

COUNCIL RESOLUTION**of 25 June 2002****on preserving tomorrow's memory — preserving digital content for future generations**

(2002/C 162/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING the strategy set by the European Council on 23 and 24 March 2000 in Lisbon aiming at preparing the transition of the European Union 'to a knowledge-based economy and society by better policies for the information society and R & D'; as well as the 'eEurope 2002' action plan, presented to the European Council held in Santa Maria da Feira on 19 and 20 June 2000, that called for increased digitisation and use of the Internet, e.g. in e-commerce, in public service, in health services and in cultural institutions,

RECOGNISING that European society and the economy as a whole are increasingly dependent on digital information and that the archiving of this information will be essential in the future in providing a comprehensive view of European development and collections,

NOTING that the cultural and intellectual assets of our society, which are created, usable and available in digital form and which form the memory of tomorrow are dependent on rapidly changing technologies, on fragile media and are widely distributed geographically and that these assets are, therefore, at great risk of being irremediably lost unless positive measures are taken to preserve them and to keep them available for the future,

FURTHER NOTING that memory institutions such as archives, libraries and museums have a central role to play in these actions,

ALSO NOTING that the digital preservation extends the existing vast publicly held collections and that a significant quantity of digital content is also in the possession of various private actors (such as publishers and broadcasters etc.), which should be taken into account when analysing the situation and planning long-term preservation measures,

NOTING that Decision No 182/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 1998 concerning the fifth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (1998-2002) ⁽¹⁾ includes actions 'to enable linguistic and cultural diversity' and scientific and technological objectives such as 'accessing scientific, cultural and

other items through the networking of libraries, archives and museums'; FURTHER NOTING that research into new information society technologies providing improved access to and preservation of cultural and scientific resources will remain essential for the foreseeable future,

NOTING that the Council Resolution of 26 June 2000 on the conservation and enhancement of European cinema heritage ⁽²⁾ emphasised that through the cinema heritage the citizens, in particular future generations, will 'have access to one of the most significant forms of artistic expression of the last 100 years and a unique record of the life, customs, history and geography of Europe' and that the Resolution recalled, among other things, the interdisciplinary nature of the problems involved, the absence of specialist vocational training and the transnational nature of the response demanded,

RECALLING that the Council Resolution of 21 January 2002 on culture and the knowledge society ⁽³⁾ called on the Commission and the Member States to, *inter alia* 'to assist in the digitisation of cultural content and in the interoperability of the related systems with a view to preserving, protecting and raising awareness of the European cultural heritage and European cultural diversity',

NOTING the vast changes in methods of creating, storing and preserving records, documents and archives, in particular in digital form; and STRESSING the need to continue to develop methods and guidelines for long-term preservation of these records, documents, collections and archives essential for safeguarding the heritage of Europe,

CONVINCED that it is therefore essential to target practical actions, shared by all of the Member States, that will address the high fragmentation of approaches across different cultural sectors and taking into consideration not only the technological challenges but also the broader socioeconomic implications,

NOTING the need for long-term digital preservation work which takes account of what has already been undertaken or is under way in different international networks and organisations, in particular the Council of Europe,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 26, 1.2.1999, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 193, 11.7.2000, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 32, 5.2.2002, p. 1.

PROPOSES the following objectives and indicative measures for further analysis:

- stimulating the development of policies for preserving digital culture and heritage, as well as their accessibility, through
 - establishing cooperation frameworks and mechanisms between Member States for exchanging experiences on policies, programmes and related regulatory issues, and for developing shared approaches,
 - supporting the relevant custodial organisations (e.g. archives, libraries and museums) collectively and individually, in their responsibilities for collecting digital content and keeping it accessible over time,
 - examining the organisational infrastructures and technical standards needed to support stable and compatible networks of trusted preservation repositories,
- advancing advocacy and awareness, through networks which support the sharing of experiences and progress, the adoption of appropriate standards, and the measurement and dissemination of good practices,

- considering appropriate investment, and analysing the cost and the impact on current and future funding, as well as the potential synergy between public and private funding,
- improving the skills base, by creating mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and skills, and for the ongoing identification of emerging skills requirements and training needs,
- stimulating research into problems and solutions, through the development of research programmes, technology trials and experimental large-scale applications,

CALLS UPON THE COMMISSION AND THE MEMBER STATES, as appropriate, and within their respective areas of competence and respecting fully the subsidiarity principle, to undertake, develop or study the feasibility of the said measures,

INVITES THE COMMISSION

- in collaboration with Member States, to assess the situation,
- to report back to the Council (in principle every two years after the adoption of this Resolution),
- to draw up an action plan, as appropriate.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 25 June 2002

on a new work plan on European cooperation in the field of culture

(2002/C 162/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. NOTING that, in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community, the Community is to contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity, to encourage cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, to support and supplement their action, while fully respecting the principle of subsidiarity as well as the Commission's right of initiative in the fields falling within Community competence;
2. NOTING that 7 February 2002 was the 10th anniversary of the Treaty of Maastricht and of the inclusion of a specific article on culture in the Treaty establishing the European Community;
3. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the fact that the Community is facing new challenges in a very different context from the one in which the Treaty of Maastricht was signed;
4. WHEREAS this new context is notably marked by the impending enlargement of the European Union;

5. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the increasing importance of inter-cultural dialogue, the mass of technological innovations in the knowledge and information society, as well as the challenges of the globalisation process;
6. TAKING DUE NOTE of the Resolution of the European Parliament of 5 September 2001 on cultural cooperation in the European Union;
7. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the mandate of the Council Resolution of 21 January 2002 on the role of culture in the development of the European Union ⁽¹⁾;
8. NOTING the debates held on one hand at the informal meetings of Ministers for Culture in Falun (20-22 May 2001), Bruges (4-5 December 2001) and Salamanca (18 March 2002) on the implementation of Article 151 of the Treaty and on the other hand the debates held during the second Forum on Cultural Cooperation in Europe organised by the Commission on 21 and 22 November 2001 on the future of Community cultural action;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 32, 5.2.2002, p. 2.