



Minutes

Eighth meeting of the Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE) 28 October 2020

Introduction

It was the 8th meeting of the Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (the 'DCHE Expert Group'). Participants were the appointed representatives of the Member States and other Observer Countries (competent authorities), UNESCO, members of the Europeana Sub-Group as well as external speakers invited to give presentations on specific aspects. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the meeting was held by videoconference during a morning session.

The meeting was chaired by Rehana SCHWINNINGER-LADAK, Head of Unit, DG CONNECT G.2; Interactive Technologies, Digital for Culture and Education (European Commission).

The web page for the 8th meeting of the DCHE Group is available [on the Europa website](#).

Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

List of points discussed – Wednesday 28 October 2020, 09.30-13.00

The Chair welcomed the participants to the eighth meeting of the DCHE Expert Group, and presented an overview of the agenda. The final version of the agenda was adopted.

Introduction

- The Chair welcomed the new DCHE member Gert Jan Willighagen (the Netherlands) and the observer Bård Bie-Larsen (Norway). The DG CNECT G2 team was also presented with its new members, Oscar Arnau and Ann Nilsson.

The minutes from the last meeting were adopted without comments.

Updates from the Commission on policy, coordination and funding initiatives

- Update by DG CNECT

The presentation brought attention to new programmes. The *Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)* is the recovery instrument to help EU become stronger and more resilient. In order to benefit from RRF Member states should before April 2021 submit their draft national plans, with a minimum of 20% expenditure on digital. These plans are to be assessed by the Commission Feb.-Aug. 2021. The seven digital priorities were presented with serving flagship areas. The strategic objective 2 of the *Digital Europe Programme* (Cloud, data and artificial intelligence), Data spaces for Cultural Heritage is under discussion with MS. The Commission work programme *Horizon Europe* will be presented end of 2020/beginning 2021 and MS will be kept informed about the publication of calls under Destination 2 ‘Innovative Research on the European Cultural Heritage and the Cultural and Creative Industries’.

On the ongoing evaluation of the 2011 Commission Recommendation, updates were provided on the outcome of the public consultation. The feedback about the Recommendation’s implementation was generally positive. However, a high number of respondents considered that the Recommendation should be updated to better reflect the current needs and challenges of the sector. A Factual summary report will be published on the specific [website](#), while MS will be kept updated on the timeframe for the revised Recommendation.

The [10 basic principles for 3D digitisation of cultural heritage](#) were highlighted. The Commission also presented a recently launched study, led by the Cyprus University of Technology, which aims to identify and analyse all the relevant elements for 3D digitisation of tangible cultural heritage. The [survey for experts](#) is open until 31 Dec. 2020.

The *European Competence Centre for digital preservation and conservation of cultural heritage* (Horizon 2020) will start its work 1 Jan. 2021. It will give a special focus on 3D technologies and tools for cultural heritage. There will be more details on contents during the next DCHE meeting.

The *Curation of digital assets and advanced digitisation* is giving grants to four projects to start their work in Dec. 2020-Jan. 2021. The future call *European Museum Collaboration and Innovation Space (CSA)* (open until 12 Jan. 2021) will be a potential for museums to innovate and collaborate.

The evaluation of the 2020 European Generic Services call for proposals has been finished and selected proposals will soon be published.

- Update by DG EAC (European Commission)

DG EAC gave an overview of the follow-up to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 ([European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage](#)) and other projects, such as [Cultural Heritage in Action](#), launched in Feb. 2020 as well as Cultural Heritage and Education projects [INCREAS](#) and [CHARTER](#). The Handbook for the joint UNESCO EU project *Engaging Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable Europe* will be published on UNESCO website in early 2021.

The mandates and activities of the Cultural Heritage Expert Group and the new Open Method of Coordination Working group called “Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate

Change” were presented. Details relating to the Workshop on complementary funding for cultural heritage were also outlined. It is clear that the impact of COVID-19 on loss of income for the Tourism and Cultural Heritage sectors is significant, therefore digitisation and provision of digital services in this context is very important.

Updates by MS and UNESCO

- Update from current Presidency of the Council of the EU (Wolfgang Krauth, German representative)

The German representative presented the events on culture and digitisation, organised during the current Presidency, such as the conference “Museums and Social Responsibility” (organised by NEMO and Deutscher Museumsbund), “The role of copyright in the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector” (by Europeana), “Rethinking Culture and Science – Opportunities, risks and developments associated with the digital transformation in Europe” (by German National Library).

- Plans of incoming Presidency of the Council of the EU (Margarida Lopes, Portuguese representative)

The future Portuguese Presidency of the Council presented the key issues and priorities of its mandate (e.g. earmarking of the recovery plan also for the cultural sector). The Portuguese representative referred to the major events and initiatives on culture, such as conferences (e.g. Europeana Conference, “Museums and social responsibility – involvement, network and partnerships”, “Culture, Cohesion and Social Impact”), meetings (e.g. National Plans for Arts and Education, Education, Youth; Culture and Sport Council meeting, meeting of the European Board of National Archivists and of the European Archives Group).

- Member States’ actions in response to COVID-19 (round table discussion)

The Commission invited Member States to present the challenges faced in relation to the COVID-19 crisis, the impact on revenues, whether increased use of digital technologies could lead to a compensation of lost revenues or represent a reliable source for the future.

Hungary pointed to an enhanced use of the online resources (20-50% additional services during the crisis), as well as to an increase in the management’s awareness of the need to work online. However, the Hungarian representative underlined the stronger competition for governmental resources between the cultural and health sectors in the context of the crisis.

Finland emphasised the vulnerability of the sector, but also its resilience, i.e. the crisis had not only a negative side, but also a positive one. Funding is very important, in particular for small cultural heritage organisations, which are the most numerous.

- UNESCO proposal for a new Mid-Term Strategy 2022-2029

The representative from UNESCO mentioned its initiatives to respond to the impact of the pandemic on the cultural sector, in particular the weekly [‘Culture & COVID-19: Impact and Response Tracker’](#). This provides an overview of both the immediate impact of the health crisis and examples of how countries around the world are adapting to the situation. The social impact of the crisis has been monitored via a global dialogue with the different ministers and stakeholders. As culture is a power for resilience, UNESCO encourages online

initiatives (#shareourheritage), a call to disseminate art and ask for documentation on COVID-19 was supported. UNESCO is engaged in a reflexion for a better use of the digital tools (how digital services can contribute to revenue and can help the recovery of the sector).

Session on Europeana

- Update by Europeana Foundation (Harry Verwayen, Executive Director, and Andy Neale, Technical Director)

Since the Europeana Strategy 2020-2025 was published in March 2020, Europeana emphasise more the support of the cultural sector in its digital transformation and prioritise improvement data quality, capacity building and infrastructure. The March updates of Europeana and Europeana Pro websites provide better browse and search possibilities, better presentation of content, as well as increased traffic. Europeana also supported the Re-OpenEU initiative with the campaign ‘Discovering Europe’ that attracted over a hundred thousand visits during the summer months. Europeana Foundation organised a number of online webinars to support the sector in the times of COVID crisis, attracting more than 3000 participants. A “sensemaking” workshop series was also organised, with 64 participants from 22 countries, to develop an understanding of how the digital transformation in the sector can be supported. The workshops identified three main areas to focus on: bridging digital divides, addressing diversity and inclusion, and increasing collaboration at different levels. In terms of future work of Europeana DSI-4, Europeana Foundation gave an overview of the main priorities and objectives for the next 12 months of the contract, along with key performance indicators targets for August 2021.

- Presentation by Europeana Aggregators Forum on deploying a Member States and Commission supported digital aggregation policy, Q&A (Marco Rendina, Chair, and Fred Truyen)

The Europeana Aggregators Forum (EAF) is a pan-European network of national, regional, domain and thematic aggregators, enabling cultural heritage institutions to make their collections available on Europeana. Aggregators are essential intermediaries between Europeana and the diverse network of European cultural institutions, possessing country-, language- and domain/thematic-specific knowledge and expertise to translate European practices and standards to support the needs of local institutions.

EAF has taken up the work carried out by national aggregators participating in the ‘Europeana Common Culture’ project (Generic Services), and has produced a set of recommendations for a Member States and Commission supported digital aggregation policy. The resulting [paper](#) produced by EAF points to the need for public, funded Member States’ digital strategies for cultural heritage, national mandates to institutions for aggregation to Europeana, clear quantity and quality targets for digitisation, availability of publicly funded digitised content through aggregators and Europeana, as well as Commission support to the aggregation landscape in DEP. Digital aggregation strategies in MS can lead to a better representation of content from MS in Europeana, increased high quality data, shared knowledge and expertise, and support for multilingualism in accessing and presenting cultural heritage content.

- National support for data quality (round table discussion)

Out of our 51 million published items on Europeana, 32 million are from accredited aggregators. The other 19 million come from non-accredited partners, many of whom are

inactive partners that Europeana Foundation has no contact with. Moreover, a total of 18 million records (ingested both from accredited aggregators and other partners) have not been updated since 1 Jan. 2017. Member States' representatives were invited to propose ways they could help Europeana increase the quality of these records, e.g. by identifying contacts for inactive CHIs for Europeana to be able to reach them, encouraging CHIs to update their data or other ideas. The BE representative proposed that EF could share a list of inactive CHIs for each Member State as a starting point. The CY representative supported this approach and reiterated Member States' willingness to support Europeana in raising data quality. The DE representative mentioned that the German Digital Library (German aggregator) could help with inactive German partners. The Commission encouraged Europeana Foundation, the Member States and EAF to work together to reach inactive partners and help them update their records and raise the quality of their data in Europeana.

- **AOB**

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End of meeting

Next steps

The European Commission has uploaded the presentations from the current meeting to the [dedicated webpage](#) and notified the group members. After distributing the draft minutes to the participants for approval they will be uploaded on the same webpage.

The date of the next DCHE meeting, which will be held online, is not fixed yet.

All communication related to the DCHE Expert Group should be addressed at: CNECT-DCHE@ec.europa.eu

List of participants

Member States and other Observer Countries

Austria	Martin Ure	Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport
Belgium	Hans van der Linden	Arts and Heritage Agency at Vlaamse Overheid
Belgium	Chris De Loof	BELSPO - Belgian Science Policy Office
Belgium	Jean-Louis Blanchart	Preservation and exploitation of cultural heritage, French-speaking Community of Belgium
Croatia	Jenela Bilic	Ministry of Culture
Czechia	Sarka Brabnikova	
Cyprus	Marinos Ioannides	Ministry of Culture
Estonia	Mirjam Rääbis	National Heritage Board of Estonia
Finland	Minna Karvonen	Ministry of Education and Culture
Finland	Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen	National Library of Finland
France	Elisabeth Freyre	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
France	Marie-Véronique Leroi	Ministère de la Culture
Germany	Wolfgang Krauth	State Archive of Baden-Württemberg

Gree	Sotirios Patronos	Ministry of Culture and Sport of Greece
Greece	Giorgos Stamou	National Technical University of Athens
Hungary	Máté Tóth	National Széchényi Library, Hungary
Hungary	Zoltan Szatucsek	Deputy State Secretariat for the Protection of Cultural Heritage
Italy	Giuliana De Francesco	Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism
Latvia	Jānis Ziediņš	Cultural Information Systems Centre
Lithuania	Rugile Puodziuniene	Ministry of Culture
Luxembourg	Marianne Backes	Ministry of Culture
Malta	Russell Muscat	Marketing and Communications, Heritage Malta
Netherlands	Maaïke Verberk	Director DEN, knowledge centre for digital culture
Netherlands	Wim van Dongen	
Poland	Agata Krawczyk	Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
Portugal	Maria Margarida Lopes	Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP)
Romania	Dan Mihai Matei	National Institute of Heritage
Slovenia	Simona Bergoc	Ministry of Culture
Sweden	Henrik Summanen	Digisam/Riksantikvarieämbetet
Sweden	Eva Stengård	Ministry of Culture

Observer organisations

UNESCO	Louise Haxthausen	Brussels Office
UNESCO	Oriol Freixa Matalonga	Brussels Office
Iceland	Örn Hrafnknelsson	National and University Library of Iceland
Norway	Bard Bie-Larsen	Arts Council's Section for Museum

DCHE Sub-group members

Ismo Malinen	DCHE Sub-Group Member
Merete Sanderhoff	DCHE Sub-Group Member: Europeana Network Association
Piermarco Rendina	DCHE Sub-Group Member: Aggregators for Digital Cultural Heritage in Europe
Vassilis Tzouvaras	DCHE Sub-Group Member: National Technical University of Athens
Zuzanna Stanska	DCHE Sub-Group Member
Ana Alvarez	DCHE Sub-Group Member

Invited experts

Harry Verwayen	Europeana Foundation
Andy Neale	Europeana Foundation
Frederik Truyen	

European Commission

Rehana Schwinniger-Ladak Anne Bajart Katarina Moutogianni Paula-Alexandra Boteanu Fulgencio Sanmartin Oscar Arnau Anne-Marie Barry Ann Nilsson Kinga Katona	DG CNECT / Directorate G / Unit G.2 Interactive Technologies, Digital for Culture and Education
Anne Grady	DG EAC Unit D.1 Cultural Policy