

Policy Perspectives on Values and Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

Values define human personality and provide the conditions for social well-being and cohesion. European values—Lisbon Treaty Art. 2—reinforce the identity of European citizenship and embody an important part of Europe’s Intangible Cultural Heritage. Thus, their cultivation contributes to the cohesion of European societies. However, how can we support this high-level social cause at a policy level? How can we derive multi-perspective value-centric policy recommendations that can further support this social cause? Aiming to contribute to the field of values and social cohesion, this paper aims to propose a concrete set of policy recommendations for promoting values as a key part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage and enhancing their digitisation. Adopting a multi-perspective, participatory policy approach, our study findings validate the importance of values and highlight the significance of their examination and research for scientific and for the policy stakeholders, supporting social cohesion and societal agility.

Keywords

Values, Values Across Time and Space, Values Digitization, Policy Recommendations

1. Introduction

Values research is considered particularly important, since values influence and shape human personality and determines people’s choices and actions (Parsons, 1951). In order to provide a concise definition of values, we adopt the one provided by Kluckhohn (1951) who influenced numerous subsequent studies in this field (Giouvanopoulou et al., 2023). Kluckhohn argued that a value “*is a concep-*

tion, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action” (p. 395). Therefore, the transformation of values over time and in different contexts as well as their digitisation is of considerable scientific interest. However, this area of research requires further exploration and research activities.

Existing literature review studies on values reveal that over the years many other important definitions have been formulated, and through a thorough study on this field, a distinction can be made (Giouvanopoulou et al., 2023), as it is observed that some scholars define them at the *individual level* (Parsons, 1951; Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992) referring to personal values, while others focus on their function at the *societal level*, exploring what societal/cultural values are (Spates, 1983; Morris, 2013; Dyczewski & Sławik, 2016; Muers, 2018; Foret & Calligaro, 2018).

This distinction (individual/societal level) can also be identified in some of the key theories on values. Schwartz proposed an integrated theory of values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012) in terms of the individual level, and Gouveia et al. (2014) developed a theoretical model that emphasises the essential relationships between human values and the functions they fulfill. A few years after formulating his first theory, Schwartz (1999) introduced another theory applied to the societal level that can be used as a basis for comparing different cultures, focusing on fundamental social issues.

The literature review also identifies studies that explore the transformative factors that influence values. Undoubtedly, the dimension of time leaves its imprint (Dyczewski & Sławik, 2016) and as for the dimension of space, “globalisation” and the subsequent interaction between global and local culture leads to cultural transformation (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). Concerning the individual level, many theorists (Schwartz, 2005; Bardi & Goodwin, 2011; Gouveia et al., 2015; Milfont et al., 2016; Foad, Maio, & Hanel, 2021) support the fact that values change during the lifespan and gender emerges as a decisive transformative factor (Milfont et al., 2016; Gouveia et al., 2015). The JRC study “*Values and Identities—A policy maker’s guide*” (Scharfbillig et al., 2021) includes among the factors affecting values the role of family and school. As regards the societal level, following the dynamic structure of ever-changing societies, values are subject to transformations that are mainly related to the way they are perceived. Inglehart (1971) formulated a theory of value transformation and, years later, Inglehart and Abramson (1994) argued that intergenerational change will result in the transformation of materialistic values into post-materialistic values. More recently, several other theorists have pointed to economic growth as a determinant that brings about changes in values (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Gouveia et al., 2015; WVS, 2022). But apart from economic growth, political stability (Gouveia et al., 2015) and technology (Danaher, 2021) are also considered to have an essential impact on value systems.

The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 provides the research methodology. Section 3 presents the need to bring technology into the field of values through their digitisation. Section 4 describes the empirical research conducted to produce policy recommendations and Section 5 summarises the main findings of the research.

2. Research Methodology

Our study is motivated by the need to digitise values and the methodology adopted to conduct our research is based, at a first level, on the identification of the primary policy areas detected in the literature on the preservation, dissemination and digitisation of values as part of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Subsequently, the key thematic areas related to the policy areas are specified and, once a framework has been defined at a top-down level, a second level of policy detection is followed by a bottom-up approach. The primary research for data collection (bottom-up level) follows on the one hand, a quantitative survey and analysis of the data collected through questionnaires and, on the other hand, a qualitative approach by conducting focus groups and analysing the findings.

In more detail, the examination of the field focuses both on top-down guidelines (Section 4.1), based on reports, declarations and recommendations of the bodies of the European Union (EC, 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b, 2021), but also on bottom-up policy perspectives through audience research based on questionnaires and focus groups (Section 4.2). The questionnaires addressed to the audiences included, apart from other questions on values, three policy questions on *the importance of values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage*, their *digitisation* and *the actions that could be taken to better disseminate them*. The total sample that responded to these questions was 267 people across various EU countries. The participants of the 1st and 2nd focus groups were 9 in total and are active in the field of museums and cultural/educational organisations, therefore the policy recommendations they presented, in relation to the predefined primary policy areas and the key thematic areas we introduced to them, are related to the dissemination of values through their field of activity.

The conclusions extracted in the final stage are based on the analysis of the data collected from the survey and the final policy recommendations presented are the result of combining the top-down and the bottom-up perspectives for a more integrated approach to the issue.

3. Digitisation of Values & Intangible Cultural Heritage

The need to bring technology into the field of Culture and to digitise cultural artifacts is emerging (EC, 2011, 2021), as it is the means to preserve and disseminate Cultural Heritage, including values that are a key part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003). The use of technologies for the preservation of Cultural Heritage may refer to the digitisation of museum exhibitions and artifacts, as well as the creation of electronic forms of new cultural objects (digital

artworks, etc.), which can eventually become Cultural Heritage objects (Nikonova & Biryukova, 2017).

Values as part of Intangible Cultural Heritage can be preserved and disseminated through technology (EC, 2011, 2021) and the results of their digitisation can be exploited and used for the benefit of the public by museum experts, educators and other stakeholders whose work and activities are related to the cultural sector. The digitisation of values can create a new field of action for people in museums and cultural organisations, providing a new framework enhanced with appropriate innovative tools to make visits to these venues more attractive and interactive (EC, 2011, 2021). Museums need to keep up with the wide application of digitisation practices in contemporary society and adopt technology-based approaches, while keeping their traditional character, in order to attract a larger audience, as it seems that in recent years, and as a consequence of the COVID 19, there is a decline in the number of visitors to museums.

Technology is also valuable in supporting educators' work on values teaching, as it allows them to see their own values and those of their students from new perspectives and can foster communication and contact between students and teachers from different cultures. Every day, it is becoming increasingly necessary to have tools that enable teachers to access knowledge about their own values as well as the values of their students. With the contribution of appropriate educational tools, teachers will be able to explain the value systems and cultural experiences that underlie the beliefs and behaviours of people from different cultures (Trumbull et al., 2001).

Overall, digitisation emerges as a means of potentially redefining the cultural politics of heritage, as well as the concomitant role of heritage institutions in contemporary society (Cameron & Kenderdine, 2007). Without idealising the so-called information society or assuming any simplified and untroubled connection between digitisation and democratisation (Ampuja & Koivisto, 2014; Fuchs, 2021), we may explore the dynamic between, on the one hand, cultural policy and communication through the application of digital technologies, and, on the other, the articulation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in relation to public culture and contemporary identities (Karp, Mullen Kreamer, & Lavine, 1992; Giorgi, Sassatelli, & Delanty, 2011; Macdonald, 2006; Sassatelli, 2009). In this respect, emergent forms of public communication, based on citizen access to and participation in discussion and debate on our common past, may strengthen a critical understanding and re-assessment of the European cultural heritage and its values (Delanty, 2018; Harrison, 2013; Macdonald, 2013; Whitehead & Bozoglu, 2017; Winter, 2013).

Of course, the issue of digitisation of cultural heritage both tangible and intangible also raises certain risks. As the preservation of cultural identities is a multifaceted issue it requires the development of best practices. The threats mainly concern indigenous cultures and communities that do not have the resources to preserve their culture. If their heritage is not adequately preserved, their memory will be at a risk of fading out. Therefore, policies for digital pre-

servation of cultural identities must carefully consider moral, ethical and legal concerns (UNESCO, 2021). Cultural heritage digitisation may have both socially inclusive and exclusive impact (availability of digitised material online; technologies as a means of strengthening the economically and politically powerful) so ethical practices are needed (Manžuch, 2017).

4. Empirical Research for Policy Recommendations on Values Digitisation & Diffusion

The need for policy recommendations on values is particularly urgent, for their preservation and dissemination to the wider community, considering that it is the value systems of societies that strengthen cohesion at a national and supra-national level. For this reason, it is important to ensure policy coherence across EU directives (Trein et al., 2023). In order to generate policy recommendations through our empirical research, we relied on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis that allows the promotion of policy integration research, in an effort to better understand policy integration and its role in policy making. Policy integration is seen as particularly important in addressing increasingly complex issues facing society (Trein et al., 2023), such as the crisis of values that has multiple implications across a variety of social sectors.

The current empirical research for policy recommendations, was conducted in the course of a European funded research project VAST—Values Across Space and Time (H2020), that focuses on the digitisation of values and their transformation across space and time. In particular, the project focuses on three pilots: Ancient Greek drama, texts of the Scientific Revolution and values in European folktales, through which the values of those periods are studied, as they emerge from the annotation of the texts and contrasted with those of today.

The *policy methodology* adopts a policy co-creation approach involving many different stakeholders, aiming to open and promote dialogue on the field of values. As such a two-step approach was utilised (Figure 1) providing both 1) multi-stakeholder policy perspectives and 2) integrated, inclusive policy recommendations.

The first step aims to collect multi-stakeholder policy perspectives on Intangible Digital Cultural Heritage and values. This step initially involves a “*top-down*” approach (Figure 1) that examines policy perspectives (primary policy areas) through the literature review in order to identify the key thematic areas in relation to Intangible Cultural Heritage, its digitization, use and re-use, as well as future perspectives. Acknowledging the importance of citizen-driven participatory perspectives in the policy context, a “*bottom-up*” approach (Figure 1) has been included in order to consider their crucial role in exploring values. This will enhance top-down policy perspectives and allow us to achieve a broader, inclusive perspective. The method used here is the inclusion, during the VAST pilots, of policy-related questions (via online and physical surveys).

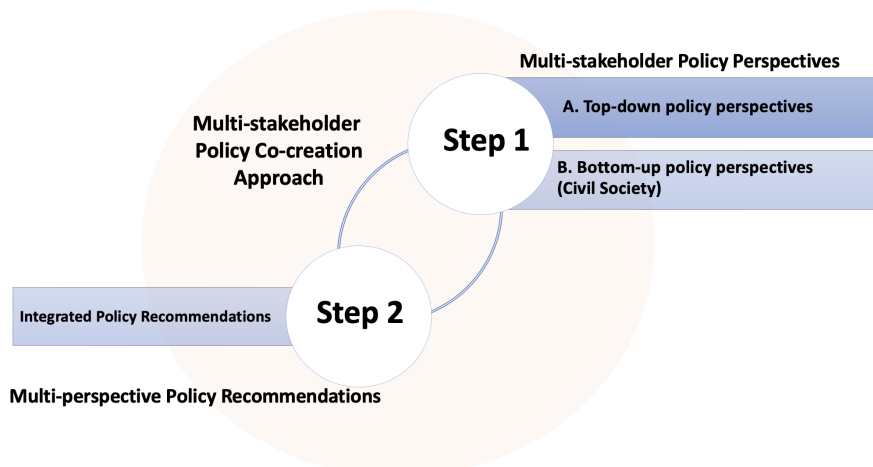


Figure 1. A Two-step approach to policy co-creation approach (Source: Ziouvelou, 2021).

The second step aims to create integrated policy recommendations based on our participatory, multi-stakeholder approach by collecting distinct policy perspectives on Intangible Digital Cultural Heritage from different stakeholders (Figure 1). To this end, a roundtable discussion (to be held at the end of the project) is foreseen in which the consortium, in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders (e.g. sibling projects, policy makers, etc.), will participate, exchange views and discuss the conclusions of step 1 (needs, ideas, challenges, future perspectives, in relation to Intangible Cultural Heritage and its digitisation, as well as the importance of values in the context of democracy and politics in general), with a view to provide a set of concrete policy recommendations. Through the final quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data collected in steps 1 and 2, the final VAST policy recommendations will be derived. The consortium will provide concrete policy recommendations with the findings of its value-centered, multi-stakeholder, participatory policy framework.

4.1. Top-Down Policy Perspectives

Our starting point is the examination of policy perspectives in order to identify the primary policy areas (Table 1) in relation to Intangible Cultural Heritage and its digitisation. Subsequently, secondary research through the study of official documents, such as European Commissions' reports and recommendations (EC, 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b, 2021), enabled us to determine the key thematic areas (Table 2, vertical axis) linked to the primary policy areas and to examine their interconnection by focusing on the added value arising from this linkage, while defining the context within which our research operates at the bottom-up level.

Initially, we examined the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage (EC, 2019a), focusing on three axes for the conservation and dissemination of Cultural Heritage (Intangible/Tangible) which provided our research with concrete guidelines. The first axis aims at raising public awareness on Cultural Heritage, increasing public participation, including through digital media. The second axis concerns the engagement of students with Cultural Heritage

Table 1. Primary policy areas.

| Primary Policy Areas | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Digital Cultural Heritage & Digitisation of Cultural Heritage |
| 2 | Cultural Policy and advanced technologies for Cultural Heritage: Artificial Intelligence and Data Annotation |
| 3 | Intangible Cultural Heritage |
| 4 | Cultural and Creative Industries and Tourism-promoting our European way of life |
| 5 | A new push for European democracy: nurturing, protecting, and strengthening our democracy |
| 6 | COVID 19 impact & Intangible Digitised Cultural Heritage |
| 7 | Data Spaces |
| 8 | Digital Decade 2030 |

Table 2. Primary policy areas in association to key thematic areas.

| Key Thematic Areas, top-down level | Relevant Primary Policy Areas | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Digital Cultural Heritage and digitisation of Cultural Heritage (EC, 2011) | Cultural policy, advanced technologies for Cultural Heritage (EC, 2018a, 2018b) | Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003) | Cultural and creative industries and tourism (EC, 2021) | A new push for European democracy (EC, 2017, 2020) | Covid-19 impact and Intangible digitised Cultural Heritage (EY, 2021) | Data Spaces (EC, 2021) | Digital Decade 2030 (EC, 2022a) |
| 1. Cultural Awareness & Cultural Organizations | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct |
| 2. Democratising Access to (Intangible) Cultural Heritage & Citizen participation | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct |
| 3. Education & vocational training | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct | direct |
| 4. Research & Innovation, Regional Development (e.g., Tourism) | direct | direct | direct | direct | indirect/direct | direct | direct | direct |
| 5. Collaboration across areas/cross border/cross stakeholder | direct | direct | direct | direct | indirect/direct | direct | direct | direct |

and the empowerment of young people through educational activities and actions aimed at harnessing the potential of Cultural Heritage as a tool for education and active citizenship. The third axis aims to overcome barriers to access and promote increased engagement of hard-to-reach groups with the Cultural Heritage in a context of democratising access. To this end, technology has enormous potential, democratising both consumption and participation in cul-

tural creation. The ultimate goal is to harness the cohesive power of Cultural Heritage to build an inclusive Europe.

Taking into consideration the above three axes, acknowledging that values are an integral part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage and recognising the need for their advanced digitisation, we have identified a set of relevant primary policy areas through the literature review, as seen in **Table 1**.

Digital Cultural Heritage & Digitisation of Cultural Heritage: The digitisation of Cultural Heritage is considered particularly important for the preservation and promotion of European cultural resources and to this end, there is an active policy debate among stakeholders to improve the framework for digitisation. The European Commission's Recommendation on digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation (EC, 2011) examines the full spectrum of the digital life cycle of Cultural Heritage items (including planning, monitoring, financing digitisation, facilitating online access and re-use as well as digital preservation) (EC, 2019b). The Commission report (2019b) on the implementation of the Commission Recommendation (2011/711/EU) aimed to examine the implementation of this Recommendation in the national policies of Member States.

Cultural Policy, advanced technologies for Cultural Heritage. Artificial Intelligence and Data Annotation: The European Commission adopted the New European Agenda for Culture in 2018, which puts culture and education at the forefront in an effort to build cohesive societies. The Work Plan for Culture supports culture-based creativity in education and innovation and aims to strengthen international cultural relations. The dual nature of Cultural Heritage (Tangible-Intangible) is a challenge related to the use of advanced technologies for its preservation, safeguarding and dissemination. The advanced digitisation of values can be seen as a relevant input for an open debate on values and their integration in the emerging technological scene. After all, the need to preserve values is more urgent than ever at a time when AI is developing rapidly and we will need now more than ever to protect and promote the freedoms, rights, autonomy, interests and well-being of people and nature (Ziouvelou et al., 2020).

Intangible Cultural Heritage: The UNESCO Convention (UNESCO, 2003) for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage aims at safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (including values), raising awareness at local, national and international level of its importance and ensuring mutual appreciation, as well as providing international cooperation and assistance (Article 1).

Cultural and Creative Industries and Tourism: The term cultural and creative industries refers to all those “whose activities are based on cultural values or other artistic individual or collective creative expressions and are defined in the legal basis of the Creative Europe program” (EC, 2021). Cultural and creative industries are at the heart of the creative economy and play a key role in ensuring the development of societies. But beyond economic prosperity, perhaps their most important contribution is linked to fostering “a shared sense of European identity, culture and values” (EC, 2021). The European Commission's Creative

Europe 2021-2027 program aims to effectively address the needs of the sector. Cultural and creative industries and tourism have a strong spill-over potential that may strengthen values by bringing people together and they can be the drivers for social cohesion and community regeneration (EC, 2022c).

A new push for European democracy: nurturing, protecting, and strengthening our democracy. The European Commission report (EC, 2017) entitled “Strengthening European identity through education and culture” underlines the importance of European values and democracies in reinforcing European identity, while highlighting the crucial role of education and culture. Freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, human rights and dignity are the fundamental values on which the EU is built, are part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage and therefore need to be understood and preserved. Furthermore, the European Democracy Action Plan (2020) aims to build more resilient democracies. To this end, the European Commission announces a series of legislative and non-legislative measures to strengthen the resilience of EU democracies, while addressing the areas where our democratic systems and citizens are most vulnerable.

COVID 19 impact & Intangible Digitised Cultural Heritage. The study “Rebuilding Europe: the cultural and creative economy before and after COVID-19” (EY, 2021) examines Europe’s thriving cultural and creative economy before and after the pandemic and according to the results of the report this sector has been severely affected by the pandemic crisis. Given the role of this sector in economic growth, the study concludes that it should be at the center of Europe’s recovery efforts.

Data space. The European Commission’s recommendation for “a common data space (2021) for Cultural Heritage” aims to strengthen Cultural Heritage stakeholders and stimulate creativity in these areas, with value for the whole economy and society, also aiming at collaborations, partnerships and engagement with the network of data partners across Europe. The ultimate aim of this Recommendation is to create a common European data space for Cultural Heritage, thus helping cultural institutions to accelerate digitisation and preservation efforts and to seize the opportunities created by digital transformation.

Digital Decade 2030: The European Declaration on “Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade” (2022a), based on European values, aims to promote a European way forward for the digital transition, putting people at the center. According to the Declaration, everyone should have access to technology and to a reliable online environment. In addition, everyone should be able to benefit from the advantages of Artificial Intelligence and no one should be denied the right to education, training and lifelong learning, so that all can acquire basic and advanced digital skills.

Primary Policy in association to Key Thematic Areas

The policies that can be implemented and actions that can be undertaken for the safeguarding and dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage (including values), as well as for its digitisation (EC, 2011, 2021), as detected through the li-

terature review, can cover different thematic areas, such as cultural awareness-raising and the functioning of cultural organisations, democratisation of access and citizens' participation, education and training, research/innovation and inter-sectoral/ cross-border cooperation.

The European Union attaches great importance to the cultural awareness of citizens and to this aim the New European Agenda for Culture explicitly states that a link must be created between the levels of education and participation in Culture, so that citizens can acquire cultural awareness (EC, 2018b). The digitisation of Cultural Heritage has the potential to serve this purpose, as the digitised material can be reused for developing learning and educational content (EC, 2011) and contribute to the cultural awareness of the wider community by providing a new push for democracy (EC, 2017, 2020). The digitisation of Cultural Heritage is undoubtedly an issue of direct concern to cultural organisations. According to the European Commission (EC, 2021), the creation of a common European data space for Cultural Heritage will strengthen cultural organisations by enabling them to exploit the scale of the single market, in line with the European data strategy. The benefits of advanced digitisation are many and among them is the creation of new jobs in the Cultural Heritage sector (EC, 2021). The digitisation of Cultural Heritage is also helping to rebuild the cultural sector after the scourge of pandemic COVID-19 (EY, 2021), helping Europe's cultural institutions to fulfill their mission of providing access to our heritage and preserving it in the digital environment.

Furthermore, the European Union strongly promotes the active participation of citizens in the field of Culture and digitisation can play a key role in this. Advanced digital technologies bring to the forefront innovative forms of artistic creation, while opening up new ways through co-creation, co-design and crowdsourcing, empowering public participation (EC, 2021). There is no denying that technology has a huge potential to make culture accessible to all (EC, 2019a), by democratising both consumption and involvement in cultural creation. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of this transformation, but it has also increased the digital divide in the European Union, between well-connected urban areas and rural and remote areas, and between those who can benefit from an accessible and secure digital environment and those who cannot. At the same time, new digital technologies may pose risks with implications for democratic values and the security of our societies. It is therefore more urgent to intensify efforts for open, fair and equitable access to digital tools and skills that can strengthen our democracies in the future (EC, 2022b).

Regarding the education area, as stated by the European Commission (EC, 2017), education and culture have a key role in promoting values and contribute to making Europe an attractive place to live in, governed by freedom and shared values respecting the ideal of democracy. The dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage, including values, can be achieved more effectively within schools and educational institutions and, to this end, digitisation (EC, 2011, 2021) can offer new educational tools. However, training is also required for using these

tools and digital skills for teachers and students (EC, 2022a) are essential.

Intangible Cultural Heritage is also closely linked to the area of research and innovation. In 2018, the European Commission calls for a holistic agenda for European Cultural Heritage and, within this context, Horizon 2020 has innovated thematically by introducing new themes, including the social value of Cultural Heritage (EC, 2018a). The European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage states that through Horizon 2020 the European Commission will fund research projects on advanced digitisation and curation of digital assets and points out that technological tools for innovation in Cultural Heritage should be developed for the preservation and curation of Cultural Heritage (EC, 2019a). The European Commission's recommendation for "a common data space on Cultural Heritage" (EC, 2021) moves in the same direction and recognises the potential of digital technologies to promote cultural and creative activities and to enable access to and participation in culture.

There is also a strong association between the strengthening of the cultural sector and its digitisation and the development that can be achieved at regional level. Regions that invest significantly in culture can reap multiple benefits, creating more jobs and attracting human capital (EC, 2018b). The European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage (EC, 2019a) identifies the regeneration of cities and regions through Cultural Heritage as an objective and refers to the actions to be dedicated to developing realistic, sustainable and integrated solutions to urban and regional challenges.

The European Union initiatives for the preservation, promotion and digitisation of (Intangible) Cultural Heritage strongly support cooperation to this goal. According to the New European Agenda for Culture (EC, 2018b), cross-sectoral dialogue between cultural, creative and technological industries should be promoted and the cooperation should extend beyond the borders of the European states as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) creates the appropriate framework for cooperation between the EU Member States (EC, 2007). The European Commission's recommendation (2021) is to encourage Member States to foster cross-border cooperation and partnerships with Cultural Heritage institutions at international level, complementing actions promoted by UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

Table 2 illustrates at an integrated level the primary policy areas defined and their direct or indirect correlation with the key thematic areas identified, as revealed through the literature survey.

4.2. Bottom-Up Policy Perspectives

Bottom-up policies are an essential parameter in policy making. They reflect people's opinion on various societal issues and in correlation with top-down policies the results lead to more integrated policies. The policy approach followed takes into consideration the general guidelines coming from the supranational level, in a top-down policy perspective, but also takes into con-

sideration a bottom-up approach by tracing the public opinion through quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative research approaches (interviews and focus groups).

Table 3, below, summarises the main details of the actions taken to collect the data on a bottom-up policy perspective and the following subsections (4.2.1, 4.2.2) detail the findings drawn from the progress of our research.

4.2.1. Data Analysis and General Recommendations via Questionnaires

In order to explore civil society's view on the importance of values, their digitisation and their dissemination in society, specialised questionnaires were designed which included 3 policy questions, as it can be seen below:

Q1: How important are values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage?

Q2: How important do you think is the digitisation of our values (and their study across time)?

Q3: What kind of actions do you think that can help enhance awareness about the importance of values as a key part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage?

The questionnaires were distributed to different types of audience (**Table 3**) in order to ensure a more representative sample. The first two policy questions rated the importance of the arguments using a 5-point Likert scale. In the last question, respondents were asked to choose from given options, which policy actions they consider important for raising awareness on values.

Table 3. Research actions.

| Focus | No. | Type of Analytical Tool | Stakeholder Focus | Geographical Scope | Date | No. of Respondents | Conclusions related to: |
|--|-----|---|--|--------------------|---------------|---|---|
| Values, Policy recommendations (general) | A1. | Online Questionnaire (English) | Cultural Organizations | EU level | June-Aug 2022 | N = 65 | 3 QUESTIONS • Values (importance) • digitisation • actions |
| | A2. | Online (Greek) + physical questionnaire (Greek) | Citizens (Antigone Theatrical Play) | Greece | July 2022 | N = 176 (total sample, online/physical) | |
| | A3. | Online questionnaire (English) | Theatre professionals | Greece | August 2022 | N = 14 | |
| | A4. | Physical questionnaire (English) | Students, Milan University | Italy | December 2022 | N = 12 | |
| Values, Policy recommendations (Museums targeted) | A5. | Focus Group 1 (Physical) (English) | Museum representatives | Portugal | July 2022 | N = 4 | policy recommendations/actions |
| | A6. | Focus Group 2 (physical) (English) | Museum/cultural /educational organisations representatives | Italy | December 2022 | N = 5 | |

1) **Online questionnaire (A1):** The first online questionnaire was disseminated by the IMSS, Galileo Museum in Italy, targeting cultural organisations, to the wide geographical network of the Museum, in countries like Portugal, Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, for a period of 3 months (June to August 2022), reaching a total number of 65 respondents.

2) **Online and physical questionnaire (A2):** Q1 and Q2 were adapted and included in the quantitative audience study conducted during the *Antigone* by Sophocles performances at the Athens Epidaurus Festival on the 5th, 6th and 7th of July 2022. Both printed questionnaires and QR codes were distributed to the audience, leading to a total of 176 responses (random sampling, 15,06% representativeness).

3) **Online questionnaire (A3):** During August 2022, an online questionnaire addressed to theater professionals (directors, actors, photographers, writers, editors, communication officer and theater teacher/ animator) in Greece, was uploaded on VAST's digital platform and the total sample of respondents was 14 people.

4) **Physical questionnaire (A4):** In December 2022, a questionnaire was distributed to a group of students at the University of Milan. The total sample consisted of 12 students (N = 12).

The total sample of all questionnaires amounts to 267 persons. In the next part of this section, the data obtained for each question from all the questionnaires distributed will be presented in detail, in order to derive an integrated picture from different audiences.

The importance of values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (Q1)

The findings from all the questionnaires strongly support the fact that values are an important or highly important (in total 93.5%) part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The results in detail are as follows:

- Questionnaire addressed to cultural organisations (A1): all respondents (100%) answered that values are a highly important or important part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (highly important: 80%, important: 20%).
- Questionnaire addressed to the audience of “*Antigone*” (A2): an overwhelming majority of respondents (89.9%) agreed that values are a foundation of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (agree: 42.6%, absolutely agree: 47.3%).
- Questionnaire addressed to theatre professionals (A3): the data indicate that the absolute majority (100%) shares the opinion that the values are a highly important or important part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (highly important: 79%, important: 21%).
- Questionnaire addressed to students (A4): the total sample (100%) of students strongly believes that values are a highly important or important part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (highly important 50%, important 50%).

The importance of the digitisation of values (Q2)

Concerning the second question, the findings show that the digitisation of values is particularly important (in total 83.1%) according to the public view.

- Questionnaire addressed to cultural organisations (A1): the vast majority of respondents (90.8%) are in favor of digitising values and studying them across time (highly important: 52.3 %, important: 38.5%).
- Questionnaire addressed to the audience of “Antigone” (A2): the vast majority of respondents (78.9%) agreed that digitisation may contribute to the study of values, and, as a result, give them prominence in contemporary society (agree: 57.1%, absolutely agree: 21.8%).
- Questionnaire addressed to theatre professionals (A3): the majority of respondents (86%) answered that they consider it highly important or important (highly important 36%, important 50%).
- Questionnaire addressed to students (A4): 58% of the students at the University of Milan answered that the digitisation of values and their study across time is highly important and 42% answered that it is important (in total 100%).

Actions that can help enhance awareness about the importance of values as a key part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (Q3)

The answers to the third question are of particular interest, as they indicate specific actions to be taken to enhance the cultural awareness of the public. The feedback received from all the questionnaires (N = 91, this question was not included in the A2 questionnaire) indicates that the 3 most popular actions for the dissemination of values are the *creation of relevant events for different audiences* (87%), the need to *invest more in the study of values across space and time* (67%) and the *creation of more workshops to share best practices across Europe* (57%).

- Questionnaire addressed to cultural organisations (A1): a percentage of 83% answered that we need to *create relevant events for different audiences* (such as students, teachers, non-cultural heritage professionals, heritage professionals, arts and theater professionals, museum curators, policy makers and the general public) and 68% supported that we should *invest more in the study of values in space and time*. In addition, 54% believe that *workshops should be set up to share best practices across Europe* and 52% chose the option referring to the *creation of value-centric museum collections*. Furthermore, 51% believe that *national policies for the digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage should be reviewed* and 32% support that the *EU policy must be revised*. Finally, concerning the last option, which refers to *other actions to be taken*, 8% of people responded that there is a need for this. It is worth noting that regarding the third question and the actions that could enhance public awareness of the importance of values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage, two recommendations were given. One respondent suggested *implementing older sustainable practices and adapting them to new contexts and lifestyles in order to enhance public awareness of values* and someone else reported that *the value system must be integrated into the educational system*.
- Questionnaire addressed to theatre professionals (A3): the data indicate that

all participants (100%) chose the option related to *creating relevant events for different audiences* and a percentage of 79% believe that *more money should be invested in the study of values across space and time*. Exactly the same percentage (79%) believe that there is a need to *create more workshops to share best practices across Europe*. Regarding the *review of national policies on digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 64% choose this option, while 57% believe that we need to *create value-centric museum collections*. It is also worth adding that 36% argue that there is a need to *revise EU policies in this field* and 14% answered that *other actions should be taken*.

- Questionnaire addressed to students (A4): according to the data on actions to be taken, the vast majority 92% answered that we should *create relevant events for different audiences to raise awareness about the importance of the values*. In addition, a percentage of 50% support that we should *invest more in the study of values in space and time* and the same percentage (50%) answered that we need to *create more workshops to share best practices across Europe*. The *review of the EU policy for digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage* also attracted the same percentage (50%), while a lower percentage of 32% chose the *creation of museum collections focusing on values* and an even lower percentage of 25% chose the *review of national policies on digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage*.

General Findings

Based on the findings of our questionnaire analysis, *values are widely seen as a key part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Furthermore, in order to promote values and our Intangible Cultural Heritage, it is strongly recommended that *emphasis should be placed at a national and a European level on teaching (education) and dissemination (awareness) of values for diverse stakeholders (e.g., Member States/public sector, EU, schools/educational institutions, cultural organisations/museums) including the wider society*. *The digitisation of our Intangible Cultural Heritage and values, is important and for this reason Member States' strategy should intensify efforts to digitise them, in line with the EU requirements, that aim to foster accessibility for all and democratisation of access*.

In order to enhance cultural awareness on values, our findings indicate (% in total) that it is necessary to adopt the following six proposed actions, among others: 1) *Create relevant events for different audiences* (87%); 2) *Invest more in the study of values across time and space* (67%), 3) *Create more workshops to share best practices across Europe* (57%), 4) *Create value-centric museum collections* (51%), 5) *Revise the national policies for digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (49%), 6) *Revise the EU policy for digitisation of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (35%).

4.2.2. Museum Targeted Policy Recommendations via Focus Groups

In addition to the questionnaire survey (presented in Section 4.2.1), our bottom-up policy research included a series of focus groups to collect and analyse further policy recommendations in relation to values. In these structured focus

groups, the discussion revolved around the important role of museums/cultural organizations in cultural awareness and cultural participation of citizens with an emphasis on the dissemination of values and the findings provided important feedback. These focus groups (**Table 3**) are:

- **Focus Group 1 (A5):** The 1st Policy Focus Group was held on the 13th of July 2022, in Portugal (at the NOVA University of Lisbon). Its duration was 3 hours and the 4 invited participants represented the cultural sector (e.g., museum experts from National museums and cultural organisations).
- **Focus Group 2 (A6):** The 2nd Policy Focus Group, which also had a 3-hour duration, was held on the 14th of December 2022, (at the University of Milan), with 5 representatives of museums and cultural/educational organisations.

The policy recommendations that resulted from the conduct of both focus groups are mainly addressed to museums and cultural/educational organisations, as the participants came from the relevant areas and are presented integrated and classified.

Cultural Awareness

In terms of values awareness, participants in the focus groups were positive towards the policy actions presented to them. In particular, the options that garnered their consensus were the *creation of relevant events on values for different audiences, the creation of more specialised workshops for different types of visitors to make museums more inclusive, the provision of educational games on values and the use of interactive tools (digitisation)*. Moreover, the contribution of the participants through their own recommendations on cultural awareness was particularly interesting. *Finding elements of surprise to increase curiosity on values, creating new narratives and new stories around the artworks in order to make existing artworks more attractive and relevant to today's visitors, were mentioned as good practices. Participants also stressed the need to make museums more attractive by presenting their activities outside their boundaries in order to raise awareness of Cultural Heritage in the local community.* The focus on values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage has also brought to the fore the *need to create museum collections based on them and at the same time to further invest in the study of values in space and time in order to increase public awareness.*

Museums/ Cultural Organisations

There were also some recommendations on the role of the museum that needs to be modernised while maintaining its traditional status in society, and on some structural changes that are needed in this direction. Participants stressed the *need to find ways to communicate better what the museum is all about. Museums and cultural organisations have the institutional mission to ensure respect for heritage and in order to achieve this they should make everyone understand the need to preserve heritage. The role of the museum should always be the transmission/cultivation of values, so there is a need for better communication of museum exhibitions that embody values.* It should not be overlooked that

participants also stated that *museums should act as stimuli, as places where people and ideas meet, as places of discussion that broaden horizons and connect the past with the present, enabling people to better understand the future.* In addition, the museum experts referred to the existence of *niche museums and stressed the need for the world to know about them and to create more.* Furthermore, *museums and cultural institutions in general need to upgrade their role so that they can serve their mission effectively. This requires structural changes in the functioning of museums/cultural organisations, such as micro-level funding and better allocation of funds for optimal financial support.* Museum experts also pointed out the *necessity to equip museums with qualified personnel at all levels and underlined the need for greater autonomy* and on this basis suggested that *the legal framework for national, municipal, and private museums should be discussed.*

Democratising access to Intangible Cultural Heritage

The participants also pointed out the importance of *access for all to museum/cultural organisations* and called for *the democratisation of access to Cultural Heritage, with the vision of making the museum more inclusive. The need to digitise Cultural Heritage and values is imperative in order to overcome all the obstacles that arise and to make access possible for all.*

Citizens' participation

In order to enhance citizens' participation in the activities of cultural institutions there is an urgent *need to keep the content of museums relevant to society, to everyone, to create exhibits for all kinds of visitors and to bridge the gap between museums and other communities so as to have a social impact. Strengthening engagement with the community and adopting different approaches and methodologies have the potential to mitigate any gap.*

Education

Concerning the education sector, the participants supported the view that *Europe's Intangible Cultural Heritage should be taught in a school environment and the teaching of values should be part of the school curricula. Teachers should promote values through discussions that foster their teaching, through activities on values diffusion, but also through their behavior, as it is particularly important to be a positive role model for young people.* Regarding the educational role of museums/cultural organisations, it was suggested that they *should also promote Europe's Intangible Cultural Heritage and values and act as learning places.* To this end, the *provision of educational programs and proper equipment are needed.* Another very important recommendation concerns vocational training and the *need to train museum employees in order to ensure the recruitment of qualified staff (for curators, employees of all levels, volunteers, etc.).*

Research-Innovation

In relation to the thematic field of research, the discussion focused on the fact that museums *need to change their research approach and the application of technology in this area is particularly crucial, as the use of interactive tools for*

this purpose and, of course, digitisation is required. The role of technology is also seen as crucial in providing new content to museums and in the emergence of new scientific tools for the preservation and dissemination of Cultural Heritage. Another aspect of the role of museums is to act as ‘research centers’ (research on collections), and to be both a place of learning and research based on knowledge sharing with research centers and universities.

Regional Development-Tourism

As was also mentioned during the focus groups, an enhanced role of museums and cultural organisations can also lead to regional development. *Municipalities should invest in Culture and provide assistance to museums* and this investment may lead to cultural tourism and regional prosperity. *The creation of traveling exhibitions* can enhance the public’s interaction with culture, bringing the museum close to the citizens and at the same time having a positive impact on regional development.

Collaboration across areas/ cross border

Regarding collaboration across areas, it is recommended that *museums should be linked to universities and research centers with the aim of exchanging knowledge*, so there is the *need to study the role of museums in cooperation with other sectors (universities, research centers, business sector etc.)*. In this context it would be beneficial *to exchange know-how, good practices/ideas and develop closer relations between museums through co-creation activities, inter-museum and traveling exhibitions*. It is also recommended that *the cooperation of cultural organisations with other actors should go beyond the borders of a country, bringing to the fore cross-border synergies* for the best possible results.

5. Conclusion

The findings of our study indicate that values are indeed an important part of Intangible Cultural Heritage and therefore their scientific examination and research is important both for the scientific community but also for the provision of relevant and value-driven policy recommendations that will support the social cohesion and societal agility. Values are decisive in the development of societies as they promote democracy and social cohesion and should therefore be taken into account when considering the future, in the political decision-making process, through strategic foresight, whose role is seen as particularly important in EU policy-making (Scharfbillig et al., 2021).

Our research initially involved desk research for the identification of thematic areas related to values as part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage (top-down analytical approach, Table 2, vertical axis). In addition, we also adopted a bottom-up approach (qualitative and quantitative analysis) with questionnaires and focus groups, to derive a set of concrete policy recommendations for enhancing this important part of our Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The findings of our study and the associated recommendations focus on

awareness creation processes and the need for digitisation of values, targeting diverse stakeholders so as to promote values and ensure social cohesion, at a national and a European level. It is evident, from our research, that distinct policy actions should be taken to promote values and their importance to the wider society via key cultural stakeholder segments such as schools, educational institutions, and cultural organizations/museums, which play a key role in raising cultural awareness. Furthermore, concrete policy initiatives should be incorporated in the Member States' policy agendas regarding the digitisation of values.

In relation to the specific practices that can be adopted by the museums and the cultural sector as well as the educational sector, our focus groups' analysis provides concrete policy recommendations. More specifically, all focus group participants stressed the need for cultural awareness and citizens' participation and highlighted the role of education and technology in this effort. Moreover, they pointed out the necessity to strengthen the role of cultural organisations and to promote cross-sectoral/cross-border cooperation for better results regarding values diffusion, through specific actions.

As a limitation of our study, we can point out that our analysis is based on a relatively small target audience as far as focus groups are concerned. Extending the focus group research both in number and diversity (geographical, thematic diversity of participants, etc.) is an envisioned future research area. Furthermore, our study findings indicate that the digitisation of values appears to be really important to European citizens and therefore research in this area should be intensified utilising emergent technological and scientific means. In addition, future research could also explore the emergence of new values, as a need that is triggered by technological evolution and as a way to protect the rights of individuals in the light of such an evolution (Ziouvelou et al., 2020).

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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