

[Towards a new policy framework to make cultural heritage institutions ready for the digital age](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/towards-new-policy-framework-make-cultural-heritage-institutions-ready-digital-age) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/towards-new-policy-framework-make-cultural-heritage-institutions-ready-digital-age>)

The Recommendation on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation has contributed to the increase in digitisation and online access to digital resources in the cultural heritage sector, across the EU during the past ten years. However, the Recommendation needs to be revised to better respond to the challenges and needs of the sector and to help it seize the opportunities created by digital transformation.

In a context driven by an urgent need to protect and preserve European cultural heritage at risk, by major technological advances and by an evolving cultural heritage sector, the Commission launched an evaluation of the [Recommendation on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation \(2011/711/EU\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32011H0711) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32011H0711>).

The evaluation highlights the success of the Recommendation in increasing the digitisation and online access of cultural material bringing digitised cultural heritage to a pan-European audience. The Recommendation has also served to enable collaboration between European cultural institutions and to share ideas across the sector. It shows that the commitment and efforts of the Member States in digitising a large number of objects and buildings has paid off.

However, the evaluation also underlines the changes of the cultural heritage sector over the past years, with new needs and new opportunities that could further increase the contribution of culture heritage to the European economy. The COVID-19 crisis has underlined once more the need for and importance of improving online access to digitised cultural material and improving its use/reuse. Advanced technologies can empower and unlock the potential of the cultural heritage sector through a more widespread adoption of 3D, AR/VR, AI for example. It opens up new opportunities to digitise cultural heritage for preservation, conservation, restoration, research, as well as for broader online access and re-use by citizens and various sectors, such as tourism.

The evaluation is based on a large set of consultation activities, including an [Open Public Consultation](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/11837-Evaluation-of-the-Recommendation-on-digitisation-and-online-accessibility-of-cultural-material-and-digital-preservation/public-consultation) (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/11837-Evaluation-of-the-Recommendation-on-digitisation-and-online-accessibility-of-cultural-material-and-digital-preservation/public-consultation>) that took place last year. The evaluation is laying the grounds for the future policy in the area of digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material, as well as digital preservation of cultural heritage. The main conclusions of the evaluation are:

- The Recommendation needs to better reflect the **huge potential of advanced digital technologies** (e.g. 3D digitisation) **or emerging technologies** (e.g. virtual reality or augmented reality).
- The Recommendation has to focus more on the **quality** of digitised cultural material, to enhance innovation and creation through the use and reuse of digitised cultural material across the sectors.

- Further adoption of **common standards and approaches** for digitised content would remove several of the remaining interoperability related obstacles.
- **Europeana** should continue to push forward standardisation activities to facilitate the work of the cultural heritage institutions (CHIs). It has to play a more prominent role in enabling CHIs to seize the opportunities provided by the digital transformation.
- It is important to **broaden the scope** of the Recommendation to cover key cultural heritage marginally addressed or not addressed at all yet, like immovable, born digital and intangible heritage.
- **Advanced digital literacy and skills** have become paramount for CHIs, in particular in the context of the pandemic.
- Making full use of cultural heritage **data** for the benefit of the sector would be beneficial not only to the cultural sector, but to other sectors as well (e.g. research, sustainable tourism, education) and would contribute to building the data space for cultural heritage.
- Increased collaboration with other CHIs **at international** level would help in finding shared responses to common challenges and exchanging best practices as well as showcasing and promoting European culture.

More information

Commission Staff Working Document: Evaluation of the Commission Recommendation of 27 October 2011 on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation ([SWD\(2021\) 15 final](#) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=SWD%3A2021%3A15%3AFIN&rid=3>})

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