



Strasbourg, 6 November 2020

CDCPP(2020)13
Item 3.1, 5.1 and 5.2 of the agenda

**STEERING COMMITTEE
FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE
(CDCPP)**

2020 THEMATIC SESSIONS

BACKGROUND NOTE

- **The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Cultural and Creative Sector**
- **Climate Change and Sustainable Development**
- **AI and culture, creativity and cultural heritage**

For information and action

Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by the
Directorate of Democratic Participation
Culture, Nature and Heritage Department

Background and 2019 Thematic Session

At its meeting in spring 2019, the Bureau of the CDCPP discussed ideas for reviewing working methods to further enhance the CDCPP's work, in view of its role as a pan-European intergovernmental structure with responsibility for unique culture/heritage/landscape Conventions. In addition to discussing progress reports on ongoing activities, Bureau members were interested in holding **thematic sessions** on topical societal issues during the annual plenary Committee meetings and agreed to participate actively in the preparation and running of such events.

The Bureau then examined an initial list of possible topics and agreed to organise at the 2019 plenary meeting a thematic session on the vital issue of climate change and sustainable development as related to human rights and democracy, and specifically, culture, heritage and landscape resources in this context.

It is the Committee's strength to bring together the above mentioned three work strands, which are in various ways linked to climate change and sustainable development issues. As expected, the 2019 thematic session with presentations by experts Andrew Potts and Freddy Paul Grunert was informative and inspiring.

Delegations presented how they are addressing the climate change challenges and/or contributing to sustainable development in relation to human rights and democracy, in respective sectors. These reports were collected on a dedicated space on the CDCPP's website (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cdcpp-committee>) and can inspire further action in member States. The section also comprises important resources, recommendations and publications including by the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) on issues related to risk prevention, heritage and climate change and on cultural landscape as a means of prevention of natural disasters.

The 2020 Thematic Sessions: Themes, structure, expectations

Following decisions by the CDCPP Bureau in November 2019 and April 2020 and the CDCPP meeting in June, the 2020 plenary in November will offer three thematic sessions, each dealing with a key challenge of our days with relevance to the Committee's work sectors, and each related to previously undertaken activities:

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Cultural and Creative Sector;
- Climate Change and Sustainable Development;
- AI and culture, creativity and cultural heritage.

The sessions would relate most recent developments and ongoing key activities in Europe, and beyond, with current sector needs and potentials and also highlight how CoE standards, soft standards and tools could be of help. Lastly, the sessions might identify possible follow ups, including in terms of transversal approaches for CDCPP activities, with useful links to other relevant activities inside or outside the Council of Europe.

Whilst leading experts will introduce the themes, and Secretariat members will provide targeted presentations of Council of Europe work in the areas addressed, the thematic sessions are not overly structured, as they are meant to be explorative, a space where participants can engage in a Q&A exchange and test ideas, report on their experiences and make suggestions for further Committee action.

The session on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Cultural and Creative Sector, on 10 November, will be opened by Mr Philippe Kern, Director of Kea, who will present his study on that topic. Following the exchange, the Secretariat will present the progress on the current preparation of a *CDCPP reader on culture in times of COVID-19*.

The session on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, on 12 November, will be opened by Mr Andrew Potts, ICOMOS, presenting most recent insights in this respect and ongoing international and European key activities of interest to the CDCPP's fields of activity. Information on recent initiatives on climate change by the Greek Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, on major Council of Europe activities and conferences as well as relevant work of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Nature will be offered as well.

The session on AI and culture, creativity and cultural heritage, on 12 November, will feature a presentation by Mr Gerfried Stocker, Director of Ars Electronica. An update on the work by the Council of Europe on AI by the Head of the Digital Development Unit and an intervention by the coordinator of the Centre for Cultural Heritage Technology of the Italian Institute of Technology will follow, preceding exchanges with the CDCPP.

Succeeding debates, a brief panel discussion comprising the Chair of the CDCPP, the Director of Democratic Participation, and the experts will highlight points of special interest, relate, where possible, the two subjects and hint at possible future actions by the Committee. Delegates and other participants and observers are welcome to join this exchange.

It is expected that the thematic sessions will be interesting and fruitful, delegations involve themselves actively by interacting with the expert presenters and contributing to the reflections on possible up-front work by the Committee on the challenges discussed. The unique role and composition of the CDCPP may thus come to full fruition, in line with its integrated vision and guided by the standards of the Council of Europe.

Action required

The Committee is invited to:

- welcome the organisation of the three thematic sessions and take an active part in questions and debates including on how Council of Europe activities and tools can be of help in addressing the challenges examined;
- suggest possible follow-up activities of transversal interest to the Committee and beneficial to policy makers, thus adding value to the CDCPP's work for member States.