Council of the European Union

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB for the meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 19 and 20 November 2026: Finland's support for Ukraine through Team Europe for cultural heritage in Ukraine initiative *- Information from Finland*

Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine continues to inflict devastating damage on the country's cultural heritage and cultural life. **The destruction of cultural sites, museums, libraries and other heritage assets is a dedicated, however unsuccessful, attack on Ukraine's historical legacy, cohesion and resilience of its people.** In light of these challenges, there is a broad international interest in strengthening efforts to protect, safeguard and restore Ukraine's cultural heritage as an integral part of the country's recovery and of Europe's shared cultural landscape.

The high-level policial meetings together with a prominent Ukraine-Finland seminar *Culture in Times of Preparedness and Recovery* and the accompanying workshops on digitalisation and resilience of cultural heritage was held in Helsinki on 22-23 October 2026. The meetings and workshops advanced Finland's support for Ukraine at EU, regional and bilateral levels. The discussions brought together government representatives and public and private stakeholders to strengthen cultural resilience, heritage protection and recovery in support of Ukraine's reconstruction and European integration efforts.

At the **EU level**, the objective was to contribute to the operationalisation of the **Team Europe for Cultural Heritage in Ukraine**, which aims to protect cultural heritage, strengthen capacities and support Ukraine's long-term recovery. **Finland supports the rapid launch of concrete activities and encourages other Member States to contribute to this Team Europe initiative** as it plays a significant part in sustaining Ukraine's resilience and recovery.

We are also doing our outmost **at the regional level**, including bilateral and national actions. To this aim, we highlight the cooperation through the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC), where Ukraine has been an observer since June 2024. Finland also pledged to prepare support to **Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF)**, which provides an additional mechanism to support the protection and recovery of Ukraine's cultural heritage.

The outcomes of the Helsinki seminar, workshops and high-level meetings directly support preparations of the Ukraine Recovery Conference 2027 (URC2027), to be held in Tallinn on 27-29 January 2027. Building on the Helsinki Process, Finland together with Ukraine would **welcome support** of participating States, and Estonia as the host country of the URC2027, **in strengthening the role and visibility of culture, cultural heritage and societal resilience** in the conference programme, particularly within the Human Dimension track.