

# What Happened in CLEF 2006

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**Abstract.** The organization of the CLEF 2006 evaluation campaign is described and details are provided concerning the tracks, test collections, evaluation infrastructure, and participation.

## 1 Introduction

The objective of CLEF is to promote research in the field of multilingual system development. This is done through the organisation of annual evaluation campaigns in which a series of tracks designed to test different aspects of mono- and cross-language information retrieval (IR) are offered. The intention is to encourage experimentation with all kinds of multilingual information access – from the development of systems for monolingual retrieval operating on many languages to the implementation of complete multilingual multimedia search services. This has been achieved by offering an increasingly complex and varied set of evaluation tasks over the years. The aim is not only to meet but also to anticipate the emerging needs of the R&D community and to encourage the development of next generation multilingual IR systems.

These Proceedings contain descriptions of the experiments conducted within CLEF 2006 – the seventh in a series of annual system evaluation campaigns<sup>1</sup>. The main features of the 2006 campaign are briefly outlined in this introductory paper in order to provide the necessary background to the experiments reported in the rest of the Working Notes.

## 2 Tracks and Tasks in CLEF 2006

CLEF 2006 offered eight tracks designed to evaluate the performance of systems for:

- mono-, bi- and multilingual textual document retrieval on news collections (Ad Hoc)
- mono- and cross-language information on structured scientific data (Domain-Specific)
- interactive cross-language retrieval (iCLEF)
- multiple language question answering (QA@CLEF)
- cross-language retrieval in image collections (ImageCLEF)

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<sup>1</sup> CLEF is included in the activities of the DELOS Network of Excellence on Digital Libraries, funded by the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Commission. For information on DELOS, see [www.delos.info](http://www.delos.info).

- cross-language speech retrieval (CL-SR)
- multilingual retrieval of Web documents (WebCLEF)
- cross-language geographical retrieval (GeoCLEF)

Although these tracks are the same as those offered in CLEF 2005, many of the tasks offered were new.

**Multilingual Text Retrieval (Ad Hoc):** Similarly to last year, the 2006 track offered mono- and bilingual tasks on target collections in French, Portuguese, Bulgarian and Hungarian. The topics (i.e. statements of information needs from which queries are derived) were prepared in a wide range of European languages (Bulgarian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish). We also offered a bilingual task aimed at encouraging system testing with non-European languages against an English target collection. Topics were supplied in: Amharic, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Oromo and Telugu. This choice of languages was determined by the demand from participants. In addition, a new robust task was offered; this task emphasized the importance of stable performance over languages instead of high average performance in mono-, bilingual and multilingual IR. It made use of test collections previously developed at CLEF. The track was coordinated jointly by ISTI-CNR and U.Padua (Italy) and U.Hildesheim (Germany).

**Cross-Language Scientific Data Retrieval (Domain-Specific):** This track studied retrieval in a domain-specific context using the GIRT-4 German/English social science database and two Russian corpora: Russian Social Science Corpus (RSSC) and the ISSS collection for sociology and economics. Multilingual controlled vocabularies (German-English, English-German, German-Russian, English-Russian) were available. Monolingual and cross-language tasks were offered. Topics were prepared in English, German and Russian. Participants could make use of the indexing terms inside the documents and/or the social science thesaurus provided, not only as translation means but also for tuning relevance decisions of their system. The track was coordinated by IZ Bonn (Germany).

**Interactive CLIR (iCLEF):** For CLEF 2006, the interactive track joined forces with the image track to work on a new type of interactive image retrieval task to better capture the interplay between image and the multilingual reality of the internet for the public at large. The task was based on the popular image perusal community Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)), a dynamic and rapidly changing database of images with textual comments, captions, and titles in many languages and annotated by image creators and viewers cooperatively in a self-organizing ontology of tags (a so-called “folksonomy”). The track was coordinated by UNED (Spain), U. Sheffield (UK) and SICS (Sweden).

**Multilingual Question Answering (QA@CLEF):** This track, which has received increasing interest at CLEF since 2003, evaluated both monolingual (non-English) and cross-language QA systems. The main task evaluated open domain QA systems. Target collections were offered in Bulgarian, Dutch, English (bilingual only), French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. In addition, three pilot tasks were organized: a task that assessed question answering using Wikipedia, the online encyclopaedia; an Answer Validation exercise; and a “Time-constrained” exercise that was conducted