

## 1.5 Use of Technology in Libraries in the European Union Towards 2020

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*A day will come when we shall see ...  
The United States of America and  
The United States of Europe face to face,  
Reaching out for each other across the seas.*

Victor Hugo, 1849

The idea of a United Europe goes back even before the date of the quotation above, to the days when William Penn wrote of a “European dyet, or parliament” in 1693. The idea was brought up by several politicians and thinkers like Immanuel Kant, Napoleon, John Stuart Mill, and Winston Churchill throughout centuries.<sup>1</sup> The first step was taken with the foundation of the Council of Europe in 1949. With its 47 members covering the complete continent, the Council aims to create a common democratic and legal area throughout the continent.<sup>2</sup> A few years later, Jean Monnet’s idea of pooling iron and steel resources was brought forward by Robert Schuman, and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established in 1951 with its six members leading to today’s European Union with 27 members, five candidate and four potential candidate countries.

Activities contributing to the use of technology in libraries which take place in Europe at Union level have mostly been carried out under research and information society programmes. This chapter covers an overview of the initiation of framework programmes (FP), the place of library research within each FP with examples of projects conducted to give an idea about the nature of work carried out, other initiatives and programmes which aim to enable cultural institutions to adapt to the requirements of knowledge-based digital economy and society aspired to be built; and the way forward to 2020.

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1 Pre-1945 ideas on European unity. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-1945\\_ideas\\_on\\_European\\_unity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-1945_ideas_on_European_unity) (03.04.2010).

2 Council of Europe in brief. <http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=nosObjectifs&l=en> (03.04.2010).