



Digitising Content Together

**Ministerial NETwoRk for Valorising Activities in digitisation**

# Quality web communication according to MINERVA

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# Goals

*MINERVA WG 5 on Identification of user needs, content and quality framework for common access points (coordinated by Belgium)*

Main goals:

- Establish criteria for quality cultural web sites in order to promote the access to the European heritage
- Encourage the use of quality framework in cultural web sites by implementation and dissemination of the quality criteria
- Encourage training actions in cultural websites



# Background

European Quality Criteria for cultural content were suggested by the **Lund Principles**.

This reflection continued during the Belgian Presidency of the EU: the resolution "**Culture and the Knowledge Society**" (5th November 2001) invites the Commission and Member States to encourage "quality-initiatives" in cultural web sites.

During the first meeting of the NRG (Brussels 11th December 2001) was presented the first European document on quality criteria for cultural web sites, the "**Brussels Quality Framework**". Its aim was to make quality more objective, applicable and measurable



# Results

- *Handbook for quality in cultural web sites*
- *European Cultural Website Quality Principles*
- *Commentary and exploration of the 10 Quality Principles*
- *Museo & Web*





# *Handbook for quality in cultural web sites*

Presented during the Parma International  
conference (21st November 2003)

*Quality for cultural web sites.*

Carried out with the contribution of more than 30  
experts from all over Europe, from different  
national cultures, different cultural institutions,  
and various professional background.

The handbook is a work in progress.



# Topic

Topic: What happens when the cultural world cross the web technologies?

Methodology:

- To propose criteria for a quality cultural web communication based on the identity and goals of the cultural institutions and on the objective
- To offer a validation method of the cultural web application
- To give an overview on the European rules on the matter



# General Definitions

## Definition of Cultural Entity (CE):

- Identity (history, mission etc)
- Category (archive, library etc)
- Goals

## Definition of Cultural Web Application (CWA)

- supplying and spreading cultural and scientific information
- existing as an instrument for education and scientific research

## Definition of user and user needs





# Categories and goals

## 8 cultural categories + 1:

- Archives
- Libraries
- Heritage diffused on territory
- Museums
- Institutes for administration and safeguarding
- Centres for research and education
- Temporary exhibitions
- Cultural projects
- + Schools

**CROSS**

## 12 cultural web application's goals:

- transparency on the activities of the CE
- transparency on the mission of the CWA
- efficiency in the sector networks
- presentation of standards and regulations of the sector
- spreading of cultural content
- support of cultural tourism
- offer of educational services
- offer of services of scientific research
- offer of services to specialists in the sector
- offer of services of reservation and e-commerce
- promotion of web communities





# Operative proposals

Web accessibility and usability, i.e. the attention to the users and their requirements, are key concept of the Handbook.

- Accessibility (WCAG/W3C)
- Usability (ISO 9241-11) basic principles



# Patterns and the language of patterns

Patterns are a different approach to the concrete problems of planning and realisation of Quality Web Sites.

Using patterns resolves recurring problems through noted and consolidated solutions.

*A. Context*

*B. Problem*

*C. Solution*

On line resource: Web design patterns

<http://www.welie.com/patterns/index.html>



# The handbook test bed

- **The Italian WG on quality proposed to check the criteria of the handbook.**
- **30 private and public cultural institutions that wanted to restyle or (re)build their web sites were involved.**

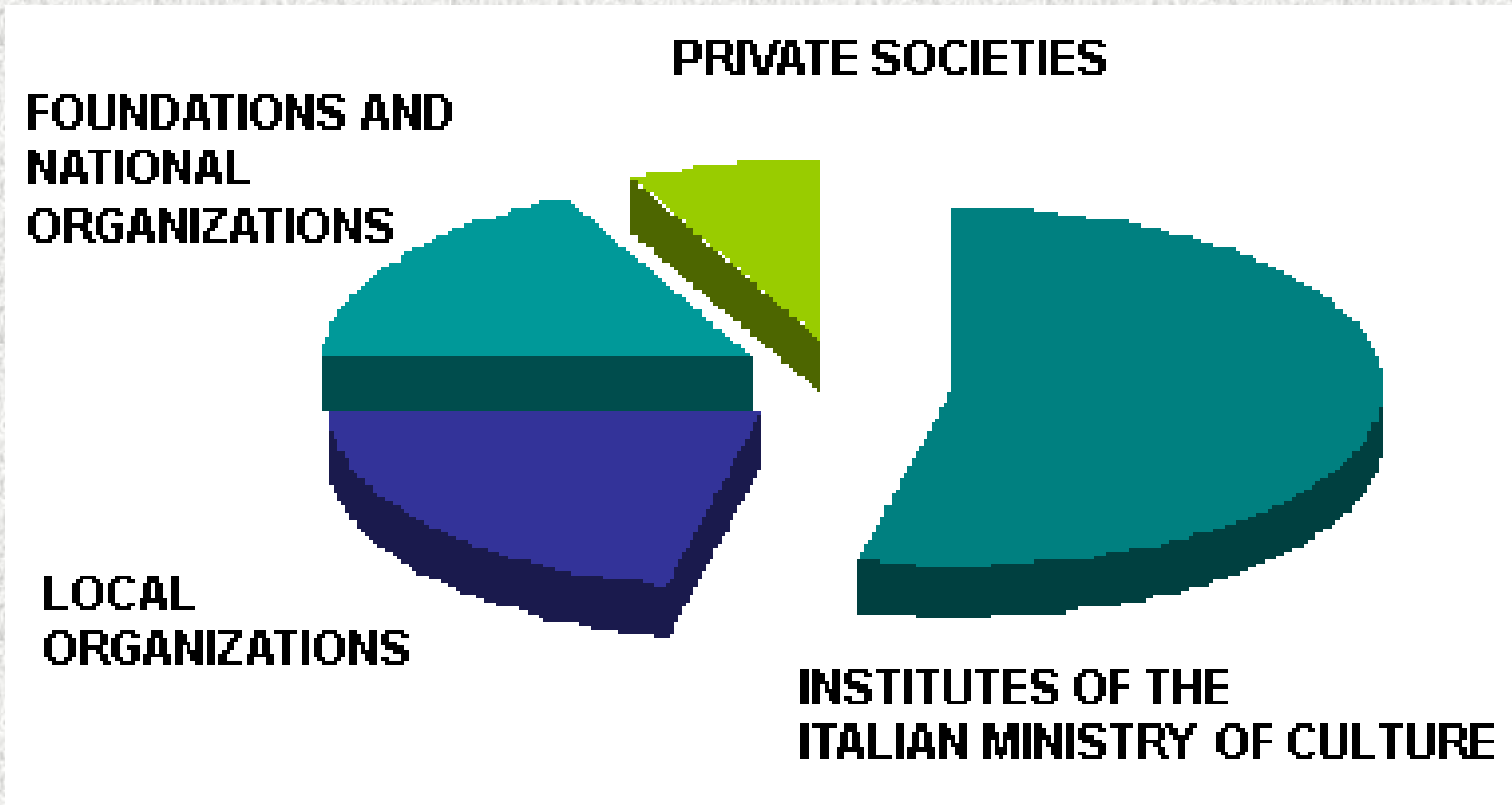


# Greatness and critical points

- Great attention to accessibility
- Great attention to the quality of content
  
- Lack of funding and organisation
- Interoperability problems
- Complex information flow
- Difficult dialogue between technicians and cultural institutions



# Institutions involved





# *Cultural Website Quality Principles*

A quality cultural website celebrates European cultural diversity by providing access for all to digital cultural content.

A good quality cultural website must be:

Transparent - effective - maintained -  
accessible - user-centred - responsive  
- multilingual - interoperable -  
managed - preserved



# Commentary to the 10 quality principles

The commentary adds supporting information for each of the principles, and provides:

- a commentary, **interpretation**, background information and motivation
- a set of criteria which can be used to **assess** whether a web site is compliant with the principle
- a **checklist**, based on the criteria, which can be used in assessing the web site
- a set of practical **tests** and questions which a web site owner can use to gain further insight into the compliance of his site.



# Museo&Web 1

## ‘Museo&Web - Planning Kit for a Quality Site for Small and Medium Sized Museums’

Project elaborated by the MINERVA Italian working group on quality.

Realised by the board for the creation of a web prototype for public cultural web sites.





# Museo&Web 2

The technical realisation of this model follows the guidelines contained in the *Handbook for Quality in Cultural Web Sites* and the *European principles for quality in a cultural Web site*, both of which were defined by the MINERVA project.



# Museo&Web 3

Italian, English, French versions are available online (+ draft in Arabic):

[http://www.minervaeurope.org/structure/workinggroups/userneeds/prototipo/museoweb\\_e.html](http://www.minervaeurope.org/structure/workinggroups/userneeds/prototipo/museoweb_e.html)

This prototype is to be used as a reference model by small and medium sized museums intending to create a web site.

It can be used also by other cultural institutions.




United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Prototype for a web site for small and medium sized museums. - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Modifica Visualizza Preferiti Strumenti ?


Indietro - Cerca - Preferiti

Indirizzo [http://www.minervaeurope.org/structure/workinggroups/userneeds/prototipo/museoweb\\_e.html](http://www.minervaeurope.org/structure/workinggroups/userneeds/prototipo/museoweb_e.html)



# Museo&Web

## Planning Kit for a Quality Site for Small and Medium Sized Museums



WP5 Italia

MINERVA - contact - feedback

versione italiana

- structure and contents
- tutorial
- quality check

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- models

This project grew from the working group WP5 Italia "**Identification of user needs and quality criteria for common access**" in the **Minerva Project**. It was realised by the study Commission for the creation of a prototype for public cultural web sites. This prototype is to be used as a reference model by small and medium sized museums intending to create a Web site.

The technical realisation of this model follows the guidelines contained in the **Handbook for Quality in Cultural Web Sites** and the **European principles for quality in a cultural Web site**, both of which were defined by the European MINERVA project.

There are 22 requisites for accessibility as defined in the **Study on the guidelines for technical requirements and the various levels of accessibility and the technical methods for verifying accessibility**. This is considered the technical base for the decree that is to be issued according to law n. 4 of 9th January 2004; **Instructions to favour disabled access to digital tools** (c.d. Legge Stanca). The site is in XHTML 1.0 with templates.

In full respect of the rules of accessibility, the structure of the site allows for browsing of contents independently of the type of technology used. It can be navigated via assistive technologies and the characters can be enlarged. The graphics of this prototype were set using tones of grey and are deliberately "neutral". Users can thus adapt the prototype to the specific graphic requirements of their on-line museum. The explanatory text in the prototype is didactic in nature and intended as a guide to practical application of the prototype.

**APPLICATIONS FOR MUSEUM&WEB**

- **Archaeological Documentary Archives**

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**PRESENTATION SEMINAR**

- **16 December 2004, Rome, Ex Chiesa di S. Marta**

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For further information:

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*Thanks for your attention.*

*Keep in touch soon...*