
A RESEARCH LIBRARY AT THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE IN FLORENCE¹

Veerle DECKMYN

Director of the Library, European University Institute (EUI)

▪ Het artikel bevat informatie over de oprichting, missie en activiteiten van het Europees Universitair Instituut (EUI). Dit internationaal instituut werd opgericht in 1972 door de zes oorspronkelijke lidstaten van de Europese Gemeenschap met het doel een voortgezette academische opleiding te verstrekken aan doctorale onderzoekers en het onderzoek te bevorderen in de sociale wetenschappen op het hoogste niveau. Het artikel refereert naar de verschillende uitdagingen waarmee de onderzoeksbibliotheek van het EUI wordt geconfronteerd op korte en middellange termijn, met name met betrekking tot de collectievorming. Onderzoeksbibliotheken zijn momenteel in een overgangsfase, gekenmerkt door de langzame verschuiving van een traditioneel paradigma - gebaseerd op de accumulatie en centralisatie van informatiebronnen - naar een gedistribueerd user-centered model. Deze verschuiving - die zeer geleidelijk en contrastvol tot stand kwam - zal het management en de rol van de bibliotheken en het gedrag van de gebruiker veranderen.

▪ L'article traite de la création, la mission et les activités de l'Institut universitaire européen (IUE). Cet institut international, créé en 1972 par les six États membres fondateurs des Communautés européennes, a pour but de fournir une formation universitaire à des chercheurs doctorants et de promouvoir la recherche en sciences sociales au plus haut niveau. L'article met également en évidence les différents défis auxquels la Bibliothèque de l'IUE est confrontée à court et moyen terme, en particulier en ce qui concerne le développement des collections. Les bibliothèques de recherche sont entrées dans une phase de transition marquée par l'évolution d'un modèle fondé sur l'accumulation et la centralisation des ressources vers un modèle centré sur l'utilisateur. Cette évolution implique des changements qui affectent profondément la gestion et le rôle des bibliothèques ainsi que le comportement des utilisateurs.

The European University Institute²: an overview

The European University Institute (EUI) is an international postgraduate teaching and research institute established in 1972 by the six founding Member States of the European Communities to promote cultural and scientific development in the social sciences, law and humanities, in a European perspective.

The idea of creating an institution that would extend the European integration process into the area of teaching and research was first launched at the Messina Conference in 1955. It took shape seventeen years later, with the signing of the Convention³ setting up the European University Institute. Florence (Italy) was chosen to be the seat of this new European postgraduate institution.

Today, nineteen of the twenty-seven Member States of the European Union (EU) have signed the EUI Convention, and negotiations are in progress for the accession of the remaining eight Member States.

The Convention stipulates that only Member States of the EU can apply for formal membership of the EUI. Other European countries, and countries acceding to the EU, can sign Association Agreements and pre-accession agreements respectively. So far the EUI has signed

pre-accession agreements with Hungary and Turkey, as well as Association Agreements with Switzerland and Norway.

The EUI has close contacts with the Commission of the European Union. Part of EUI funding comes partly from the Member States and partly from the EU budget.

The main governing body of the Institute is the High Council, composed of representatives of the Member States. The High Council appoints the President of the EUI, and the Secretary General. The current President, Josep Borrell, former President of the European Parliament, directs the Institute since 2010.

Today, the Institute brings together a community of over 1,000 people and is one of the largest doctoral and post-doctoral programmes in the social sciences in the world. Researchers are admitted after a rigorous selection and follow their doctoral programme in one of the Institute's four departments (Economics, History and Civilization, Law, Political and Social Sciences). From the 1980s fellowships were set up for post-doctoral researchers.

In the early 1990s, an interdisciplinary research centre, the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, was created to conduct policy-oriented research with an interdisciplinary and European approach.

In 2006 the Max Weber Postdoctoral Programme was launched in cooperation with the European Commission, to strengthen the post-doctoral dimension of the EUI.

After signing the Deposit Agreement in 1984, the EUI manages, on behalf of the EU Institutions, the Historical Archives of the European Union, whose mission is to collect, preserve and make available to the public the documents older than 30 years stemming from the EU.

The EUI is accommodated in a dozen historical buildings on the Fiesole hillside on the edge of Florence.



Fig. 1: The EUI library.

Teaching and research: the doctoral programme

The European University Institute provides an excellent environment for doctoral training. Its full-time teaching staff, fellows and research students and part-time and visiting academics (around 600 Ph.D. students, 100 post-doctoral fellows, 50 full-time and 10 part-time professors), are recruited from throughout the European Union and beyond. It is precisely this international environment that allows for the sort of comparative, Europe-focused research and teaching that gives it the edge over most national postgraduate institutions.

The doctoral programme is at the heart of the Institute: in 2010, the EUI recruited 138 Ph.D. and LL.M. candidates, from 33 different countries. Each of the 19 Member States of the EUI finances grants for its students. Latvia finances 2 grants for Latvian nationals, and two countries also offer grants to non-nationals: Italy gives 25 grants to students from Central-Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, while Spain finances grants for a number of Latin American students.

The quality of the Ph.D. programme is also confirmed by the excellent career development of researchers, who obtain positions in the best-known universities, or become officials in EU institutions or International organisations.

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) is a specialised interdisciplinary body, created in the early 1990s to conduct policy research and advanced training of professionals.

The RSCAS, as part of the European University Institute, offers a stimulating and international research environment. The RSCAS conducts multidisciplinary and multilingual research which embraces all national traditions of thought, scientific approach, and methodological orientation. Most of the research carried out concerns Europe in a broad sense, with a substantial part devoted to the process of European integration and to the global issues that Europe is facing.

The RSCAS has six main areas of research activity: European Institutions, Governance and Democracy; Migration; Economic and Monetary Policy; Competition Policy and Market Regulation; Energy Policy; and International and Transnational Relations.

The post-doctoral programme

At the level of post-doctoral training and research, the first post-doctoral fellows joined the EUI in the late 1980s in the framework of the Jean Monnet Fellowships programme.

More recently, in 2006, as a way of expanding post-doctoral education at the EUI, the Max Weber Programme was established. This innovative programme provides training in teaching and research for promising young post-doctoral scholars before they embark on an academic career. It is financed entirely by the European Commission and annually recruits forty post-doctoral fellows from all over the world.

The Institute also offers Fernand Braudel Senior Fellowships for senior academics.

Besides these, a certain number of other post-doctoral grants are awarded by national governments, private foundations or the European Commission (Marie Curie Fellows). These fel-

lowships give both European and non-European scholars an opportunity to pursue their careers in Europe and/or to consolidate their research in an active, multidisciplinary environment, thus at least partially reversing the brain drain to the United States.

In the academic year 2009–2010, a total of 73 post-doctoral grants were awarded, making the EUI one of the largest centres in Europe for post-doctoral studies in the social sciences.

The EUI Campus

The EUI was originally located in the historical building of the Badia Fiesolana, bought and put at the disposal of the EUI by the Italian Government. Over the years, in order to accommodate the ever growing number of researchers and professors, the Institute has expanded to other buildings, mostly historical villas, located near the beautiful hillside town of Fiesole.



Fig. 2: Exterior view of the library.

A research library at the EUI⁴

The mission of the library is to support the research and teaching activities of Professors, Ph.D. researchers and fellows in the four academic departments, the Postdoctoral Max Weber Programme and the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Research at the European University Institute is supported by an excellent library and has among its international professional staff of librarians, information specialists for each discipline.

The collections contain approximately 2,500 subscriptions to current journals, around 11,000 full text electronic journals and e-resources, and some half a million volumes in law, economics, history and civilization, and

political and social sciences, extensively covering all aspects of European affairs. Most of the library's holdings are freely accessible.

The profile of the library reflects the evolving research activities of the EUI in the Institute's main academic disciplines. Although relatively limited in size, when compared to libraries of larger universities, the collections of the EUI library represent a unique and highly relevant selection, strongly focused on the needs of all EUI scholars.

In recent years – and in line with the evolution of current research activities at the EUI academic departments and centres – significant adjustments have been introduced to the library collection development profile. Importantly, there has been a greater focus on Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the countries of the Near East. This trend affects all the departmental areas and research programmes. It should be pointed out that in the globalised dimension, it is increasingly difficult to delimit the focus on European issues from broader global themes. The comparative and interdisciplinary approaches – the basic features of the EUI since its foundation – constitute a special challenge for the library's aim to have a coherent collection policy.

Focus on Europe and the European Union

A central focus of the library is Europe and the European Union in its various aspects. In this area the library of the EUI seeks to maintain a high degree of completeness and quality through a dedicated work of selection.

Another pillar sustaining the European studies carried out at the EUI is its European documentation. The library has the status of European Documentation Centre, and also has a comprehensive collection of the official publications of major international organisations. The value of these collections is highlighted by their proximity to the Historical Archives of the European Union. These two elements complement each other, producing one of the most exhaustive collections of documents in the field of European integration, a unique patrimony recognised by the numerous scholars from Europe and abroad who request access to the library and the Historical Archives of the European Union.

Themes

Central themes of the research at the EUI, reflected in the library collections include: Euro-

pean institutions and governance, European competition and regulation, EU integration and enlargement, migration, European economy, labour economics, European monetary union, welfare states, globalisation, citizenship and democratic legitimacy, Mediterranean studies, European integration policy and history, national identity in Europe, EU and human rights, Political parties and democracy, rethinking the history of Europe, history of European expansion, population, family and gender, history of European culture (16th to 20th centuries), development of industrial societies and modern political regimes, comparative and transnational history, women's history and, more recently, security issues, terrorism, and global financial crises.

Multilingual nature

The very nature of the Institute compels it to assume a multilingual approach as one of the basic principles of collection development policy – even if limits of a practical nature restrict its application. For example, many of the 23 official languages of the EU are not widely known by library users or staff. It is important to consider the limited availability and the cost of digital products (eg. quality platforms) in languages other than English. In addition, the emphasis on English by the major international suppliers and the relatively limited technological capability of the alternative suppliers (often small companies) further restricts the acquisition of library materials in less widely used languages.

The periodicals collection represents the scientific production in the social sciences and humanities, offering in every EU language an important selection of the most significant titles in the research areas of the Institute. With regard to monographs the language emphasis varies according to the needs of the separate disciplines. In general, for History and Law, books are acquired in their original language. Only in those cases in which a clear need emerges, will a translation also be acquired. In other words, a sort of "sustainable multi-lingual approach" has been adopted.

Challenges ahead with respect to collection development

Research libraries have entered an acute phase of transition, marked by the slow (but inexorable) shift from a traditional paradigm - founded on the accumulation and centralisation of information resources - to a distributed user-centred model. This shift - not without time lags and contradic-

tions - involves changes that deeply affect the management and the role of libraries and user behaviour.

The responsibility for selection rests with the selectors (i.e. the information specialists) who are in close contact with the academic departments and centres as well as with library users. The task of the selectors is not just to wait for the input from users, but especially, to anticipate the researcher's needs and the emerging research demands, in order to translate these into a coherent collection and acquisition policy. An efficient collection policy requires clear procedures and collaboration across different specialisations and responsibilities of an administrative, technical and disciplinary nature. This requires teamwork among staff (selection, acquisition, cataloguing and collection maintenance) as well as cooperation with library consortia and vendors. Collaboration among staff has become much more important than in the past, and is now an important element in the collection development.

Guidelines have been defined for the various collection types, taking account of the ever growing trend towards online services. It should be stated however that, with the exception of commercial publications in English, these electronic products rarely reach the level of acceptable performance - both in terms of user access and cost-benefit. For EUI library collection policy, the quality of content is underlined as the most important factor, and both print and online publications are considered as the preferred media.

Printed books

The collection of printed books has undergone significant growth over the past years. Despite the massive growth in the availability of electronic resources - licensed and free access - printed material continues to be a very important sector of the EUI library. In fact, in the domain of academic books, electronic format is still considered of a merely complementary nature for the EUI library. This is probably due – among others factors – to the characteristics of print publishing, which is much richer in quality and language diversity. From this point of view the books collection reflects the multi-cultural and pan-European profile of the EUI.

E-books

E-books are becoming an important element of the EUI library collection policy. At the time of writing, the collection includes 350,000 e-book

titles; 250,000 of which are listed in the library catalogue. Many of these titles are components of large digitized collections of important libraries, distributed by commercial publishers and aggregators. Others are recent and new e-book titles made available via the platforms of international academic publishers.

The e-book production has grown significantly also in the field of the social sciences and humanities. Research platforms offered by international publishers and vendors are becoming more sophisticated. Nevertheless a wide gap persists in availability across different language groups, which does not help the multilingual mandate of the EUI library. License models applied by publishers appear rather restrictive from the users' point of view, and the economic models offered to libraries discourage the selective approach, which is crucial to EUI library policy.

The library is devoting increased efforts to the development of this sector – both in terms of negotiation with suppliers, IT solutions, management procedures and user support.

Periodicals

The preferred solution for the EUI periodicals collection is the electronic format - both for current and back issues. For periodicals identified as important titles, the e-only solution is adopted only when an archive of back sets in a reliable electronic format is available. If a reliable electronic archive is not available, the paper version will also be acquired for as long as possible. It is important to point out once more that many journal titles in other languages than English are not available electronically, hence the importance to proceed cautiously.

The challenge of change: some critical factors in defining the collection development policy

Hybrid library. the EUI library collections consist of traditional analog formats and digital formats – requiring two parallel infrastructures, two separate processes and two different access interfaces and services. On the administrative side, this reality brings into play a considerable increase in operating costs and organisational complexity.

Distributed model. an important feature is that most of the electronic information resources offered are not under the direct control of the library itself, but depend on internal and external

organisations (i.e. publishers, aggregators etc.). In such a context, relations with external and internal partners are critical for the quality of library services.

Ownership/access. contrary to the world of printed materials (for which libraries have a right of possession *in perpetuum*), electronic resources are generally provided by a licensing agreement for temporary use. In practice, through such arrangements, libraries rent the use of an information resource without actually acquiring ownership. This implies that, when the contract expires (or in the event of cancellation) the library is without access to the resource, unless specific archival clauses have been negotiated.

"Liquid" collection. one of the consequences of this method of acquisition of e-resources is the flexibility of the collection offered by the library. When compared with the more static library print collections, the digital model is more unstable. In other words, a collection accessible today may disappear from the catalogue tomorrow, i.e. when the subscription expires.

Accumulation/consumption. another consequence of this change in formats is that while the acquisition of traditional publications will automatically increase the "asset value" of the library, in the digital environment acquiring a license to use after the licence expiry date (except in cases agreed in archival/perpetual access clauses) does not generate an increase in the overall value of the patrimony of the library.

Preservation for long-term access. in the print environment long-term preservation is implicit in the document life cycle. Unfortunately such a model does not apply in the digital environment, where the acquisitions of the archival rights – and a dedicated technical infrastructure – are preconditions for providing long-term access.

Information deluge. the dramatic growth of electronic information - both commercially available and free access - requires greater investment by libraries taking advantage of this abundance without losing quality. More effort is necessary to ensure the accuracy of selection and maintenance of these resources.

Redundancy of print material. the large availability of digital copies of printed publications, as a result of mass digitisation programmes (such as *Google Print*, the *Open Content Alliance* and *Europeana*); or specific electronic collections (like *JSTOR*[®], *ECCO*[®], etc.) can make redundant original copies in analog format. This factor will in-

creasingly affect library collection management and preservation in the future.

Collaboration: sustainable solutions to address these organisational and technical challenges point towards a cooperative model, involving the libraries themselves - through various forms of consortia - and the other players in the communication world (primarily the providers and publishers) and the users themselves. In this environment the collaborative attitude of the library is the key factor for success.

Preservation for long-term access

A strategy for long-term access and preservation of digital publications has been under development since 2008. Cooperation with major preservation programmes is considered a crucial component in the EUI library strategy.

Currently the library participates in the following programmes:

Portico⁷: the largest programme of long-term preservation of academic e-journals, involving the most important international publishers. Through this service the library can provide access to backfiles of e-journals, if they are no longer available on a publisher's site, or in case of disaster.

LOCKSS⁸: an open-source based programme, developed by Stanford University, involving more than 200 universities and many academic publishers worldwide. LOCKSS enables libraries to locally store - and directly control - the e-resources to be preserved. One of the features of the LOCKSS network is a commitment to preserve e-publications of small publishers and free access e-journals.

CLOCKSS⁹: a geographically distributed "dark" archive, involving important international publishers, committed to the long-term preservation of Web-based scholarly publications for the global research community.

The complementarity of these programmes - *Portico*, *LOCKSS* and *CLOCKSS* - is an important feature of the library's preservation strategy. By participating in the *LOCKSS* network, the EUI library is seeking to play a proactive role in the long-term preservation arena. Particular attention is being addressed - in line with the mission of the EUI - to content concerning European integration and research.

These first steps have also served to expand the library's understanding of the practice of digital preservation. Acquiring a better know-how of the complexity of the problems and resources was

one of the primary goals of this pilot phase. In fact, the size and the international institutional status of the EUI, in this case, could be considered a disadvantage, given the resources and scale needed for a long-term preservation programme. It should be noted that most of the initiatives in the field, are taken at national level and supported by central funds. The EUI library continues to develop its collaborative approach, and seeks to identify partners interested in the library's content profile.

The EUI and open access

The EUI library has also increased its role as collector and archiver of the EUI's academic output. The creation of the online institutional repository, *Cadmus*¹⁰ - based on *DSpace* and *Open Archive* - is managed by the library. This is in line with international trends in new modes of scholarly communication, open access and library evolution.

The repository includes the scientific output of Professors, Ph.D. Researchers and Fellows, including theses and working papers. Currently *Cadmus* contains some 9050 records of which 2086 in full text. The EUI library collaborates in networks with other universities.

The library as a place

Notwithstanding the increasing digital component of the collections accessible both on and off campus there is a vast increase of users visiting the library on a daily basis. Researchers continue to appreciate long opening hours covering Monday to Saturday from 8.30 to 22.30, and ask to extend this even more.

What is certainly true for the library at the EUI is that it is a laboratory of the EUI where scholars meet, exchanges views and feel part of an international community of scholars as it is defined precisely by article 2 par 2 of the Convention. *"The Institute should also be a forum for the exchange and discussion of ideas and experience in subjects falling within the areas of study and research with which it is concerned."*

Veerle Deckmyn
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
Via dei Roccettini 9
50014 San Domenico di Fiesole
Italy
veerle.deckmyn@eui.eu

October 2010

Notes

- ¹ The article is based on EUI texts, and on the Collection Development Policy Document of the EUI library.
- ² European University Institute. *Convention setting up the EUI* [online]. <<http://www.eui.eu/About/Convention.aspx>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ³ Article 2 of the convention setting up the EUI states:
"*The aim of the Institute shall be to contribute, by its activities in the fields of higher education and research, to the development of the cultural and scientific heritage of Europe, as a whole and in its constituent parts. Its work shall also be concerned with the great movements and institutions which characterize the history and development of Europe. It shall take into account Europe's cultural and linguistic pluralism and relations with cultures outside Europe. This aim shall be pursued through teaching and research at the highest university level. As part of the general programme of its scientific activities, the Institute shall develop interdisciplinary research programmes on the major issues confronting contemporary European society, including matters relating to the construction of Europe.*
2. The Institute should also be a forum for the exchange and discussion of ideas and experience in subjects falling within the areas of study and research with which it is concerned."
- ⁴ European University Institute. *Library* [online]. <<http://www.eui.eu/Research/Library/Index.aspx>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ⁵ *JSTOR* [online] <<http://about.jstor.org/>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ⁶ ECCO: eighteenth-century collections online
- ⁷ *Portico* [online]. <<http://www.portico.org/digital-preservation/>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ⁸ *LOCKSS* [online]. <<http://lockss.stanford.edu/lockss/Home>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ⁹ *CLOCKSS* [online]. <<http://www.clockss.org/clockss/Home>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).
- ¹⁰ European University Institute. *Cadmus* [online]. <<http://cadmus.eui.eu/>> (consulted on 30 October 2010).