RAPPORTEURS REPORTS

European Heritage Hub Community of Interest 'Heritage Dialogue on Cultural Heritage for a Regenerative Digital Transition in EU Neighbouring Countries'

Digital transition

1. The digital transition demands a new set of digital and transversal skills alongside non-digital competencies such as ethics

- A key challenge in the digital transition of Europe's cultural heritage sector is the absence of **ethical standards** for using advanced technologies.
- There is a lack of regulation and common standards regarding the **required capacities** of those involved in the digitisation process. These capacities encompass ethical considerations, strategic decisions - such as prioritising what to digitise, determining methods, quality standards, and conditions for retrieval and accessibility. Collaborating with universities, researchers, experts, and regulatory bodies is essential to address this gap.
- There is a lack of knowledge and awareness in the heritage sector regarding the importance of **cybersecurity,** the risks of cyberattacks, and the potential misuse of heritage data.
- There seems to be a lack of **confidence** among heritage communities in using digital tools, highlighting the need for educational opportunities, as well as skill and capacity building.

2. The digitisation of cultural heritage offers significant opportunities, provided that assets are accessible and reusable

- Accessibility, discoverability, and reuse of digitised heritage assets present a significant opportunity to **democratise access, enhance heritage protection** and **support research.**
- Discoverability of data remains a challenge, highlighting the need for **multilingual access** and translation of content.

3. Sustained funding is essential to ensure a sustainable, innovative and relevant digital transition

- There is a need for **sustained funding** for digitisation projects and initiatives at the European, national, and local levels. Cross-border collaboration projects are essential, with networks playing a key role in facilitating cooperation and securing joint funding through consortia. Projects need to stay relevant and innovative in order to be eligible for funding proposals.

- Support from the EU and Member States is essential to facilitate the **exchange of good practices.**

Social transition

1. Digital heritage initiatives must prioritise the evolving needs and expectations of users

- **Users of heritage** are the main target audience of digitisation work, and their needs, interests, and expectations must be considered in planning, policy and strategy. It is also important to note that the profile of end users evolves rapidly over time.

Green transition

1. The heritage sector must integrate climate awareness holistically and embrace a green, transversal transition

- Raising awareness of climate change in the heritage sector is crucial, particularly when it comes to combining new technologies with informal traditional knowledge to develop effective **climate change adaptation projects and strategies.**
- The green transition is on everyone's mind, but it has not yet been fully mainstreamed in the heritage sector, with few tangible outcomes. While there are internal sustainability groups within organisations, there is still a need for a **shift in mindset** and genuine **investment** in a green, transversal transition.

Pan-European cooperation

1. Pan-European cooperation and networks are essential for advancing digital change and addressing *'glocal'* challenges

- **Pan-European cooperation** should be at the heart of the solution to these challenges, including cross-border projects. This also involves establishing networks - connecting individuals, projects, and organisations - to pool resources and knowledge.
- Being part of **existing networks**, such as Europeana and the European Heritage Hub, is crucial for advancing digital change.

2. Collaboration across borders and organisations is key to drive digital innovation in cultural heritage, particularly in conflict-stricken areas

- There are many grassroots, bottom-up projects emerging from local communities' needs, particularly in **times of conflict,** where there is a strong desire to initiate digital projects aimed at preserving cultural

heritage at risk. Since these are community-based projects, funding is key to their sustainability, and pan-European partnerships crucial to sustain and scale up their work. Examples include the Oral history Kosovo Project and the Museum of Stolen Art of Ukraine.

- Innovative tools like the metaverse and immersive technologies offer new opportunities for **cultural heritage storytelling.** Small grassroots projects are often more flexible in adopting and adapting these advanced technologies compared to large, established institutions, creating space for **learning and collaboration.**