

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 7 July 2025, with which you draw my attention to the need for cross-border, long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage and for sharing Estonia's analysis and concrete proposals. I also thank you for raising this important issue at the last meeting of the Council in its Education, Youth, Culture and Sport configuration in Brussels on 13 May.

I fully agree with your concerns and on its importance for the cultural heritage sector in the European Union and for society at large. I would like to reassure you that the Commission its utmost to support the preservation of digital heritage, within the main policy framework in the sector, the 'Recommendation for the common European data space for cultural heritage'. The recommendation puts indeed a strong emphasis on the need to ensure long-term digital preservation. The case of Ukraine, where the Commission helped to find solutions to store Ukrainian digital cultural assets safely in European data centers overnight, is a case in point which shows the strong link between preservation and preparedness policies, and the need to cooperate across borders.

Work on the matter at hand has already started at the technical level in the framework of the common European data space for cultural heritage. The data space offers structured and sustainable solutions at European, cross-border level, including common data exchange standards and metadata compatibility. Its governance includes our Commission Expert Group on the common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage, representing Member States in operational discussions on cross-border coordination for the digital preservation of cultural heritage, as well as the Commission and the Europeana Foundation, the main contractor and representative of the consortium that manages the data space. Estonia's contribution, as enclosed with your letter, will provide key input to the reflections of the Commission and the work of the expert group.

I want to reiterate our full support for the long-term digital preservation of European cultural heritage, and I look forward to our further dialogue on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)
Henna Virkkunen

*Ms Heidi Purga
Minister of Culture of the Republic of Estonia*

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