Council of the European Union

Brussels, 20 November 2026
(OR. en)

15479/26

CULT 138
CULT HERIT 33

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2027-2030

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned resolution, approved by the Council (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport) at its session on 20 November 2026.

ANNEX

Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2027–2030

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

REAFFIRMING

– the long-term strategic vision to place culture at the heart of Europe's identity outlined in the Joint Declaration 'Europe for Culture – Culture for Europe', agreed by the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament and the European Commission on 18 June 2026[1];

RECOGNISING

– the EU Work Plans for Culture and the results achieved under them, which set the high-level political priorities and a forward-looking agenda for Member States' engagement on cultural policy at Union level;

ACKNOWLEDGING

– the intrinsic value of culture as a source of meaning, inspiration, innovation, human connection, mutual understanding, identity and community;

– that Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity forms a common heritage that should be cherished, supported and preserved for the benefit of all;

– the central role of culture in protecting democracy and promoting European values as well as fostering peace, societal resilience, social dialogue, inclusion, social cohesion and the health and wellbeing of all Union citizens;

[1] C/2026/3440, 25.6.2026

– the role of culture in the promotion of gender equality and the need for the Union to aim to eliminate inequalities and promote equality in all its activities, in accordance with Article 8 TFEU;

– the unique role of the cultural and creative sectors (CCS) in accelerating the green transition by including sustainability, resilience and climate adaptation, in line with the Union's objectives;

– the pivotal role of the CCS in generating employment across the Union and in driving growth, competitiveness, innovation and inclusive sustainable development;

– the importance of culture in the EU's bilateral and multilateral external relations and cooperation, and in particular its partnership with UNESCO and the Council of Europe;

IN LIGHT OF

– Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, including the targeted destruction of cultural heritage, attacks on its CCS, and attacks on Ukrainian artists and cultural professionals;

– the ongoing geopolitical instabilities across the globe, including in conflict regions, which pose significant threats to and have far-reaching impacts on cultural heritage, artists and cultural professionals;

– the real and immediate impacts of the environmental and climate crises, on cultural landscapes and cultural heritage and, more broadly, on the CCS, with Europe – the fastest warming continent on the planet – experiencing an unprecedented loss of biodiversity, worsening cycles of heatwaves, wildfires, drought, heavy snow, floods, marine heatwaves and windstorms[2];

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[2] See European State of the Climate Report 2025, https://climate.copernicus.eu/esotc/2025

– ongoing challenges facing democracies across the Union and globally, including threats to artistic freedom and the autonomy of cultural institutions, and ongoing efforts to help coordinate, mobilise, complement and strengthen Europe's collective response to these challenges[3];

– rapid developments in digital technology, notably artificial intelligence (AI), creating opportunities to support creative practice and protect and enhance cultural heritage, while raising concerns about threats to human creativity, cultural and linguistic diversity, job security, cybersecurity, data sovereignty, fair remuneration and the protection of intellectual property rights in the CCS;

RECALLING

– the Culture Compass for Europe Communication issued by the Commission on 12 November 2025[4];

– the Commission's Report on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 of 2 July 2026;

– the political references as set out in Annex IV to this Resolution;

AGREE

– to support the enhancement of European cultural cooperation, promote cultural and linguistic diversity, and provide European added value, taking into consideration the current cultural, social, economic, security and political context and with due regard for the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;

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3 See European Democracy Shield: Empowering Strong and Resilient Democracies

4 Doc. 15410/25

– on the following areas of focus for the 2027-2030 period, inspired by the key directions of the 2025 Culture Compass for Europe:

a) Strengthening European values, cultural rights and artistic freedom;

b) Empowering artists and cultural professionals, and supporting people and society;

c) Culture and competitiveness, resilience, innovation, sustainability and cohesion;

d) International cultural relations (ICR) and partnerships.

INVITE MEMBER STATES

– to consider, where appropriate, the areas of focus of this Work Plan in the development of their own national policy in culture and the opportunities for cooperation between Member States arising from those areas.

INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

– to prepare a report on the implementation of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2027-2030, based on voluntary contributions from EU Member States, by June 2030;

– to regularly update the Council on the implementation of the Work Plan for Culture 2027-2030 and its specific actions, as appropriate, to enable Member States to maintain an overall view of progress and outcomes, while working with Member States to ensure appropriate visibility and accessibility of the outcomes for cultural sectors and citizens.

I. AREAS OF FOCUS

a) Strengthening European values, cultural rights and artistic freedom

Social, cultural and geopolitical developments during previous Work Plans for Culture have highlighted the strategic role of culture in promoting European values, strengthening democracy and building stronger, more resilient societies. Actions under the Work Plan 2027-2030 should further strengthen understanding and awareness of cultural rights as a way to enhance access to and participation in culture and freedom of artistic expression and creation.

Access to and participation in culture remain fundamental pillars of cultural rights as recognised in relevant human rights instruments[5]. The Work Plan should support coordinated Union action to promote inclusive participation in culture and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, and digital cultural assets. Cultural institutions, including, among others, libraries, museums, theatres, cinema, and heritage sites, as well as high-quality living environments promote democratic participation and civic engagement, while strengthening community-based cultural and social hubs. This is particularly important for young and older people, rural and remote communities, including those in the Union's outermost regions, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups.

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5 See for example the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Threats to artistic freedom in their many forms remain a key concern in the CCS[6]. Stakeholders have called for measures in response to these threats, including the development of robust indicators and country-specific monitoring of artistic freedom. Cooperation with the Council of Europe and UNESCO should be strengthened to support existing initiatives, to develop future joint initiatives and to avoid duplication.

The Work Plan should contribute to greater awareness of the principles and values embedded in Europe's cultural heritage, which constitute a shared source of remembrance, understanding, identity, dialogue, cohesion and creativity.

b) Empowering artists and cultural professionals and supporting people and society

Strengthening the status, working conditions and cross-border mobility of artists and CCS professionals, while respecting the role and autonomy of the social partners, remains a key priority for cultural policies in the Union, and is essential for protecting the viability and increasing the impact of the CCS. Artists and cultural professionals have the right to fair, just, healthy and safe working conditions, while fair remuneration and suitable working conditions also help sustain artistic freedom and cultural and linguistic diversity. Facilitating mobility across Europe is essential to fostering artistic and creative collaboration, supporting career development opportunities and ensuring the circulation of cultural works.

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6 See for example Commission Report on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026.

The Work Plan 2027-2030 builds on Europe's collective work to date to protect the status of artists and ensure fair remuneration of artists and CCS professionals at national and regional level. To ensure continuity, regard should be given to the recommendations outlined in the 2023 Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Report 'The status and working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals', including through stocktaking and sharing best practices. The Work Plan should also support the Council's input into the development of future policy initiatives in this field, including through timely contributions to the EU Artists Charter[7].

Precarity of work and gender and representation gaps continue to have negative impacts on the wellbeing of artists and CCS professionals, which should continue to be addressed during this period. Upskilling and training for artists and CCS professionals - including in traditional skills and crafts as well as new digital technologies - will also increase in importance as technological and economic changes continue to impact the sectors. Other important concerns include improving both cultural and artistic education, film and media literacy, through formal, non-formal and informal learning, as part of lifelong learning.

In addition, the Work Plan seeks to continue EU-level cooperation in the area of culture and health, fostering culture's role in promoting wellbeing, quality of life, mental and social health and community resilience. Building on the 2025 OMC report 'Culture and Health – Time to Act', this work will support the development of EU guidelines on culture, health and wellbeing[8].

7 An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.
8 An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.

c) Culture, competitiveness, resilience, innovation, sustainability and cohesion

Europe's CCS are vital to the Union's competitiveness, employment and innovation. However, they face unprecedented economic and technological challenges. At a time of significant economic uncertainty, inflation and pressure on national budgets, the Work Plan 2027-2030 should promote strategic investment in the CCS. Alongside the mainstreaming of culture across public financing, including Union funding mechanisms, particular emphasis could be placed on innovative financing approaches, including philanthropy, public-private partnerships, and other mechanisms to leverage private capital. Supporting the development and exchange of best practices in innovative financing tools and engaging a wide range of stakeholders across different territories, including capacity-constrained regions and outermost regions, will be important to raise awareness of opportunities and to strengthen cooperation. Sustainable and predictable investment in culture remains essential to safeguarding cultural and linguistic diversity, cultural heritage, artistic freedom and the long-term resilience of the CCS.

During the period 2027-2030 Europe must work to address the impact of AI, particularly generative AI, on the CCS, balancing its opportunities with potential threats. These include impacts on human creativity, employment, fair remuneration, business models, competitiveness, use of data, copyright and related rights, transparency, accessibility, discoverability, linguistic diversity and prominence of European content. Addressing these impacts calls for modernisation of the copyright infrastructure[9]. Continued exchange amongst Member States, supported by policy dialogues, strategic foresight activities and stakeholder engagement, will be essential to monitor developments in this rapidly developing field, identify appropriate policy responses and avoid duplication of work undertaken in other Council preparatory bodies, while respecting areas of expertise and competences. The planned AI strategy for the CCS[10] will be informed by consultation with Member States.

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[9] Copyright infrastructure should be understood as "the set of rules, technologies and institutions that frame data management practices in the creative industries".

[10] An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe, building on the Apply AI Strategy.

Further coordinated action is needed to improve the availability and comparability of European cultural data, improving monitoring and evaluation of the economic, environmental and social impact of the CCS on the wider economy and society. The Work Plan should contribute to the development of the envisaged EU Cultural Data Hub[11].

The continued impact of the climate crisis on Europe's culture and heritage sectors, as well as other ongoing conflicts and crises of a human-induced nature, also requires a response. Culture and cultural heritage should continue to be appropriately reflected in relevant strategies and cross-sector cooperation under the Union's approach to preparedness, including the Joint Communication on a Preparedness Union Strategy. At the same time, the Work Plan should strengthen cooperation on risk preparedness, prevention and management, medium and long-term climate adaptation and emergency response of the CCS, as well as the restoration and recovery of cultural heritage. It should advance the use of digitisation to preserve culture and heritage, including audiovisual archives.

Supporting the preservation, conservation, restoration and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including underwater cultural heritage, remains essential to fostering shared European identity social cohesion and sustainable development. Efforts to combat illicit trafficking of cultural goods and to protect cultural heritage from destruction caused by natural disasters, climate change, conflict, theft from cultural institutions and human intervention require continued cooperation, knowledge-sharing and integration into broader conflict and crisis responses and preparedness measures.

[11] An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.

The CCS should be encouraged in their efforts to continue their green transition and increase sustainability, including through climate-resilient infrastructure, sustainable production processes, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Particular attention should be paid to the quality of the built environment and to the role of the architectural sector in achieving it, in line with the New European Bauhaus[12]. The CCS should also be recognised as drivers of change, helping to promote environmental responsibility and sustainability. In this context, the Work Plan should build on the recommendations of the 2025 OMC report *'Creative Shifts: Empowering culture for sustainable living'*.

Furthermore, the Work Plan should foster cooperation on policy development in certain cultural and creative sub-sectors such as audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), the music sector, the library sector, the publishing and the books sector, creative fashion and design, architecture and cultural heritage sectors, with a view to enhancing competitiveness, resilience, innovation and sustainability.

[12] Also in line with the work of the OMC group of Member States' experts on investing in a high-quality architecture and living environment for all (2021).

d) International cultural relations (ICR) and partnerships

The Work Plan should focus on the role of culture in the Union's external action and diplomacy, building on the recommendations of the OMC report on the Governance of ICR *'From soft power to Deep Power: EU Governance of ICR in a Changing World'.* Actions under the Work Plan should support a coherent approach to ICR and ensure Member State involvement in the preparation and implementation of an EU strategic approach towards ICR.

Greater engagement with the Council of Europe, UNESCO and other relevant multilateral partners can foster cooperation and avoid duplication of work on common priorities. In light of ongoing geopolitical instabilities, particular attention should be given to protecting culture and cultural heritage in conflict-affected regions. As targeted attacks on cultural heritage, creative infrastructure and artists continue in Ukraine and conflicts elsewhere continue to affect cultural life, Member States should maintain a coordinated response, in coherence with initiatives such as the Team Europe Approach (TEA) for Cultural Heritage in Ukraine and other relevant measures[13].

The MONDIACULT 2025 Outcome Document provides a clear blueprint for collective global action to promote the role of culture in sustainable development and to shape the post-2030 development agenda. Actions under the Work Plan should support this vision and develop shared contributions to relevant discussions in order to reinforce culture's role as a driver of sustainable development, including through advancing work towards these objectives at MONDIACULT 2029 and engagement in other relevant international processes.

[13] See, in that context, paragraph 13 of European Council conclusions of 18 and 19 June 2026 (EUCO 8/26).

II. IMPLEMENTATION AND WORKING METHODS

Building on the Joint Declaration ‘Europe for Culture - Culture for Europe’, the Work Plan for Culture 2027-2030 identifies common challenges of Member States in the field of cultural policy and allows for cooperation and exchange between Member States. This includes, but is not limited to, outlining priorities to be considered by the Presidencies of the Council and to inform the discussions at Council level. The Work Plan should facilitate structured engagement and input from Member States into key flagship actions outlined in the Culture Compass.

The Work Plan outlines themes for discussion and debate at the appropriate levels during the period covered, as well as key themes for regular review at working party level in the CAC.

It also outlines other arrangements for coordinated EU engagement between officials and experts, including peer-learning activities, stocktaking exercises and the OMC groups.

Review and flexibility

Maintaining flexibility and adaptability in the provisions and implementation of the EU Work Plan for Culture is essential in order to respond to the needs of the CCS in a challenging and evolving political, social and economic climate. Therefore, at the end of each Presidency trio in the timeframe of this Work Plan, the sitting Presidency will facilitate a discussion in the CAC to provide informal updates on actions provided for in the Work Plan. This informal review will look at progress achieved, impact of actions taken, and may propose adjustments to subsequent actions in light of the results achieved and/or relevant policy developments at EU or national levels.

This does not preclude other Presidencies from facilitating further informal reviews, as deemed appropriate.

Mainstreaming

Increased coordination and cooperation between cultural policy and other EU and national policymaking fora remains essential. The mainstreaming of cultural policy and coordinated action are essential to leveraging culture's potential to drive societal progress. The Work Plan therefore seeks to enhance cross-sectoral cooperation and learning with relevant institutions. This includes collaborations at expert level, closer interaction between various Council preparatory bodies, and increased engagement with relevant stakeholders.

III. ACTIONS

A. Policy dialogues - Artificial Intelligence and the CCS

Objective: to support policy cooperation and information exchange on the opportunities and challenges presented by AI, including the exchange of experiences on national measures, as well as practical guidance and capacity-building for the CCS, and to contribute to the development and implementation of the future EU AI Strategy for the CCS.

Rationale: AI presents significant challenges and opportunities for the CCS. Key issues identified by Member States include the ethical, sustainable, responsible and human-centred training and use of AI; the respect of copyright and related rights; transparency in the use of protected content; employment and working conditions; fair remuneration in the CCS; cultural and linguistic diversity; the impact of AI on creative practice, as well as cultural data as a resource for AI and innovation. While some of these matters are being addressed via other policy initiatives, many issues related to AI should be considered in the forthcoming AI strategy for the CCS. In tandem, the Work Plan 2027-2030 proposes a series of targeted Policy Dialogues to address the different, emerging issues related to AI and the CCS and to support human-centred creativity, innovation and diversity in the age of AI. Given the fast pace of AI developments, flexible but regular policy dialogues can provide a responsive structure for focused and agile exchanges and interventions on topical AI issues over the period of the Work Plan.

Lessons, best practice and recommendations from the Policy Dialogues should inform political and expert discussions. The full list of the specific topics should be agile to be able to respond to emerging issues.

Indicative topics could include, but are not limited to:

1. AI and cultural and linguistic diversity

Objective: examine measures addressing the impact of AI on cultural and linguistic diversity, participation in cultural life in the digital environment, accessibility and discoverability of diverse European content.

Expected output: suggestions, ideas and recommendations on how to protect and enhance cultural diversity online and to promote the participation of regional and minority languages in AI systems, as well as issues related to the accessibility and discoverability of diverse content. Findings should build upon and complement the wider AI and CCS strategy development, and feed into the ongoing global discussions in international cultural policy fora, including those held under the UNESCO 2005 Convention.

2. AI and employment in the CCS

Objective: examine the potential impact on jobs displacement and transformation and employment in the CCS, working conditions, fair remuneration, human creativity, skills needs, critical thinking and AI literacy.

Expected output: peer-review/evidence-gathering of the impact of AI on the labour market and consideration of emerging policy responses.

3. Other emerging AI issues

Possible additional AI and CCS policy dialogue(s) could serve to facilitate the exchange of information on other emerging issues, including in relation to relevant initiatives adopted at national level, as well as key priorities for action identified in the EU AI Strategy for the CCS. Possible topics may include:

- arts education, skills and training in the age of AI;
- sectoral responses to the impact of AI (including the impact of AI on the audiovisual sector, video games, music, design, publishing and the European book sector, libraries, museums and cultural heritage or others);
- opportunities and good practices in the use of AI for creativity, cultural production, dissemination and access to culture;
- cultural data as a resource for AI and innovation that reflects European values and promotes cultural and linguistic diversity.

B. Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) / Workshops

i) Peer Learning Activities

The Commission's Report on the Work Plan 2023-2026 noted Member States' interest in making greater use of PLAs. These are Member State-led voluntary exchanges at expert level, providing a practical framework for participating countries to share experience, compare policy approaches, and identify best practices. Where appropriate, PLAs may produce summary reports and practical recommendations. PLAs should remain flexible and respond to emerging challenges. They may cover:

- *Status of artists and cultural professionals*: exchange of experience on topics that impact the CCS, such as working conditions, fair remuneration, gender and representation gaps, barriers to cross-border mobility or follow up to previous OMC recommendations[14].

- *Creative fashion*: exchange of best practices on the structural challenges facing creative fashion as a distinct cultural and creative sector, including sustainability transition, access to finance, skills and craft transmission.

- *Long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage*: exchange of best practices with the possibility of developing common solutions and tools for long-term cross-border preservation of diverse forms of digital cultural heritage in the EU, including, among others, audiovisual, textual, visual and built heritage, with the aim of enhancing preparedness and resilience, including cyber resilience, in the CCS.

[14] Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Group of Member States' experts on 'The Status and Working Conditions of Artists and creative and Cultural Professionals' (2023).

- *Access to culture and cultural participation*: exchange of best practices for supporting access to and participation in culture and cultural heritage, particularly for underrepresented groups, persons with disabilities, young and older people, and those living in rural and remote areas.

Possible additional PLA topics could include culture and arts education, including film education; artists at risk; democratic resilience and European remembrance; living heritage, traditional crafts and intangible cultural heritage; libraries, publishing and the European book sector; design, architecture and high-quality living environments; the audiovisual and film sector; the music sector; illegal trafficking of cultural goods; and underwater cultural heritage.

ii) Workshops

'Workshops' are Commission-led exchanges bringing together Member States, experts, and stakeholders, where appropriate. Workshops may cover:

- *Culture and health*: exchange of best practices on ongoing cooperation between the culture and health and wellbeing sectors, including contributions to the future EU guidelines on culture, health and wellbeing.[15]

[15] An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.

C. Open Method of Coordination (OMC) groups

Objective: facilitate structured expert cooperation and the development of practical recommendations for policymaking at Union level and, where applicable, at national level.

i) *Unlocking culture financing: stimulating investment in the cultural and creative sectors*

Rationale: adequate financing for culture is critical to ensuring a stronger, more competitive cultural sector. However, culture budgets are under ongoing pressure throughout Europe.

Objective: this OMC group will examine culture financing and draw up recommendations for Member States and EU institutions on how to further stimulate the use of innovative financing tools, incentivise and manage private, philanthropic and other sources and mechanisms of funding and cooperation, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. This includes examining how the CCS can be strengthened by creating an enabling environment for increased funding, and how cultural institutions and professionals can best manage their development and address any related risks. The OMC group will also consider how culture financing can be embedded horizontally into various funding instruments, allowing culture to benefit from research, enterprise, mobility, international development and others. The OMC group should bring together experts in cultural policy and experts in public and private financing mechanisms. It should also consider UNESCO's emerging work on developing guidelines and recommendations for the financing of culture including through the invitation of relevant experts from UNESCO to participate in the group.

This new OMC group will seek to review and build on the findings and recommendations of the 2015 report '*Towards More Efficient Financial Ecosystems: Innovative Instruments to Facilitate Access to Finance for the Cultural and Creative Sectors'*. It will also build on the lessons and resources developed under the Creative FLIP (Finance, Learning, Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights for the CCSI) project.

The OMC exercise will help inform the planned 'EU guidelines on strategic investment in culture'[16], and explore innovative investment tools to attract private capital, including philanthropy, in cooperation with relevant financial institutions.

Target Outputs: an expert report outlining key recommendations for embedding culture in cross-cutting funding mechanisms, and developing an enabling environment for the public and private financing of culture.

ii) Culture and heritage in crisis and disaster preparedness and response

Rationale: in an increasingly volatile global geopolitical context, culture and heritage are too often at the forefront of conflict and instability. These attacks can take many forms, including the direct targeting of cultural infrastructure and cultural heritage sites. Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine has continued to highlight the targeted destruction of culture and heritage as a deliberate tactic of cultural warfare, designed to undermine and destroy cultural identity. The escalating pattern of extreme weather events, including flooding, heatwaves and wildfires, driven by the climate crisis, also pose significant risks of emergency situations for culture and heritage sites across the Union and require reflection, analysis and concrete, coordinated cross-sector preparedness actions ahead of such events. In addition, thefts from museums and other cultural institutions constitute a growing threat to the integrity of cultural heritage in a number of Member States.

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16 An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.

Objective: Europe has learned from its response to recent crises that EU actions can complement the bilateral initiatives taken by Member States and can provide a valuable contribution and template for crisis preparedness, risk management and emergency response in the culture and heritage sectors. The OMC should consider early warning and immediate response mechanisms, the protection, conservation and restoration of culture and heritage, and best practices on security measures against theft from museums and other cultural institutions. Initiatives such as the TEA for Cultural Heritage in Ukraine, which respond to attacks on culture, and the inclusion of cultural heritage protection in Union civil protection frameworks, provide an approach which is coordinated, effective and scalable. The EU Preparedness Union Strategy proposes a range of actions following an all-hazards, whole of society, whole of government approach. Bringing together experts in culture and heritage policy and experts in crisis and disaster preparedness and response, this OMC will seek to outline recommendations for a dynamic, responsive and effective model for coordinating the EU's response to threats to shared cultural heritage, whilst also taking into account existing EU-level crisis and disaster preparedness and response frameworks and tools. The OMC should address crisis and disaster preparedness, risk management and emergency responses for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, while taking into account digital preservation technologies, where applicable.

Target outputs: an expert report outlining key recommendations and tools for cultural heritage crisis and disaster preparedness and risk management to develop a more strategic, rapid, effective and responsive approach to safeguarding culture and tangible and intangible heritage.

iii) Artistic freedom: enhancing capacities to safeguard artistic freedom

Rationale: given the role of culture and the arts in upholding European values and democratic resilience, strengthening artistic freedom is of particular importance. Artistic freedom enables free and pluralistic expression, dialogue and civic participation. Furthermore, artistic freedom has been identified as a key concern for the Work Plan in consultations with Member States and stakeholders from the CCS, with artists and cultural professionals increasingly subjected to direct and indirect pressures.

Objective: this OMC exercise should bring together experts in cultural policy, human rights or justice policy in cooperation with representatives of relevant international organisations, including the Council of Europe and UNESCO, which already implement reporting and mapping activities and are developing policy standard-setting in this field. The OMC should facilitate the exchange on existing frameworks, initiatives and good practices at national and multilateral level and explore measures to safeguard artistic freedom and promote enabling environments for artistic creation. The OMC should examine existing approaches to monitoring and reporting on artistic freedom at national, European and international level and should identify gaps hindering the development of effective policy responses to protect artistic freedom. Such work should seek to complement, and avoid duplication of, existing initiatives undertaken by the Council of Europe, UNESCO, relevant civil society organisations and academia. The OMC group should also consider how Council actions in the field of artistic freedom can provide added value, and contribute to wider cultural policy objectives, including the development of the 'State of Culture' reports[17].

Target outputs: an expert report that builds on existing international approaches and frameworks, in particular those of the Council of Europe and UNESCO, outlines good practices and possible recommendations for the enhancement of abilities and capacities to safeguard and strengthen artistic freedom and identifies opportunities for future joint initiatives with the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

[17] An initiative by the Commission under the Culture Compass for Europe.

D. Expert networks and exchanges

i) EU Cultural Data Hub Network

Rationale: ongoing work is required to develop data collection, research and monitoring capabilities in the field of culture across the Union. The Joint Declaration sets out a collective commitment to "advanc[e] initiatives aimed at improving the availability of sound and comparable data on culture to support the development of evidence-based cultural policies." In line with this, the Commission has committed to developing a new EU Cultural Data Hub.

Objective: provide a forum for Member States and the Commission to share best practice, test ideas and address gaps in measuring the CCS at EU level, together with experts in the field, to build greater coherence and align work on cultural data, as appropriate. The network's activities will be complementary to existing work on official statistics and should support evidence-based policymaking, including through voluntary exchange of practices on common metrics, interoperability and responsible data governance. The related activities should also be used in the development of the EU Cultural Data Hub. The objectives and remit of the network should be discussed in the CAC prior to the start of its activities.

Target output: a network of Member States' experts working bilaterally or multilaterally on a voluntary and ad hoc basis on the measurement and analysis of culture and the CCS.

ii) Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) on ICR

Rationale: Taking into account the recommendations of the OMC group on Governance of ICR, regular SOMs on ICR can be held every six months as a prerogative of the Presidency, on a voluntary basis. Alternatively, an informal SOM support committee comprising interested Member States can help ensure continuity between SOMs by organising meetings and facilitating forward planning of topics and agendas. This committee should comprise experts in the field of culture and external relations from interested Member States and Commission services and the EEAS, as relevant, from both culture and foreign affairs to reflect the shared policy field of ICR.

Target output: Regular meetings to support continuity, strategic planning and policy coordination for ICR.

E. Follow-up to previous OMCs

A key lesson learned from the Work Plan 2023-2026 was the need that networks developed by OMC groups continue to operate beyond the OMC report and to allow for continued engagement to encourage implementation of recommendations[18]. The Work Plan 2027-2030 will seek to ensure continuity and delivery under thematic focuses of recent OMCs through actions including possible (i) stocktaking exercises, (ii) informal exchanges of views at the CAC to share updates on the national and EU-wide implementation of recommendations; and (iii) feeding recommendations from OMC exercises into other policy development processes.

F. Guest presentations / oral exchanges at the CAC

Objective: for culture-related topics that are addressed in other Council preparatory bodies, or externally, "guest presentations / oral exchanges at the CAC" may provide a space for sharing ideas and updates on relevant issues. An indicative list of topics could include:

- *Ukraine: culture, cultural heritage and recovery*

Exchanges of views in the CAC on TEA and other support measures to assess and identify additional needs and opportunities for cooperation in providing support to Ukraine in the fields of culture and heritage.

- *Cultural rights, cultural democracy and socially engaged arts: Sharing of best practices*

Discussion in the CAC with input from relevant international stakeholders, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights.

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18 See Commission Report on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026.

- *Competitiveness and cultural dimensions of the European video games sector*

Exchange of views at a possible joint meeting of the CAC and the Audiovisual and Media Working Party.

- *Architecture policy, a high-quality living environment for everyone and the New European Bauhaus*

Exchange of views at a possible joint meeting of the CAC and the Working Party on the Environment, with input from other relevant stakeholders, such as the European Directors for Architectural Policies (EDAP) network.

- *Copyright – presentation from other working parties*

Exchange of views at a possible joint meeting of the CAC and Working Party on Intellectual Property (Copyright).

- *Culture, European history and remembrance*

Exchange of views at the CAC to include relevant stakeholders in international affairs, relevant EU bodies, or others.

The list above does not preclude Presidencies from addressing other relevant topics, as deemed appropriate.

G. Other actions

In line with previous EU Work Plans for Culture, conferences, seminars, studies and other actions will continue to contribute to the implementation of the Work Plan and to the exploration of priority themes.

While maintaining the need for flexibility and responsiveness under this Work Plan, indicative themes for Presidency-led initiatives, and possible Council outputs could include:

- The contribution of libraries and media to societal resilience;
- Safeguarding of cultural heritage and combating illicit trafficking;
- International Cultural Relations;
- Skills and cultural professions in times of transition;
- Copyright and Culture;
- Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- A powerful cultural ecosystem for a resilient and healthy society;
- The role of culture in enhancing wellbeing, civic participation, and community resilience;
- Underwater cultural heritage;
- Culture and sustainable tourism.

Indicative timetable of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2027–2030

	2027		2028		2029		2030	
	H1	**H2**	**H1**	**H2**	**H1**	**H2**	**H1**	**H2**
A. Strengthening European values, cultural rights and artistic freedom								
Artistic freedom			OMC					
Access to culture			PLA (*poss.*)					
Libraries and cultural institutions	Conference: Libraries and media for societal resilience and civic engagement	Conference: Public libraries, reading culture and literacy: European perspectives and Greek initiatives				Stocktaking		
Cultural rights					CAC Guest presentation/ oral exchange (*poss.*)			
B. Empowering artists and cultural professionals and supporting people and society								
Culture and health		Conference on cultural prescription	Workshop (*poss.*)	Conference and Council conclusions (*poss.*)				
Status and working conditions							Stocktaking (*poss*.)	

Skills and training			Conference: Future-ready skills for stronger culture, heritage and creative ecosystems					
Wellbeing, civic participation, and community resilience.								Conference and conclusions (*poss.*)
C. Culture. competitiveness, resilience, innovation, sustainability and cohesion								
Culture financing	OMC							
			Conference on funding mechanisms					
Crisis and disaster preparedness				OMC				
Cultural data			Expert Network					

Artificial Intelligence		Conference on the relationship between AI, IP and employment conditions in the cultural sector Conference on the use of AI, aiming at the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage	CAC: Guest presentation/oral exchange (AI and Copyright)	Policy dialogue (*poss.*)		Policy dialogue (*poss.*)	Conference & Council conclusions (*poss.*)	
Cultural heritage and the climate		Informal ministerial meeting Conference on the blue economy and the promotion of underwater archaeological sites	Conference on museums and cultural heritage as drivers of protection, regeneration and resilience					Stocktaking (*poss.*)
Sectoral exchanges (audiovisual, music)			CAC: Guest presentation/ oral exchange (*poss.*) Conference on film heritage and film education	CAC: Guest presentation/ oral exchange (*poss.*)				

Architecture policy	EDAP meeting	EDAP meeting European Conference on Architectural Policies (ECAP)	EDAP meeting	EDAP meeting European Conference on Architectural Policies (ECAP)	EDAP meeting CAC: Guest presentation/ oral exchange (*poss.*)	EDAP meeting European Conference on Architectural Policies (ECAP)	EDAP meeting	EDAP meeting European Conference on Architectural Policies (ECAP)
CCS competitiveness	Conference: Re-thinking EU's competitiveness: how do cultural and creative industries contribute							
D. International cultural relations (ICR) and partnerships								
Illicit trafficking		Conference on the illegal trafficking of cultural goods and the trafficking of counterfeit works of art						
Ukraine	TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA	TEA CAC: Guest presentation/ oral exchange (*poss.*)	TEA	TEA	TEA
ICR	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)	SOM (*poss.*)

			Conference on strengthening cultural cooperation across the Mediterranean		Stocktaking (*poss.*)			

Guidelines on working methods

General principles

- Actions under the Work Plan should be implemented in a flexible manner and in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.
- Participation is voluntary and, when relevant, based on Member State nominations.
- Actions under the Work Plan should not unduly increase administrative burden for Member States, the Commission and stakeholders.
- The Commission may support the implementation of the Work Plan by providing expertise and, where appropriate, logistical or financial support.
- Where appropriate, outcomes of actions carried out under the Work Plan may be presented to the Council or its preparatory bodies.
- Actions under the Work Plan may inform future policy development and recommendations.
- Presidencies, Member States and the Commission should seek to ensure coherence between actions under this Work Plan and other relevant initiatives.
- Where relevant, after the completion of an action, a report on the outcomes will be provided.

Policy dialogues

- Policy dialogues will be organised by the Commission, provided budgetary conditions are met, though individual Member State or Presidencies may propose a particular topic of focus or organise additional dialogues or events, including in relation to relevant initiatives adopted at national level.

- Policy dialogues should bring together relevant policymakers, experts, and, where appropriate, stakeholders.

PLAs/ Workshops

- PLAs comprise Member State-led voluntary peer exchanges and provide a flexible format for Member States to share best practice and experience.

- A Member State or a group of interested Member States may, if they deem it necessary, propose to organise and finance a PLA. If the budgetary conditions are met, the Commission may provide financial support.

- Workshops are Commission-led exchanges bringing together Member States, experts, and stakeholders.

Open Method of Coordination (OMC)

- The OMC provides a framework for cooperation, exchange and sharing good practices among Member States on certain common topics and allows for the development of non-binding recommendations.

- The OMC mandate will be finalised in the CAC – with input from the relevant other Working Parties, as appropriate, on the basis of a draft mandate proposed by the Commission.

- The mandate can propose that third parties, including third countries, be invited to an OMC group.
- Each OMC group will be responsible for appointing a chair or co-chairs at its first meeting.
- Depending on the topic, the OMC group might be encouraged to form smaller focus groups and use participatory methods, where appropriate.

Expert Networks and Exchanges

- Expert networks and exchanges may be used where continuous cooperation, information-sharing or coordination is required.
- Nomination of relevant experts to these networks and exchanges will be made by Member States and the Commission, as appropriate.

Follow-up to previous OMCs

- Where appropriate, stocktaking exercises, exchanges of views or other follow-up activities on topics addressed in OMCs under the Work Plan 2023-2026 or preceding Work Plans may be organised.
- These exercises should assess implementation gaps, identify follow-up responsibilities and establish links to future EU and national policy development.

Guest presentations / oral exchanges at the CAC

- Guest presentations or oral exchanges may be organised at the CAC to facilitate discussion of emerging issues and developments in culture-related policy fields.
- Such exchanges may include contributions from external experts and stakeholders, as well as from representatives of other relevant Council preparatory bodies, in line with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

Main Political References

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- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Making the most of the EU's innovative potential - An intellectual property action plan to support the EU's recovery and resilience" (COM(2020) 760 final)

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– Council conclusions on the strategic role of culture, cultural heritage and audiovisual works in upholding European values and democratic resilience (C/2025/6562, 10.12.2025)

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– Council of Europe Landscape Convention (Florence Convention, 2000)

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– Davos Declaration, “Towards a high-quality Baukultur for Europe” (Switzerland, 2018)

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– European Commission study, 2020, The status and working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals, Final report, https://culture.ec.europa.eu/resources/document-library/the-status-and-working-conditions-of-artists-and-cultural-and-creative-professionals-0

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