

CULTURAL

HERITAGE

IN THE DIGITAL DECADE

NOVEMBER 2022



## WHAT IS THE DIGITAL DECADE?

The European Commission's new plan to prepare the European Union for a digital future was unveiled at the turn of the new decade. The aim is to prepare institutions and citizens for a future in which digital will both support for a sustainable future and be a key to development.

Learn, ambition, explore, entertain, but also freedom and rights are the main drive behind the project for the next ten years: the "**Digital Decade**" is changing the way we are shaping policies and behaving in the digital environment.

The challenges to be addressed in terms of democracy and sustainability are many: first of all, the **digital divide** (the gap between those who have effective access to information technologies and those who are partially or totally excluded from them) is among the priorities of the Commission.

In addition, there is a need to increase **strategic autonomy in technology** and decrease **misinformation**, used as a political tool.

The basic idea is that the Union will finance multi-country projects in different areas that can meet these needs. Funding instruments can be at member states, such as the **Recovery and Resilience Facility**, but also directly at projects, with systems such as **Horizon2020**. Here are some of the areas the Commission is focusing on:



COMMON DATA  
INFRASTRUCTURES



BLOCKCHAIN



PAN-EUROPEAN  
5G CORRIDORS



DIGITAL  
INNOVATION HUBS



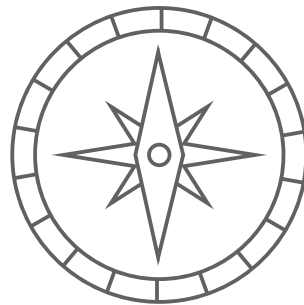
PARTNERSHIP FOR  
DIGITAL SKILLS

## THE DIGITAL COMPASS

A compass to understand the direction to take is always handy when the journey is a decade long. So here is the compass that will guide the actions of the Union during the Digital Decade.

**A digitally skilled population and highly skilled digital professionals**

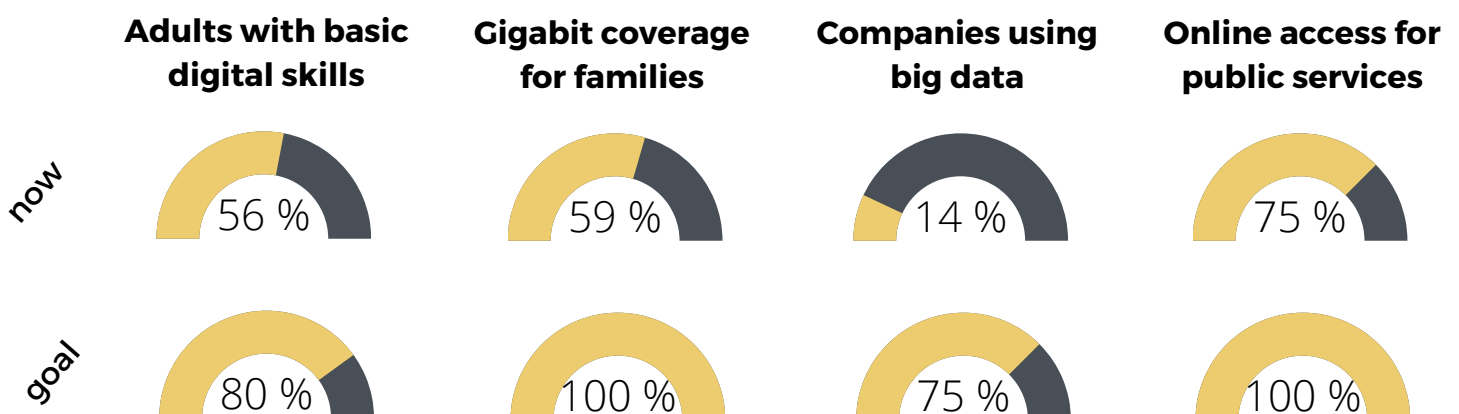
**Digitalisation of public services**



**Secure and sustainable digital infrastructures**

**Digital transformation of businesses**

## HOW THINGS WILL CHANGE IN THE EU



and much more...

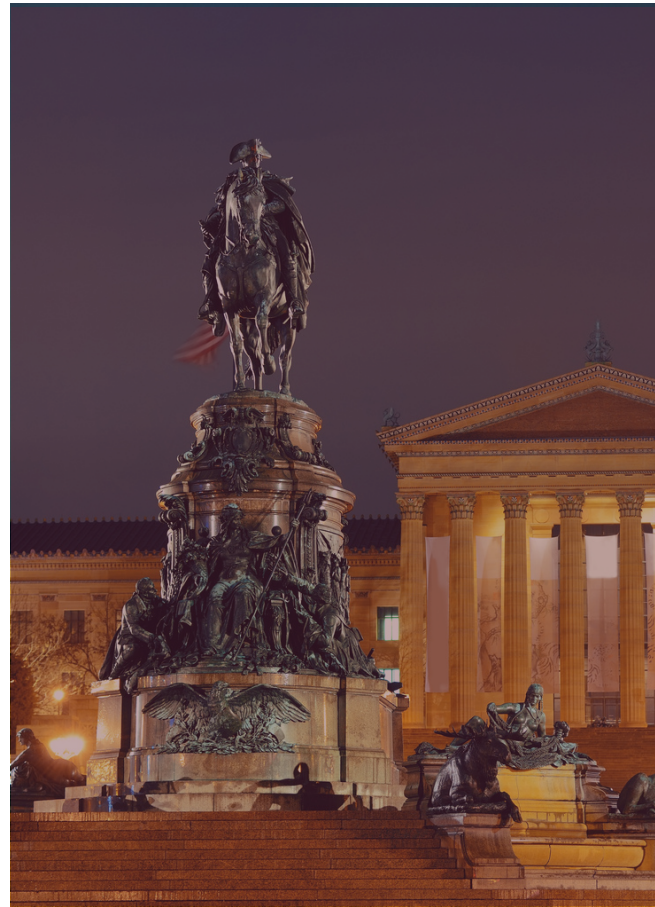


## WHAT ABOUT CULTURAL HERITAGE

In a context of technological improvement, the cultural sector sees a crossroads in front of itself: while digital is useful to increase and better access to heritage, culture remains a commodity linked to the group live experience. It is therefore important that the support of European institutions is balanced between these two important factors.

Here again, the role of the EU institutions is to economically support the policies of the different member states so that they all improve together. These actions cover the areas of **digitisation, online access to cultural material and digital preservation.**

But it does not end here: there is a clear will to create common infrastructures and hubs to manage a cultural heritage that is the basis of a European identity. An excellent example is the setting up of a **European competence centre** aiming to preserve and conserve European Cultural Heritage. **4CH** is a project coordinated by Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (IT) that aims to create a collaborative digital space for cultural heritage conservation.



### THE COMMON EUROPEAN DATA SPACE



Data are now fundamental to the digital economy: they can be exploited to improve the society we live in, but at the same time they risk being a powerful weapon if in the wrong hands. This is why the EU is moving quickly in this direction. The **DATA ACT** is a key measure for making more data available for use in line with EU rules and values.

Another key measure is the creation of **common European data spaces** to manage and make available to European citizens. These spaces will be created for different areas, including cultural heritage. What is the plan?

# FOR A EUROPEAN DATA SPACE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE



## What will it be?

This platform will be a repository not only of **digitised images**, but also of **metadata** (physical and historical descriptions of the object).

It will allow museums, galleries, libraries, archives across Europe to share and reuse the digitised cultural heritage images such as 3D models of historical sites and high quality scans of paintings.



## Europeana Initiative

Europeana is an established platform since 2015. Thanks to its aggregators, it brings together almost **54 million items** in the field of cultural heritage, including photos, audio, video and text.

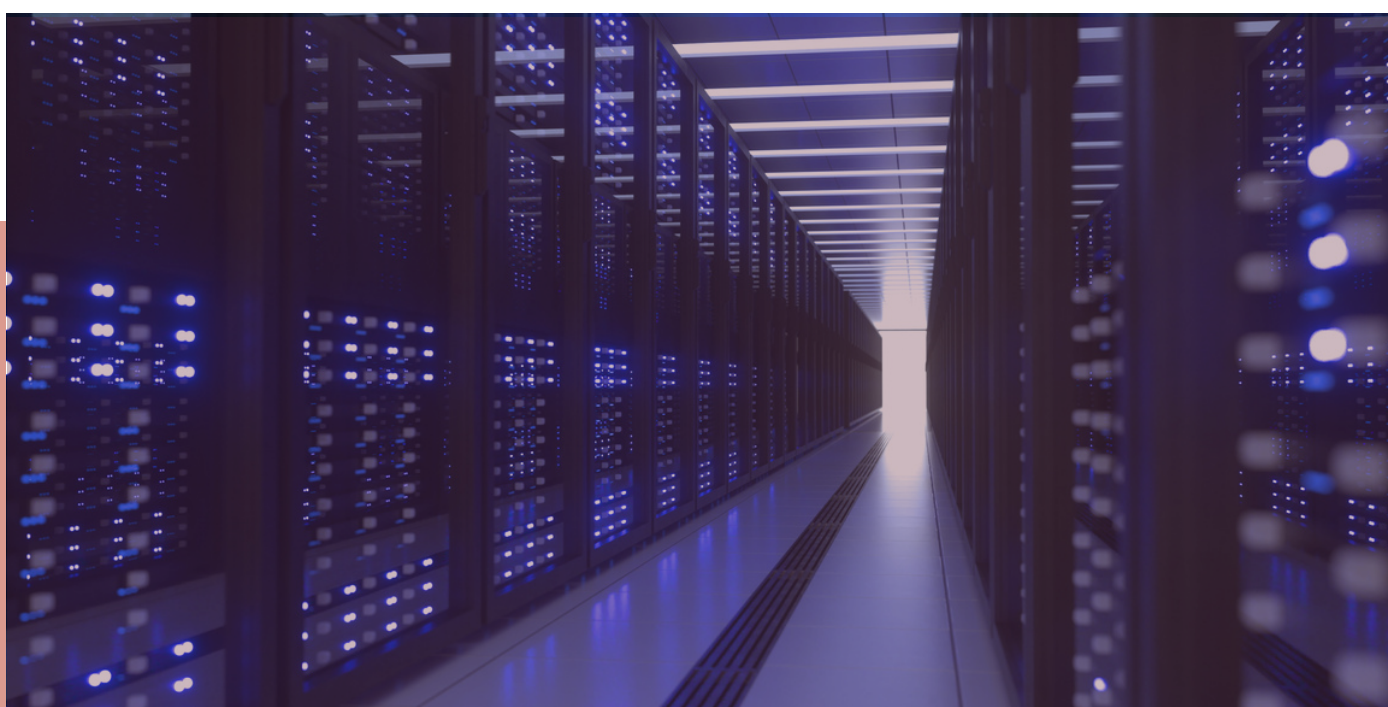
In September 2022, Europeana won the tender to build the future data space for cultural heritage.



## The Commission Expert Group

To check that the data space is growing in the right direction, the Commission has set up a **group of experts, consisting of the member states, the Commission and UNESCO.**

Recently, a sub-group of outsiders has been gathered to give their opinion on legal and technical issues in the creation of this data space.





## RESOURCES

- [What was Horizon2020?, EU Commission, seen on 22/02/2023](#)
- [The EU digital strategy, EU commission, seen on 22/02/2023](#)
- [A path to the digital strategy, EU Commission, seen on 22/02/2023](#)
- [Expert group on a common European data space for cultural heritage, EU Commission, seen on 22/02/2023](#)
- [4CH PROJECT - Competence Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage](#)
- [Europeana Initiative](#)
- [Data Act, EU Commission, seen on 22/02/2023](#)

## CONTACTS

This synthesis note is published by **Michael Culture Association (AISBL Belgium)**, a European trans-domain devoted to European digital cultural heritage, from aggregation, protection, preservation, valorization, and reuse, aiming to support the DCH communities.

MCA is a member of the Europeana Aggregators Forum through MUSEU-HUB: a reference point for European museums and other cultural institutions hosting museum collections in the field of digital cultural heritage and aggregation for Europeana.

If you have any comments or suggestions on this or the rest of the synthesis notes, please write to: [contact@michael-culture.eu](mailto:contact@michael-culture.eu)