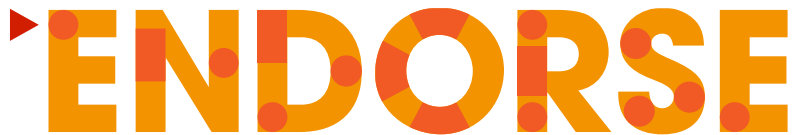


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Data manager at the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR), Brussels ( <https://ror.org/0105w2p42>)

Opening up Belgian Cultural Heritage Reference Data with Wikibase



THE EUROPEAN DATA CONFERENCE ON REFERENCE DATA AND SEMANTICS

Agenda

- GLAM* use case MetaBelgica
- Decentral vs Central solution
- Conclusion and next steps

*Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums

KBR is the national library of Belgium



We currently hold around **8 mio documents** that can be consulted in our reading rooms

Via legal deposit we roughly receive **35,000 books each year**

=> We have a lot of bibliographic and authority records (linked entities)



KBR is one of ten Federal Scientific Institutes (FSIs)

Belgian Science Policy Office



Open research data mandate
"As open as possible, as closed as necessary"
CC0 and CC BY recommended
for data created by BELSPO
funded research

Royal Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy (BIRA-IASB)
Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium (KMI-IRM)
Royal Observatory of Belgium (KSB-ORB) and the Planetarium
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (KBIN-IRSNB)
Royal Museum for Central Africa (KMMA-MRAC)
Royal Museums for Art and History (KMKG-MRAH)
Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (KMSKB-MRBAB)
Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA)
Royal Library of Belgium (KBR)
State Archives (RA-AE)



Legal obligations to among other
create inventories of the
respective collections, **share** with
the public and actively participate
in (inter) national **research**

Duplicate data of shared entities leads to problems

KBR

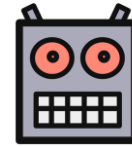


Royal Institute for
Cultural Heritage

 Royal Museums
of Fine Arts of Belgium



ROYAL MUSEUMS OF ART AND HISTORY
KONINKLIJKE MUSEA VOOR KUNST EN GESCHIEDENIS
MUSÉES ROYAUX D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE



Duplicate efforts to curate data about entities

Varying quality and correctness of data

+ efforts for data consumers
to integrate and identify/fix
inconsistencies

Decentral vs Central solution

Fully decentral

- Current legacy systems not ready

- Shifting data integration burden to users and data hubs

- Not solving the issue of duplicate efforts and data

- Keep in mind: not just dataset-metadata aggregation, but millions of records with duplicates

Fully central

- A single-point of failure

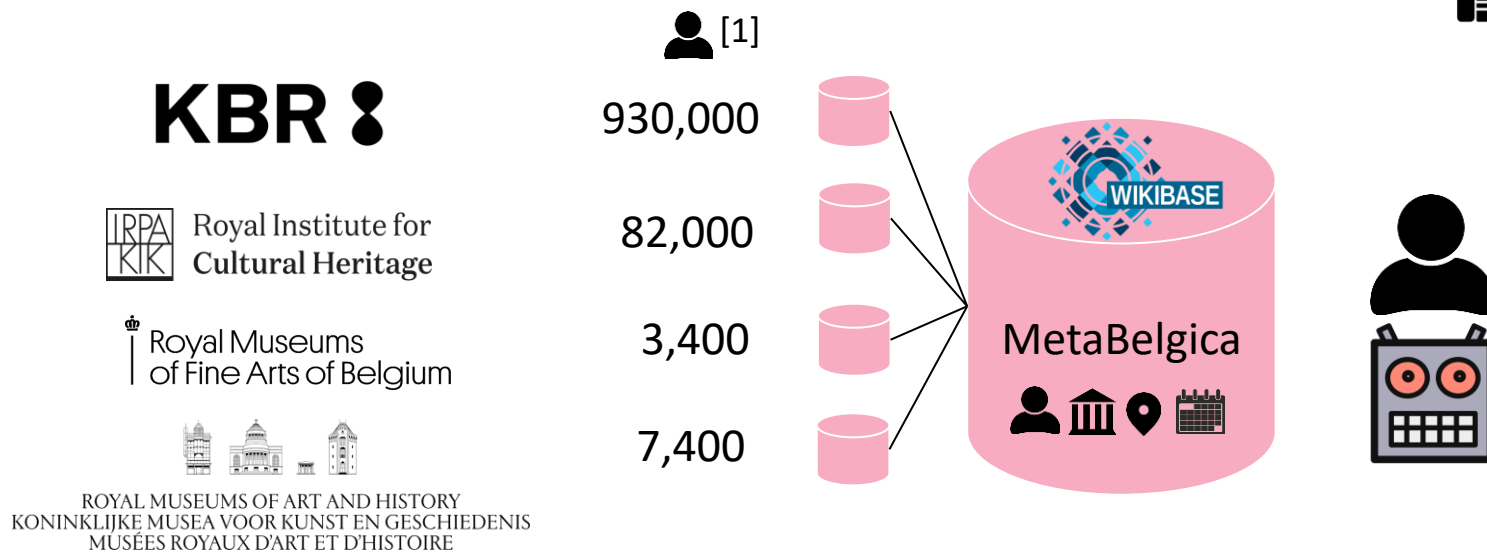
- One-size-fits-all schema pressure

- Technical and social challenges by replacing existing system

Wikibase reference data system

- Best of both worlds: loosely coupled FAIR data

Shared entity management - open source and FAIR



Loosely coupled, central deduplicated data: names, birth and death date/place, identifiers

Data integration on producer side (short-term: project until 2026-12, long-term: Wikibase)

Advantages of decentralized and central system + single trustworthy source for users

Conclusions

Pragmatic and future-oriented

Wikibase is mature (TRL-9), data maintenance is user-friendly and software widely used in similar contexts (Luxembourg, Germany, ...)

Balancing control and collaboration

Local autonomy and data protection while providing high quality FAIR reference data

Sustainable authority data management

Join forces to position Belgium's cultural heritage on the global stage

Next steps

Data integration and enrichment

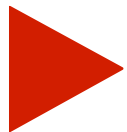
Apply tailored strategies depending on metadata quality categories

Data governance and public interface

Define clear roles, workflows and develop end-user front-end

Ease maintenance of loose coupling

Automatic or semi-automatic workflows to keep datasets aligned



Thanks



<https://w3id.org/metabelgica>



<https://zenodo.org/communities/metabelgica>



<https://fedihum.org/@metabelgica>



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