

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, CONTENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Data

Interactive Technologies, Digital for Culture and Education

Minutes

8th meeting of the Commission Expert Group on the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage (CEDCHE)

21 and 22 May 2025

Welcome, introduction and approval of the agenda

The 8th meeting of the Commission Expert Group on the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage (CEDCHE) took place online on 21 and 22 May 2025. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission DG CONNECT, unit G.2 - Interactive Technologies, Digital for Culture and Education.

The Chair welcomed the participants and introduced the DG CONNECT G2 team present in the meeting. CEDCHE members were reminded that, to ensure continuity, each Member State should have two appointed members, and that nominations should be made by the Permanent Representations. The draft agenda, which had been distributed to the members before the meeting, was adopted.

Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

Points discussed

1. DG CONNECT: Policy, coordination, and funding updates.

The Chair presented the key political priorities of the new College of Commissioners, which will constitute the European Commission's focus for funding and policies between 2024 and 2029. The seven priorities are aimed at contributing to a faster, simpler and more united Union by focusing on:

- sustainable prosperity and competitiveness
- a global Europe - leveraging our power and partnerships
- preparing the Union for the future
- food security, water and nature

- strengthening the European societies and social model
- protecting democracy, upholding European value
- defence and security

The Chair followed with an overview of the [Competitiveness Compass](#) that was presented by the Commission in January 2025. The Competitiveness Compass establishes competitiveness as one of the EU's overarching principles for action to restore Europe's dynamism and to boost economic growth. It builds upon the [Draghi report](#), which identifies three main necessities for the EU to boost its competitiveness: closing the innovation gap, decarbonising the economy and reducing dependencies. On closing the innovation gap, the Competitiveness Compass proposes creating a friendly environment for young companies to start and expand, actively supporting industrial leadership in the technology sector, promoting the adoption of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), across companies and public organisations, as well as reducing the administrative burden for companies by simplifying rules and laws. The data space for cultural heritage is closely linked to the objective on closing the innovation gap, as it contributes to the overall efforts for creating future-looking ecosystems and innovation-friendly environments in the cultural and creative sectors.

DG CONNECT presented the [European Partnership for Virtual Worlds](#) that is expected to be launched in September 2025. The Partnership was introduced under the European Commission [strategy on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds](#) in July 2023, as an initiative to support the European virtual worlds industrial ecosystem. It will support research and the technical development of innovative virtual worlds applications, it will contribute to appropriate standards, and it will address ethical and regulatory aspects concerning the development of virtual worlds. The Partnership will bring together all relevant stakeholders, including industry, academia, policy makers, and end-users. The mode of operation will take the form of a co-programmed European Partnership, with an established legal entity led by Siemens. In the upcoming months, the Partnership will be tasked with creating a report on priorities for innovation and research in virtual worlds, focusing on different domain applications. A full chapter will be dedicated to arts and culture, which will provide valuable insights on virtual worlds applications in the cultural heritage sector.

Plans regarding the European Commission's next long-term budget were also presented. In February 2025, the Commission published a [Communication](#) on the road to the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), outlining the key policy and budgetary aspects that will shape the next MFF. The EU budget will require stable contributions from all Member States, as well as an effective capitalisation of new income streams. The next MFF will be effective for seven years, between 2028 and 2034, and it will prioritise more focused alignment with current policy priorities of the EU, catering for new challenges and expectations in terms of competitiveness, decarbonisation, defence, Europe's global positioning and the European way of life. The next MFF aims for a simplified, more flexible, focused and impactful funding, focusing on a policy-based, rather than a programme-based approach. This will imply fewer funding programmes and an elaborated plan for each country, linking key reforms with investment. A new European Competitiveness Fund is foreseen as part of the next MFF, aimed at establishing an investment capacity that will support strategic sectors and technologies critical to the EU

competitiveness, including research and innovation, and important projects of common European interest. To conclude, the Chair announced the interactive session planned for the second meeting day, where Member States were invited to discuss and express their views on the current and future funding needs for the cultural heritage sector, in the context of the next MFF.

DG CONNECT announced the publication of the progress report on the [Commission Recommendation on a common European data space for cultural heritage](#). The report, titled “[The future of Europe’s past – Why Member States must do more to advance digitisation of our cultural heritage](#)”, takes stock of Member States’ progress in the implementation of the Recommendation and the actions taken during the first two years following its adoption, between November 2021 and November 2023.

Another announcement followed on the adoption of the [Digital Europe Work Programme 2025-2027](#). Funding is foreseen for the continuation of the data space for cultural heritage for another two years, starting in 2026, with a planned budget of EUR 15 million.

Lastly, DG CONNECT provided a brief overview on some upcoming events, including the [Europeana 2025 Conference](#) that took place in June 2025, the data space for cultural heritage projects meeting and the international organisations round-table that will take place in September 2025.

2. DG EAC: Culture Compass

DG EAC was invited to present the Culture Compass, the European Commission’s new strategic framework to guide and harness the multiple dimensions of culture. The Culture Compass was announced by President Von der Leyen in Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport Glenn Micallef’s Mission Letter, as a main priority for ensuring a more strategic policy approach to culture, embedding it in the EU’s overarching policy goals.

The Culture Compass aims to establish a comprehensive strategy to harness the benefits of culture for society and economy, to tackle common challenges, to empower Europe’s cultural and creative sectors (CCS), to support and amplify the impact of Member States’ efforts and to bring culture closer to European citizens. The Compass is intended to address the current lack of a coherent EU strategy for culture, as well as several challenges posed to culture and cultural heritage, especially in the current geopolitical context marked by military conflicts and threats to democracy, the rapid digital advancements having a transformative impact on the CCS such as AI, and the working conditions of artists and culture professionals.

In this context, DG EAC organised stakeholder dialogue, call for evidence open to everyone, a Eurobarometer and targeted consultations with stakeholders and Member States gathering feedback on what should be the guiding principles of the Culture Compass, the current needs identified in the CCS, and other EU policy areas where culture can be leveraged. DG EAC is currently preparing a Communication on the Culture Compass, which is expected to be adopted in November 2025 and a draft Joint Declaration attached.

3. DG RTD: European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage funding updates

DG RTD presented updates on the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH). Funding under the Horizon Europe (HE) 2023 Work Programme focused on the design and implementation of the basic architecture, data model and governance of the ECCCH. The [European Cloud for Heritage Open Science \(ECHOES\)](#) project responsible for developing the ECCCH platform started on 1 June 2024. Important developments from the project include the closing of the 1st call for cascading grants which received 190 applications, the upcoming launch of the 2nd call in September 2025, as well as the launch of the [ECHOES consultation](#) to identify needs and expectations for the cultural heritage cloud, open until the end of June 2025.

Under the 2024 Work Programme, funding was allocated to the research and development of basic tools and functionalities in five key areas: [digitisation and analysis of dynamic processes, objects and complex combined data](#), [documenting, interlinking and organising data](#), [high-value interactions with visitors and heritage objects](#), [study, conservation and restoration of heritage objects](#), and [advanced data enrichment](#). Proposals are currently under evaluation, and the selected projects are expected to start in autumn 2025.

Under the 2025 Work Programme, funding will be available for the development and testing of real-world uses of the ECCCH platform. Successful projects are expected to contribute to improving the ECCCH, making it more user-friendly, as well as to increase the platform's visibility and use. The 2025 call for proposal is open for applications until 16 September 2025. An info day was held on 15 May, the recording and other useful resources for applicants are available [online](#). Organisations interested in applying can access the [brokerage platform](#) to search for suitable consortium partners.

4. HaDEA: data space for cultural heritage projects event

HaDEA announced the organisation of an event to promote the work of the completed and ongoing Digital Europe (DEP) projects which contribute to the deployment of the data space for cultural heritage, that will take place in Brussels, on 24 September 2025. The purpose of this event is to foster collaboration, visibility and knowledge exchange among the projects contributing to the data space. It will bring together 9 projects to highlight innovative approaches, share best practices and create synergies.

The event will feature project and policy presentations, panel discussions on 3D and XR digitisation and reuse of datasets, sustainability, synergies and capacity building, as well as live demonstrations conducted by project representatives. The event will include demos of the projects' work, lessons learned and discussion on potential synergies across projects to maximise their offerings to the data space and the cultural heritage institutions. More information will be shared later in the summer.

5. Updates by Member States

Polish Presidency updates

Poland provided an overview of the main priorities under the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union agenda for culture.

The [Council Conclusions on supporting young artists and cultural and creative professionals in starting their careers](#) were adopted during the Polish Presidency, in June 2025. The Council Conclusions emphasise the importance of promoting the mental well-being of young professionals, improving their social protection and access to social rights, strengthening arts education, as well as maintaining and further developing scholarships and grant programmes. On 9 and 10 April, Poland hosted a conference focusing on exploring the current professional conditions of young artists, as well as strategies to better support them. The conference, titled [“Young artists – challenges and reality”](#), took place at Zachęta, the National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, gathering over 300 artists, experts and cultural institutions representatives.

The [Council Conclusions on the assessment of the legal framework for audiovisual media services and video-sharing platform services](#) were adopted in May 2025. Key focus areas include ensuring the protection of minors, assessing platform obligations for fair competition, improving visibility of public interest content and addressing cross-border and non-EU service challenges in the digital environment. A conference on the [impact of AI on copyright, media and the creative sectors](#) was organised between 24 and 25 April in Łódź. The conference explored AI’s impact on the audiovisual sector, the use of AI tool in copyright protection, collective rights management enhanced by AI, as well as the use of AI in newsrooms and how it influences journalism.

During the Council meeting on Education, Youth, Culture and Sport held on 13 May, Member States discussed the future of the Creative Europe Programme, emphasising that more funds should be allocated to culture. Further discussions focused on the Culture Compass.

Lastly, Poland provided more details on registration and participation to the Europeana 2025 Conference. The conference, titled [“Preserve, Protect, Reuse”](#), took place between 11 and 12 June 2025, at the POLIN Museum in Warsaw.

Danish Presidency updates

Denmark presented the main priorities listed in the upcoming Danish Presidency [agenda for culture](#). A key priority for the Danish Presidency is to gather Member States’ support for a common European declaration underlining the central role of media and culture in defending and protecting European democracies. In the media field, Denmark aims to launch several initiatives to secure adequate framework conditions, a strong, independent, pluralistic and responsible media sector, as well as to fight disinformation and fake news. Initiatives related to the cultural sector suggest a strong emphasis on the inherent value of culture and its broader role in supporting democratic values and societal understanding and resilience. Lastly, Denmark aims to continue the work carried out under the Polish Presidency on addressing issues relating to copyright and AI, to advance the use of AI in the cultural and creative sectors while ensuring fair conditions for copyright holders.

Belgium: European Policy Forum on data-driven audience development in the cultural and creative sectors

Belgium presented the Policy Forum on data-driven audience development that took shape under the Belgian Presidency for the Council of the European Union. Building upon the [Council Conclusions on empowering the cultural and creative sectors through data-driven](#)

[audience development](#) and the [Ghent Manifesto](#), the Policy Forum serves as a collaborative platform, uniting regional and national government experts, EU representatives, and cultural and creative sector (CCS) organisations. The Council Conclusions invite Member States and the European Commission to take policy actions on five key dimensions for the digitisation of the cultural and creative sectors, including skills and digital leadership, infrastructure, research and cooperation, values and ethics, and transparency. The Ghent Manifesto calls for action and collaboration around data-driven audience development across all Member States and hence enforces the council conclusions.

The Policy Forum facilitates dialogue, knowledge-sharing and recommendations on data-driven audience development policies. Moreover, it facilitates connections between European organisations, experts and governments, and helps activate EU countries where knowledge is still lacking in this area. While the Forum does not hold formal decision-making power, its outcomes and recommendations are aimed to support policy development and implementation at regional, national and European levels. To date, 17 Member States, several cultural institutions as well as the European Commission DG EAC are part of the forum. Other Member States interested to join are invited to contact the Belgian CEDCHE representatives.

Since its establishment, the Forum worked on identifying challenges and priorities for data-driven audience development. The Forum is currently working on a policy paper, which is expected to be finalised during the next meeting of the forum in November 2025. The policy paper will address several topics including the added value of data-driven audience development for the cultural sector and policy makers and alignment with European priorities. It will also formulate a set of recommendations including investment in data literacy and skills, standardisation of data collection, the development of benchmark metrics for cultural impact, feasibility studies and pilot projects among others.

Estonia: Proposal for the long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage beyond national borders

Estonia presented their proposal for Member States collaboration on the long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage. Given the current geopolitical context marked by war and conflicts, as well as the increasing threat of natural disasters due to climate change, Estonia argues that preserving heritage should be an important part of crisis management. Currently, digital preservation of cultural heritage is managed individually by each country, at regional or national levels. However, to ensure long-term preservation in crisis situations, collaboration between Member States to store cultural heritage data is essential. Estonia calls for the implementation of strategies and systems to ensure preservation and the seamless transfer of cultural heritage data outside national borders.

Estonia set up a working group to explore potential solutions in this sense, to describe crisis scenarios of potential concern to cultural heritage, as well as to map cultural heritage data requirements and to identify elements for further analysis. Following this analysis, and based on the country's national practices, Estonia proposes a two-tier model for cross-border preservation:

1. Ensuring the long-term preservation of digital cultural heritage copies, along with descriptive metadata in a secondary location.

2. Ensuring the long-term preservation of priority information systems, along with access to digital cultural heritage copies in a secondary location and ensuring continuity for launching and operating information systems.

As first steps in establishing a cross-border preservation model, Member States should agree on business requirements, guidelines for assessing priority cultural heritage, the volume and cost of such a solution, and its potential financing model. It is also necessary to assess the interoperability between national preservation systems, as well as data protection, security and confidentiality aspects relating to data transfers outside national borders. Estonia suggests that implementing a pilot initiative, involving 5-7 Member States, to test this model in different crisis situations, is necessary.

Estonia calls on the European Commission and the Member States to explore the possibilities of developing a common cross-border preservation solution for digital heritage at the EU level. Member States are invited to reflect on whether this is an area of concern for them, and to share their comments and opinions on what aspects should take priority in the first stages of implementing such efforts. Estonia's proposal is expected to be approved by the Parliament and published in June 2025. Once approved and published, it will be shared with the Member States.

Following the presentation, several Member States expressed their support to the initiative. Cyprus requested more information on the proposal and mentioned the importance of ensuring that the measures brought forward are not duplicated in other ongoing initiatives, including the data space for cultural heritage. Latvia considers that Member States should be represented directly by their cultural heritage institutions in bringing this proposal further, and that the initiative should be supported financially by the EU. Both Latvia and Finland agreed that one priority would be to ensure interoperability by setting common standards and a unified technical framework for all Member States. As a next step, DG CONNECT will organise a follow-up meeting to discuss the proposal as well as potential funding options for its implementation. A working group with all interested Member States will be created to take this initiative further.

Finland: Digital preservation service for cultural heritage

Representing the [IT Center for Science \(CSC\)](#), Mr. Kimmo Koivunen, Director of the CSC, and Mr. Heikki Helin, Development Manager, were invited to present Finland's digital preservation services. CSC provides centralised digital preservation services for cultural heritage and research data to the Ministry of Education and Culture.

CSC collaborates with all major cultural heritage organisations across Finland, including the National Archive, the National Library, the National Audiovisual Institute and the Finnish Heritage Agency. The preservation process involves both the CSC and the partner organisations at different steps. CSC is responsible for the bit-level preservation of cultural heritage data, which concerns the geographical distribution, file fixity, storage media and devices. The logical preservation concerning administrative and technical metadata, file formats, migrations, preservation planning and actions to ensure the long-term preservation of data, is done by both the CSC and the partner organisations. As for the semantic preservation concerning content knowledge, semantics, and descriptive metadata,

it is the responsibility of the cultural institutions as the ones possessing the knowledge on the preserved heritage.

CSC provides guidance on national specifications, roadmaps for digital preservation services development, helps ensure interoperability and offers data management support to partner organisations. For the wider national community, the CSC organises workshops and trainings, shares information and provides guidance on best practices regarding digital preservation. At the international level, the CSC collaborates with the Digital Preservation Coalition, the Open Preservation Foundation and the METS Editorial Board. CSC also participates in the EU projects [EOSC EDEN](#) and [EOSC FIDELIS](#) which aim to ensure that research outputs are preserved over the long-term in the context of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC).

France: National strategy for aggregation

France presented their national aggregation strategy and standard for aggregation. The aggregation landscape in France consists of a network of intermediary aggregators and 3 national aggregators: [Bibliothèque Nationale de France \(BnF\)](#) and [Moteur Collections](#) from the Ministry of Culture, aggregating content directly to [Europeana](#), as well as [France Archives](#), making data available to [Archives Portal Europe](#).

The Ministry of Culture adopted the Lightweight Information Describing Objects (LIDO) standard and its [LIDO-MC](#) version to facilitate the exchange of cultural data online, by harmonising the flows from cultural institutions and aggregators. By using the LIDO standard, France aims to optimise the processing of a large diversity of cultural data, and to address the needs to improve quality, limit processing and widen the distribution of collected data. The LIDO standard integrates Linked Data standards, and it complies with the FAIR principles. It also enables accurate replicability of digitised elements for a more detailed description, as well as the integration of indexing elements.

The Ministry's current technical infrastructure supports aggregation at different stages, from data collection to data processing and sharing. However, several challenges remain, concerning common standards and processes between the intermediary and national aggregators and harmonising the development of a technical infrastructure with the specific needs for aggregation. Developing and promoting the LIDO standard to cultural heritage institutions and intermediary aggregators is also a significant challenge. Regarding data, more work is in progress to harmonise quality, manage additions, updates and withdrawals, as well as establishing a shared governance between the national and intermediary aggregators. As next steps, the Ministry of Culture will test the adapted LIDO standard internally, will continue to promote the LIDO standard to cultural heritage institutions and aggregators, and it will work on developing and promoting a set of tools aimed at harmonising data flows.

6. Co-creation of the data space for cultural heritage strategy 2025-2030

DG CONNECT provided an update on the 2025-2030 strategy for the data space for cultural heritage. As announced in the previous CEDCHE meeting, the strategy will be co-created by the CEDCHE and the European Commission, representing the data space governance, as well as the Europeana Foundation, as stewards of the data space. The CEDCHE sub-group, the Europeana Foundation and the Commission started discussing

and defining the main priorities to be included in the strategy. Working groups were established for each priority, which met regularly to work on developing and drafting the strategy in their respective areas. The three priorities are:

- Providing a robust, interoperable data space infrastructure, while increasing the diversity and quality of data
- Facilitating access to cultural heritage data and enabling its reuse across sectors
- Supporting the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector through capacity building, networking and innovation

Artificial intelligence, 3D and multilingualism are transversal themes cutting across all three priorities.

Based on the input by the sub-group, the Commission is preparing a draft of the strategy, that will be shared with the CEDCHE members over the summer. The Chair suggested the possibility to organise a follow-up meeting to discuss feedback received from the CEDCHE. The final version of the strategy is expected to be published in October 2025.

7. Prof. Dr. Julia Noordegraaf: From Smart to Soft Cities: Employing Cultural Heritage data for a Sustainable Future

Prof. Julia Noordegraaf was invited to present an Amsterdam-based initiative that integrates cultural heritage into urban planning. The pilot project was conducted by the [Amsterdam Time Machine](#), members of the [Time Machine Organisation \(TMO\)](#), in collaboration with the Amsterdam municipality, the University of Amsterdam and [Netherlands 3D](#), and it focused on using historical data for the restoration of the Amsterdam Jewish Quarter.

The project emerged from an inquiry into using cultural heritage for designing solutions to complex societal questions, such as the energy transition, future housing and inclusive societies. It is based on the premise that cultural heritage represents the soft tissue of urban living, which is often overlooked in conventional urban planning despite being an essential element in defining the identity of a place. Historical data reflects the values communities ascribe to climate, health, housing and social inclusion, and it allows for the identification of elements that make them feel at home in a certain place.

The initiative made historical information from cultural heritage sources available by connecting it in space and time in the attempt to recreate the experience of the past in the present. All partners involved collaborated on creating a repository, similar to a data space, of historical data points from various sources. The data was used to reconstruct Amsterdam's Vlooienburg island in 4D. The same approach was replicated in Amsterdam Time Machine's water pilot, to restore part of Amsterdam's water canals networks. Historical data on the canals was added to a thematic version of Amsterdam's digital twin created by the municipality, showing how the city evolved over time through mapping and 3D visualisation techniques.

The CEDCHE members welcomed the initiative, acknowledging it as a strong and commercially viable reuse case for cultural heritage data. Participants inquired about the main challenges in implementing this pilot as well as its applicability to other cities. Prof. Noordegraaf mentioned some of the main challenges were of an organisational as well as

technical nature, specifically connecting heritage data with its source. Long-term sustainability was another concern, as such initiatives are often developed as one-off solutions. For this reason, the support and involvement of local authorities in such initiatives is required to ensure continuity and a wider uptake into urban planning. Prof. Noordegraaf suggested that this pilot could be applicable to other cities as well. The main requirements are a data space where different data sources are brought together, as well as clear governance and collaboration frameworks.

Another question concerned the amount of time needed to implement such initiatives. For this pilot, Prof. Noordegraaf mentioned that developing the idea and building connections with the municipality took 10 years. However, Prof. Noordegraaf suggested that the actual implementation process does not take long.

Further questions were on whether the heritage data used for this pilot is also available on the data space for cultural heritage, and the type of data the data space should make available in support of such initiatives. Prof. Noordegraaf confirmed that the cultural heritage partners involved in the project are also active in the data space. In fact, TMO is part of the data space for cultural heritage consortium. However, much of the content used in this pilot came from the Amsterdam archives, the city museums, and research materials. Regarding the types of content the data space should provide, Prof. Noordegraaf mentions transcripts of historical documents and diaries as primary resources.

8. Europeana Foundation: Twin it! Part II

The Europeana Foundation presented the concept of a new pan-European campaign aimed at boosting the 3D digitisation capacity of Member States. Twin it! Part II builds upon the success of the [Twin it! 3D for Europe's culture](#) campaign that concluded in May 2024, and brought together all 27 Member States in a joint effort to promote the 3D digitisation of cultural heritage assets. The campaign resulted in 37 3D heritage models submitted by Member States, that were showcased in a [virtual exhibition](#). The campaign culminated with a [high-level event](#) inaugurated by Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton, that brought together 10 Ministers of Culture and other dignitaries from Member States, as well as over 100 policymakers at European and national levels.

Like the first edition, Twin it! Part II will be a cross-presidency campaign organised in collaboration with the European Commission and the Polish, Danish and Cypriot Presidencies. The campaign is expected to run between June 2025 and June 2026, concluding with a high-level event during the Cypriot Presidency.

The scope of the campaign is similar to its first iteration, inviting Member States to submit at least one high-quality 3D digitised asset to the data space. The heritage assets should align with the 3 priority categories identified in the 2021 Recommendation: at risk heritage, heritage sites and monuments among the most visited, or heritage belonging to categories with low levels of digitisation. The main novel element is represented by the requirement to specify a clear reuse intent and to submit additional data pertaining to the digitised asset. There will be a stronger focus on multilingualism, and open license will be a key requirement for the submitted heritage assets to facilitate reuse. In addition, the campaign will host a hackathon, bringing together creators, students and citizens to reuse the heritage assets submitted by the Member States in creating new content. The Europeana Foundation

will assist Member States throughout the campaign, by providing them with comprehensive guidelines, helping them define their digitisation objectives, providing technical support, organising dedicated sessions and webinars, helping them with dissemination actions and establishing digitisation partnerships.

CEDCHE members are invited to support the campaign by securing the participation of their respective country and encouraging ministerial engagement and presence at the final event. National contact points for the campaign will be appointed in the coming weeks.

9. Horizontal Working Group: Personas and use cases for the data space for cultural heritage

The Horizontal working group provided an overview of their work in identifying and defining use cases for the data space. This work tries to address several aspects including:

- what the data space could and should entail in terms of data, service and other offerings
- standards, protocols and frameworks to which the data space should comply
- whom the data space could and should serve
- governance aspects
- remits between the collaborative cloud and the data space for cultural heritage, addressing concerns, opportunities and positive aspects.

The identification and development of use cases is a crucial step in shaping the design, scope and functionality of the data space, as they help to operationalise the vision, anticipate user needs and develop strategies for future developments. The working group developed a set of personas to identify different typologies of potential users, as well as several use cases exemplifying how the personas could use the data space. The personas profiles focus on the different needs for data types and quality, the potential users' available budgets, IT expertise and digital proficiency, IT support needs, standards and frameworks, as well as whether the user would generate new data. The use cases focused on the data space functionalities needed by the users, data uses beyond cultural heritage and their potential to generate profit.

Starting from examples and insights provided by the working group members, grounded in their diverse backgrounds, roles and practical experiences, common patterns and user typologies were identified. This analysis then enabled the conceptualisation of broader application scenarios and functional requirements for the data space. The Horizontal working group identified 10 different typologies of data space users: researchers, curators and archivists, technical professionals, community facilitators and educators, artists and content creators, digital preservation specialists, policy makers and legal experts, data scientists and AI specialists, tourists and casual users, as well as cultural entrepreneurs and startups. From the use cases analysis, the working group identified several priorities the data space should focus on, including interoperability and metadata standardisation, IPR management and data governance, data integrity and digital preservation, open innovation, inclusivity and accessibility, participation and curation features, and community-building capacity.

The group acknowledges that parallel efforts on use cases development for the data space for cultural heritage are currently underway and aims to align and co-analyse these bodies of work wherever possible. Benchmarking against a shared methodology or framework - such as that proposed by the ECCCH Blueprint - will be considered to ensure complementarity, coherence and a shared vision.

The Horizontal working group provided a set of 10 recommendations emerging from their analysis. The recommendations include:

- using the Data Spaces Support Centre (DSSC) blueprint as a shared reference framework for use cases
- enabling open submissions of use cases by the cultural heritage community
- clarifying and communicating the distinction between the data space and the collaborative cloud for cultural heritage
- adopting an architecture that respects the autonomy of contributing institutions and complies with regional and legal frameworks
- considering sustainable revenue models for commercial reuse, as well as value-sharing mechanisms to emphasize the public value of cultural heritage
- contextualising target audiences, use cases and business models across other data spaces and EU digital initiatives
- developing and adopting a shared terminology for technical terms
- defining and classifying data stewardship roles and responsibilities
- facilitating modular service designs tailored to user archetypes
- incorporating ethical, legal and social considerations early in the development process for the data space

As next steps, the Horizontal working group will draft a detailed report on the personas and use cases developed, containing the full analysis and recommendations.

10. Discussion: Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034

The 8th CEDCHE meeting concluded with a session dedicated to the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). CEDCHE members were invited to share their views on the most pressing needs for EU financial support, how they see support at the EU level, and the types of collaborations between Member States the Commission should facilitate.

On funding needs, CEDCHE members argued that, given the current geopolitical context, more investments should be allocated to tackling propaganda and disinformation, especially in the digital space, increasing cybersecurity, as well as preserving and improving storage capacities for digital cultural heritage. The early targeting of cultural heritage in Ukraine underscores the need for digitising cultural heritage, to help safeguard cultural identities. In this sense, the potential for digital cultural heritage to facilitate resilience and regeneration, especially by supporting regions or sectors in using culture as a basis for progress, is highlighted as a priority area for funding. The next MFF should continue to support the long-term preservation and digitisation of cultural heritage, and more funding should be allocated for preserving intangible heritage.

The societal value of cultural heritage should be advocated for more strongly in budget negotiations, since culture is often seen as expendable compared to other policy and economic areas. A transversal approach may enhance the presence of cultural heritage across different domains, making it more relevant. The CEDCHE also mentioned the need for more funding to facilitate the use of cultural heritage in education.

Furthermore, CEDCHE members believe that more funding should be targeted towards increasing awareness of the data space for cultural heritage and facilitating synergies with other data spaces. Connections between different data spaces would facilitate collaboration and innovation, and they would also help secure more sustainable funding. Increased investments in capacity building, digital literacy and skills, as well as facilitating access to education and professional development for cultural heritage professionals were also identified as priorities.

Other identified needs include increased funding for standards and multilingualism in the context of the data space for cultural heritage, as well as increased support for the uptake of latest digital technologies, such as AI, in the cultural heritage sector. Considering future developments, the CEDCHE points out that funding under the next MFF should remain flexible to accommodate for rapid technological changes. Furthermore, fighting illicit trafficking of cultural goods, addressing artists' remuneration in the digital context, and simplifying cross-continental engagements are crucial aspects of support.

To improve access to funding, CEDCHE members call for the simplification of administrative processes to reduce the burden for small organisations that often do not have the resources to comply with all the application requirements. The simplification of funding programmes and having a single funding programme for culture were also recommended to alleviate scattered funding streams. Furthermore, the CEDCHE considers that coordination between EC services that fund cultural heritage projects should be improved, and that synergies between related initiatives should be encouraged in the next MFF. Addressing the fragmentation between EU and national policies is also needed, and the Commission should invest more efforts into harmonising EU policies to better account for national contexts.

CEDCHE members mentioned the establishment of a European Digital Infrastructure Consortium (EDIC) to facilitate collaboration between Member States on advancing the cultural heritage digitisation efforts. The Commission should also support a better alignment of Member States' national digitisation strategies, given that Member States are more advanced while others are lagging. Lastly, promoting collaboration within Europe to reach scattered and underrepresented communities is highlighted to support cultural cohesion and diversity.

Conclusions

DG CONNECT will organise several *ad hoc* meetings to follow up on Estonia's proposal for the long-term digitisation of cultural heritage outside national borders, and the Twin it! Part II campaign. The data space for cultural heritage 2025-2030 draft strategy will be shared with the CEDCHE members over summer. An *ad hoc* meeting dedicated to the

strategy might also be organised, to discuss the expert group's feedback and recommendations.

Next steps

DG CONNECT will follow up regarding the organisation of subsequent ad hoc meetings and sharing of documents as convened.

All meeting presentations and documents are available on the expert group Microsoft Teams collaborative platform. The draft minutes are available in the [Register of Commission Expert Groups](#) linked from the CEDCHE [Europa website](#), as well as in the expert group collaborative platform. All communication related to the CEDCHE should be addressed to the CEDCHE Secretariat: CNECT-CEDCHE@ec.europa.eu.

Next meeting

The 9th CEDCHE meeting will take place in Luxembourg on 21 and 22 October 2025. A save the date was sent to all CEDCHE and sub-group members, and more details will be communicated later.

List of participants

- CEDCHE representatives from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.
- Sub-group Type A members appointed in their personal capacity: Elisabeth Niggemann, George Caridakis, Cristiana Sappa, Ronald Dekker.
- Sub-group Type B individual expert representing the European Fashion Heritage Association: Piermarco Rendina.
- Sub-group Type C members representing the Europeana Network Association and the Computer Application and quantitative methods in Archaeology (CAA Germany)
- Sub-group Type D members representing Member State Authorities from Austria, Cyprus, France, Hungary, Ireland and Sweden.
- Europeana Foundation: Harry Verwayen, Shadi Ardalan, Lorena Aldana, Valentine Charles.
- Invited experts: Heikki Helin, Kimmo Koivunen - IT Centre for Science (CSC) Finland, Julia Noordegraaf - Time Machine Organisation Amsterdam.
- European Commission services: DG CONNECT unit G2 – Interactive Technologies, Digital for Culture and Education; DG EAC unit D1 – Cultural Policy; DG RTD unit D4 – Democracy, Equality and Culture, HaDEA unit B2 – Digital.