Questionnaire on future digital services for ACE members
Summary of results

(Julia Welter and Kerstin Herlt for ACE, September 2020)

In July 2020, ACE asked their membership to participate in a survey that would give insight into where ACE member archives currently publish their collections online, who they consider their main target audiences and what functionalities and services they find important in online platforms. The survey included questions about ACE members' ability to export metadata from their local databases and about existing challenges of publishing collections online. The aim of the survey was to get a general sense of where ACE members generally stand with regard to their publication efforts and to find out what they would expect from a digital service, should ACE decide to offer one. This report summarizes the replies of 34 ACE archives that answered the survey. A complete list of institutions who replied is available in ANNEX I.

The survey was divided into the following five main sections:

A. Collections available online
B. Target user groups
C. Tools and services: Priorities for a potential future ACE digital service
D. Existing functionalities
E. Technical questions

1 Main findings

Replies to the survey revealed that all but two respondents publish collections online, both on national portals as well as on transnational portals. The survey did not go into detail about whether the collections published nationally are the same as internationally.

Archives consider the research sector as well as the general public their most important target audiences, both in their day-to-day work as well as on transnational portals they publish their collections on. The educational sector also ranks high. Less relevant seem the creative industry sector and broadcasters, which ranked lowest.

Asked what kind of functionalities and services ACE members would like to see in a platform potentially offered by ACE, collaboration came first: 32 archives prioritize the creation of a community platform to exchange ideas/expertise for developing and implementing tools together, second came a community platform for sharing information on rights clearing, film copies, etc. with 28 archives considering this important or very important. User interaction, such as allowing users to annotate videos, e.g. creating subtitles and descriptions has low priority.

Looking at functionalities that archives find useful on existing portals and platforms, almost half of the archives stated they cannot think of functionalities worth mentioning or they didn't respond to the question at all. Replies to this question were heterogeneous in general with archives prioritizing different functionalities. Archives did not necessarily limit their replies to portal functionalities in the strict sense but gave more general replies about what they see as positive with regard to the publication of their collections, e.g. the quality of catalogue information, advanced search options, or video streaming.

About ⅔ of respondents stated they can export metadata from their database inhouse without external technical support. Most archives can export their data in XML and CSV, 10 archives have an OAI-PMH in place that allows harvesting of metadata. Linked data technologies are only used by two archives.

When asked about major challenges and bottlenecks regarding publishing their collections online, the most common replies referred to the creation, export and transfer of metadata. Rights clearing was also named by a number of archives as well as staff-related issues, such as lack of staff in general or lack of tech-savvy staff. As this was an open question, replies varied widely.

2 Collections available online

This part of the survey asked archives where they publish their collections and what type and size of collections they make available. All but two respondents indicated that they publish both on national platforms (including their own institutions' websites) as well as on international platforms (these include vimeo, youtube, etc as well as search portals like EFG and Europeana).

	Number of archives
Publish collections on their own website or on NATIONAL portals	32
Publish collections on INTERNATIONAL portals	32
Publish collections on EFG and Europeana	26

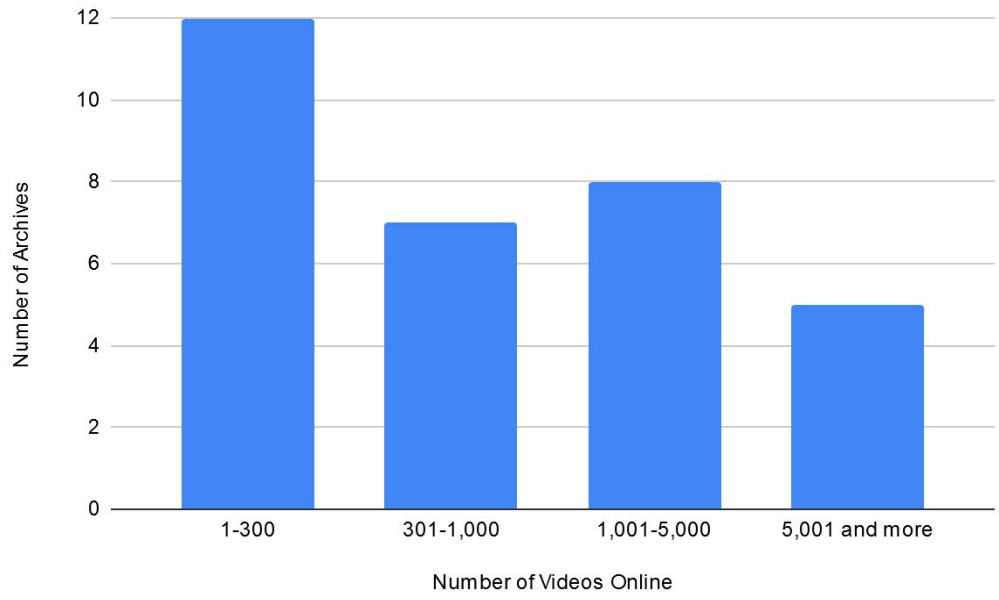
2.1. Type of content and size of online collections

32 archives publish video collections, 26 archives publish image collections, 23 archives publish text collections and 7 archives publish sound collections. One archive stated they are publishing

metadata only. The following graphs only take into account those archives that publish digital content.

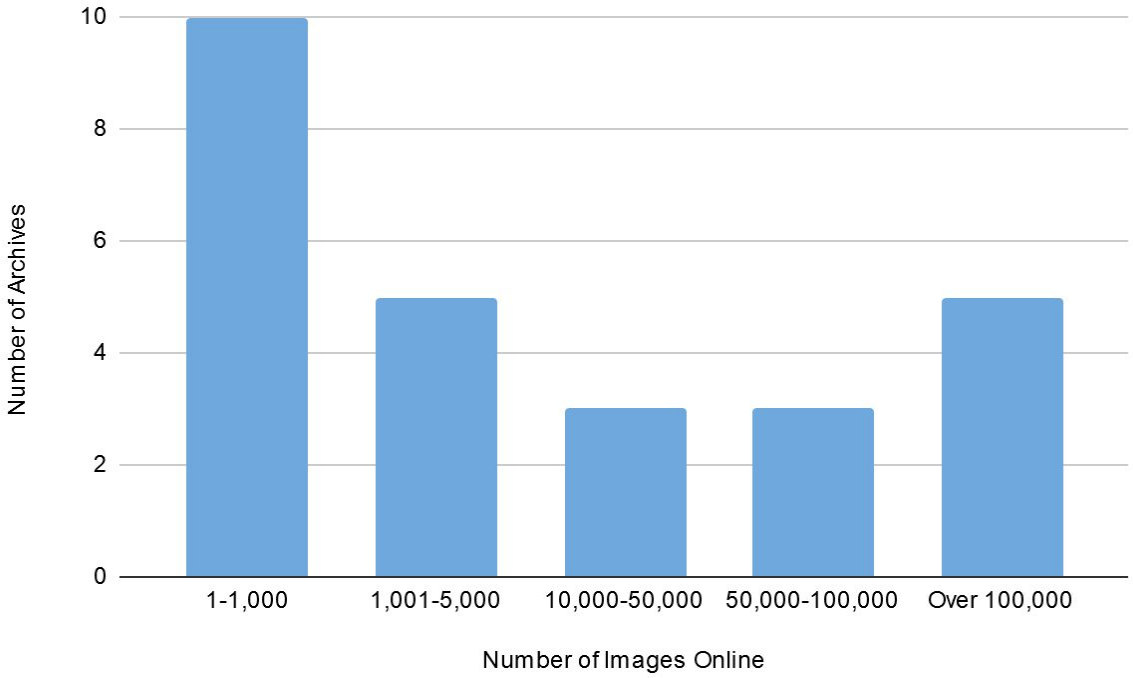
2.1.1. Video collections

Number of archives that publish VIDEO collections online: 32
At the time of the survey, the majority of respondents (19) had 1,000 or less videos online. 13 archives have larger collections of 1,000 videos and more online.



2.1.2. Image collections

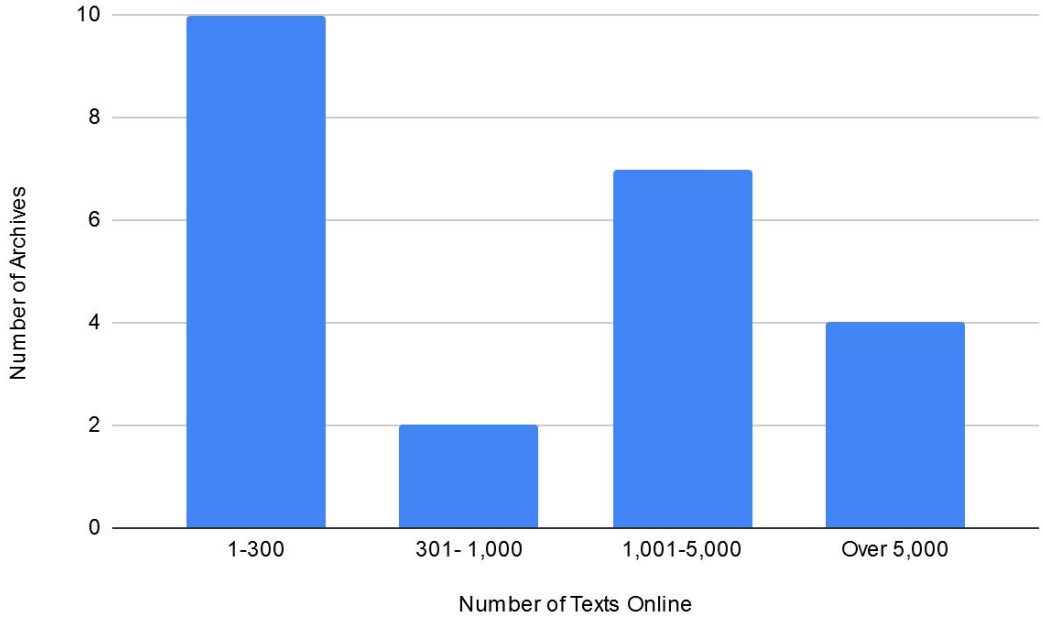
Number of archives that publish IMAGE collections online: 26
The number of images published online varies considerably. 15 archives have 5,000 or less images online. No archive publishes between 5,000 and 10,000 images. 11 archives have larger collections of over 10,000 images online, five of which publish collections of more than 100,000 images.



2.1.3. Text collections

Number of archives that publish TEXT collections online: 23

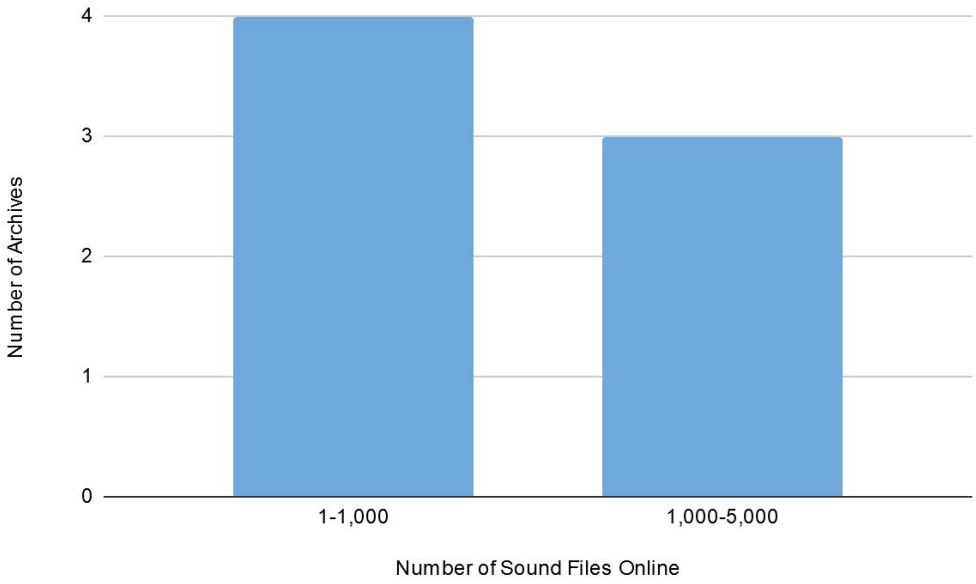
Most archives only publish smaller numbers of text materials. 4 archives indicated that they currently publish over 5,000 text objects.



2.1.4 Sound collections

Number of archives that publish SOUND collections online: 7

Few respondents make sound files available online and the collections that are available are generally speaking rather small compared to other object types.



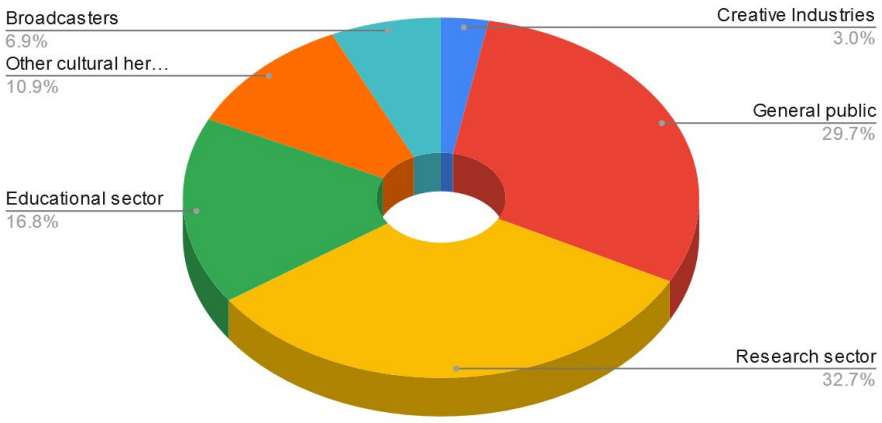
3 Target user groups

Archives were asked to rank the importance of target groups, both for their archive in general as well as for audiences they try to reach (or would like to see reached) through transnational online portals. Out of a selection of six options, archives were asked to indicate the THREE target groups that are most relevant to them. Overwhelmingly, respondents stated that they consider the research sector as well as the general public their most important user groups.

3.1 Most important user groups for archives in general

User group	Considered relevant by number of archives
Research sector	33
General public	30
Educational sector	17
Other cultural heritage institutions (museums, cinemas, etc)	11
Broadcasters	7
Creative industries	3

Visualised in a graph, archives' most relevant target audiences break down as follows:



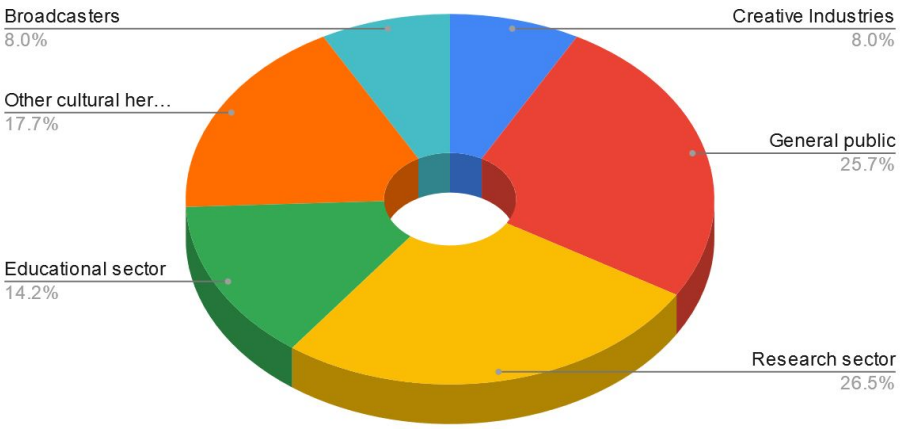
3.2. Most important user groups for archives when publishing on transnational platforms

When publishing their collections on transnational portals, archives still consider the research sector and the general public their most important target audiences. However, it is noteworthy that other cultural heritage institutions, broadcasters and creative industries are considered

more important than indicated in the table above. This could mean that some archives like to use transnational platforms as a way to reach audiences that they focus less on in their day-to-day work.

User group	**Considered relevant by number of archives**
Research sector	30
General public	29
Other cultural heritage institutions (museums, cinemas, etc)	20
Educational sector	16
Broadcasters	9
Creative industries	9

Visualised in a graph, the archives' preferences for target groups that should be reached by transnational platforms are as follows:



4 Tools and services

With regard to an online platform that could potentially be offered by ACE to their membership, this section of the survey asked archives to rank a selection of functionalities and services according to relevance on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). The table below

shows how many archives have ranked a functionality/service 4 or 5 (important or very important) respectively. The biggest priorities for respondents are the creation of a community platform to both collaborate on and discuss the development and implementation of tools as well as to exchange information on rights clearing, film copies, digitisation, etc. To have a tool that supports the subtitling of videos in the original language and with translations and the creation of virtual exhibitions rank high as well.

Functionality / Service	**Number of archives considering it important or very important (i.e. ranked them as a 4 or 5)**
Create a community platform of digital experts working at ACE member institutions that can help each other develop and implement tools	32
Create a community platform for ACE members that share information on rights clearing, film copies, digitisation etc	28
Subtitling of videos in original language as well as in other languages	28
Create online exhibitions of cross-archive content (joint curatorial approach) that can be embedded on your institution's websites and other platforms	24
Automatically recognize speech in videos and convert it into text	23
Upload your archive's metadata to a centralized database yourself	20
Download your own metadata in different formats/standards from the centralized database yourself	19
Create online exhibitions (with your own content) that you can embed on your institution's websites and other platforms	18
Allow users to tag or comment on your content	16
Allow users to create subtitles and descriptions for your online videos	9

For a detailed breakdown of how each individual functionality/service was rated by the archives, please see ANNEX II.

5 Functionalities of existing online platforms that present filmographic data and digital collections

This part of the survey aimed to find out which functionalities of EXISTING platforms respondents value most. Replies to this open question vary as respondents did not necessarily differentiate between actual portal functionalities and filmographic or editorial offers.

5.1. Functionalities considered most useful on archives' own websites and portals

12 out of 34 respondents felt their own platforms had nothing of particular interest to offer. They either explicitly said so or simply did not answer the question. Out of the remaining 22 archives:

- 8 archives mentioned the quality and quantity of their catalogue information that is available online,
- 5 archives mentioned satisfaction with their (advanced) search functionalities (no further information provided),
- 5 archives named video streaming as one of their most useful offers.
- EYE mentioned that they are about to launch a new platform in October that includes DRM, a VOD service (revenues are shared with rights holders) that is compatible with Chromecast and Apple TV.
- The Swedish Film Institute mentioned they offer geotagged content.
- Both, Filmoteka Narodowa and the Bundesarchiv mentioned their sales system for photos,
- Both, Filmoteka Narodowa (FINA) and the Film Archive of the National Archives of Estonia answered they provide deeper contextualisation of their content in themed galleries (FINA) and an online blog (Estonia)

5.2 Functionalities considered most useful on external portals and platforms archives use to publish their collections

7 out of 34 respondents did not reply to this question or said they could not think of anything worth mentioning. Out of the remaining 27 archives:

- 11 archives specifically mentioned they appreciate the possibility of cross-archival search and contextualisation of content
- 3 archives appreciate the (geo)tagging offered by portals and platforms they use,

- 3 archives mentioned subtitling functionalities
- 3 archives mentioned tailored access to content for different user groups (e.g. researchers, creatives, educational sector)

Other replies that were given by mostly just one archive each include:

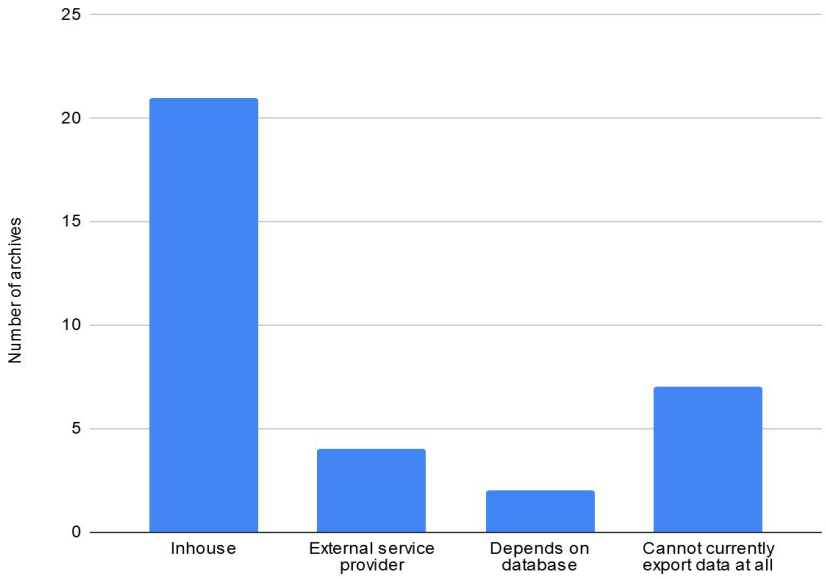
- Automatic object recognition
- Voice recognition
- Sharing functionalities
- Embedding functionalities
- Filtering search results by copyright status
- Tools that help create learning scenarios

6 Technical questions

The fifth part of the survey covered questions on the archives' database systems, their ability to export data from it as well as the use of Linked Data. The final question focused on existing challenges and bottlenecks regarding online publication.

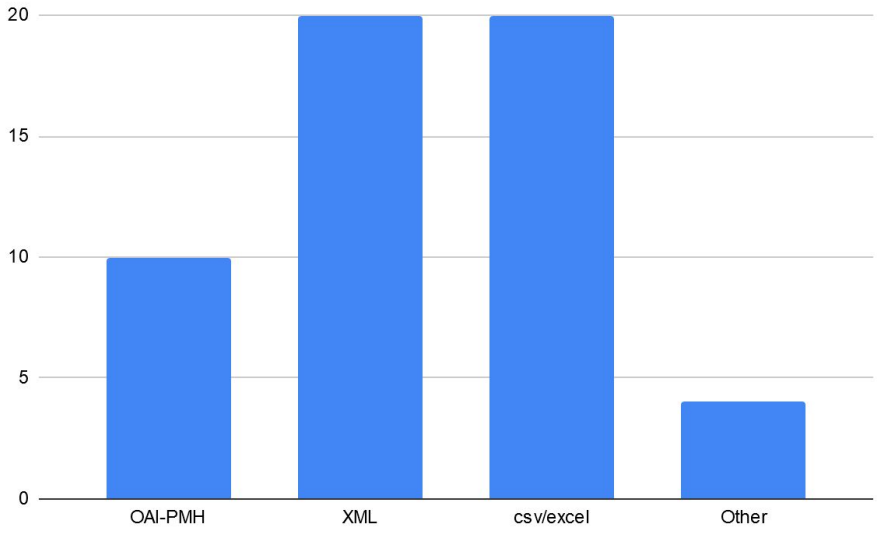
6.1. Archives' ability to export metadata from their local database systems

The majority of archives are able to export metadata from their databases themselves, four archives need the help of an external service provider, six archives cannot export metadata at all currently. Two archives indicated that their ability to export metadata depends on the database, i.e. they can export metadata themselves from some of their databases but not all.



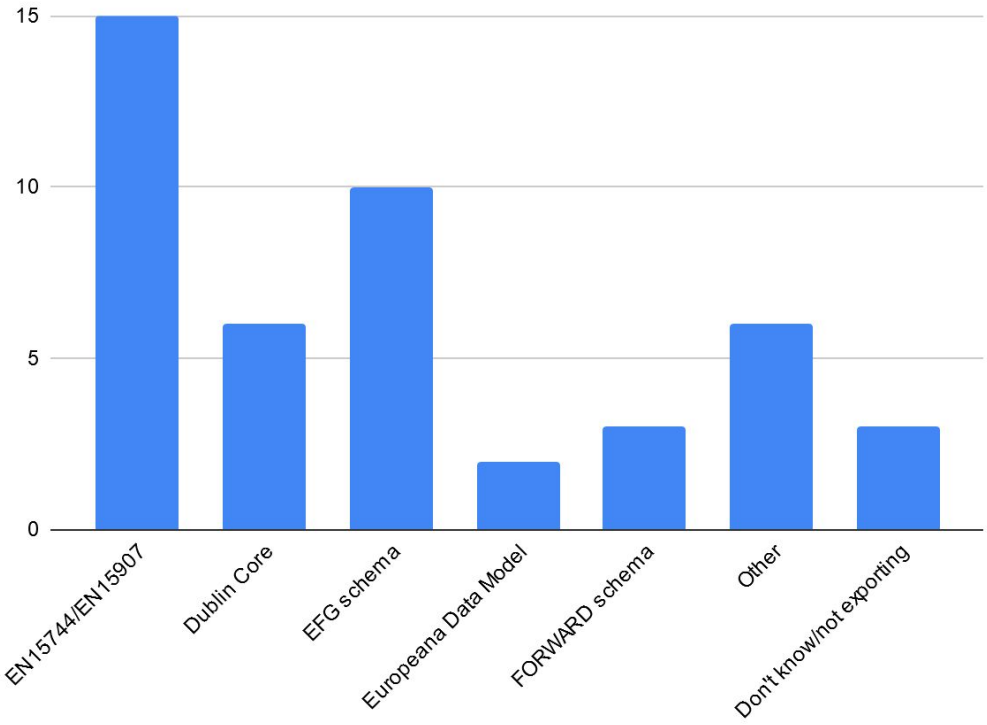
6.2. Format(s) and means used by archives to export their metadata

This question allowed multiple replies. 10 archives allow harvesting of their metadata through and OAI-PMH, while the majority of archives exports their metadata in xml or csv/excel format.



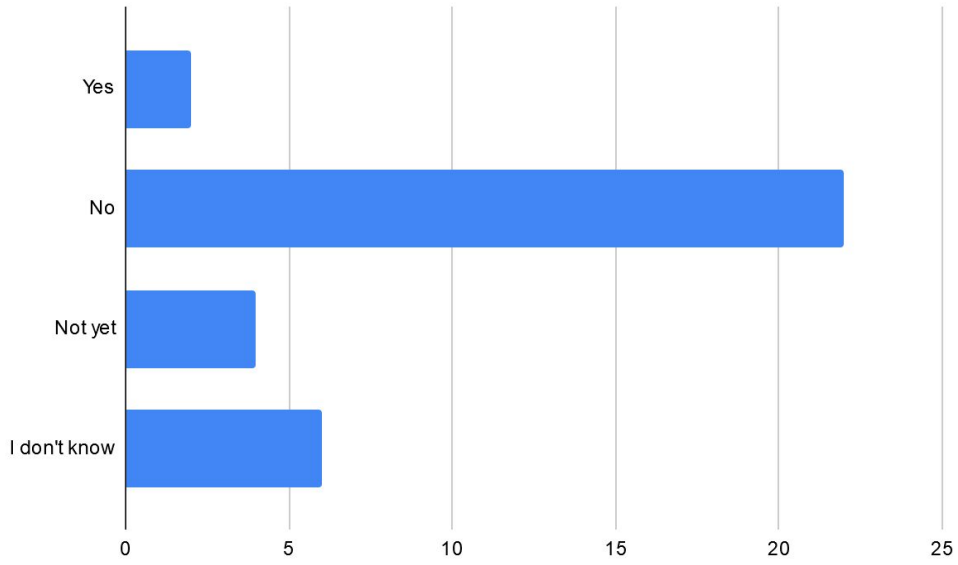
6.3. Standards and schemas used to export data

Archives were asked what formats and schemas they can export their metadata in. Multiple replies were allowed. 15 archives can export data in a format based on EN15744/EN15907. 10 archives replied they export their data according to the EFG schema, however, it should be noted that DFF is not aware of any EFG providers that deliver their data in exact EFG format, but usually it is a format that is EFG-like or roughly based on EFG. The same (we assume) is true for EDM.



6.4. Application of Linked Data technologies (e.g. RDF) in local databases

So far, only two archives out of the 34 which responded to this survey, use Linked Data technologies in their local database. The vast majority does not currently make use of such technologies.



6.5. Biggest technical and resource-related bottlenecks faced by archives re online publication

We offered a free-text field for archives to elaborate on the biggest challenges and obstacles they face in making collections available online. 9 out of 34 respondents did not answer this question. Typically, respondents named several issues and challenges they are faced with. Out of 25 archives:

- 8 archives said the export or transfer of metadata between databases caused problems,
- 7 archives found the creation of metadata (also for online publication) a challenge,
- 7 archives mentioned the encoding and preparation of content for online publication (including file transfer and transfer of formats),
- 6 archives found rights clearing and rights management an obstacle,
- 6 archives mentioned staff-related issues, in three cases the lack of staff causes challenges (mainly re cataloguing but also with regard to inhouse tech support), in two cases the communication between different departments involved in the process is described as a bottleneck,
- 3 archives mentioned the lack of standardisation in their institutions (for metadata, digital long-term preservation)
- 2 archives mentioned challenges with building a website suitable for presenting their collections,
- Other individual mentions included low internet speed, digitization in general, implementation of Linked Data, proprietary databases

ANNEX I List of archives that responded to the survey

	Institution	**Country**
1	Arhiv Republike Slovenije/Slovenski filmski arhiv	Slovenia
2	Arhiva Naţională de Filme	Romania
3	ARKIVI QENDROR SHTETEROR I FILMIT	Albania
4	Bulgarian National Film Archive	Bulgaria
5	Bundesarchiv	Germany

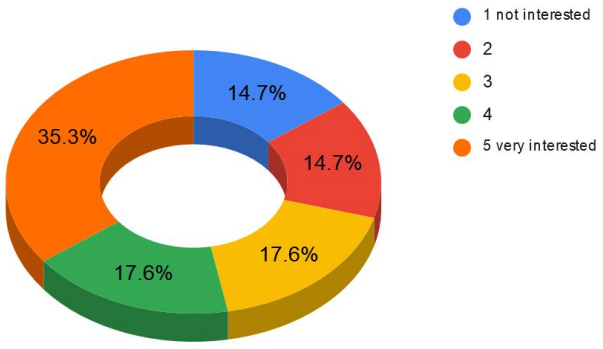
6	Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC)	France
7	Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia - Cineteca Nazionale (department) - Archivio Nazionale del cinema d'impresa (department)	Italy
8	Cinemateca Portuguesa-Museu do Cinema, IP	Portugal
9	Cinematheque of Republic of North Macedonia/ Kinoteka na Makedonija	Macedonia
10	Cinémathèque royale de Belgique	Belgium
11	Cinémathèque suisse	Switzerland
12	Cineteca di Bologna	Italy
13	Croatian State Archives - Croatian Cinematheque	Croatia
14	Danish Film Institute	Denmark
15	Deutsche Kinemathek - Museum für Film und Fernsehen	Germany
16	DFF - Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum	Germany
17	Eye Filmmuseum	Netherlands
18	Film Archive of the National Archives of Estonia	Estonia
19	Filmoteca de Catalunya	Spain
20	Filmoteca Valenciana - Institut Valencià de Cultura	Spain
21	Filmoteka Narodowa - Instytut Audiowizualny	Poland
22	Filmske novosti	Serbia
23	Gosfilmofond of Russia	Russia
24	Hungarian National Film Archive	Hungary
25	Imperial War Museum	United Kingdom
26	Jugoslovenska kinoteka	Serbia
27	Kansallinen audiovisuaalinen instituutti / National	Finland

	Audiovisual Institute	
28	La Cinémathèque de Toulouse	France
29	La Cineteca del Friuli	Italy
30	Museo Nazionale del Cinema	Italy
31	Národní filmový archiv, Prague	Czech Republic
32	National Library of Norway	Norway
33	Österreichisches Filmmuseum	Austria
34	The Swedish Film Institute	Sweden

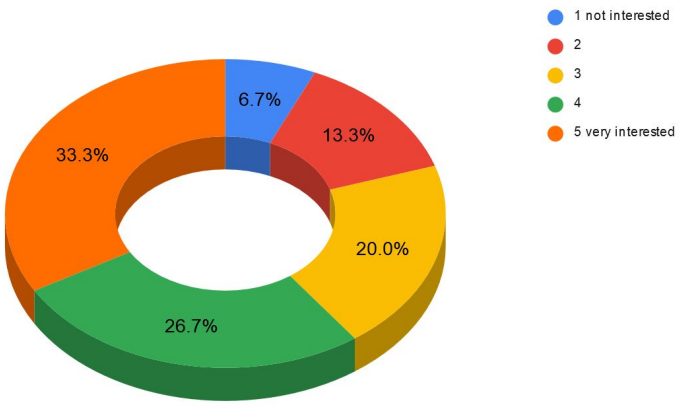
ANNEX II Functionalities archives favour in a possible ACE digital service - detailed breakdown of results

All 34 archives ranked the listed functionalities on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). As mentioned above, most popular with archives where community platforms to exchange knowledge and information on development of tools, rights clearing, film copies etc. The following graphs list the results in the order the functionalities/services were listed in the survey.

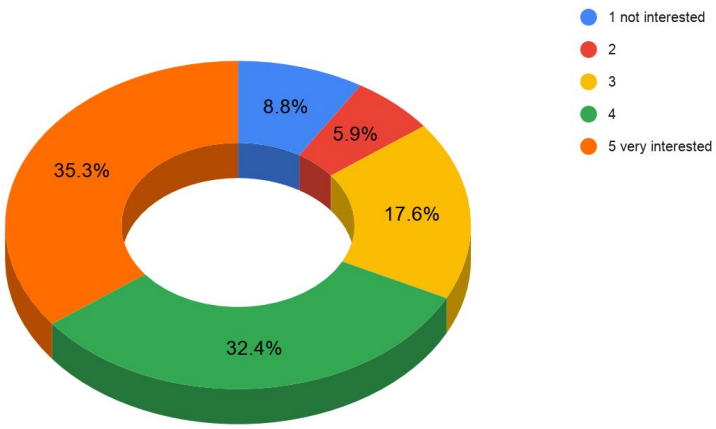
a) Create online exhibitions (with your own content) that you can embed on your institution's websites and other platforms.



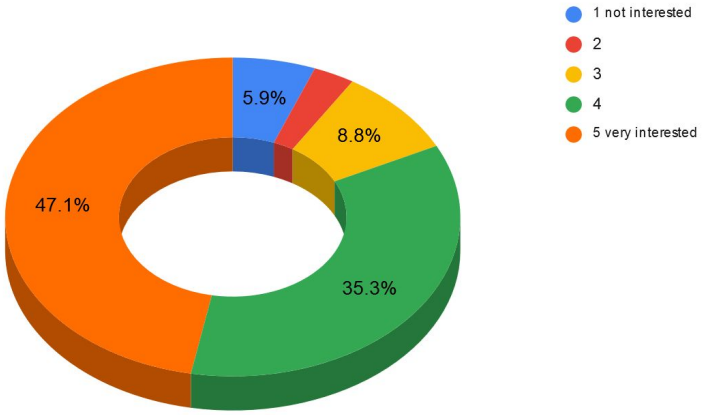
b) Create online exhibitions of cross-archive content (joint curatorial approach) that can be embedded on your institution's websites and other platforms



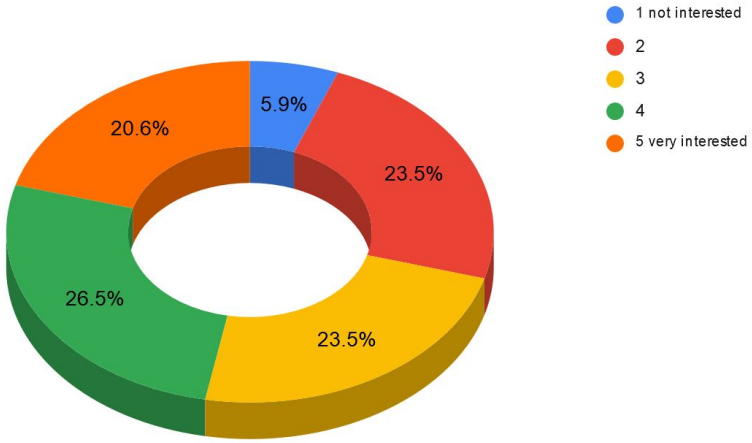
c) Automatically recognize speech in videos and convert it into text



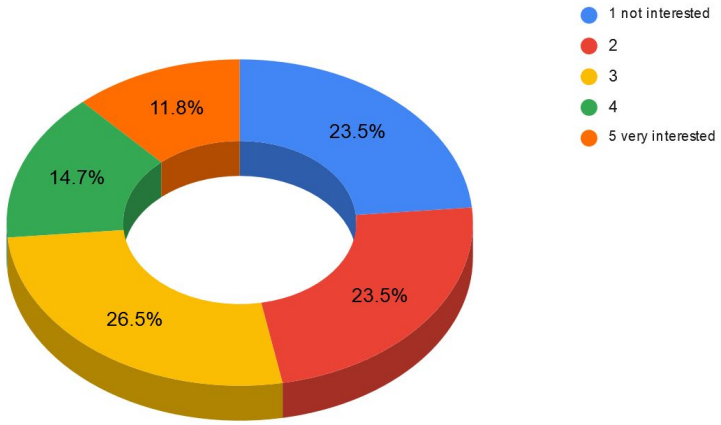
d) Subtitling of videos in original language as well as in other languages



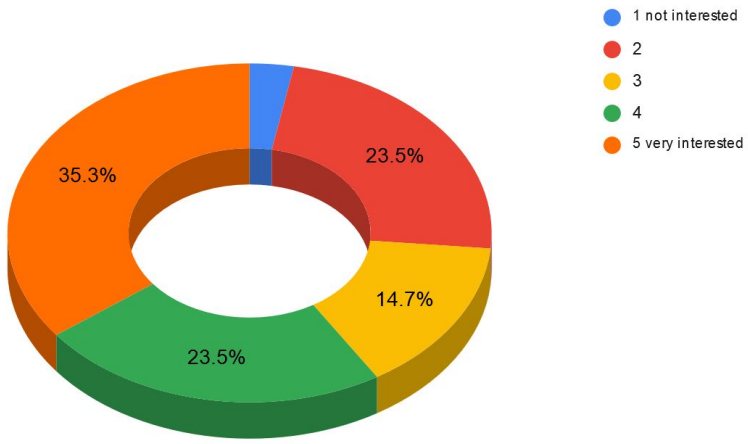
e) Allow users to tag or comment on your content



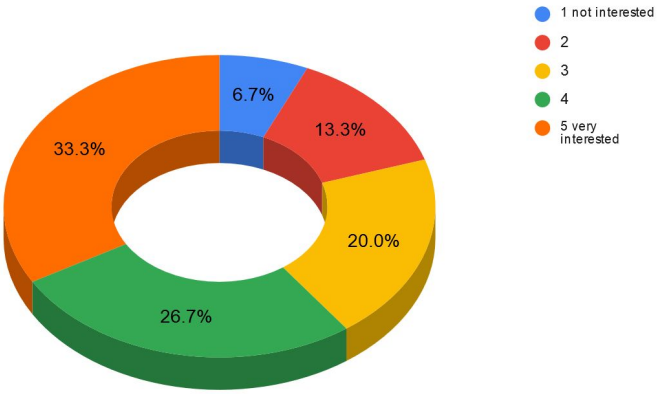
f) Allow users to create subtitles and descriptions for your online videos



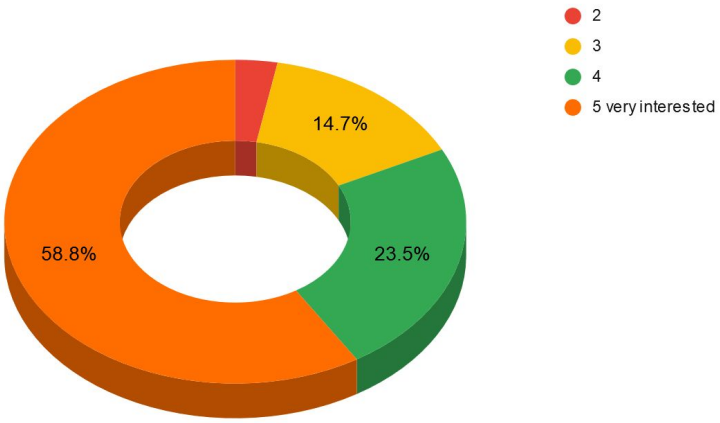
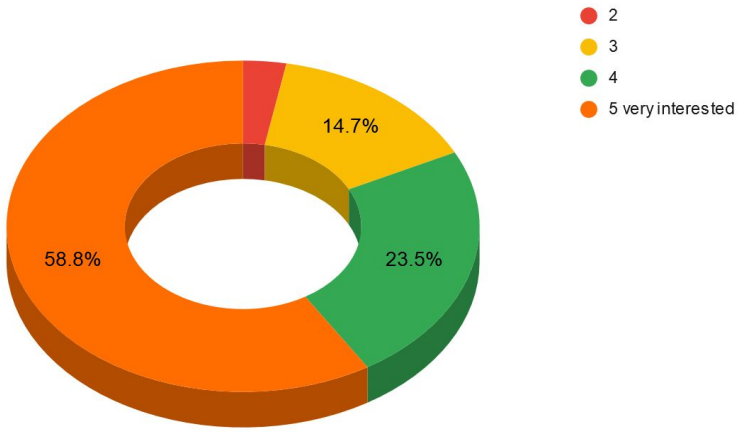
g) Upload your archive's metadata to a centralized database yourself



h) Download your own metadata in different formats/standards from the centralized database yourself



i) Create a community platform for ACE members that share information on rights clearing, film copies, digitisation etc.



j) Create a community platform of digital experts working at ACE member institutions that can help each other develop and implement tools