Chinese-European Workshop on Digital Preservation

Beijing (China), July 14 – 16, 2004

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Definition: Cultural Heritage

The Cultural Heritage Act 2002 defines ‘cultural heritage’ as “movable and immovable objects of artistic, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, paleontological and geological importance and includes information or data relative to cultural heritage pertaining to Malta or to any other country. This includes archaeological, paleontological or geological sites and deposits, landscapes, groups of buildings, as well as scientific collections, collections of art objects, manuscripts, books, published material, archives, audio-visual material and reproductions of any of the preceding, or collections of historical value, as well as intangible cultural assets comprising arts, traditions, customs and skills employed in the performing arts, in applied arts and in crafts and other intangible assets which have a historical, artistic or ethnographic value.”
UNESCO: “Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage”

October, 15 2003
considering that the disappearance of heritage in whatever form constitutes an impoverishment of the heritage of all nations, [...]  

recognizing that the resources of information and creative expression are increasingly produced, distributed, accessed and maintained in digital form, creating a new legacy – the digital heritage  

understanding that digital heritage is at risk of being lost and that its preservation for the benefit of present and future generations is an urgent issue of worldwide concern
“Many of the [digital] resources have lasting value and significance, and therefore constitute a heritage that should be protected and preserved for current and future generations.

This ever-growing heritage may exist in any language, in any part of the world, and in any area of human knowledge or expression.”
Article 4

Unless the prevailing threats are addressed, the loss of the digital heritage will be rapid and inevitable. Member States will benefit by encouraging legal, economic and technical measures to safeguard the heritage. Awareness-raising and advocacy is urgent, alerting policy-makers and sensitising the general public to both the potential of the digital media and the practicalities of preservation.
Article 10

The digital heritage of all regions, countries and communities should be preserved and made accessible, so as to assure over time representation of all peoples, nations, cultures and languages.
Article 11

In the face of the current digital divide, it is necessary to reinforce international cooperation and solidarity to enable all countries to ensure creation, dissemination, preservation and continued accessibility of their digital heritage.
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