

EUROPEAN AND UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE IN CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Cultural heritages are known as one of the most important backing and identity of the culture of a society, while their conservation is a critical domain. Cultural heritages, as the source of most traditions that are maintained and spread inside a society, are the reflecting means for culture preservation, presentation, and delivery. At the same time, they are the most influential treasures, and they are known as necessary to convey the culture to the later generations [1, p. 141].

In the 21st century, the preservation of cultural heritage has become particularly relevant due to globalization processes, digital transformation, and challenges caused by wars and crises. For Ukraine, this issue has become not only a part of humanitarian policy but also an element of national security, given the losses suffered by historical and cultural heritage during the Russian-Ukrainian war. As researchers point out, “historical and cultural heritage is one of the main factors in the formation of Ukrainian national identity and the revival of the spirituality of the Ukrainian people” [5, p. 149].

At the same time, European Union countries are actively implementing digital strategies for the preservation and popularization of cultural heritage, forming new formats for access and data processing. The experience of the Baltic countries, particularly Lithuania and Latvia, demonstrates the effectiveness of introducing modern technologies into cultural policy.

The purpose of these theses is to analyze the Ukrainian and European experience of preserving cultural heritage, particularly in digitalization, identify best practices, and determine the prospects for their implementation in Ukraine in the context of European integration.

An important area of cultural policy is the preservation of cultural heritage. In recent decades, digital technologies have provided new opportunities for preserving, disseminating, and promoting cultural heritage. The digitization of historical and cultural heritage and the formation of relevant digital collections have become trends in the contemporary cultural policy of EU Member States [2, p. 71].

Digitizing works of art is one of the best, and in some cases, the only way to guarantee the preservation of cultural heritage and ensure its accessibility to the widest possible audience. According to cult urologist and art historian Diana Klochko, the process of digitization of all our museum collections will significantly change the perception of our heritage and, accordingly, the attitude toward culture:

“If the state allocated (and not so much) funds for the total digitization of the funds of all art museums, it would be done now. So that all museums would have full digital catalogs. In order to be able to go to the full website of the museum, read annotations, the history of each item, its nationalization and exhibition, and, finally, to imagine what a visual fund of artistic values is – this should be normal state support” [3, p. 65].

According to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, since the beginning of the full-scale war, more than 872 cultural heritage sites have been destroyed or damaged, including architectural monuments, museums, and religious buildings [5, p. 147].

In these conditions, digitalization has become especially important as a tool for preserving national identity. Several important projects have been implemented in Ukraine, including:

In 2020, in the V. Vereshchagin Mykolaiv Art Museum, the collection of graphics, which had not previously been exhibited to the audience, was digitized. Specialists focused on the most valuable works of the 18th, 19th, and the first half of the 20th centuries – paintings by Danylo Krainev, Roman Semashkevych, Vasyl Shukhaev, Borys Kustodieiev, Ivan Shishkin, Nicholas

Roerich, Vasyl Vereshchagin and other artists using 3D models that allow users to interact with the works using smartphones.

For example, in the last few years in Ukraine, there has been a growing interest in such a phenomenon as NFT – a unique digital asset built on blockchain technology. NFT tokens provide artists and content creators with a unique opportunity to monetize the results of their creative activity, which is why the digital art sphere has become the first to massively use the new technology [3, p. 65].

In 2022, two significant events took place in the Ukrainian cultural and artistic environment, which may indicate the beginning of the tokenization of cultural heritage. This is a new experience for the National Museum of Art of Ukraine (Kyiv) and Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv.

At the beginning of the year, the capital's museum, having started selling licensed NFT tokens, became the first museum in Ukraine to create an NFT collection based on works from its art collection [3, p. 66].

The collection includes works by Vsevolod Maksymovych, Oleksandr Murashko, Oleksandra Ekster, and Petro Rybka.

The Ukrainian Heritage Hub project, which proposes the preservation of Ukrainian cultural heritage through the reliable data storage algorithms of blockchain technology, is an ambitious project that has no analogs.

In addition to preservation, the project aims to record Ukraine's rights to cultural heritage in the digital world on the blockchain [3, p. 66].

Thus, in the modern world, there are new trends in art, in general, and in museums, in particular. NFT allows these works to travel virtually from museum collections to the world. In addition, the museum has the opportunity to receive certain funds that it can use for its development, to digitize collections, to show these collections to the world, and, as far as possible, to help Ukrainian cultural institutions that suffered during the war.

An important thing in today's European integration processes of Ukraine is to study and learn from the experience of the leading EU countries, including

in cultural policy [2, p. 72].

EU cultural policy is characterized by the presence of a priority direction – the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations, as well as its promotion and dissemination. Therefore, the European Commission and EU Member States systematically review and amend cultural policy, update existing and develop new cultural heritage preservation programs, and implement historical and cultural heritage digitization projects.

One of the major achievements of the European Union can be considered the launch and further development of Europeana. Today, Europeana is a digital platform that represents and provides access to Europe's cultural heritage, based on the provisions of pan-European cooperation between EU Member States' institutions and the European Commission, copyright requirements, and open access requirements [2, p. 72].

Based on the analysis of European and Ukrainian experience, it can be concluded that the digitalization of cultural heritage is not only a modern requirement but also a necessary condition for the preservation and development of national culture in the context of globalization and European integration.

In Ukraine, despite some successful cases, such as the digitization of museum collections or the implementation of NFT projects, the general system of digital preservation of cultural heritage is at an early stage. There is a lack of a national strategy, legislative clarity, and coordination between authorities, specialists, and institutions. As the researchers point out, “the problem of digitizing historical and cultural heritage and integrating it into the digital resources of the European Union's cultural heritage has not yet found a proper scientific solution and effective implementation in Ukraine” [2, p. 71].

So, the main task facing Ukraine today is the urgent need for a significant rethinking of the role and elevation of the place of culture in the successful development of our country [2, p. 72].

Conclusion. An important priority for Ukraine remains the integration into the European information and cultural space and the presentation of its own

documentary heritage in Europe. The attraction of EU grant programs is promising for Ukraine in financing the digitization of historical and cultural heritage. For example, there is a Creative Europe grant program in the EU that supports cultural and media projects. Therefore, cooperation with the EU involves not only financial support but also the exchange of experiences, the introduction of innovative technologies, and integration into the pan-European cultural and information space.

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