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**REPORT OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
TO THE XVIIITH ALPINE CONFERENCE
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION “POPULATION AND CULTURE”
ADOPTED BY THE IXTH ALPINE CONFERENCE**

(Final draft)

Introduction

This report presents the state of implementation of the Declaration “Population and Culture” by the Contracting Parties to the Alpine Convention based on the national reports submitted to the Compliance Committee in the period from September 2019 to September 2022. A first general chapter containing the legal basis, a description of the Contracting Parties' joint activities and general statements on the implementation of the Declaration is followed by a second chapter with an overview of the procedure for drafting this report and considerations on the difficulties encountered in compiling the standardised template. The state of implementation of the objectives and measures of an exemplary nature of the Declaration “Population and Culture” is the subject of the third chapter. In this main part of the report, which deals in detail with all areas of the Declaration, emphasis is placed on the many measures through which the Declaration is implemented in the Alpine region, with the intention of giving the Contracting Parties the opportunity to learn from each other. The report closes with a fourth chapter presenting some conclusions.

1. General information on the implementation of the Declaration “Population and Culture”

- **Legal basis**

According to Article 2, Paragraph 1 of the Alpine Convention, the Contracting Parties shall pursue a comprehensive policy for the preservation and protection of the Alps, after careful consideration of the interests of all the Alpine States, their Alpine regions, and the European Union, and through the prudent and sustained use of resources. Transborder cooperation in the Alpine region shall be intensified and extended both in terms of the territory and the number of subjects covered.

In order to achieve this objective, the Contracting Parties, on the basis of Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the Convention, shall take appropriate measures in particular in areas mentioned in letters a-l, foremost among which is the policy area “Population and Culture”. For this policy area the Convention prescribes to respect, preserve and promote the cultural and social independence of the indigenous population and to guarantee the basis for their living standards, in particular environmentally sound settlement and economic development, and promote mutual understanding and cooperation between Alpine and extra Alpine populations.

The VIIIth Alpine Conference in Garmisch-Partenkirchen decided in 2004 to draw up a political Declaration on the subject of "Population and Culture", to submit it for review in accordance with the compliance mechanism¹ and, four years after the adoption of the Declaration, to examine, in the light of the experience gained in its implementation, whether it would be appropriate to draw up a Protocol on "Population and Culture"².

The text of the Declaration "Population and Culture", approved by the IXth Alpine Conference in Alpbach 2006³, includes objectives in the five areas of "Community Awareness and Cooperation", "Cultural Diversity", "Living Space, Quality of Life and Equal Opportunities", "Economic Space" and "The Role of Cities and Rural Areas", as well as measures listed as examples in the Annex, which the Contracting Parties to the Alpine Convention undertake to adopt.

The first report on the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture"⁴ was submitted to the XIth Alpine Conference in Brdo pri Kranju, which asked the Permanent Committee to prepare a draft decision of the possible need to draw up a Protocol for decision at the XIIth Alpine Conference. The XIIth Alpine Conference in Poschiavo decided for the time being not to prepare any Protocol on the topic "Population and Culture". The Alpine Conferences held since then have also not taken any steps in this regard.

However, the strong importance of the topics of population and culture is also reflected in the Multi-Annual Work Programmes of the past years. In the Work Programme 2017- 2022, "Population and Culture" was one of six priorities. In the Work Programme 2023- 2030 the topics population and culture have found their way into priority area 3 "Enabling a good quality of life for the people in the Alps". This also affects the selection and design of projects by the Contracting Parties and the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

The Declaration "Population and Culture" is a political commitment by the Contracting Parties which, as such, does not constitute a binding document under international law. Therefore, the review of the implementation of the Declaration cannot be based on the ascertainment of any failure to comply with obligations under international law but can only offer a factual list of

¹ The current compliance mechanism is regulated in decision ACXVII/A2/2.

² Decisions ACVIII/11/2 and ACVIII/11/5

³ Decision ACIX/11/1

⁴ Document ACXI/A1/4

what the Contracting Parties have done in fulfilment of the Declaration's requirements. This is even more valid as the Declaration does not contain a definitive list of implementation measures, but gives such measures only as examples. In this sense, this report therefore provides a simple description of the activities implemented by the Contracting Parties on the topics of the Declaration.

- **Common activities of the Contracting Parties**

Within the framework of the approval of the Declaration in Alpbach in 2006, the Ministers committed themselves, among other things, to support useful initiatives so that the population, non-governmental organisations, municipalities and regions can actively participate in the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sustainable development of the Alpine region.

During the reporting period, all Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports participated in activities and projects related to Alpine networks and NGOs, including those of the 'Alpine Town of the Year' association and the network of municipalities "Alliance in the Alps", dealing in depth with the protection of the environment and the cultural and natural heritage as well as the revitalisation of abandoned buildings.

Many Contracting Parties have also attached great importance to environmental education and the involvement of young people in the Alpine region. One example among many is the support of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention (YPAC), which involves various schools in the Alps and aims to provide its insights into parliamentary structures, addressing various Alpine issues related to the topics of the Declaration on Population and Culture, such as children's rights and demography, as well as acting as a platform for knowledge exchange and networking between young people from different cultural backgrounds.

To promote cultural diversity, in 2015 Germany, together with the Permanent Secretariat, launched the "Reading Mountains" Festival throughout the Alps and beyond. Both France and Italy took part in the initiative, pointing out that through the Festival it was possible to promote a Franco-Italian cultural dialogue (Library of Nice, Institute Polimnia of Paris) around the theme of the Alps. Since then, this Alpine cultural event has become a fixed appointment for the International Mountain Day on 11 December for the entire Alpine region. Also, in Austria and

in Slovenia, libraries, primary and secondary schools and public institutions are widely involved in this annual Festival.

Finally, several Contracting Parties mentioned the Fifth Report on the State of the Alps (RSA5) on demographic change in the Alpine region and the Sixth Report on the State of the Alps (RSA6) on the green economy in the Alpine region. These common endeavours contributed also to the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture", stressing the need to preserve the presence of the population in the Alpine region, maintain the unique characteristics of an anthropized mountain environment and strengthen the Alpine economic and political area.

- **General statements by the Contracting Parties and Observers on the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture"**

The implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture" by the Contracting Parties varies and corresponds to the bandwidth of its topics.

Austria states that the heterogeneous structure of the Framework Convention is also reflected in the content of the Declaration on Population and Culture. The diversity of the Alpine region is particularly prominent as a common value throughout all recommendations for action. It is of great importance that the vital aspiration of the population living in the Alpine region to permanently survive and to carry out economic activities is explicitly stated as an essential guideline. The Declaration opens up the unique opportunity to establish the Alpine Convention as a social and cultural instrument. However, answers are primarily expected as to how the population in the Alpine region can be guaranteed social, cultural and economic development in harmony with a protected and sustainably managed environment and how the threatening structural loss in the Alpine region can be halted. To ensure that the protection of the Alps remains an issue all people living in the Alpine arc can identify with, it is necessary to disseminate the contents of the Declaration and to offer opportunities for participation. Furthermore, it is noted that the Declaration includes objectives that are of different relevance for the Austrian Länder because of their spatial impact, such as the maintenance and promotion of regional languages. In general, therefore, an attempt is made to implement the relevant objectives, depending also on the availability of funds. In many cases, however, the affiliation to the scope of application of the Alpine Convention is not sufficient to trigger specific additional measures. Finally, projects within the framework of Local Agenda 21, especially in the field of village renewal, are mentioned as an implementation initiative.

For France, the Declaration "Population and Culture" is realised through territorial development and the promotion of Alpine culture. Concerning territorial development, the measures implemented by the National Agency for Territorial Cohesion and the Regions Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur as well as Auvergne Rhône Alpes within the regulatory framework of the Mountain Law and the regional planning instruments aim at ensuring sustainable development. The promotion of Alpine culture, on the other hand, is realised through policies supporting cultural and artistic activities, through language policies and through valuing the Alpine heritage in various contexts, in particular through the recognition of Alpine heritage as intangible cultural heritage of mankind (avalanche risk management 2018 and transhumance as well as alpinism 2019). Critically, it is noted that in France the learning of the Alpine languages Italian and German has been clearly declining for decades.

The activities related to the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture" carried out by Germany cover the entire range of objectives stated in the Declaration. Emphasis is placed on strengthening the community and cultural heritage, safeguarding equal living conditions on the territory and ensuring value creation on a regional level. Germany argues that the Alpine Convention can only be brought to life and realised together with the inhabitants of the Alpine region. Civil society was therefore an important partner for Germany throughout the whole reporting period. This is reflected in the financial support for projects of the Alpine networks such as the network of municipalities Alliance in the Alps, Alpine Town of the Year, ALPARC and CIPRA. Great importance was also attached to environmental education and the involvement of youth in the Alpine region. Examples of this are the financial support for several sessions of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention and the "Youth at the Summit" initiative of ALPARC.

Italy affirms that attention to the mountains today should be understood in the sense of sustainably living in the mountains, which includes attention to cultures and traditions but also a balance between the environment, the people who live in the mountains and those who visit them. Therefore, Italy has strongly promoted initiatives aimed at pursuing the objectives set in the Declaration on Population and Culture, sharing the need to preserve the presence of the population in the Alpine region and to maintain the unique characteristics of the anthropized mountain environment. Appropriate actions that can contribute to improving the living conditions of mountain populations encompassing the economic, social and accessibility dimensions through adequate services are considered as useful. To support the

implementation of the Declaration reference is made to many projects and events, such as the conference “Alpine Landscape Meets Culture, Cultural Heritage and Landscape for a new Alpine tourism” held on 28-30 September 2020 in Courmayeur and conferences on Alpine food and mountain products in the framework of the Mountain Week at EXPO Milan 2015.

Slovenia considers the implementation of the Declaration “Population and Culture” to be a key area of the Alpine Convention and a possible socio-political instrument for the development of mountain areas. Special mention is made of the programme for the holistic development of rural areas and village renewal for municipalities as well as the awarding of additional points for applications for heritage conservation projects that correspond to recommendations of the Declaration. In addition, Slovenia refers to the Law on the Triglav National Park and to activities such as the revitalisation of abandoned buildings in Alpine towns (Idrija 2011 and Tolmin 2016), in which the recommendations of the Declaration “Population and Culture” are implemented.

France, Germany and Italy do not experience any difficulties in implementing the Declaration “Population and Culture”. In Austria, implementation difficulties are sometimes noted, which are attributable to a widespread lack of financial and personnel resources, so often can be mentioned only what is done thanks to the efforts of various institutions, such as the Salzburg Regional Institute for Cultural Traditions. In Slovenia, too, insufficient staff skills and staff shortages are considered an obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration.

CIPRA International appreciates that much is done to implement the Declaration on Population and Culture and considers this 10-year implementation report a useful overview of the range of measures that have been put into place. However, CIPRA International notes that this report is based on the national reports of only five Contracting Parties, some of which were submitted much after the deadline. This leads to some information not being up to date with recent developments. Furthermore, CIPRA International criticises that the report lacks an assessment of the effectiveness of implementation and does not allow any conclusions to be drawn as to whether the objectives of the Declaration have been achieved. In this context it is noted that sometimes the measures listed in the national reports refer to only one practice implemented in one town, which gives an inaccurate picture of the reality in the Alps that are losing people and identity. Finally, CIPRA notices how closely the Declaration on Population and Culture addresses topics of quality of life.

The Club Arc Alpin (CAA) regrets that the Regions not always collaborate in making the Declaration on Population and Culture known. Major interventions such as new ski runs, artificial snowmaking and big sporting events require new infrastructures and road connections that make the Alps apparently attractive but produce negative effects over time. Environmental and cultural values are impaired and in certain areas the Alps are being abandoned by young people and families so that only the older population remains. The CAA also notes a lack of relationship between small villages, Alpine and non-Alpine cities, which leads to different and non-cohesive local policies.

2. Procedure for the Report of the Compliance Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration “Population and Culture”

• Procedure

The deadline for the submission of the national reports in the four languages of the Alpine Convention was 1 September 2019. This resulted from the decision of the XIIth Alpine Conference in 2012 on the modification of the compliance mechanism⁵, which established the extension of the reporting interval from 4 to 10 years⁶.

For their reporting the Contracting Parties used the standardised questionnaire elaborated for this purpose and approved by the Xth Alpine Conference⁷.

By the beginning of October 2022 only five Contracting Parties had submitted their national reports. Therefore, the XVIIth Alpine Conference in Brig invited the other Contracting Parties to submit their national reports as soon as possible and asked the Compliance Committee to decide on the next steps for continuing the review procedure on the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture at its first meeting under the Slovenian Presidency⁸.

At its 33rd meeting on 19/20 April 2023, the Compliance Committee requested the Permanent Secretariat, in cooperation with the Presidency, to submit a first draft of the final report based

⁵ Decision ACXII/A1

⁶ In a further amendment to the compliance mechanism, it was determined that the next country reports are to be submitted in one of the Alpine languages German, French, Italian, Slovenian as well as in English. This amendment entered into force on 11 December 2020.

⁷ Decision ACX/B2/5

⁸ Decisions ACVII/A2/3 and ACXVII/A2/4

on the available documentation in time for discussion at the next meeting of the Compliance Committee.

Based on the national reports submitted by Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia⁹, the Permanent Secretariat prepared a first draft report that enabled the Compliance Committee at its 34th meeting on 5 December 2023 to examine the measures taken by the Contracting Parties to implement the Declaration. The Compliance Committee then invited the Contracting Parties and the Observers to submit their requests for amendments and additions to this draft report by the end of January 2024. Based on the comments made by the Contracting Parties and Observers the Permanent Secretariat prepared in cooperation with the Presidency a revised draft final report, which was discussed at the 35th meeting of the Compliance Committee. Subsequently, this draft final report was finalised based on the results of the discussion at the meeting and some text proposals submitted jointly by Italy and CIPRA International. The report was then approved by the Contracting Parties for submission to the Permanent Committee for the attention of the XVIIIth Alpine Conference.

The current versions of the national reports submitted by the Contracting Parties are available on the internet of the Alpine Convention homepage at the address <https://www.alpconv.org/en/home/organisation/compliance-committee/>.

- **Difficulties in filling in the standardised form**

All Contracting Parties that submitted their national reports, except Italy, had difficulties in completing the questionnaire.

France, Germany and Slovenia stated that the questions were partly not precise enough, too abstract, incomprehensible and too complicated, and that overlaps were sometimes noted. To improve it, it was proposed to simplify and rationalise the questionnaire, shorten the questions and make them more concrete.

Austria found that since the questions are partly rather general and the measures and activities referred to are usually not limited to the scope of application of the Alpine Convention, it becomes very difficult to deduce the degree of implementation of the Declaration.

⁹ The table in Annex 1 shows the date of submission of the report and the translations.

Furthermore, many questions refer to qualitative criteria that, if anything, can only be tracked with great effort and about which information is rarely available. Finally, Austria, France and Slovenia, agreed that many questions cannot be answered with a simple YES or NO, which is attributable to the differences in approaches applied at the micro-territorial level.

France found that many stakeholders had to be found to answer the questions and suggested that language issues should be divided into two parts: 1) internal: preservation of the heritage of language communities (dialects, regional languages); 2) cross-border: learning of other Alpine languages at school.

Finally, it should be noted that only Italy and France have included in their national reports the compilation of relevant national and regional/provincial regulations requested as an annex in the standardised questionnaire.

3. State of implementation of the objectives and measures of an exemplary nature contained in the Declaration “Population and Culture”¹⁰

3.1. Section “Community awareness and cooperation”

3.1.1 Sub-section “Community awareness and identity”

3.1.1.1. General information

While in Germany, Italy and Slovenia the common responsibility of the Alpine and non-Alpine population and of all political decision-making levels in preserving the cultural peculiarities of the Alpine living space and in particular in strengthening the community awareness and identity of the resident population is reinforced, in Austria and France this is not always the case. Austria also notes that the Alpine area is still divided between many individual interests and here is not much evidence of any tangible solidarity.

¹⁰ The information in this chapter refers to the national reports submitted by Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia and therefore does not cover the entire scope of application of the Alpine Convention. For the many examples of implementation in all individual areas, not mentioned in this report, please refer to the national reports.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Community awareness and identity"¹¹</i>	
Support for organisations committed to transmitting these values	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion and further development of partnerships between local and regional authorities in the Alps	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Activities aimed at giving the population access to the historical, economic and environmental knowledge of the Alpine living space	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Information and training programmes on the Alpine Convention and its Protocols	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Joint projects	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports implement the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Community awareness and identity".

3.1.1.2. Examples of implementation measures

For Austria, Germany and Slovenia, cooperation within the framework of INTERREG programmes is an important instrument for strengthening community awareness and the identity of the resident population.

Austria emphasises the involvement of various organisations in mission statement development processes („ZukunftsRaum Tirol"), the establishment of the Office for the Slovenian group within the Carinthian regional administration, which serves Slovenian-speaking citizens and the Mountaineering Villages project aimed at strengthening joint responsibility for rural areas in the Alpine region, promoted by the Austrian Alpine Club and financed by the Ministry of the Environment and the EU as part of the 2007 - 2013 rural development programme.

France mentions ALPARC's annual actions "Youth at the top" deal with natural and cultural themes of the Alps. In addition, the PACA and AURA regions support CIPRA in its communication activities on the Alpine Convention, in the promotion of partnerships between actors and towns in the Alps, as well as other associations working on environmental education (EDUC'Alpes) and the development of services for the population in the Alpine region (ADRETS in particular).

¹¹ In this table and in all subsequent tables in this report, the information provided by the Contracting Parties in their national reports is reproduced as it appears in the version in the respective national language/s.

Germany points out that the Euregio structures enable the implementation of many cross-border projects, from music festivals and the publication of a cultural calendar to the creation of the 'Via bavarica Tyrolensis' cycle path.

Italy refers to the establishment of the Courmayeur Mont Blanc Foundation in the Valle d'Aosta Region implementing multi-year research programmes with an interdisciplinary approach and cultural voluntary work, which has fostered the growth of a centre of Alpine culture and a strengthening of community awareness.

Slovenia mentions the 'Alpine Convention Day', at which the treaty and local initiatives in the area of sustainable development are presented to the public, the flower festival in Bohinj as well as the Triglav National Park's training programmes for young people.

3.1.1.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.1.2 Sub-section "Alpine and extra-Alpine cooperation"

3.1.2.1 General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports promote language understanding, dialogue, cooperation and knowledge exchange within the Alps and between the Alpine and non-Alpine populations. All these Contracting Parties strengthen sustainable regional development through cooperation and the exchange of experience between the various cultural communities in the Alps and with other mountain regions of the world. For France, however, this is only partly the case. Austria notes that the exchange of experience and cooperation is still limited to a few regions in the Alps.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Alpine and extra-Alpine cooperation"</i>	
Creation or consolidation and development of cross-border and interregional cooperation networks	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Activities to promote cultural exchange and the exchange of information and of experience with respect to specific topics	AT, DE, IT, SI
Organisation of events, exhibitions, publications, film productions and research work	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Creation and dissemination of multilingual publications in Alpine languages	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Projects within international mountain partnerships	DE, FR, IT, SI
Inner-Alpine, transalpine and international cross-border exchange programmes and projects	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Alpine and Extra-Alpine Cooperation" are implemented by the Contracting Parties with the exception of Austria, where, due to a lack of information, it cannot be determined whether projects within international mountain partnerships are carried out. For France as well no information was given with respect to activities to promote cultural exchange and the exchange of information and of experience on specific topics.

3.1.2.2 Examples of implementation measures

European territorial cooperation programmes, be they cross-border, transnational or interregional, are of course ideal instruments of Alpine and extra-Alpine cooperation for all Contracting Parties. However, Austria points out that interregional contacts with non-Alpine areas are rare. Austria and Germany also emphasise co-financing from the EU LEADER programme, which makes it possible to support a wide range of innovative activities in rural areas.

In addition, Austria mentions the conference "The role of women in mountain regions", organised in 2017, where women from various mountain regions around the world discussed regional solutions to global challenges that specifically affect women and produced a declaration.

France states that in the Alps, the exchange between park regions in different fields can contribute to strengthening the sustainability of development in these regions. Reference is made also to ALPARC's collaboration with the Carpathian countries on a wide range of projects.

Germany attaches great importance to cooperation within the Arge Alp, such as the the project “Talente-Akademie Lindau”, a summer academy for particularly gifted young people. The Upper Bavarian Cultural Days are also named as a measure by which the objectives of this sub-section are realised.

Development cooperation also plays an important role for Italy. For example, Italian Alpine regions participate in European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation Groups (EGTCs), an instrument of EU Cohesion Policy. In addition, Italy notes that Nova Gorica and Gorizia were proclaimed European Capital of Culture 2025, which entails the realization of a high-quality cultural programme lasting an entire calendar year in this cross-border area.

For Slovenia, the partnership between the Julian Pre-Alps Nature Park (Italy), the Triglav National Park (Slovenia) and the Nockberge Mountains (Austria) as well as the strengthening of the common Slovene linguistic and cultural space, linking the indigenous Slovene national communities in the neighbouring countries with the motherland, are mentioned.

3.1.2.3 Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA International notes that most cooperation takes place thanks to funding from European programmes. Much less cooperation on population and culture occurs with own resources of those involved or thanks to national funds, even when such cooperation may not require extensive resources. It would be comforting for CIPRA International to see that more cooperation across boundaries happens beyond EU-funded projects.

3.1.3 Sub-section “Transparency and participation”

3.1.3.1 General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, recognize the important role of civil society in the sustainable development of the Alpine region and promote the greatest possible transparency in relations between the public administration and the population as well as the participation of the population in public affairs. However, Austria and France point out the discrepancy that still exists between announced intentions and reality.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section “Transparency and participation”</i>	
Promotion of training and updating of decision-makers on the topic of participation and mediation	AT, DE, IT, SI
Support to Local Agenda 21 processes	AT, DE, IT

The national reports show that Austria, Germany and Italy implement the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Transparency and participation". This does not apply to Slovenia, where Local Agenda 21 processes are not supported. In addition, due to a lack of information, it cannot be determined whether France promotes training and updating of decision-makers on the topic of participation and mediation and supports Local Agenda 21 processes.

3.1.3.2 Examples of implementation measures

Austria, Germany, Italy and Slovenia mention bottom-up processes of regional development, such as the strategy for sustainable development of the municipality of Kranjska Gora till 2030 in Slovenia. In France the socio-professional and associative stakeholders are actively involved in all working groups of the Alpine Massif Committee. A significant example of participatory processes in Italy are the river contracts, which are widely applied in the Alpine area to implement the transition from environmental protection policies to broader landscape-environmental resource management policies.

3.1.3.3 Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA underlines the importance of transparency and public participation of civil society and citizens in processes related to major mountain sporting events. CIPRA insists on the opportunity, still not seized, for transparency and meaningful participation in the upcoming Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games.

3.2. Section "Cultural diversity"

3.2.1. Sub-section "Tangible and intangible cultural heritage"

3.2.1.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, study, preserve and develop the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the traditional knowledge, particularly with regard to the forms of cultural landscape design and the architectural and historical-artistic heritage, including the traditional working methods of agricultural, forestry, craft and industrial production. All Contracting Parties also support modern culture as well as the maintenance and further development of regional and local traditions in the area of forms of expression and presentation.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by Contracting Parties under the sub-section "Tangible and intangible cultural heritage"</i>	
Creation and expansion of local documentation centres for tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage and their linking	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Conservation and restoration of structures and buildings of historical and architectural value	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Vocational training offers for the transmission of historical craft technologies in the Alpine region	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Support for innovative forms of cultural work and cultural expression	AT, DE, IT, SI
Information and training programmes and projects (courses, competitions, experimental workshops, etc.) for imparting traditional knowledge and traditions	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of cooperation between relevant private or public museums, educational institutions and private actors	AT, DE, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Tangible and intangible cultural heritage" are implemented by all Contracting Parties, with the exception of France, where, due to a lack of information, it cannot be determined whether it supports innovative forms of work and cultural expression and promotes cooperation between private or public museums, educational institutions and private actors.

3.2.1.2. Examples of implementation measures

In the Alpine region, there are many local and regional museums, archives and information centres dedicated to study, preserve and develop the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the traditional knowledge. Examples include the museum of Tyrolean farms in Kramsach in Austria, the Musées des terroirs or the Musée de la Mine at La Mure presenting the working methods used in the Alps in France, the Mountain Farmers' Museum in Diepholz and the Information Centre for Folklore Costumes in Benediktbeuern in Germany, the National Mountain Museum in Turin, the Fortress and Village of Bard complex in the Aosta Valley and, and the Slovenian Alpine Museum in Mojstrana, which presents the history of mountaineering in Slovenia and life in the mountains. These institutes also carry out cross-border activities, such as the Bavarian-Upper Austrian Regional Exhibition 2012, the cooperation between the public libraries of the Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein and the iAlp project - Interactive Alpine Museums, to enhance and promote an invaluable cultural heritage - which links the National Mountain Museum in Turin and the Musée alpin in Chamonix-Mont-Blanc with the rest of the world in the framework of the territorial cooperation programme Alcotra Italy-France 2014-2020.

Among the publications on this subject, it is worth pointing out the statement by the Mountain Farming Platform of the Alpine Convention on the topic of "Alpine pastures/alpine farming as cultural heritage" from 2019, the book on "Transformation of the Rural Landscape in Allgäu and the Tannheim Valley" edited by CIPRA and mentioned by Germany, and the provision in Slovenia of the preparation of manuals with guidelines for the maintenance of cultural buildings according to their type by the Triglav National Park Public Authority.

Of course, events and conferences are also tools for implementing the objectives of this subsection. In this regard, Austria refers to forestry-cultural events, which draw the attention of contemporary cultural operators to the theme of forests and wood materials as well as the topic-specific workshops within the cooperation between the forestry sector and the Austrian UNESCO Commission on Intangible Cultural Heritage. etc.) Germany mentions a wide range of counselling and course offers from the Heritage Information Centre, the Traditional Costume Information Centre and the Folk Music Archive in Upper Bavaria. Slovenia's example in this regard are the weekly markets in the Triglav National Park. France and Italy also give evidence of festivals, concerts and folkloric dance events.

The Contracting Parties then carry out numerous projects, such as the Cultural Landscape Inventory Montafon (KLIM) project to record the agricultural facilities outside the permanent settlement area in Vorarlberg and the cultural projects of Pro Vita Alpina in Austria, the projects to enhance artistic expressions and traditional tangible and intangible cultural practices for the public, or to transmit and renew approaches to regional culture and traditions supported by the PACA and AURA regions in France, the renovation of the Allgäu House of Literature and the development of a regional collection in Germany, the MARAÈA project, a digital archive of the memory of Valle Camonica in Lombardy, created with the aim of representing the intangible cultural heritage of local communities and the Community Map of Valle Sabbia in Italy and the preparation and implementation of international projects as part of the regular activities of the Škocjan Caves Park in Slovenia.

On the occasion of the International Mountain Day on 11 December 2019, UNESCO has inscribed mountaineering on the List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The candidature had been submitted by the Alpine Clubs of Italy, France and Switzerland. Another example of international recognition is the inscription in 2019 of the site "The Hills of Prosecco di Conegliano and Valdobbiadene" situated in Veneto in the UNESCO World Heritage List as a cultural landscape.

3.2.1.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.2.2. Sub-section "Linguistic pluralism"

3.2.2.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports are improving the necessary framework conditions so that linguistic diversity in the Alpine region can be maintained and promoted, with particular consideration being given to the traditional linguistic and cultural communities with the exception of France. In this regard, France points out that two main aspects need to be distinguished, the preservation of local languages/dialects and traditions, which improved over the last 20 years and the policy of learning foreign languages of the Alps. In this respect the learning of German and Italian decreased over the last 50 years, raising the issue of the use of Alpine languages for Alpine cross-border communication. Moreover, France notes that the development of English as the working language of governance bodies in the Alps sends contradictory messages to the population and surprisingly Italian has been 'replaced' by Spanish in Alpine high schools for several decades now. Whereas in Germany, Italy and Slovenia, the importance of the toponymic heritage of the Alpine region is recognised, also in view of its cultural and historical significance and its value, this is only partially the case in Austria and France. In France, there is some progress in bilingual signage (French-Occitan or French-Franco Provençal).

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties under the sub-section "Linguistic pluralism".</i>	
Targeted promotion of Alpine languages, particularly regional languages, including dialects, in the school curriculum	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Training and further education of teachers	AT, DE, IT, SI
Procurement of the necessary teaching materials	AT, DE, IT, SI
Promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism and the linguistic integration of migrants	AT, DE, IT
Establishing partnerships between schools from different language regions	AT, DE, IT, SI
Cultural events in local languages, in particular music, literature and/or theatre events, language courses, print and electronic media.	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Projects for the development and acquisition of local knowledge through the study and use of toponymy	AT, DE, IT
Establishment of information boards with the most important and significant place names of a given area in the municipalities and villages	DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the subsection "Linguistic pluralism" are implemented by the Contracting Parties. However, this does not apply to France which states that it does not provide training and further education of teachers as well as the necessary teaching materials. Furthermore, France does not promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism and the linguistic integration of migrants, does not establish partnerships between schools from different language regions and does not carry out projects for the development and acquisition of local knowledge through the study and use of toponymy. In addition, due to a lack of corresponding information it could not be determined whether Austria establishes information boards with the most important and significant place names of a given area in the municipalities and villages and whether Slovenia, promotes linguistic diversity and multilingualism and the linguistic integration of migrants and whether it carries out projects for the development and acquisition of local knowledge through the study and use of toponymy.

3.2.2.2. Examples of implementation measures

A fundamental element of the examples cited by the Contracting Parties is the promotion of the regional languages of the Alpine region and, in particular, of dialects. Austria points to the promotion of bi- and multilingual kindergartens in the settlement areas of the Slovene-ethnic group and a speaking dialect atlas on CD-ROM presenting the dialects in the Salzburg-Bavarian border region. France refers to the teaching of Italian from the second grade in schools in the High Alps and to summer festivals. Germany mentions folklore evenings in dialect. In Italy, the twelve recognised language communities are guaranteed lessons in their minority languages. In addition, the project 'Liminal - Linguistic Minorities in the Alps: Ethnicity, Languages and Demographic Processes' (2013-2014), led by the University of Turin, investigated the link between valuing the minority language heritage of the Italian Alps and the repopulation of many Alpine places.

As far as toponymy is concerned, Austria mentions various publications on the subject, such as the Austrian Alpine Club's publication on the toponymy of the Hohe Tauern National Park and the research project "Cultural-historical documentation of Alpine and mountain names in Innsbruck". Germany emphasises the compilation of local chronicles and the collection and documentation of old land and house names. Italy highlights how the law facilitates the recovery of local toponymy in minority languages and provides for the public use of less widespread idioms in the Autonomous Province of Trento and how the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia favours, through the 'Plan of interventions for the development of the

educational offer of school institutions' for 2020/2021, the projects of individual school institutions related to the teaching and value of the languages and cultures of historical linguistic minorities. Finally, Slovenia refers to the FLU LED project on house and field names in Slovenia and Austria of the Development Agency of the Upper Gorenjska Region and the support provided to projects for the preservation of toponymic names in the neighbouring countries Austria and Italy.

The courses in "intercultural competence" and "promotion of early language acquisition" at the Vorarlberg Teacher Training College in Austria and the "Mother speaks German" project in Germany are aimed at improving the language integration of migrants.

3.2.2.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.2.3. Sub-section " Creative artistic production"

3.2.3.1. General information

All Contracting Parties who have submitted their national reports support artistic production in all its forms of expression and the artistic treatment of Alpine-related themes.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Creative artistic production"</i>	
Organisation of art exhibitions and events	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Competitions for the design of quality labels, logos, "Corporate Design" for local administrations and companies in the Alpine region	DE, IT
Organisation of art courses and art workshops on Alpine-specific topics	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Projects and initiatives for the artistic utilisation of local raw materials from the Alpine region	AT, DE, FR IT, SI

All Contracting Parties implement the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Creative Artistic Production". This does not apply to Austria and Slovenia regarding the realisation of competitions for the design of quality labels, logos, "Corporate Design" for local administrations and companies in the Alpine region. Whether this is also the case in France could not be determined due to a lack of information.

3.2.3.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the acquisition of works of art with thematic reference to the Alpine area by local authorities and the initiative and support for the identification and setting up of exhibition

sites, e.g. in the Mariazell area and the Gesäuse National Park. For France, there are examples of exhibitions and events that reflect Alpine themes, such as the meetings of the mountain film library. Germany indicates a project to establish the silver fir as an art object. Italy reports the course to enhance Alpine practices and rituals at the School of Design of the Milan Polytechnic and the “Ca' Mon” community centre for mountain art and crafts in Valle Camonica. Slovenia mentions the Trenta music forum for young musicians and the presentation of movies with mountain themes in the Slovenian Alpine Museum, which participates in the annual Slovenian Mountain Film Festival.

3.2.3.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.3. Section “Living space, quality of life and equal opportunities”

3.3.1.1. Sub-section “Settlement conditions and structures”

3.3.1.2. General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports ensure the preservation and modernisation of existing settlement structures according to the principle of sustainability and taking into account territorial specificities. However, Austria notes self-critically that in the Alpine valleys there is still a huge surplus of unused, designated building land or vacant land in town centres and that instead of solving this problem, new land is still being allocated, settlement boundaries are being extended and urban sprawl and the related problems (mobility, technical and social infrastructure, loss of valuable land) are increasing.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section “Settlement conditions and structures”</i>	
Consideration of sustainability principles in the planning and realisation of construction measures	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Training and further education programmes on sustainable building issues for building sector technicians and authorising authorities	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Events and initiatives for the general public to inform and sensitize to sustainable construction and the sustainable use of resources	AT, DE, FR IT, SI

The measures indicated by way of example in the Declaration “Population and Culture” for the sub-section “Settlement conditions and structures” are implemented by all Contracting Parties.

3.3.1.3. Examples of implementation measures

Austria indicates regional spatial planning programmes and concepts, local spatial planning concepts, townscape protection and monument preservation as well as the energy certification of buildings.

France mentions, in the PACA region, the "Zero Smoke" programme for the energy rehabilitation of mountain huts, emblematic of the Alpine heritage, and the intervention framework for housing, with the objective of improving the energy performance of housing, producing a rental offer at controlled rents and rehabilitating the very degraded housing stock. It notes, however, that this framework is not specifically dedicated to the Alpine area.

Germany refers to village renovation and master plans for certain 'historic village centres'. It also emphasizes the AlpBC project of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts of Munich and Upper Bavaria on the bioclimatic renovation of typical Alpine buildings, promoted by the Alpine Space Programme and ARGE ALP funds.

Italy also mentions the initiative of the Italian Environment Fund "Progetto Alpe. L'Italia sopra i 1,000 metri". This is the first project for the restoration, enhancement and management of assets in Italy's highlands and inland areas from the Alps to the Apennines and Sardinia. In addition, reference is made to the project "Building in the Alps - Lowtech" of the cross-border INTERREG programme Austria-Italy helping the local construction sector deliver energy savings in buildings in a way that does not rely on complex, expensive technologies.

For Slovenia the manuals and guidelines on building typology of the Triglav National Park contribute to the observance of traditional building techniques and the use of local materials. Another implementation measure mentioned is the travelling exhibition of award-winning projects from the "Constructive Alps" competition, which applies also to Austria.

3.3.1.4. Statements of Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.3.2. Sub-section "Services of general interest and basic services"

3.3.2.1. General information

In all Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, the decentralised provision of services of general interest and of basic services is maintained, guaranteed and developed. In this regard, Austria points out that in spite of efforts, such as specific regulations for shopping centres and supermarkets in the corresponding regional planning laws as well as the establishment of mobile services for home nursing care etc., post offices and schools are being closed and the public transport network continues to shrink.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Services of general interest and basic services"</i>	
Measures to promote a better spatial distribution of services for basic needs	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Maintaining local services by improving the range of multifunctional facilities	AT, DE, FR IT, SI
Re-establishment or strengthening of public transport services	AT, DE, FR IT, SI

The measures mentioned as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Essential Services of General Interest and Basic Services" are implemented by all Contracting Parties.

3.3.2.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the granting of subsidies for the construction and procurement of kindergarten and school premises in order to provide a decentralised basic service in particular to small municipalities. In addition, the multi-professional dementia care team of Volkshilfe Burgenland is active in the municipalities of the Alpine Convention located in Burgenland.

The French Alps benefit from a dense network of Espaces France Services, adapted to the specificities of mountain territories, especially in terms of offers and for seasonal workers and, in the PACA region, school transport is open to the residential or tourist population.

In addition to principles included in the Bavarian spatial development programme, such as the principle of maintaining the infrastructure and the principle of prioritising certain rural portions of the territory, whose development is to be particularly strengthened, Germany points to the decentralisation and expansion of clinical and complementary psychiatric care in Upper Bavaria, village shops and regular local public transport in rural areas.

Italy refers to the INTESI project of the Alpine Space programme aiming at overcoming the sectoral approach for the provision of services of general interest, promoting inclusion of these services in integrated territorial strategies, to the “MisMi” project developed in Aosta Valley to promote the development of social and health services to fight depopulation in mountain and rural areas, and to examples of the restoration and enhancement of public transport offers including the “Green Mobility” project to develop South Tyrol as a model region for sustainable Alpine mobility.

Slovenia also mentions the INTESI project, under which a guide on service provision and an action plan to improve the supply of basic services in the Idrija and Cerklje area has been drawn up. Furthermore, in view of the demographic changes occurring in mountainous and other rural areas, the Association of Municipalities of Slovenia has begun to operationalise the Working Group for Decentralisation of State Services and Balanced Regional Development, which is drafting proposals as to the spatial levels at which certain services of general and economic importance should be provided.

3.3.2.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA International observes that public services provided in mountain areas constantly decrease, while the projects AlpTick and Yoalin contribute to filling a gap in mobility services.

3.3.3. Sub-section "School education, vocational training and further education as well as adult education"

3.3.3.1. General information

In all Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, an adequate supply of school education, vocational training and further education, as well as appropriate adult education programmes, is maintained and developed at the local and regional level, taking into account specifically Alpine aspects in all training-educational fields.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "School education, vocational training and further education as well as adult education".</i>	
Provision of an adequate supply of education facilities, including appropriate teaching materials and technologies	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Offer of adult education courses	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Facilitation of school partnerships	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "School education, vocational training and further education as well as adult education" are implemented by the Contracting Parties.

3.3.3.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the development and holding of the 'Forest + Culture' qualification course for the initiation, planning and implementation of regional forestry projects, which is in high demand and the intensification of cooperation between the Ministry of the Environment and the Kulturkontakt Austria school network of the Ministry of Education through the launch of pilot projects, including events and exhibitions.

In France, reference is made to the programmes offered by the Ministry of Education and those for adult education (e.g. on forestry and sport). In addition, since 2020, the two French Alpine regions have supported "classe verte" / "classe montagne" excursions to sensitize a young audience to discovering the mountains.

For Germany, the projects within the framework of the ERASMUS+ programme, the offers of the Volkshochschule (adult education centres), the events of the Centre for Environment and Culture in Benediktbeuern and the 'Ehren.Sache' course of the Länder of Bavaria and Salzburg for training in the field of cultural volunteering represent activities in this area.

Examples of Italy's implementation measures include the "Guidelines for the dimensioning of the school network and the planning of the training offer" elaborated by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, the Montagna sicura Foundation in the autonomous Valle d'Aosta Region with continuous and permanent training as well as higher education interventions, the national training courses of the CAI Scuola project and finally EURAC Research, as a centre of excellence for research and post graduate training in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano.

Slovenia mentions the activities of the 16 centres for school and extracurricular activities (CŠOD) in the Slovenian Alpine Convention area covering the fields of education, sport and culture, the Andragogical Centre of Slovenia, which develops and organises various inclusive and educational programmes and projects, the international Ecoschool programme on integrated environmental education aimed at children in kindergartens and primary and secondary school pupils, and the Europe at School project of the Association of Friends of Youth of Slovenia, which organises every year a competition on various topics.

3.3.3.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA International notes that the administrators of small mountain communities and their unions cannot keep small classes of pupils, as decisions on whether or not to allow a class depends on the number of pupils.

3.3.4. Sub-section "Recreational offer"

3.3.4.1. General information

In all Contracting Parties that submitted their national reports, a diversified year-round cultural offer is maintained including, where possible, an adequate recreational offer for the local population. Austria notes that, given the intensity of tourism, ensuring a cultural and recreational offer is not a major problem for the country, as the local population can also make use of the recreational facilities intended for tourism. Italy adds that, following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Italian Government enacted several measures to stem its effects and support the cultural sector in its recovery, including the establishment of the 'Fund for Culture' promoted by Federculture.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Recreational offer"</i>	
Provision of adequate recreational offers and facilities taking into account the needs and demands of the various regional populations	AT, DE, FR, IT
Increased support of local cultural and sports associations	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Construction, maintenance and renovation of facilities for cultural and sports activities, social and environmental considerations permitting	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of cultural and sports activities for young people	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Recreational offer" are implemented by the Contracting Parties with the exception of Slovenia, where, due to a lack of information, it cannot be determined whether adequate recreational offers and facilities taking into account the needs and demands of the various regional populations are provided.

3.3.4.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the promotion of environmentally friendly renovation of Alpine infrastructure (mountain huts and trails), the promotion of training for hiking guides from the Association of Austrian Alpine Clubs and the lively cultural programme organised by associations and municipalities in Lower Austria.

In France, support for four-season tourism diversification through the renovation of holiday resorts and of mountain huts of the French Alpine Club is emphasised. Activities include Festivals (580 in summer 2022) and the new “Espaces Valléens 2021-2027” programme, which aims to support territories in developing tourism offers, including for local populations. Finally, with regard to mountaineering, the Region Sud / PACA supported ice climbing projects and events.

Germany emphasises the vibrancy of association life on a local and regional level and identifies the promotion of youth sport as another important element. Indeed, youth activities in sports associations are subsidised by the state as part of the flat-rate contribution to associations, supplemented by contributions from municipalities and credit institutions. In addition, Germany also mentions cultural events such as the “Chiemgauer Kulturtage” and events in the “Kulturwerkstatt Sonthofen”.

Italy is moving in the same direction, with the Autonomous Province of Trento as an example, which intervenes by means of economic subsidies to support cultural projects of provincial importance. In addition, numerous cultural events related to cinema take place throughout the Italian Alps, in particular film festivals dedicated to the mountains, including the Gran Paradiso and the Trento Film Festivals.

Slovenia is committed, through its school infrastructure, the centres for school and extracurricular activities and the Slovenian Alpine Museum, to making it possible to organise cultural and recreational activities, numerous professional training courses, conferences and seminars, children's workshops, cultural and technical days, and educational and training programmes for adults on topics such as mountain rescue, speleology and alpinism. The cultural bazaar is also mentioned, a project aimed at raising awareness of cultural offers and generating interest in cultural education among professionals and the general public.

3.3.4.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA International returns to the example of the Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games to express concern on another missed opportunity. CIPRA hopes that the Declaration's exemplary measures related to the recreational offer will guide the preparation of the Milan-Cortina Games wherever this is still possible. In particular, emphasis should be placed on the Games' legacy in terms of the provision of recreational facilities that take into account the

needs of the regional population and on the due environmental and social considerations behind such facilities. Failing this, CIPRA fears that the Milan-Cortina Games and any future large sport and cultural event will not leave a legacy of much good for the area.

3.3.5. Sub-section "Communication and information"

3.3.5.1. General information

In all Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, a plurality of media is maintained and promoted as an essential instrument for the preservation of the cultural peculiarities of the Alpine region, and access of the Alpine population to modern media and communication technologies is facilitated. France notes the fact that the COVID crisis has enabled the development of 'home office work', giving a new impetus to the mountain valleys.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Communication and information"</i>	
Securing the presence of the media in remote Alpine areas through public providers	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of communication and information in regional languages	DE, IT, SI
Creating the framework conditions for a print media offer in regional languages	DE, IT, SI
Promoting information on issues regarding the Alpine living space	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

All measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Communication and information" are implemented by the Contracting Parties except Austria and France which do not promote communication and information in regional languages and do not create the framework conditions for a print media offer in regional languages.

3.3.5.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the journal "Die Alpenkonvention. Nachhaltige Entwicklung für die Alpen" ("The Alpine Convention. Sustainable Development for the Alps") by CIPRA Austria, which is financially supported by the Ministry for the Environment. In Germany, Italy and Slovenia regional television and radio stations contribute to media pluralism.

Broadband initiatives are for the Contracting Parties an effective means to facilitate the access of the Alpine population to modern means and technologies of communication.

3.3.5.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.3.6. Sub-section "Community life"

3.3.6.1. General information

In all the Contracting Parties that submitted their national reports, mutual understanding and dialogue in the daily life of the different communities in the Alpine arc are supported, except for France, which only partially supports them. In fact, France refers to the regional scheme for spatial planning, sustainable development and territorial equality (SRADDET) of the PACA region, organised according to 4 areas (Rhône, Côte d'Azur, Provence and Alps) to better address the diversity of the areas and the regional topics. For Austria, despite many collaborations, the exchange of experience and cooperation is still limited to a few regions in the Alps.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Community life"</i>	
Maintaining and promoting meeting places	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of collaboration and exchange projects	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Enhancing volunteer work and mutual aid	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Community life" are implemented by the Contracting Parties.

3.3.6.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria emphasises the promotion of volunteer centre projects and GEMA 'working together' platforms as well as the new edition of the 'Austrian Volunteer Passport' and the 'Certificate of Volunteer Work', which are intended to certify the specific skills and social competences acquired in the course of voluntary work and thus improve career opportunities.

France mentions the EUSALP Youth Council and the Youth At The Top project by ALPARC.

Germany mentions cooperation in Euroregions, village inns and the second-hand goods shops 'Unternehmen Chance' in Lindau and Lindenberg.

Italy mentions two examples, the first from Lombardy, the Alpes association, which promotes and realises events that look at the territory as a set of cultural and geographical themes with an interdisciplinary scope, and the second from Piedmont, the Amico Parco association, established in 1999 in the Maritime Alps Park, promoting volunteering. Initiatives such as the PlurAlps project of the Alpine Space Programme have produced tailor-made solutions to local integration challenges.

Slovenia refers to various museum activities, including exhibitions and museum evenings with Nives Meroi and Romano Benet as well as presentations in Italy and Austria.

3.3.6.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA International detects poor inclusion of linguistic minorities and migrants.

3.4. Section "Economic space"

3.4.1. Sub-section "Regional development"

3.4.1.1. General information

In all Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports, a specific regional policy is implemented, which allows for a balanced, diversified and endogenous territorial development through the sustainable use of local potentials and through the use of new socially and environmentally friendly technologies. Austria observes that at present, the so-called 'specific regional policy' strategy is being increasingly replaced by an old-fashioned type of infrastructure policy (construction of hydroelectric power stations, planning of tunnels, cable cars and artificial lakes for snowmaking, roads, etc.). This lays the foundations for a territorial development that has little to do with balance, autonomy and the exploitation of endogenous potential. Only the so-called 'residual areas' would then remain for the implementation of the goals of the Alpine Convention. Consultation processes at the regional planning level, although they may be easier, often lack resources. In France, it would not be entirely accurate to speak of a specific regional policy for the Alps in the Regional Schemes for Planning, Sustainable Development and Equality (SRADDET). However, their objectives and rules, which are binding for local planning documents, reflect the different dynamics in various territories.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Regional development"</i>	
Specific measures aimed at the economic strengthening of mountain areas in all sectoral policies	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Strengthening initiatives to foster the socially, culturally and environmentally friendly development of tourism activities	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of a regional policy aimed at the specific needs of mountain areas	AT, DE, FR, IT
Specific business development programmes for young people	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of regional development aiming at greater cooperation between agriculture, forestry, trade and tourism as well as other economic sectors	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Regional development" are implemented by the Contracting Parties. This does not apply to Slovenia, which claims that it does not promote a regional policy aimed at the specific needs of mountain areas. However, the sustainable development of Slovenia's upland areas is ensured by individual sectoral policies, programmes and projects.

3.4.1.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the "Forschungsplatz Österreich" ("Austria, Land of Research") campaign, run by the Austrian Business Agency, which aims to improve Austria's image abroad by presenting it as a research country in order to strengthen the establishment of research and development companies in the country. In addition, the development of tourism strategies for national parks, the mountaineering villages project initiated by the Austrian Alpine Club and the network of the Alpine Pearls project focusing on environmentally friendly holidays deserve to be named.

France refers to the State-Region plan contracts (CPER and CPIER), a development tool between the State and the regions, for the implementation of structuring projects and to AOC certifications for dairy products such as Beaufort or Comté cheese.

For Germany, regional brand co-operations, e.g. under the "Allgäu" brand or across borders under the "Vierländerregion Bodensee" ("Lake Constance, one region, four countries") brand as well as LEADER projects such as the "Allgäuer Alpgenuss" ("Taste of the Allgäu") are good examples of implementation measures.

Italy mentions the National Strategy for Internal Areas aiming at slowing down depopulation, the "Cortina Charter" containing a series of criteria and practices to ensure the sustainability of major winter sporting events and the Heaps 2 project of the Alpine Space Programme,

which aiming to promote the recognition of the Alpine space as a place for health promotion at a global level.

As examples of implementation measures, Slovenia brings forward the financial support for problematic border areas, regional scholarship schemes to combat the brain drain and the mountaineering villages project.

3.4.1.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA believes that in general not much is done to diversify the tourist offer away from traditional winter tourism nor to encourage a different cultural approach to mountain tourism. As tourism is the main resource for mountain communities and local development, CIPRA International is amazed that governments generally continue to subsidize ski areas instead of sustainable forms of tourism, the only ones with a future and little impact. CIPRA International also sadly reports a general failure to implement the "Cortina Charter" for the sustainability of major mountain sporting events and maintains that this is linked to the Italian Ministry of Tourism heavily financing the owners of the ski infrastructures, compared to making available only minimum funding for those who work to promote eco- and sustainable tourism. At the same time, there are also complaints about poor funding for green communities. Finally, among the measures adopted, in this subchapter we could also mention the Alpine Changemakers Basecamp project of CIPRA International.

3.4.2. Sub-section "Value chains"

3.4.2.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that submitted their national report strengthen and develop value chains to promote local and regional products and services.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Value chains"</i>	
Development and consolidation of regional brands, quality standards and systems for quality certification of Alpine products and services	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Supporting the marketing of local and regional products	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Promotion of training initiatives in the sector	AT, DE, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Value chains" are implemented by the contracting parties. This does not apply to

France, where, due to a lack of information, it cannot be determined whether training initiatives in this field are supported.

3.4.2.2. Examples of implementation measures

For Austria, worth mentioning are the Austrian Business Agency's project 'Integration of supply chains', which aims to identify gaps in regional and sectoral supply chains, identify potential foreign candidates to fill them and formulate proposals for contacting possible investors and for business establishment support, the Austrian Alpine Club's initiative 'The taste of the mountains', a cooperation between local mountain hut managers and farmers, and the agricultural marketing campaign in Tyrol to strengthen the integration of agriculture and trade as well as of agriculture and tourism.

The promotion and support of the marketing of products of the pastoral economy through the recognition of quality labels, the development of an Alpine timber industry and the purchasing centre for the lycées in the PACA region, which are supplied with local products including a large proportion from the Southern Alps are good examples of implementation measures for France.

Germany points to the West Allgäu 'White Spruce' initiative, with which, thanks to intensive public relations work and the establishment of model white spruce forests, demand for white spruce wood could be significantly increased, leading to the creation of many jobs and better utilisation of local resources for foresters. A further LEADER project concerns the promotion of decentralised renewable energies, such as the activation of a biomass heating plant at the Agricultural Training Centre in Landsberg am Lech, fuelled by wood chips from the region. In addition, the direct marketing of rustic and handicraft products is promoted, as in the Achental ecomodel.

Italy refers to the Interreg Alpine Space project AlpFoodway, which intends to provide a contribution to sustainable development policies based on conserving and on valuing the cultural heritage linked to food in mountain areas, and, with regard to value chains, mentions those of the forest-wood sector, referring, by way of example, to the "Wood of the Province of Turin" standard, which ensures the local origin and processing of wood products and a series of actions for the planning of forest resource management and timber marketing the management of forest resources and the marketing of timber in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region.

Slovenia emphasises the introduction of the quality label for the Triglav National Park, which characterises areas, buildings, products, goods and services .and the brands Babica Jerca and Dedek Jaka, named after Grandmother Jerca and Grandfather Jaka, who confided their recipes and acquired knowledge, which combine the offer of natural products, high-quality culinary products, and local handicrafts and arts and crafts from the rural areas of Škofja Loka.

3.4.2.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

CIPRA points out that several measures related to Population and Culture undertaken by the Alpine countries as part of the EUSALP process are not listed. This applies to value chains treated by EUSALP Action Groups such as Alpine textiles, Territorial Brands and wood and non-wood forest products but also to initiatives like the Green Infrastructure goes business award.

3.4.3. Sub-section "Employment"

3.4.3.1. General information

The creation of framework conditions for a sufficient and attractive supply of jobs, and, in appropriate cases, of mixed forms of income takes place in Austria, Germany and Italy. Whether this also applies to France and Slovenia cannot be determined due to a lack of information in this regard. Slovenia indicates that on the websites of the Employment Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (ZRSZ) there is an overview of all job offers of those employers who wish their vacancies to be published via the ZRSZ and those employers who are legally obliged to do so. In addition, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs provides various forms of assistance as part of the active employment policy measures and ensures various forms of subsidies to unemployed persons and employers.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section 'Employment'</i>	
Promotion of sustainable public/private investments for the creation of jobs, especially for highly qualified personnel	AT, DE, FR, IT
Promoting framework conditions for the attainment of an adequate income	AT, DE, IT, SI
Improving social protection, in particular, for seasonal workers	DE, FR, IT, SI

The measures indicated as examples in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Employment" are partly implemented by the Contracting Parties. Slovenia states that it does not promote sustainable public/private investments for the creation of jobs, especially for highly qualified personnel. In the absence of any indication in this regard, it could not be

ascertained whether Austria provides for an improvement of social protection, in particular for seasonal workers, just as it could not be ascertained whether France promotes framework conditions for achieving an adequate income.

3.4.3.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria reports on “Territorial employment packages” which ensure a sufficient and attractive supply of jobs and mixed forms of income. These packages are partnerships concluded on a contractual basis to combine employment and labour market policies with other policy areas to contribute to the improvement of the labour market situation in the regions. The activities conducted within the framework of “Netzwerk Zukunftsraum Land” and the events under the title “Destination WALD” which aim at the creation of permanent jobs and the generation of targeted impulses to increase wealth generation at regional and company level.

The promotion of public buildings made of Alpine wood and the provision of seasonal accommodation are examples of implementation measures brought by France.

Germany mentions the activities of the Association for Economic Promotion within the Traunstein district office and the labour market initiatives „Sommer am See, Winter im Schnee“ in the Lindau area.

Italy refers to the huge potential of tourism as an economic activity capable of generating growth and employment and of diversifying the job offer and to the Memorandum of Understanding between the 2i3T Incubator and Banca Alpi Marittime aimed at promoting and supporting the birth and development of new entrepreneurial activities and start-up initiatives within the territory to stimulate employment growth.

Slovenia refers to its active employment policy, the measures of which range from formal and non-formal education and training to incentives for hiring hard-to-place people to the reimbursement of contributions to employers in areas of high unemployment.

3.4.3.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.5. Section "Role of towns and rural areas"

3.5.1. Sub-section "Relations between towns and surrounding areas"

3.5.1.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that submitted their national reports recognise the importance of inner-Alpine towns, in particular for their role as centres of cross-municipal social, cultural and economic services in interaction with their surrounding areas.¹²

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Relations between towns and their surrounding areas".</i>	
Initiatives to strengthen the awareness of inhabitants of urban and rural areas with regard to their shared responsibility for the cultural and natural heritage for future generations	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Cooperation initiatives between towns and between towns and neighbouring municipalities within the framework of the mutual exchange of experience and cross-municipal development projects at national and transnational level, that pursue objectives in line with the Alpine Convention and environmental, economic and settlement policy objectives	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Learning and information initiatives to avoid and resolve land use conflicts	AT, DE, FR, IT

The Contracting Parties which have submitted their national reports implement for the most part the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Relations between towns and surrounding areas". However, it was not possible to ascertain in the absence of any indication in this regard, whether Slovenia carried out learning and information initiatives to avoid and resolve land use conflicts.

3.5.1.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria refers to the masterplan rural territory by the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, the 'Alpine Town of the Year' Association and the creation of regional planning consortia, such as the planning consortium of Innsbruck and its surroundings.

France mentions the Committee of the Alpine Massif, whose Alpine agriculture group works on land use conflicts in particular on Alpine pastures as well as several model projects and

¹² Point V.1 of the standardised template for the Contracting Parties' report on the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture has no specific question on the achievement of the objectives, but from the implementation of even one of the measures contained in the Declaration, it can certainly be concluded that the importance of inner-Alpine towns is recognized in the defined sense.

programmes for the recovery of unprotected rural heritage, also outside the Alps, realised by the Culture Department of the PACA region.

For some Contracting Parties, projects carried out within the framework of the Alpine Space Programme are examples of implementation measures. Thus, Germany mentions the projects INNOCITÉ, for improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized towns in the Alpine space gravitating around larger centres, and CLISP for raising awareness of climate change-related risks in the Alpine space and preventing and minimising land-use conflicts. Italy refers to the project LUIGI - Linking Urban and Inner-Alpine Green Infrastructures, which aims to strengthen the link between mountain ecosystems and urban centres in the foothills of the Alps, as well as their potential for sustainable economic development.

Germany also mentions associations of municipalities that cooperate in the field of tourism or commercial area management, e.g. the Alpsee-Grünten region with the towns of Sonthofen and Immenstadt and the municipalities of Blaichach, Burgberg and Rettenberg.

Italy emphasises the instrument of the Strategic Plan, adopted by several Alpine cities and cites, by way of example, the Turin Strategic Plan, which includes specific measures to enhance mountain territories.

Slovenian legislation promotes cooperation between neighbouring municipalities in matters of common interest, such as spatial planning, drinking water supply, sewage and waste disposal. In addition, Slovenia indicates the cleaning of alpine paths at the end of the season, initiated forty years ago by the students of the Tolmin Gymnasium, which has now become a national tradition and extended to all the mountains of Slovenia, and which has educational effects in terms of proper conduct in the mountains.

3.5.1.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.5.2. Sub-section " Relations between towns inside and outside the Alps"

3.5.2.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports develop and strengthen relations between towns in the Alps and towns and metropolises outside the Alps to ensure

the connection and exchange of information between the Alpine population and the economic, scientific and cultural centres outside the Alps. France points out that it is not easy to show solidarity. Joint water management is historically well put in place, the management of renewable energies has yet to be established.

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Relations between towns inside and outside the Alps".</i>	
Agreements on a voluntary basis between Alpine territorial authorities and institutions outside the Alps	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Programmes focusing on specific themes for the exchange and visits of students and young people within the framework of partnerships between Alpine and non-Alpine towns	DE, IT, SI
Partnerships between intra-Alpine and extra-Alpine towns and municipalities aimed at exchanging information and presenting best practices	DE, FR, IT, SI

The Contracting Parties implement the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Relations between towns inside and outside the Alps" to varying degrees. While Germany, Italy and Slovenia have carried out all exemplary measures, the same cannot be said of Austria and France. Austria declares not to carry out programmes focusing on specific themes for the exchange and visits of students, pupils and young people within the framework of partnerships between Alpine and non-Alpine towns as well as partnerships between intra-Alpine and extra-Alpine towns and municipalities aimed at exchanging information and presenting best practices. France does not specify whether it implements programmes focusing on specific themes for the exchange and visits of students and young people within the framework of partnerships between Alpine and non-Alpine towns.

3.5.2.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria mentions the activities of Arge Alp and various INTERREG Programmes, France partnerships between Alpine towns (Chambéry/Turin) and between Alpine and ~~and~~ extra-Alpine towns (Annecy/Milena in Sicily) as well as the network of municipalities "Alliance in the Alps", Germany twinnings and language schools, Italy the Strategic Plan of the City of Aosta putting the town strictly in relation to the surrounding territory and the Strategic Plan of the Municipalities of Alto Canavese (Piedmont Region), and finally Slovenia the sessions of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention that have so far taken place in Kamnik 2015 and Maribor 2018.

3.5.2.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

3.5.3. Sub-section "Role of rural areas"

3.5.3.1. General information

All Contracting Parties that submitted their national reports recognise the importance of Alpine rural areas as diverse, heterogeneous, independent economic, natural and cultural locations and promote integrated strategies adapted to their respective potentials.¹³

<i>Exemplary measures taken by the Contracting Parties in the sub-section "Role of rural areas".</i>	
Ensuring and supporting cooperation and exchange of experience between rural areas	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Development of policy strategies for the exploitation of endogenous potentials and synergies as well as creative regional environments	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI
Ensuring equal access to infrastructures, information and knowledge to strengthen rural areas in the competition between locations	AT, DE, FR, IT, SI

The Contracting Parties implement the exemplary measures listed in the Declaration "Population and Culture" for the sub-section "Role of rural areas".

3.5.3.2. Examples of implementation measures

Austria, Germany and Italy mention regional development institutions such as LEADER action groups. In addition, Austria refers to the ACCESS project of the Alpine Space Programme on accessibility to facilities offering services of general interest in mountain areas, France to the instrument of "Espaces valléens" and the network of regional nature parks and national parks, Germany to the Action Programme "Bayerns ländlicher Raum" (Bavarian Rural Area) and the international network of rural regions 'Rur@ct' and finally Slovenia to the inter-municipal advisory and coordination body of the municipalities of the Upper Soča Valley, the Tolmin administrative unit, the Soča Valley Development Centre and public institutions in this area which are entrusted with these tasks.

3.5.3.3. Statements of the Contracting Parties and Observers

None

¹³ Point V.3 of the standardised template for the Contracting Parties' report on the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture has no specific question on the achievement of the objectives, but from the implementation of even one of the measures contained in the Declaration, it can certainly be concluded the recognition of the importance of the Alpine rural territories in the defined sense.

4. Conclusions

4.1. Conclusions and recommendations from a procedural perspective

The second ordinary procedure for reviewing the implementation of the Declaration "Population and Culture" was carried out based on the national reports that had to be submitted at the end of August 2019. The delays in submitting the national reports and the fact that not all Contracting Parties submitted such reports brought the review procedure to a standstill and prevented the Compliance Committee from timely fulfilling its tasks. In future, it will therefore be necessary for all Contracting Parties to submit the national reports on time.

4.2. Conclusions and recommendations from a content perspective

An analysis of the available material showed that, despite being a legally non-binding document, the Declaration on Population and Culture is to a large extent implemented by the Contracting Parties that have submitted national reports, with regard to both the objectives and the 70 implementation measures contained in the Declaration, almost all of which have been adopted by these Contracting Parties. This commitment demonstrates the importance that these Contracting Parties attach to socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects in the implementation of an integral policy for the protection and sustainable development of the Alpine region.

However, it has been shown that the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture is not homogeneous. On smaller territories, different modalities are sometimes found, and the exchange of experiences and cooperation is limited to certain regions. This is due both to the fact that the objectives and measures of the Declaration differ in relevance from one region to another and to the fact that local actors are simply not familiar with the Declaration.

Furthermore, many of the measures and activities contained in the Declaration on Population and Culture are implemented regardless of their connection to the Declaration or the Alpine Convention. The mere fact of belonging to the area of application of the Convention in many cases does not give rise to additional special measures, with the risk that, especially in times of threatened structural loss, the peculiarities of the territory are not taken into account and the Alpine space gradually fragments into many special interests. For this reason, too, it is essential to make the contents of the Declaration known to political and economic actors, but also to local populations, to consolidate the Declaration's function as a social, cultural and economic instrument of the Alpine space in harmony with a protected and sustainably

managed environment and to provide opportunities for participation. Of course, sufficient personnel and financial resources must also be available for the implementation of the Declaration.

The policy areas mentioned in the Declaration are all the more important because many of the challenges currently facing the Alps have direct effects there, such as demographic changes on the relationship between cities and their surrounding areas and on employment, climate change on settlement conditions and structures and recreational offerings, or globalisation on community life, supply chains and the relationship between Alpine and non-Alpine cities. Moreover, many of the measures implemented in the thematic areas of the Declaration are highly relevant to the quality of life in the Alps. This results not least from the five main themes of the Tenth Report on the State of the Alps environment, infrastructure and services, work and financial security, social relationships and governance. The deepening of the content of the Declaration by means of joint activities of the Contracting Parties, within the framework of which these topical issues are dealt with, could therefore be a further element in strengthening and giving the Alpine Convention additional impact.

Understood in this way, the Declaration on Population and Culture is thus a key document of the Alpine Convention, the voluntary implementation of which is a positive sign of the readiness of the Contracting Parties to address the political challenges posed by the socio-economic and socio-cultural pillars of sustainability, making the Alpine Convention a comprehensive instrument for the pursuit of sustainable development of the Alpine region.