will be linked to the European Film Gateway and Europeana. As was expected, with the upcoming centenary of the First World War, requests for (unknown) moving image material increases dramatically from TV producers, academics and other WWI projects. During the first project year this could be witnessed through a high number of various requests for re-use or linking to films digitised in EFG1914. There was also a particularly high interest in a list of titles that

EFG1914 partners plan to digitise. There is good reason to assume that the interest will even grow during the second project year, especially since dissemination can be stepped up now that first content is available online.

EFG1914 is one of three projects in the Europeana network that aggregates WWI-related material for the Europeana portal. The other two being the National libraries' project "Europeana Collections 1914-1918"[1] and the crowd-sourcing project "Europeana 1914-1918"[2], both of which provide non-AV material to Europeana. The project is supported by the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE) and the Europeana Foundation itself.

At the heart of EFG1914 is not only the delivery of content to EFG and Europeana, but also the goal to familiarise film archives with the film digitisation workflow on a large-scale basis. The change from analogue to digital which has been affecting heritage institutions around the world in the past years, has an especially big impact on the work of film archives. Still a high number of archives has not had the opportunity to carry out film digitisation on a larger scale and many of them therefore lack the know-how as well as hard- and software solutions to handle high quality master files like DPXs and encode them in different output formats. Building a close network in EFG1914, archives that are more knowledgeable regarding digital work flows can support others that are less skilled so far. During the first project year it was a core goal to bring all archives in a position where they could set up a work flow that would not only allow them to deliver the content for EFG1914 but also to enable them to further their knowledge on digital work flows for their future digitisation activities. It is important to mention that film restoration is not part of the project though.

EFG1914 builds on the work carried out from September 2008 - August 2009 in the EFG – European Film Gateway project[3] that developed the EFG portal and successfully aggregated over 500'000 digital items from 16 European film archives for Europeana. As the common database, EFG1914 re-uses the tested and running D-Net application of the EFG Information Space, which is the basis for the aggregation of the data from the content providers and for its public display through www.europeanfilmgateway.eu and www.europeana.eu.

Background information and results of the EFG1914 project are also accessible on the project's website www.project.efg1914.eu

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[1] http://www.europeana-collections-1914-1918.eu/
[2] http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/
[3] http://efgproject.eu

Overall project objectives for the first project year

In the first project year, partners of the EFG1914 project were supposed to

- digitse 163,5 hours of film (25% of the total amount of 654 hours to be digitised)
- give online access to 163,5 hours of film via the European Film Gateway and Europeana
- digitise and give online access via EFG and Europeana to 1'400 non-AV items
- build a prototype for the Virtual Exhibition
- provide participating archives with necessary information and support to set up digital work flows through guidelines and workshops

Overall project achievements in Year 1

All Deliverables and Milestones defined for the first project year were achieved. The main results in accordance with the goals set in the EFG1914's Description of Work are:

- Creation of project website for internal and external dissemination purposes[4]
- Digitisation schedules established by all archives
- 32% of films digitised (official goal 25%)
- 25% of films searchable via the European Film Gateway[5]
- 25% of films searchable through Europeana
- 70% of non-AV content digitised (official goal 25%)
- 19% of non-AV content searchable via the EFG
- Digitisation workflow successfully implemented in all partner archives
- Where necessary: Successful sub-contracting of film and non-film digitisation
- Sharing of experience and expertise in two workshops on content selection, digitisation workflows
- Internal prototype of the Virtual Exhibition available

Progress in the individual work packages:

The EFG1914 project is divided into nine Work Packages of which the first four, WP1 - WP4, represent the individual steps necessary in the digitisation process of film material. The first four WPs are therefore especially closely linked. Also, it is noteworthy that WP leaders of these four Work Packages were especially active in the first project year, in which the parameters for the workflow implementation had to be set. The following graph illustrates how the WPs are connected.

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[4] http://www.project.efg1914.eu
[5] http://www.europeanfilmgateway.eu/content/efg1914-project
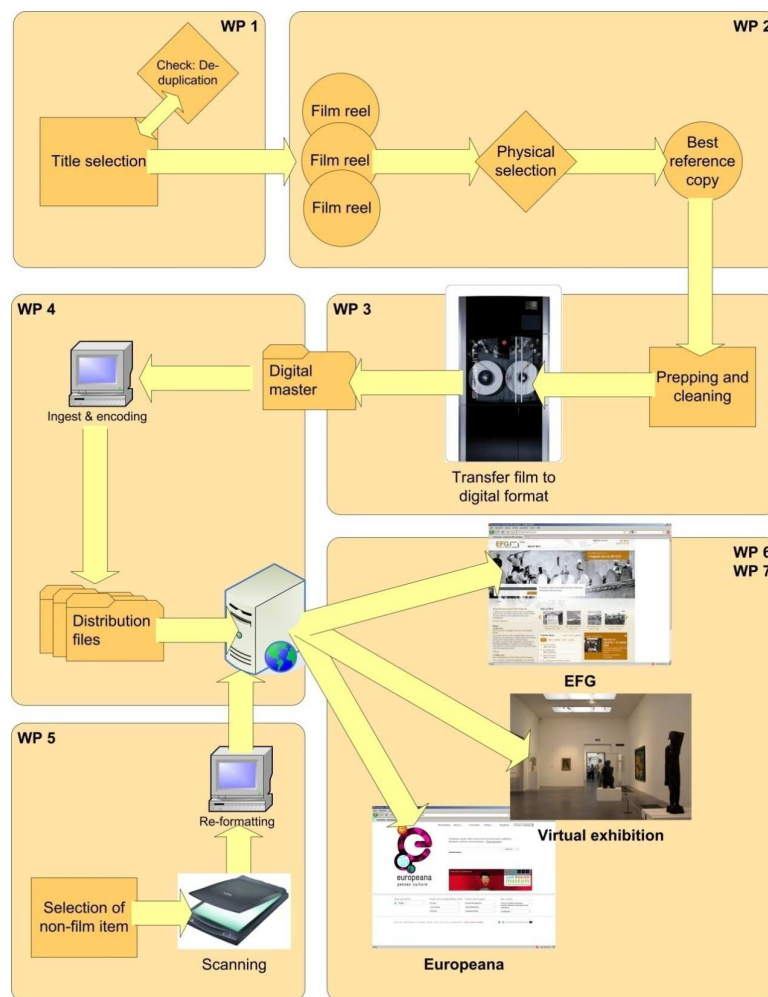
WP1: Content selection and monitoring

Main aim of WP1 in Year 1 was to come up with a reliable list of titles to be digitised in the course of the EFG1914 project. While the archives in the consortium checked their holdings for suitable titles before the project proposal was submitted, a more thorough and detailed search for available material had to be carried out once the project started. All archives added a list of titles to be rights cleared and possibly digitised to their own online digitisation schedule kept on smartsheet[6]. These schedules do not only hold information on the titles themselves but also on basic filmographic information, format of the source material and rights status. In addition to that, partners indicate the digitisation, encoding and online availability status of the individual film title in their lists. All archives can view the digitisation schedules of all other archives involved, which helps them identify possible doublets and exchange rights information. All archives update their lists regularly, which allows for a detailed overview of the state of title selection. In the first project year EFG1914 archives identified approximately 2'800 film titles for possible digitisation and added them to their lists. Some of the films had and will have to be removed again, because rights are not granted, source material is in a condition unsuitable for digitisation or doublets appear. WP1 leader Det Danske Filminstitut monitored the title lists of the partners closely and produced two reports, one of which is titled D1.2 "First Digitisation Progress Report to the Commission"[7].

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[6] http://www.smartsheet.com Smartsheet is an online project management tool, which allows information to be shared with others in a certain group.

[7] http://project.efg1914.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/EFG1914_D1_2_Digitisation_progress_report_to_the_Commission.pdf

D1.2 gives an overview of the results of film digitisation in the first project year and describes the nature of the so far digitised content in greater detail. During the second project year, the title lists maintained by the archives will undergo further revisions for the same reasons stated above. Most of the archives with a smaller contribution to the project have finalised their lists already, while title lists of the bigger content providers are subject to further change. As soon as a film was successfully rights cleared, digitised and made available online via EFG, it was included in a public version of the title list, which was updated regularly.[8]

WP2: Digitisation planning, preparation and best practice
While WP1 deals with the selection of titles that appear to be relevant to the project with regards to their content, WP2 focuses on the selection of the best source material for digitisation. The content selection in WP1 and the physical selection in WP2 are very closely related as the actual inclusion of a film title in the digitisation lists of the partner archives very much depends on the condition of the source material. The same archive might hold several different versions of a film work, in which case they will have to inspect and document the material with a high degree of attention to detail in order to determine which one is most suitable for digitisation. The same applies for a film work that is held by two different archives. Here the results of the extremely detailed inspection process will have to be communicated and evaluated jointly in order to assure that the more suitable copy will be selected for digitisation. Considering that at that point in the project the material is still available in analogue form only, it is clear that the described process can be time-consuming. However, since all archivists could monitor the list of the other partners, identification of possible doublets was simplified. Another major task to be carried out by the archives in WP2 is the clearing of copyrights. Although many of the films are almost 100 years old, archives still have to invest time and effort in finding out whether a film is still under copyright, orphaned or in public domain. Most archives in the consortium do not hold the rights to the films they plan to digitise and make available online. Notable exceptions are Cinecittà Luce based in Rome and the Imperial War Museums in London. As is well-known, rights clearance for films is especially difficult due to the fact that, depending on national legislation, films have several authors (typically four: director, screenwriter, dialogue writer and music composer), which must be identified and be contacted in order to receive permission to digitise the film and make it available online, if they died less than 70 years ago. Archives participating in the EFG1914 project could profit from the Guidelines for rights clearance[9] that were established in the course of the original EFG project and that are available publicly. Most relevant however, was the implementation of digital workflows in all partner archives. At the beginning of the project only less than half of the participating archives had implemented a digital workflow that allowed them to scan film in-house, handle the resulting high-quality files and encode them into streamable web files. At least half of the archives participating in EFG1914 still lacked the experience. Through direct contact of the archives with each other, but especially with the help of WP2 leader Det Danske Filminstitut supported by Fraunhofer, archives received support with the implementation of a digital workflow in their archive. The publicly available report D2.1 "Specification of processes and digital formats"[10] provided the archives with necessary information on the "Curator Archive Suite" software (developed by Fraunhofer) that was subsequently used for the encoding of web files. While the archives were relatively free to decide in which quality and format they wanted to give online access to their films, the report provided recommendations on preferred digital formats. Direct exchange of experiences with digitisation took place at the "Planning/ Standardisation and

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[8]

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Ai0xfQHaBpe0dHlNbnRaTm5oSFVUREc1SG5SYWct
ZUE&usp=sharing
[9] http://efgproject.eu/downloads/D_5_3_Final_Guidelines_Copyright_Clearance_online.pdf
[10] http://project.efg1914.eu/wp-
content/uploads/2012/07/D2_1_Specification_of_processes_and_digital_formats_V1.5.pdf

digitisation best practice workshop" in Brussels in October 2012, which was prepared jointly by Det Danske Filminstitut and WP4 leader Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique.

WP3: Transfer and mastering film to digital format
The task of the actual film digitisation, the transfer from analogue to digital, was carried out in this WP. As specified in the Description of Work, 10 archives had to sub-contract the scanning of their films due to the lack of an in-house solution. The main task of WP leader EYE Film Institute was to provide these archives with the necessary information to carry out a tender to find a suitable sub-contractor. Due to their involvement in the Dutch national digitisation project "Images for the Future", EYE was able to provide the archives in question with relevant information on the specifics of the tender procedure as well as with a model Request of Tender document that archives could then adjust to their purposes. All relevant information including the model tender documents were made available in D3.1 "Tenders for transfer of film to digital master."[11] Archives with in-house digitisation facilities included the scanning of EFG1914 content in their regular digitisation workflow and in many cases were able to start the digitisation sooner than archives which outsourced the transfer from analogue to digital. EFG1914 aims at a high quality digitisation, ideally producing 2K digital master files (DPXs), at least HD quality. By the end of Year 1, all archives had digitised a total of 772 films, equalling 212 hours of film or 32% of all content to be provided in EFG1914. Over 90% of the films were digitised in 2K quality. The number of digitised films exceeded the original forecast made in the project's description of work, which said that 25% of the total 654 hours (163,5 hrs) would be digitised by the end of Year 1. The evaluation of the already digitised content showed that around 80% of the selected titles is non-fiction material, only around 20% are fiction films. It further showed that the majority of the titles (around 70%) were produced during the First World War, a smaller part of around 5% stem from the time shortly before the war, depicting events that lead up to the outbreak of the First World War (e.g. Balkan War 1912-1913). Another 25% of the titles digitised in the first project year were produced post-war but deal with WWI.

WP4: Ingest, encoding and access
Very closely linked to WP2, WP4 aims at facilitating the involved archives with the skills to handle high-quality DPX files and encode them into lower resolution web files. Based on D2.1, WP4 leader Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique produced a "Handbook on encoding", which would not only give the archives hands-on guidelines for encoding DPX files into web files as specified in WP2, but also contains an overview of hardware and software in use in all participating archives. Due to the fact that information regarding the archives' work flow and hardware/software in use can become outdated rather quickly, this handbook was distributed internally only. A workshop carried out together with WP2 in Brussels in October was used as a forum for the archives to exchange experiences. Fraunhofer, who were active in the EDCine project, gave hands-on presentations of their encoding software, while, during a visit to the digital lab of Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique, archives were introduced to the digitisation workflow at CRB. As an easy-to-use software for the encoding of DPX files, Fraunhofer provided interested archives with their "Curator Archive Suite". With the support of CRB and Fraunhofer, all archives involved in EFG1914 were able to set up a workflow for themselves and successfully encode the digitised films.

WP5: Digitisation and delivery of non-film material
While the focus in EFG1914 is certainly on digitisation of film, nine out of 20 archives also provide smaller amounts of WWI-related non-AV material. The majority of this material is photos and posters, a smaller part consists of text material such as programmes, articles and journals. Apart from the Estonian Film Archive, which gives access to a large collection of photos from the First World War that are not film-related, all other non-AV content is related

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[11] http://project.efg1914.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/EFG1914_D3_1_Tenders_for_transfer_Film_to_digital_Master.pdf

to film production between 1914-1918. The chosen objects will help contextualise the films that are made available and to provide more background information on film production in general in the years during the war. The digitisation of non-AV material is monitored in WP5. By the end of the first project year, approximately 70% of the 5'600 non-AV objects had been digitised, 19% of which have been made available online so far. Regarding the status of digitised objects, WP5 is well ahead of the goals foreseen in the DOW, which expected 25% of the content to be digitised by the end of Year 1. WP leader Deutsches Filminstitut authored the internal report M26 "Digitisation of Non-Film Material: Summary of Best Practices", which was shared with the partners in the Members' section of the EFG1914 project website. Just as for the film material, archives have also cleared rights for the non-AV material in the scope of this WP.

WP6: Interoperability with EFG and Europeana

There are two different ways for EFG1914 partners to provide data about the digitised items to the EFG database and therefore to Europeana. They can either export the data from their local databases in XML or enter the data manually in a Metadata Form set up for EFG1914. The latter is a sensible choice when the number of objects provided to EFG is not very large. Some of the archives were already partners in the original EFG project and mappings from their local databases to the EFG database were already available. For archives that had never before contributed data to the EFG database, new mappings had to be implemented. In the first project year, WP6 leader CNR-ISTI ingested data from 10 archives, thus meeting the goal to make 25% of the content available online . Priority was given to the ingestion of data from archives delivering more hours of film than others. 18 out of 20 archives had delivered data by the end of the first project year that will be available on EFG soon. In March, shortly after the end of the first project year, WP6 leader CNR-ISTI forwarded the aggregated data to the Europeana ingestion team, so that all items available through the European Film Gateway can also be found on Europeana.

WP7: Virtual exhibition

Groundwork for the implementation of the Virtual Exhibition was carried out in the first project year. Aim of the Virtual Exhibition is to highlight selected films and non-AV objects and contextualise them by combining them under a certain topic. It will be closely connected to the WWI exhibitions by Europeana and Europeana Collections 1914-1918, yet relying mostly on material aggregated in the EFG1914 project. Together, all archives helped define a set of 8 themes that will structure the Virtual Exhibition. Feedback was collected via questionnaires and during a workshop in July 2012. WP leader Athena, who is mainly responsible for the technical implementation of the exhibition, developed a first prototype based on the input provided by the archives during the same workshop. The report D7.1 "EFG1914 Virtual Exhibition: Concept and Technical Specifications"[12] was written and made publicly available in November. As foreseen in the project's Description of Work, the actual curatorial process has not yet started, but will do so in April 2013. The plan drawn up in year 1 foresees that selected archives are responsible for a theme and will write the texts that accompany the objects displayed in the Virtual Exhibition.

WP8: Dissemination and awareness

WP8 leader Association des Cinémathèques Europèenes (ACE) set up a project website at www.project.efg1914.eu to inform the general public about the project's goals and background. ACE added the public results of the individual WPs to the project website in regular intervals. A sub-page of the project website was dedicated to highlighting first digitisation results with more detailed background information about the chosen films during the months when the digital content was not yet searchable via EFG or Europeana. A standard project presentation and a fact sheet translated by the partners into 8 languages

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[12] http://project.efg1914.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/EFG1914_D7.1_Concept_Technical_Specifications_EFG1914_VE.pdf

was also made available on the website[13]. D8.3 "Dissemination plan" outlines EFG1914's dissemination strategy and elaborates on the cooperation with other WWI projects. The EFG1914 project partners have featured EFG1914 on their institution's websites, published press releases or promoted the project on various occasions. Especially noteworthy is the close cooperation with the crowd-sourcing project "Europeana 1914-1918" and the national libraries' project "Europeana Collections 1914-1918". Members of all three projects meet regularly in different contexts and streamline their dissemination activities. All three make sure that their own dissemination activities always include the mentioning of the other projects. A common fact sheet, which briefly introduces all three projects, is available on the EFG1914 project website.

WP9: Co-ordination and management
At the start of the project, project coordinator Deutsches FIlminstitut carried out a kick-off meeting during which the consortium was introduced to the specifics of the project. The responsible project officer from the Commission was present and informed about the rights and obligations of participating in an ICT PSP project. Since the first month, Deutsches Filminstitut has been closely monitoring the project progress and has been in close contact with the consortium members via emails, phone, the online project management tool smartsheet, the members-only section of the project website and a consortium blog. A monthly skype call with the WP leaders helps to discuss the project progress and challenges. Minutes of these monthly calls are available on the internal project website, where also all other documents produced in the project are uploaded (minutes, reports, templates, guidelines, other project-relevant information). All project partners submit progress and financial reports on a quarterly basis. Deutsches Filminstitut uses these to monitor expenses as well as progress and undertakes corrective measures when necessary. To disseminate the project, the project coordinator held several presentations in external contexts. During the first project year, the project coordinator also talked to archives interested in providing content to the European Film Gateway or participating in the project. Cineteca del Friuli is about to become an official project partner providing about 11 hours of WWI-related film material. Lichtspiel – Kinemathek Bern (Switzerland) plans to provide a small amount of WWI films without becoming a project partner. Further WWI films come from Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv (Berlin) and Museo Nazionale del Cinema (Turino). Deutsches Filminstitut is also talking to the Scottish Screen Archive/National Library of Scotland, the Irish Film Archive as well as the Swedish Film Institute, all of whom showed their interest to contribute digitised films from their collections (not WWI-related) to the EFG portal. The Scottish Screen Archive has already provided data that was successfully ingested in the test portal soon to be released to the EFG portal.

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[13] All public results of the EFG1914 project: http://project.efg1914.eu/outcomes/