

3rd CHEBEC WEBINAR REPORT

1. CHEBEC WEBINARS CONTEXT:

The Chebec webinars intent to promote access from key operators and decision makers to new competences and approaches to the CCI sector, in order to improve their knowledge, activity, strategies and support to the CCI sector.

They aimed at decision makers and institutions or key actors that can incorporate Chebec outputs and approach and can contribute to transfer results.

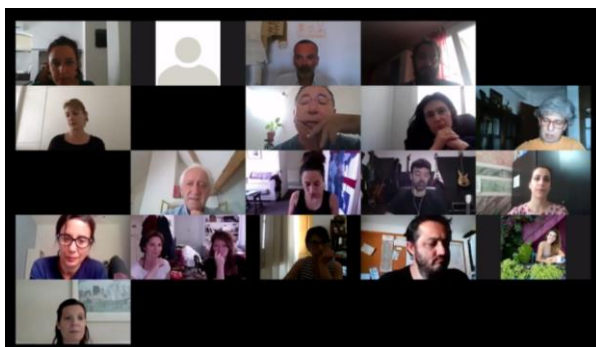
The 3 webinars should move from a more general approach (1st webinar) to specific cases, including the pilot action results of Chebec (last webinar).

The webinars should be associated to other local events, in Chebec activities contexts or associated to other events connected with the cultural and creative approach.

The Covid-19 Pandemic causes a shift in the last webinar approach. The cultural sector was one of the most affected by the crisis, with unknown consequences. By this reason, Chebec partners decided to try to focus on the effects of the pandemic in the world and in culture and also on the opportunities for change that the crisis also brings. The last webinar was not connected to local events, which were physical impossible due to social distance need.

2. THIRD CHEBEC WEBINAR

The 3rd Webinar took place on May 28th, 2020, at 4 pm (GMT) and was broadcasted from England in full Covid-19 pandemic context.



Our lesson:

**Our civilisation is a thin film
of order we build around the
chaos of events**

The big message:

A focus on what really matters

Keep a memory of the moment

Use the clarity to drive energy

CIMAC was responsible for the organization of this webinar. All partners attended as well as part of Chebec beneficiaries, local and regional stakeholders and other persons from various contexts, mainly from the cultural sector.

The webinar was broadcasted through Zoom Platform. The webinar was recorded and edited. It is available in MED website <https://chebec.interreg-med.eu/> and other communication channels, namely the ones from each Chebec partner.

PARTICIPANTS

112 persons attended virtually to the Webinar among partners, beneficiaries and other participants, from the cultural and creative sectors of each region and also from other regions outside Chebec area.

WEBINAR THEME:

CRISIS AS A TIME FOR CULTURE

After the 1st Webinar with Tom Fleming, where we approached the importance of strategy and partnerships in the supporting of the Creative Ecosystems, and the 2nd Chebec Webinar with Koen Snoeckx, which defended a practical approach to the development of creative community colliders, the 3rd webinar was focused on the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic in the cultural sector.

The current situation poses massive challenges to all of us. The cultural and creative sector is no exception. In this Webinar, guided by Charles Landry, we debate and deepen the role of culture and creativity in the crisis. Does it have a special role to perform in helping to create a more positive outcome of the crisis? Does it push us towards new ways of making and producing culture? Does the digital alternative provide democratic and human centred access to culture? Is there a silver lining to the crisis? If so, how?

After a very brief reminder of the impact of the crisis on culture, Charles Landry reassembled the bigger argument for culture by focusing on:

- Culture & the 4th pillar of sustainability
- Culture & resilient places
- Culture & the psychological/mental impact of the crisis
- Culture in a time of social distancing

Finally, we focused on prospects for culture now, in 1 or 2 years and the longer horizon.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

CIMAC invited Charles Landry to provide the Webinar.

Charles Landry works with cities around the world to help them make the most of their potential. He is widely acclaimed as a speaker, author, innovator and he facilitates complex urban change projects.

An international authority on using imagination in creating self-sustaining urban change Charles has advised cities or given talks in over 60 countries. He helps shift how we harness possibilities and resources in reinventing our cities and his Creative City concept has become a global movement. His book *The Art of City Making* was recently voted the 2nd best book on cities ever written by the planning website: <http://www.planetizen.com/node/66462>. His most recent book is *The Civic City in a Nomadic World*. Other books cover the measurement of urban creativity, the digitized city, urban fragility and risk, the sensory experience cities and interculturalism.

For further information: www.charleslandry.com

DEVELOPMENT

Previously to the webinar Charles Landry and CIMAC prepared some questions in order to shape an active and positive discussion during the webinar. This questions, directed to Chebec partners, were the following:

1. Does culture has a special role to perform in helping to create a more positive outcome of the crisis?
2. Does the crisis push us towards new ways of making and producing culture?
3. Does the digital alternative provide democratic and human centred access to culture?
4. Is there a silver lining to the crisis? If so, how?

Charles Landry started by making a presentation where he began by sharing his main feeling over this crisis, which is a sense that we are limited and that **the virus has shown us that we cannot do everything**. But it is also **a time for change and for culture, since the transformation that needs to happen is in itself a cultural project. The transformation project that we need it's a cultural one because it's about values**. We are currently in the eye of the storm and it becomes difficult to reflect. We are in a mix of clarity and confusion. Some artists point that the world we created is a monster and that the crisis is a way to control and divide us. But the point is that we can create a new mosaic, knowing that the foundations are completely unstable and its very hard to think clear in a context of anxiety.

The big lesson that emerges, according to Charles Landry is that **our civilization is a thin film of order we build around the chaos of events**. So we need to set how can we achieve a better order. So, the big message would be how, under the confusion and clarity that coexists now, try to **use clarity to drive energy, focusing in what really matters and avoid repeating errors from the past**. Economy is materially expansive, socially divisive and environmental hostile but only now the change feels urgent. The paradigm has been the wrong one.

So, what can art and culture do? We are social beings and culture and arts have the capacity to connect. The classical arguments become urgent today. Our sensory system is fundamental and art and culture act towards this system. There is a sanitary and economic crisis but also a political one, when persons like Trump rule. There is also a psychological crisis in the relation between persons and there is a cultural crisis. The digital enable a lot but it's not the same as being face to face. The urban life and its meaning become the opposite of its traditional meaning (density, contact, vibe, ...). **If we think about post pandemic places, we see that pandemics, all through history have shaped the cities**. We will adapt to new set of regulation (about the number of persons in spaces, for example), the micro-mobility will increase, the relation with work will change and the possibilities of working from home will led to new balance between rural and urban based on a depopulation of cities and higher attractivity from smaller places and with the performances becoming much more local. And all this will affect urban design. And there is a negative perspective of new forms of ghettos as small bubbles of population where for instance you will be tested before get in. And the way the young will react to all this will be decisive.

For culture, it will be determinant the way we will reassemble the argument (4th pillar). In a time of huge economic and social crisis, how can we defend spending money in museums? And this implies to put culture in the same level on economic, cohesion, environmental. **Not "what is the value of culture" but "what is the cost of not valuing arts/culture"**. And we need to have a collective conversation among culture around this argument and not between sectors. Culture as an activity that create anchorage, possibilities, connection, network, learning and inspiration.

If we focus on cultural forms and their worlds (visual arts, performing arts, digital, museums, heritage...) they all face different challenges. Charles then focused in some of these areas. The performing arts are the ones who are and will face higher difficulties. In terms of the "making" could be ok, "distribution" will be very hard, the "selling" could be ok by using digital means, the "experience" is a challenge... We can have great digital experiences in performing arts and we can use this moment to explore that, including we can increase audiences (on line ones) but it's of course another type of experience.

Performing means audience, so definitely we will lose something on the way. Nevertheless, there will be creativity in new ways of audience, like fake persons in a football match or in a concert.

In the digital area, of course there is a digital pivot. In digital media, gaming, and so on, with massive opportunities. We have the virtual reality, augmented reality (not all the same) and it will depend a lot on what we choose and how we can combine them with other areas, namely in public spaces.

To conclude, Charles Landry reinforces the need of **reassemble that argument to show the urgency of culture**. A second final message is that we really need to look at the rules and regulations system and here the cultural community itself can come up with some creative ideas around on how new regulations and incentives should be shaped. This connects with the idea of creative bureaucracy. We need **creative rules and regulations and to influence the new generation of bureaucrats**.

After this presentation, a period from questions and answers followed.

From the virtual audience, some questions were raised:

- Considering that cultural spaces generally come from bottom-up processes that explore human capital more than monetary resources, how does this crisis will affect these processes?
Charles pointed out that the financial crisis will be so huge that people will have such amount of questions and need for so many answers, that this could be the moment for bottom-up approach, even that it seems a bit naive. But people realize now that we need to listen more to the bottom-up (for instance nurses and care workers)
- Do cultural spaces will manage to keep their role in creating vital and cohesive communities?
Charles answer that it will be harder to keep the arguments but on the other side, in terms of communities it will be so urgent to keep this that they will be screaming for help. The psychological and economic damage its so intense that it's not just a matter of getting jobs.
- Does this crisis will accelerate the process of culture working together with other sectors?
Charles says that he's always pushing for cultural planning into city making and we are not being as affective as we should be and partly because it's usually connected with new building or spaces that cost a lot of money. So, it's not so much on cultural planning but more on planning culturally, which is very different. This means that you understand what culture is about and you understand the impact of it. And this is part of reframing the argument. And again, it's about showing evidence on the value. Not the value of culture but the cost of not valuing it. And this should come from conversation with the decision makers. Not put a value on a theatre play for instance but a cost on not doing it.
- In the scope of globalization, how to instigate more public policies that focus on cultural artistic practices for the youth at risk or to decrease social inequality? How to instigate art as a mean to transform society?
Charles argument that we are of course in a general context, where not all agree with us. We need to see the transformation project as a cultural one, in a bigger and in a smaller sense. It's about values. The cultural and artistic community needs to be more politically active. Be more sophisticated on how we make our arguments.
- Under the need of connect culture with other sectors what should be the arguments to defend this links, mainly in this time of social distance?
This a time of loneliness, says Charles. So, anything connected to that, to mental health. But at the end it's again on having in the room those people that are not in the room and should be in the room and the people that are in the room should be more active in the decision-making processes and with better arguments.
- How to create in public spaces in the current situation?
If you think in external public spaces that is less of a problem. The problem is in the enclosed spaces, where the design will be very important and here is not so much a problem of creation but a problem of audience, how to get audience in those spaces. It will be a matter of confidence and statistics and risk calculation.

- If Charles will be the policy maker how will he use the funds face the urgency that CCI sector is facing at the moment?

Charles says that he will put more money in culture than in roads, for instance but this is too radical. There are massive budgets for infrastructure. He would reshape budgets, arguing that the impact of investing in CCI will bring more impact in economy, mental health and so on. And do this involving other persons in planning, including the creative persons. Also the process of funding needs to be faster with some more radical decisions and consequently involving those who feel harmed with the decision in the designing of the new fund or project, for instance.

- How can this crisis contribute for the following aspects: culture for use and not for profit. The crisis is increasing the capital mechanisms in culture as well (big platforms, Amazon, Netflix and so on) but that is not being reflected in the cultural workers, which are still in precarity conditions

The crisis is doing that. There is a big opportunity for culture as a provider of solutions. But of course, these big platforms are winning and that is why the political battle is so important and it should be based in new arguments

- In Portugal there was a recent example of a show that was sell out in 10 minutes... Charles is more worry with the internal events, he thinks the outside events will explode because people feel imprisoned

- How can culture contribute for society to move forward to sustainable societies?

Again, the transformation project is a cultural project because it's about values. The question is how to connect different perspectives and this requires partly imagination and perhaps what should happen at the end of Chebec is to find a way of widening this conversation of transformation as a cultural project. We all know this to be true but the question is why it's not happening. So we need to use our imagination to find ways to get and connect to the power and demonstrate it.

To conclude, maybe we need to become more radical. It's important to remember this moment, this combination of fear and clarity which give us a sort of slightly frighten energy that we can begin to use, while trying to be clear headed.

