Digital culture – Access issues

SUMMARY

The digital shift has touched all aspects of human activity, and culture is no exception. Cultural assets and works have been digitised and digital technology has become a tool for novel creations. Digital-born works have enriched the resources available to those interested in culture. Technology has huge potential to facilitate and democratise access to cultural resources.

However, certain technical conditions are required to allow access to these cultural resources, for example webpages devoted to digitised cultural heritage and its hidden treasures as well as those devoted to novel creations. These conditions include an internet infrastructure, computers, tablets, or, more frequently, a smartphone – all of which has a price tag. Moreover, the deployment of such infrastructure needs to be evenly distributed so as to provide equal and democratic access to cultural resources – which is not yet the case.

Access to costly technology is not sufficient. The technology used must go hand in hand with digital skills that are not evenly acquired by all ages and social groups. Persons with disabilities are in a particularly difficult situation, since ICT equipment often does not suit their specific needs. Moreover, cultural resources are often not available in suitable formats for them.

European Union policies and strategies in many areas take all these challenges and access barriers into consideration. EU funds finance connectivity infrastructure in areas in need, training, and educational initiatives across policy areas going from culture and education to innovation and technology. The relationship between technology, science, the arts, and culture is becoming increasingly close in the digital era.

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Culture as a right and cross-area policy

The European Union has very limited powers in the policy area of culture. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) sets it the role of coordinating Member States' efforts in this field (Article 6), promoting and preserving Europe's cultural heritage, cultural and linguistic diversity (Article 167), and providing support, including financial. The Treaty also states that cultural aspects shall be taken into account in actions under other provisions of the Treaty. This is important given the presence of cultural aspects in many human activities.

The right to participate freely in cultural life was recognised by Unesco’s 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and confirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, in force since 1976. The signatory states need to ensure conditions allow for such participation, bringing down barriers which hinder its application, and to take the necessary steps for the conservation, development, and diffusion of science and culture, as well as to respect the freedom necessary for creative activity.

The European Convention on Human Rights, adopted by the Council of Europe in November 1950, guarantees the freedom of expression in its Article 10. The European Court of Human Rights considers its impact in the context of cultural rights. It interprets different articles of the Convention and has ‘gradually recognised substantive rights which may fall under the notion of cultural rights in a broad sense,’ covering issues such as artistic expression, access to culture, cultural identity, and linguistic rights, among other issues. The Court devoted special attention to access to culture through the internet and television, recognising their potential for promoting access to culture, and focusing also on self-expression, freedom of expression and potential copyright infringement in a digital environment.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union – of equivalent legal value to the EU Treaties since December 2009 – also contains provisions related to cultural rights. Article 13 focuses on artistic and academic freedom, Article 22 focuses on the respect of cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity, and Article 25 recognises the right of the elderly to participate in social and cultural life.

Culture and digital technologies

As information technology and digitalisation started to expand swiftly in the 1990s, their relationship with culture has become increasingly closer in the following areas:

- digitisation of cultural content, such as cultural heritage (digitised content),
- creation of digital content (digital-born content),
- digital participation in culture for the empowerment of citizens:
  - amateur production of content (prosumers, i.e. consumers of digital culture expressing their relationship to it via content of their own making),
  - sharing opinions and information (citizens' engagement).

Thus, the framework for the analysis of the EU’s policy approach to culture and the digital environment can be split into the following issues related to cultural rights:

- digital access to cultural goods and services,
- freedom of expression,
- digital cultural participation (content providers),
- digital cultural engagement,
- cultural and linguistic diversity in the digital environment (identity and linguistic rights, diversity of digital culture consumption),
- digital cultural content in education.

All these cultural rights issues can be applied to cultural heritage and current cultural creation as both commercial and non-commercial goods and services.
Access to digital culture, an important aspect of access to culture, implies technical issues, such as:

- internet infrastructure and connection,
- ICT equipment,
- digital platforms providing cultural content,
- digital skills for content provision and access.

There is no access to digital culture without internet infrastructure and equipment that allows digital technologies to operate. The structure of cultural expenses can cast some light on issues of access to digital culture.

An analysis of household expenditure on cultural goods and services is important in the context of access to culture. A 2016 French publication pointed to a rise in cultural expenses from 4.4% in 1980 to 6% in 2000, but showed that the purchase of equipment, payment of TV and internet subscription fees, and the purchase of cultural goods and services proper are not evenly distributed. Figure 1 supports this analysis – 46% of cultural expenses are devoted to equipment and fees; 37% to books, periodicals, newspapers, and cinema, theatre, and concert tickets; and 17% to photographic and cinematographic equipment and accessories, repairs of such equipment, photographic services, musical instruments, stationary, and drawing materials. All of these expenses go to support users’ self-expression and content production. The data cast new light on the growth of expenditure on cultural goods and services. Almost half of it goes to equipment and various access fees that do not necessarily or directly contribute to cultural production or to artists/creators’ revenues. Moreover, often customers are not ready to pay for the content in addition.

This trend is further highlighted by the 2016 Flash Eurobarometer 437 on internet users’ preferences for accessing content online, according to which the majority of EU citizens favours free online content. 71% of online users prefer to listen to free music (33% prefer free music without ads), 77% favour free-of-charge news services (42% favour those without ads), and 64% choose free film and TV services (42% choose those without ads).

### Digital access and the digital gap

It is widely accepted that digital technology is key to democratic access to cultural goods and services, since it potentially facilitates access to culture for inhabitants of remote, rural, or peninsular areas devoid of cultural infrastructure and activities, and for people with disabilities and the elderly.

A 2001 Council of Europe project – Vital Links for a Knowledge Culture – considers public access to information and content a prerequisite to a democratic information society. Public access must be

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<th>Figure 1 – Households’ expenditure on cultural goods and services by consumption purpose (in purchasing power standard)</th>
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Data source: Eurostat, 2015 (not including data from France and Denmark).
'affordable, available, and usable' to 'a literate user having access to meaningful content and services'. Thus, the lack of internet access is a factor of exclusion. Differences in access to the internet based on revenue, location, level of digital skills (digital literacy), and availability of equipment and services adapted to the needs of people with disabilities are measures of the digital gap/divide.

Digital gap according to location and revenue

In the EU, there are significant differences among Member States with regard to access to the internet in rural areas, cities, towns, and suburbs (see Figure 2). In most cases, people living in rural areas do not have the same level of access to the internet as those living in cities. This difference is especially significant in Bulgaria, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia – countries that have a significant rural population.

The biggest difference in digital access by revenue can be found in Bulgaria (see Figure 3). In general, the difference in internet access by people with the highest revenue is very small across Member States, while the difference in internet access by people with the lowest revenue approaches 60 % – Bulgaria and the Netherlands.

ICT devices according to age and sex

Eurostat data show that the device used to access the internet varies according to age (see Figures 4 and 5). In the case of mobile phones, the difference in the number of users aged 16-24, on the one hand, and 55-74, on the other hand, is almost 50 %.

The largest difference in the use of desktop computers is only 16 % among the different age groups, probably due to the fact that the overall rate of use of this equipment is much lower than that of mobile devices. Data show that in 2018 the use of mobile phones and smartphones to access the internet increased by 9 % as a whole and by 12 % among people aged 55-74. The situation varies considerably among Member States. In Sweden and Denmark, for example, there are no significant differences across age categories. In Bulgaria, Greece, and Latvia, on the other hand, internet access from mobile/smart phones is four times more frequent among 16-34 year-olds than it is among 55-74 year-olds. It is often argued that women have more restricted access to new technologies than men. However, this also varies according to age, geographical origin, and educational level.
Figure 6 illustrates these differences. The use of computers or phones to access the internet in the EU does not differ a lot between males and females in the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups. In 11 Member States, for the 16-24 age group, men are more likely than women to use computers and smart/mobile phones to access the internet, with a 9 % difference in Ireland and a mere 1 % difference in Greece. In 12 Member States, the percentage is higher for women, with the biggest difference in Sweden (7 %). In Latvia, the percentage of women is higher for all age groups, with a 5 % difference in the 16-24 age group and a 2 % difference in the 55-74 age group, at 21 %. Poland shows almost identical percentages for men and women of all age groups. The biggest difference between men and women, where men are a higher percentage of users than women, can be found in the 55-74 age group, with the highest differences in Luxembourg (14 %), Spain (12 %), Belgium (11 %), and Germany (10 %). However, in some Member States, women in this age group are slightly more likely than men to use such technologies.

Skills gap

Another factor that affects access to digital culture is the level of digital skills – the ability to use ICT equipment as a passive consumer or to create one’s own content. On average, 1 % of EU citizens have no digital skills, 26 % have a low level, 26 % have a basic level, and 31 % have a level that is above basic (see Figure 7). The percentage of citizens with a low overall level of digital skills is highest in România (35 %) and lowest in Luxembourg (12 %). The percentage of citizens
with an above-average level of digital skills is, this time around, highest in Luxembourg (55 %) and lowest in Romania (10 %).

Figure 8 gives some insights into the digital gap between men and women. The data confirm a significant difference in basic and above-basic digital skills among men and women in the 55-74 age group, which lags significantly behind the younger generations. However, the data for 16-24 year-olds in many countries show that young women are more likely to master basic and above-basic digital skills. 24-54 year-old women in many cases have equal or even better scores than men. Since there is no prevalence of poor digital skills of girls and women in general, it seems the issue is rather a local problem of Member States and girls should not be stigmatised as performing poorly in digital environment.

However, Eurostat data for 2019 (see Figure 9) show that the digital skills of inhabitants of cities are better than such skills among inhabitants of rural areas, towns and suburbs. The digital gap shows on average 14 % difference in the EU between cities and rural areas. The gap exceeds 20 % in Ireland, Lithuania, and Hungary, reaching 23 % in Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, and Portugal. It is a reflection of the differences in educational level and type of education between urban and rural populations.

Availabilty of cultural content for persons with disabilities

Digital technologies have the potential to facilitate access to digital cultural content for persons with disabilities. Access to the internet, proper equipment, and IT skills can solve problems of physical barriers for people with disabilities, as well as help to overcome distance barriers. According to the European Union of the Deaf, ‘upcoming technology promises a future where many of the challenges that people with disabilities currently face in society could be tackled with creative solutions’. The websites of museums, libraries, and archives, as well as films and performances must contain audio descriptions or other enhancements that make them accessible to the visually impaired. Only 5 % of all books published in developed countries are offered in a format accessible to the visually impaired and the print disabled.

Likewise, upcoming technology can also improve the lives of the deaf and the hard of hearing, for example by creating special gadgets for sign language interpretation of museum visits and exhibitions and by subtitling non-dialogue audio – accompanying noises and music in films and theatre performances. People with a cognitive disorder would also benefit from such gadgets.
Use of the internet for cultural purposes

Among other possible uses, the internet is a tool for accessing cultural content, such as films, books, the press, information on and tickets for cultural events and services, learning platforms, and knowledge-sharing platforms for cultural heritage and current cultural trends. Figure 10 shows that most EU consumers use the internet to purchase films or music. Only in the Netherlands, Spain, Poland, Portugal, and Slovakia does the number of people who purchase e-books exceed the number of people who purchase films or music. This does not mean that people in these Member States read more than they watch films or listen to music. It simply shows that for them, in 2017, buying e-books was more popular than buying films or music online. Finding out what percentage of films watched online were heritage films would be an excellent input for film literacy actions and film education.

Digital access to and availability of cultural heritage

Figure 11 is based on a special Eurobarometer survey carried out at the end of 2017 in preparation for the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage. It shows uses of the internet for purposes related to cultural heritage. The survey enquired about habits such as looking up information, checking the accessibility of facilities, checking the main features of a heritage site or event, buying an entrance ticket, deepening knowledge after a visit, giving an opinion about a site, and sharing self-created content related to a visit.

Overall, more than half of the respondents used the internet for purposes related to cultural heritage. More than 30% looked for information about a cultural heritage site or event. Slightly less than 25% bought tickets online and less than 20% looked for further information after the visit. Only very few shared their experience by posting an opinion or by sharing content related to the site visited or event attended.
Figure 12, also based on Special Eurobarometer 466, shows the main reasons why people do not visit cultural heritage sites — lack of interest, time, information, choice, or money, and the poor quality or remote location of the sites (or events). Interestingly, people who use the internet daily are the most likely to mention lack of information as a reason for not attending cultural heritage events or visiting cultural heritage sites. They are by far the most likely to mention lack of time to visit sites or attend events. It seems that access to the internet and its use on a daily basis is no guarantee of access to information on museums, archaeological sites, cultural heritage events and festivals, although this information is widely available online.

The Eurobarometer 466 confirms that in the era of hyper-choice in the area of online cultural content, heritage sites, works of art, heritage films, festivals, and traditions compete for attention with all other online content. One expert in the field of cultural content has claimed that the quantity of online cultural content is overwhelming, which may constitute an access barrier in itself. For this reason, he stresses the need for a sort of ‘knowledgeable librarian’ to guide the public through the content jungle and to attract the attention of those who are not aware that such content is available online.3

**Digitised cultural heritage and its availability**

Following the 2005 Commission communication on digital libraries, the 2010 communication on European cinema in the digital era, and the successive 2014 communication on European film in the digital era, cultural institutions in the Member States launched digitisation projects of their libraries, archives, art collections, museums, films, and music collections. In 2008, the digital platform ‘Europeana’ was launched as a single entrance point for access to European cultural heritage material online. At present, it contains more than 58 million artworks, books, manuscripts, photographs, films, and music tracks. Images account for 58 % of the digital collection, text 39 %, and video and sound recordings 3 %.

According to the site’s own statistics, the United States and the Netherlands are the countries with the most visits, followed by eight other European countries — Spain, Germany, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland (see Figure 13).

Following digitisation initiatives at EU level, cultural institutions in all Member States launched projects to digitise their collections, thereby contributing to Europeana. Since 2008, a survey by ENUMERATE has been following the progress of these projects, especially the accessibility and availability of digital objects.
According to ENUMERATE’s 2017 report, as much as 74% of all digitalised library objects are available online, 59% of all archive objects, and 48% of museums’ objects. The report also shows that 83% of online users access digital collections via the website of the institution to which the collection belongs, 40% of users go through Europeana, and 20% go through other aggregators or social media platforms. It is expected that the number of users that go through social media platforms will increase to 25%.

The digitisation of cultural heritage and its availability and accessibility are just some of the possibilities offered by digital culture and an example of a priority area in EU cultural policy that is enshrined in the Treaties.

**European Union actions supporting access to digital culture**

The EU has various tools to shape and implement its policies. Digital culture is a horizontal policy area that cuts across other policy areas, such as technology, culture, infrastructure, and research.

**Aspects of access to digital culture in the Digital Single Market**

The Digital Single Market (DSM) is at the core of the Digital Single Market Strategy, which aims at providing better access to digital content and covers, among other issues, connectivity and access, digital infrastructure, media, and digital culture. The digital society, another element of the DSM, aims at creating an inclusive digital society through the promotion of digital skills, which are key for an inclusive culture.

Supporting media and digital culture in the framework of the DSM means providing coherent media policies, legislation on audiovisual media services, and the preservation of cultural heritage through digital technologies. The objective is to offer European citizens a variety of interactive content from across Europe and to ensure EU citizens access to European audiovisual works. Access to cultural content from the EU entails issues such as copyright, rules on advertising, media freedom, and the fight against illegal content, among others. The digitisation of cultural heritage from European libraries, archives, museums, and audiovisual archives is part of this strategy.

The Commission plans to propose legislation on the Digital Single Market of Content to enhance digital distribution of creative content. Creative content is delivered and used in various ways, such as e-books, music streaming sites, video-sharing platforms, and gaming applications, to name just a few. Such content needs to be available in a borderless interoperable internet environment, which the DSM is meant to provide.

The Commission’s priorities for 2019-2024 – Europe Fit for the Digital Age – include new rules on e-commerce intended to break down barriers to full access to all goods and services offered online and to promote cross-border access to online content. A modern framework for copyright should include simpler licensing for online transmissions.

Since April 2018, the cross-border portability of digital content allows subscribers to online content services to access the services they paid for during a stay in another EU Member State for a limited period of time. This measure is also part of the Digital Single Market Strategy.

In its contribution to the informal EU-27 leaders’ meeting in Sibiu in May 2019, the Commission highlighted the benefits of digitisation. However, it also pointed to the risk that digitalisation might widen digital skills gaps and deepen regional and social divides across the European Union. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate such gaps in internet access by location (urban and rural areas), Member State, and revenue. Figures 7, 8, and 9 show digital skills gaps by location (rural and urban areas), Member State, and age. Skills gaps also reflect differences in educational levels, which in turn are related to socio-economic status. This shows that the potential of digital technologies to benefit all citizens has not yet been realised.

The 2010 Commission report on the implementation of the European Agenda for Culture, which strongly focused on access to culture and digitisation, stated that digitisation has contributed to progress in access to culture. However, with digitised resources still lacking visibility, especially
across national boundaries, and, for example, only around 10% of Europe’s cultural heritage digitised on Europeana, more digitised resources of relevance should be made available online and their cross-border use enhanced.

Language is a barrier in access to content in the DSM. €200 million was already allocated to computer-assisted translation, semantic technologies, multilingual publishing in previous research and competitiveness funding programmes.

Digital infrastructure

In an effort to bridge the gap in broadband access between urban and rural areas, the Commission invested €100 million of the Connecting Europe Facility to create the Connecting Europe Broadband Fund and to further mobilise some €3 billion of investment in broadband infrastructure projects in rural areas. The Commission’s investment contributed to the financing of a cross-border broadband network between Slovenia and Croatia for more than 4,000 villages. It also allocated €6 billion of EU structural funds to broadband needed for the smart rural economy.

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) brought an optic fibre network to the Arctic Circle – a region with a population density of two inhabitants per 10 km², who strongly need to stay connected. The EAFRD is part of the European structural and investment funds, which also contributes to improving access to digital content thanks to the development of cloud computing infrastructure and services that reduce the need for heavy investments in data centres, hardware, and software required for the promotion of digital technologies in relatively poor rural areas.

The digital scoreboard measures, across the EU, digital performance defined according to indicators, such as the consumption of audiovisual and media content; reading and downloading online newspapers and news magazines; playing and downloading games, images, films, and music; household subscription to video-on-demand (VoD) services; or watching VoD from commercial services platforms. The data provided via the scoreboard are key to the development of a policy for facilitating access to digital culture.

The Web Accessibility Directive, in force since September 2018, addresses the issue of digital exclusion and the digital gap resulting from disability, a phenomenon still to be assessed as regards its scope. Digital inclusion is addressed in research projects such as WAI-dev, which focuses on the creation of an ecosystem for inclusive design and development that provides better accessibility for everyone. The Accessibility Directive is accompanied by the European Accessibility Act, which covers products and services promoting digital inclusion in various areas, including audiovisual media services, e-books, and ICT equipment. These measures have an impact on access to digital culture for persons with disability.

Cultural and educational policy aspects of access to digital culture

According to research quoted in the Commission’s New European Agenda for Culture, ‘cultural access is the second most important determinant of psychological well-being’. The document also points to the fact that both urban and rural communities which want to attract employers, students and tourists need to consider the importance of their cultural offer. The EU’s Digital4Culture strategy reflects the benefits of the digital revolution for a broader, more democratic access to culture and heritage as well as new ways to access cultural content.

Audience development, referred to in the 2017 Council conclusions on promoting access to culture via digital means, is to attract new audiences and engage existing ones in an effort to increase cohesion within communities. The document points to links between education and culture, concluding that, to achieve its objective, the audience needs to acquire new skills, such as digital skills. One of the proposed actions aimed at achieving cohesion and well-being is the understanding of digital audiences, particularly as concerns data collection, since data is the key to understanding audience’s needs, thus addressing people’s access to the content that they like or might like. However, this raises questions about the creation of a ‘cultural consumption bubble’ through the customisation of content based on data on audience preference, which would, as a result, lead to less exposure to cultural novelty and bewilderment, so important in the arts and culture.
The Council resolution on education and training of February 2020 draws attention to the digital skills gap, which still needs to be addressed in the light of the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2020. The promotion of the skills needed to access cultural content cuts across education policy and the digital strategy. Digital literacy equips people with the skills needed to thrive in the digital environment. These skills are covered by the Connectivity in schools action, which is part of the Digital Education Action Plan, under the supervision of the Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton. With 18% of EU schools lacking a reliable broadband connection, they cannot help in the development of students’ digital skills. Schools have a role to play in developing audiences, showing them the way to rich cultural online content, acquainting them with Europeana and other online cultural resources for educational needs, via video streaming, cloud computing, and virtual and augmented reality as educational tools for cultural awareness and creative usage. The action plan on connectivity at schools aims at informing interested parties about funding possibilities for connectivity projects, namely funds from the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF), the EAFRD, and the Connecting Europe Facility.

The current Creative Europe programme set as its objectives audience development and access to cultural and creative works, particularly for under-represented groups, such as people with disability. However, it does not specifically mention digital technologies and digital access. The development of digital skills is only mentioned in relation to professionals. The next programme (2021-2027) aims at enhancing online distribution and providing wider cross-border access to European audiovisual works and content. It contemplates film education schemes as a way of enhancing access to digital culture. Online educational catalogues of recent and heritage films will help educate students. Media literacy – a factor in access to culture – will be a part of policy cooperation among Member States in this area.

With a view to provide better access to digital cultural content, the 2019 work programme for the Creative Europe Programme lists among its actions support for the development of European video games. It includes an award for games that encourage ‘accessibility for gamers with disabilities and other impairments’.

The European Parliament has often addressed the issue of access to culture and digitisation of cultural works, paying particular attention to the digital divide and striving to turn the potential of digital technology into a facilitator of universal and democratic access to culture. The 2017 resolution on the new skills agenda recognised the role of culture for personal development and described media literacy as the ability to critically understand different forms of media, which enhances the benefits of digital literacy. It called upon Member States to set up national strategies for digital skills that involve education and culture professionals who work with both young people and the elderly in order to bridge the digital divide. The 2016 resolution on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities pointed to a disproportionate number of people with disabilities left out of digital developments and unable to access important services.

European Parliament on access to digital culture

In its resolutions, the European Parliament has often addressed the issue of access to culture and digitisation of cultural works, paying particular attention to the digital divide and striving to turn the potential of digital technology as a facilitator of universal and democratic access to culture. The 2017 resolution on the new skills agenda recognised the role of culture for personal development and described media literacy as the ability to critically understand different forms of media, which enhances the benefits of digital literacy. It called upon Member States to set up national strategies for digital skills that involve education and culture professionals who work with both young people and the elderly in order to bridge the digital divide. The 2016 resolution on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities pointed to a disproportionate number of people with disabilities left out of digital developments and unable to access important services.

Pilot projects supported by the European Parliament

Since 2014, following the success of Parliament’s pilot projects and preparatory actions supporting the subtitling of non-fiction cultural content programmes with a view to facilitating cross-border access, the Creative Europe programme has been providing stable funding for the subtitling in English, Spanish, Polish, and Italian of a selection of ARTE programmes originally available only in French and German. These programmes are available online and in the mother tongue of almost 70% of Europe’s citizens.

for measures that support the rights of people with disability to access online cultural content, such as training programmes at national and EU levels, the mainstreaming of digital content, and the mandatory suspension of copyright for materials used for non-commercial purposes.

In June 2017, a resolution on the Commission communication on digitising European industry highlighted the need to provide funds for the digitisation of cultural works and for facilitating access to culture for people with disability and for people in remote areas. The issue was raised again in a 2019 legislative resolution on the proposal for the ERDF and Cohesion Fund for 2021-2027.

In the June 2018 resolution Structural and financial barriers in the access to culture, Parliament drew attention to digital barriers that need to be addressed via a digital strategy for cultural infrastructures and activities, including audience development. The resolution focused on the digital skills and competences required by those in charge of cultural and education institutions and on the promotion of public access to digital cultural heritage resources and services.

In its legislative resolution of April 2019 on the proposal for a regulation establishing the Digital Europe programme (2021-2027), under discussion with the Commission and the Council, the European Parliament highlighted that digitisation can facilitate and improve access to digital services — including multilingual ones — for everyone, regardless of age, disability, and distance from urban centres.

Digital preservation and subtitling were also described as an issue of access in the 2015 resolution on European film in the digital era. The digitisation of cultural heritage as an issue of access for people with disability and those living in rural areas was highlighted in the resolution on an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe. Finally, the 2016 resolution on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries called for support to the digitisation of cultural content and recognised online platforms as a means to provide wider access to cultural and creative works.

ENDNOTES


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