Digitization - a solution for preserving and capitalizing the national cultural heritage

Respecting copyright in the context of cultural heritage digitization and development of digital libraries in the European Union and in the Republic of Moldova were the main topics of a national seminar, that gathered librarians from over the country. The event was organized by AGEPI together with the EU Project ”Support to Enforcement of the Intellectual Property Rights” in the Republic of Moldova, on 9th October, in Chisinau.

Ms. Lilia Bolocan, AGEPI Director General, said that the digitization of cultural material allows everyone to gain access to culture and knowledge in the digital age, as well promoting the richness and diversity of national and universal cultural heritage. "Digitized cultural material is an important resource for the cultural and creative industries, it boost the economy and create jobs. It also promotes the digital market by offering new and innovative online products and services", AGEPI Director General noted.

Attending the event, Mr. Andrei Chistol, State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, welcomed the initiative to organize the seminar, especially when we have an ascendant in developing the process of digitization, computerization of public libraries in the Republic of Moldova.

EU Project Team leader, Mr. Maximilian Foedinger, said that digitization is a priority on European level. The European Commission adopted a recommendation on digitization and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation.

”Cultural heritage breathes a new life with digital technologies and the internet. The citizens have now unprecedented opportunities to access cultural material, while the institutions can reach out to broader audiences, engage new users and develop creative and accessible content for leisure and education. In EU through the digital platform for cultural heritage ”Europeana”, the people have access to over 53 million items including image, text, sound, video and 3D material from the collections of over 3 700 libraries, archives, museums, galleries and audio-visual collections across Europe. It can be used by teachers, artists, professionals in cultural institutions and creative fields but also everyone looking for information on culture”, Mr. Foedinger noted.

The EU Project Expert, Mr. Nicolae Constantinescu, made a presentation on European copyright protection in the work of digital libraries. He mentioned that, at present, the major goal at EU level is to strengthen a single digital market, and copyright is a central policy in its realization. European Copyright legislation comprises 10 directives aimed to harmonize law at European level.

"Why should we do this digitization, to create digital deposits? Let's remember the case of Brazilian National Museum, that lost after the fire circa 400 years of research, the collapse of the Koln archive in 2009, when hundreds of documents were destroyed forever. As a result, people have begun to reconstitute what has been digitally stored - photos, copies, etc.", the expert said.

He also highlighted that parallel to digital deposits creation, attention must be focused to their management through sustainable policies in the field.

We mention that at present there is the Moldavian Digital Library, which provides access to about 6600 digital objects and 790,000 digitized pages of the written cultural heritage, including books, manuscripts, old and rare prints, and other patrimonial documents.


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