



POLICY BRIEFING — WINTER 2021

Prioritising arts and culture in a renewed social contract

European Young Leaders (EYL40) Working Group on Arts and Culture



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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated structural challenges at several levels of our societies and economies. The initial shock of the pandemic and its continuing fallout has forced us to rethink how we live and how we work. No sector has been immune, but few have been harder hit than Europe's cultural and creative industries (CCIs).

According to a study commissioned by authors and creators' rights organisations and presented to the European Commission in January 2021, only the aviation industry has suffered more as a result of shutdowns that brought much of our lives to a standstill. "Europe's creative sector has never known such economic devastation in the past, and its profound after-effects will be felt throughout the coming decade," the report noted.

Revenues in the cultural economy – which includes TV, cinema, radio, music, publishing, video games and the performing and visual arts – plummeted by 31.2% in 2020 compared with 2019. Europe's CCIs were hit even harder than tourism, which lost 27% of its income. Within the sector, performing arts and music were the worst hit.

The impact of 2020's early closures of cinemas, theatres, music venues and museums, as well as the cancellation of summer festivals, is still

being felt in a sector struggling to regain its footing in a changed world. Though majorities across Europe are now vaccinated against COVID-19, the unpredictability of the virus signals an uncertain future in the medium term.

The pandemic has highlighted many long-standing structural issues within a sector that is a powerhouse of the European economy and a cornerstone of Europe's idea of itself. In particular, it has demonstrated the extremely precarious position of the many freelancers or temporary workers who drive much of European creativity.

COVID-19 may have pummeled the sector, but in every crisis, there is an opportunity. This is a historic chance to reimagine and reinvent the future of the creative and cultural sector in Europe, an opportunity to create a cultural ecosystem that is anchored in better working conditions and safeguards against the precariousness that left so many exposed when the pandemic swept across the continent.

Our message is simple: it's time for new approaches, fresh ideas and innovative thinking. With this publication, Friends of Europe hopes to kick-start a constructive and transformational conversation on the future of Europe's CCIs.

European Young Leaders (EYL40) Working Group on Arts and Culture

The European Young Leaders (EYL40) Working Group on Arts and Culture was established to share and brainstorm ideas for collaborating on pan-European projects related to arts and culture. It places a particular importance on how arts and culture can be used as tools to help build a sense of ‘European-ness’ among citizens of Europe.

The Working Group draws on artists, musicians, composers, filmmakers, writers, fashion designers and cultural managers from across Europe, all of whom belong the EYL40 network.

Members of the Working Group include: Anne-Solène Rolland, Head of the Museum Department at the French Ministry of Culture; Beatrice Leanza, Executive Director of the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (MAAT) in Lisbon; Agneta Filatove, Executive Director of Vilnius International Film Festival; Romanian pianist Alexandra Dariescu; best-selling author of the “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls” series Francesca Cavallo; Spanish conductor Eduardo Portal Martin; Slovenian artist Jasmina Cibic; and Irish writers Mary Fitzgerald and Una Mullally.

For a full list of EYL40 that contributed to the discussions which informed and shaped this policy briefing, you may refer to the acknowledgements section. This publication is anchored in conclusions drawn from three online meetings in which the Working Group discussed the post-pandemic future of Europe’s CCIs with European Commission officials, external sector stakeholders and leading cultural practitioners.



The power and potential of Europe's cultural and creative industries

Collectively, the CCIs represent a powerhouse within European economies. According to an EY Consulting study published in January 2021, CCIs were responsible for 4.4% of European Union GDP in 2019, with a turnover of €643bn and total added value of €253bn. That meant the pre-pandemic economic contribution of CCIs outweighed that of telecommunications, high-tech goods, pharmaceuticals or the automotive industry. Since 2013, total revenues from the cultural and creative sector have increased by €93bn and by almost 17%.

In 2019, the five largest EU member states – France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United

Kingdom – accounted for 69% of CCIs' total revenue in the EU. The strongest growth within the sector came from central and eastern Europe.

Just before the pandemic started, CCIs employed more than 7.6mn people across the EU. The sector had added approximately 700,000 jobs, including authors, performers and other creative workers, since 2013 – an increase of 10%.

It's clear: Europe's cultural and creative sector helps power our economies and plays an important role in job creation. But we should not forget its less tangible but equally important

contributions to our societies. Woven through our public spaces and our interactions with each other, the arts, culture and creativity are key to keeping us healthy in mind and spirit. They help make us dream and hope. They contribute to building resilience. They can bring us together and help us believe in a better tomorrow. That makes Europe's CCIs critical to our pandemic recovery.

“To artists and culture professionals: you represent the soul of Europe. You are the bridge to renewed and sustained activities in all corners of Europe, but you are also a promise of vivid exchanges and valuable insights on our society.”

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

At EU level, the cultural and creative sectors will receive slightly more than 2% of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the bloc's unprecedented financial plan of €672.5bn. However, despite calls for at least 2% of national recovery budgets to be earmarked for the CCIs, relatively few member states have expressly included the sector in their national plans. Nevertheless, it should be integrated in other priority areas, including social cohesion, education, health and digital.

Key to ensuring maximum benefit will be the collaboration of stakeholders, as well as cities, artists and other cultural actors beyond sectors and national borders, to focus on a recovery that draws on new ways of thinking to build a better future.



Key themes – beyond the pandemic

Prioritising art and culture in a renewed social contract

“Culture is a cornerstone of togetherness and social life. Enjoying the arts is both an individual and collective experience. Culture is also an important tool for improving inclusion because it can open doors to new worlds and different ways of life. Arts and culture can rebuild communities, reignite a spirit of inclusion and togetherness, combat social withdrawal and offer hope after crisis. For these reasons, arts and culture is key to recovery, and support for the

sector must be a priority in recovery plans throughout Europe.”

Anne-Solène Rolland, Head of the Museum Department at the French Ministry of Culture and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

The cultural and creative sector represents a cornerstone of Europe’s soft power and it creates added value in several sectors, such as tourism, education and the digital industries. Therefore, putting the sector at the heart of Europe’s recovery makes sense on a number of levels, from the economy to the health and well-being of our societies as we emerge from the worst effects of the COVID-19 period. A

post-pandemic social contract should weave the CCIs throughout the implementation of national plans under the EU's RRF.

To ensure that CCIs play as comprehensive a role as possible, it is key to adopt a broad understanding of culture, including also media, urban planning, education and sport. Engaging with a wider range of actors will help build inclusiveness and bring more citizens into the conversation.

The New European Bauhaus initiative is an example of how the inclusion of different stakeholders in policymaking allows for more inclusive and efficient outcomes, breaking down policy silos. Some EU member states, including Ireland, are examining the possibility of a basic income system for artists and other cultural and creative actors. This points to the importance of supporting individuals, as well as organisations in the sector, as traditionally most funding streams tend to be directed

BIG IDEAS

“Adopt a 50/50 gender balance approach [to funding and programming] at the level of headline artists, coupled with a fair representation of minorities. This would undoubtedly go a long way towards enthusing and educating the younger generation about great artists, regardless of their background and gender.”

Alexandra Dariescu, Concert pianist, Producer of “The Nutcracker and I” and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

“We need artists and creative people who exist on the fringes, who are drawn to a city’s creative underground and edge and who birth alternative scenes, to be able to choose to stay in the city they grow up in and have an impact on that city’s life and future. Rent control and an increase in public housing stock is the best way to ensure a diversity of people from all socio-economic backgrounds can exist within a city. Cheap and affordable rent means those who are not driven solely by big salaries can stay and contribute to a city’s cultural landscape. City councils, local governments and cultural organisations should come together to envisage and develop key principles.”

Una Mullally, Writer, LGBTQ activist and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

towards the latter. The European Commission plans to publish an online guide to EU funding for CCIs, which will help practitioners navigate the complexity of EU programmes, resulting in more opportunities when it comes to finding subsidies.

“Keeping young people in cities where they can rent affordably, and supporting those on lower incomes so that they can thrive in and participate in urban cultural life, is vital to the creative vibrancy of Europe ... Only by facilitating those whose value is rooted in creative contributions can we begin to imagine what a vibrant Roaring Twenties of the 21st century may look like.”

Una Mullally, Writer, LGBTQ activist and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Rethinking the future of Europe's cultural and creative sector as part of a wider conversation about a new social contract should also include an examination of how artists and other cultural actors can best thrive in our cities and wider communities.

“It's fine to talk about state-level support for struggling artists and top-down funding, but

that misses the bigger picture – the cultural and creative habitat,” says Una Mullally, a Dublin-based writer. Many creatives gravitate towards European cities like Berlin, Barcelona and Lisbon. However, they increasingly face ever higher costs of living. Mullally proposes a new systemic approach to urban areas in Europe, with the possibility of including lower rents and other artist-specific initiatives. “If the cost of living inflates, we must inflate arts funding,” she says.

“The arts are often considered to be the repository of a society's collective memory, so if we are to truly promote equality, diversity and inclusion, we must, first and foremost, start by addressing what we ourselves consider valuable from one generation to the next.”

Alexandra Dariescu, Concert pianist, Producer of “The Nutcracker and I” and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Given the opportunity for reinvention this moment presents, Europe's cultural sector should also focus on how it can improve diversity, equity and inclusion from within and also promote it more widely in our societies through creative output.

Encouraging the creative and cultural sector to reinvent itself and adapt to new realities

“It is a challenge not to see [the pandemic] only as a negative episode, not to see it only as an episode that we need to recover and heal from to go back to business-as-usual. It should really be an invitation to reinvent our practices. We need to ask ourselves how can we, from the arts and culture sector, define the major transitions, be they ecological, social and connected to inclusion, be they urban and architectural. Are we being ambitious enough?”

Jan Goossens, Artistic Director of the Festival de Marseille and 2012 European Young Leader (EYL40)

COVID-19 may have knocked the sector sideways but it also presents an opportunity for reimagining and reinventing Europe's CCIIs to better adapt to changing realities in the longer term. This is a time for CCIIs to identify new ways to express, develop and adapt activities and output, plus examine its role in a world facing challenges, including the climate emergency. Exploring new digital platforms for artists, digital training of creators and ways to earn an income will help ensure a more sustainable model. Planning for the future should include discussions on copyright rule and the monetisation of online content.

BIG IDEA

“Supporting cultural mobility and transnational projects is another avenue for supporting inclusivity and solidarity. This could be done by bringing artists from different countries together to build common projects that would tour schools, institutions and public places throughout Europe, encouraging public institutions to invite and host EU artists, or even, very simply, reinforcing travel fellowships for artists, who require support to start new projects again.”

Anne-Solène Rolland, Head of the Museum Department at the French Ministry of Culture and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Ensuring technology is more friend than foe

Throughout the pandemic, online streaming has dominated how we consume and access cultural and creative content. While the reopening of cultural spaces such as museums, art galleries and theatres has reversed this trend, a proportion of virtual content is here to stay. The digital transformation offers artists and other cultural actors many opportunities for greater experimentation, as well as a platform to reach wider audiences. But it has also profoundly affected the value chains, disrupting the traditional mode of

remuneration. A robust framework is needed to ensure greater protection of online rights for artists and other cultural practitioners, particularly when it comes to fair and transparent compensation.

In its recent study, the European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers (GESAC) recommended a new policy framework to ensure a more sustainable and fairer digital market. The European Commission's recently adopted Copyright Directive is an important step in that direction, as is its plan to launch an expert group on understanding digital audience, but there is more to be done.

BIG IDEA

“Let’s acknowledge the many local cultural associations that are already doing a great job in promoting the arts through informal education. There should be a clear framework for this kind of local engagement to make it easier for them to collaborate and issue credits for students’ curricula. In addition, the possibility to learn directly from professional artists is of great inspiration. A scalable digital tool could act as a repository of contents and formats easy to use for local communities with a little bit of customisation (i.e. 80% standard + 20% custom) and as a platform that connects artists and schools to easily organise (distant) learning experiences within their programmes.”

Cristina Pozzi, Board Member, COO and Head of Contents at Treccani Futura and 2020 European Young Leader (EYL40)



Bringing education and the creative and cultural industries closer

“Access to arts in schools, at all levels and in all educational centres, must be prioritised as a means to positively influence the lives and well-being of individuals and build a more inclusive society. Special funds should be allocated to innovative initiatives, such as the long-term presence of artists in schools, in-depth programmes that introduce pupils to the arts, or long-term partnerships between schools and cultural institutions that facilitate students’ sense of belonging in a museum, library or theatre. Many of these initiatives already exist on smaller scales, but they require time and money

to grow and develop. Linking the arts and education has to be part of a large scale and long-term ambition within Europe.”

Anne-Solène Rolland, Head of the Museum Department at the French Ministry of Culture and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Improving access to art and culture, already a focus before the pandemic, should take on a new urgency in its wake. An effective way of doing this is by fostering greater collaboration between cultural actors, schools and other educational institutions. Scaling up links between the cultural and creative sector and education – and exploring new and innovative ways of doing so – should be part of Europe’s recovery, but also its long-term ambition. Improving access to art and other creative expression in schools and other educational

spaces can positively influence the lives and well-being of individuals and help build a more inclusive society.

“We need to think much more radically about access ... There is no point in trying to bring 15-year-olds to a concert

hall [or] a museum ... it's way too late. Start when people are three, four and five – that's where you anchor cultural practices.”

Jakob Haesler, Managing Director at Foxdixneuf and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

BIG IDEAS

“In order to address the fact that the foundations of creativity and civic development are established at a very young age, a possibly publicly-funded programme for children from kindergarten through to 4th grade, across all socioeconomic areas, should surround cultural institutions. In addition, by acquainting children (and their parents) from low-income areas with these institutions, there is greater opportunity for social cohesion as these institutions would be regarded as serving all citizens, and not just an ‘elite bubble’.”

Jakob Haesler, Managing Director at Foxdixneuf and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

“Educational technology has made a huge step forward in delivering information using highly visual technologies. Adding arts as apart of educational curriculum and connecting students with museums and artists using AR/VR tools, working with cultural sites and museums for creating and enhancing digital contents of Europeana will develop high level of engagement and create interconnected Europe at the level of common cultural diversity.”

Darya Yegorina, CEO CleverBooks and 2020 European Young Leader (EYL40)



The role of the creative and cultural industries in social cohesion and mental health

The pandemic has brought more of a spotlight on mental health, both in terms of the medium- to long-term consequences of the 2020 shutdowns – particularly on children – but also in terms of how we prepare for future crises by building further resilience on an individual and societal level.

In the spring of 2020, Europe's cultural and creative sector demonstrated how it can support social cohesion and boost well-being when it provided a range of online content inspired by the collective experience of COVID-19.

CCIs can significantly contribute to creating a more resilient social fabric and add independent perspectives for tackling the longer-term societal challenges that the EU faces.

BIG IDEA

“Make Europe Day (9 May) a truly inclusive celebration by establishing a fund that would allow groups and individuals to apply for grants to mark the day with Europe-themed cultural and creative events and initiatives in their community. These could range from the large-scale to smaller neighbourhood events such as a street party.”

Mary Fitzgerald, Writer on Euro-Mediterranean affairs, specialising in Libya, Trustee of Friends of Europe and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

“Part of the investments in culture should also take into consideration that this will be a major opportunity to recreate ties in the community, ensuring that people are not abandoned to themselves through this crisis.”

Francesca Cavallo, Best-selling co-author of “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls”, Founder & CEO of Undercats and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

A 2019 review by the World Health Organization in Europe on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being noted that there is substantial evidence of how passive and active forms of cultural engagement can affect health.

Recommendations

- **EU institutions and member state governments should embed and mainstream the conversation about the cultural and creative sector within all policy fields to fully realise its potential in the EU's post-pandemic future.** The CCIs are a key pillar of Europe's soft power and they add value in all sectors, including tourism, education and the digital industries. They also support social cohesion, providing mental health support and fostering a sense of 'togetherness' – between nations and between cultures.
- **EU institutions and member state governments should adopt a broad understanding of culture to include media, urban planning, education and sport to ensure maximum reach and a more inclusive conversation.**
- **EU institutions and member state governments should mainstream a new way of tapping into and utilising the policy insights drawn from society, encouraging individuals and organisations to participate in the wider conversation.** The New European Bauhaus is an example of how bringing different stakeholders into the policymaking conversation allows for more inclusive and efficient policies, crossing policy silos.
- **EU institutions should support funding schemes for individual artists,** not just art organisations, and address the danger of significant income disparities, if such funding depends solely on EU member states.
- **EU institutions, member state governments and the CCIs should work together to create a 'new normal' by building a more resilient cultural and creative ecosystem that tackles precarity within the sector,** reinforced by a European policy framework and guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- **The cultural and creative sector should leverage the digital transformation** so that it continues to offer opportunities for greater creativity and experimentation, as well as access to and consumption of art, but also find ways to better protect the rights of authors and artists going online.
- **We all – as citizens of Europe – should reassess what we value as Europeans and explore the vital role that culture can play in fostering a sense of shared values and an inclusive vision for the future of our continent.**

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Annex – #CriticalThinking article series on arts and culture

A series of articles were published in Friends of Europe's #CriticalThinking publication throughout 2021 to complement the work of the EYL40 Working Group on Arts and Culture.

A time to reimagine and reinvent

Mary Fitzgerald, Writer on Euro-Mediterranean affairs, specialising in Libya, Trustee of Friends of Europe and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Is this what hope looks like? In March Barcelona played host to Europe's biggest indoor event since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Images of the rock concert – attended by 5,000 mask-wearing fans who had been tested beforehand – were not only a reminder of what we have missed over the past year but also a timely nudge for us to imagine what might be possible again soon. It was “a small but important step toward normality”, said Ventura Barba, one of the organisers. Last week medical researchers said there was “no sign” the concert had caused contagion. “In summary, a live music concert in a covered enclosure with the correct measures and ventilation is a safe activity,” declared one doctor.

Europe has been knocked sideways by the pandemic, and every member state has

experienced the fallout in its own way. It has been a long year of uncertainty for everyone, but few have been hit harder than those in the cultural and creative sector.

According to a study commissioned by authors and creators' rights organisations and presented to the European Commission in January, only the aviation industry has suffered more as a result of shutdowns that brought much of the world we knew to a standstill. “Europe's creative sector has never known such economic devastation in the past, and its profound after-effects will be felt throughout the coming decade,” the report noted.

It outlined how revenues in the sector – which includes TV, cinema, radio, music, publishing, video games and the performing and visual arts – plummeted by 31.2% last

year compared with 2019. Europe's cultural and creative sector was hit even harder than tourism, which lost 27% of its income.

[“It is not enough to focus only on the economic recovery of the cultural and creative sector”](#)

The impact of last year's early closures of cinemas, theatres, music venues and museums, and the cancellation of summer festivals sent the sector reeling. In some EU member states, such venues remain shuttered. Discontent over continuing closures in France prompted protesters to occupy scores of national theatres before the government recently announced a summer reopening.

The pandemic has highlighted many structural issues within a sector that is a powerhouse of the European economy and a cornerstone of Europe's idea of itself. In particular, it has demonstrated the extremely precarious position of the many freelancers or temporary workers who drive much of European creativity.

Some countries are thinking about how to address such vulnerabilities, both now and in the future. Ireland is considering a basic income scheme for artists and other cultural professionals. An EU-driven effort, bringing member states together to improve the working conditions of those within the sector, would send a powerful message of European cooperation and solidarity, and help encourage the idea that culture transcends borders.

Last September the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the cultural recovery of Europe. Key to the resolution – which was supported by an overwhelming majority of MEPs – was the understanding that it is not enough to focus only on the economic recovery of the cultural and creative sector, given how much it informs – and is informed by – so many other areas of our lives. This is where the conversation on cultural recovery should start.

[“This is a time for not only imagining what is possible together but acting on it”](#)

COVID-19 may have pummeled the sector but in every crisis, there is an opportunity. This is an historic chance to reimagine and reinvent the future of culture in Europe. An opportunity to create a cultural ecosystem that is anchored in better working conditions and safeguards against the precariousness that left so many exposed when the pandemic swept across the continent.

Our European Young Leaders (EYL) Working Group on Arts and Culture emerged from the sense of urgency of this current moment, not only in terms of the immediate needs of the cultural and creative sector but also the question of what its future looks like. The Working Group draws on artists, musicians, composers, filmmakers, writers, fashion designers and cultural managers from across Europe, all of whom belong to the EYL network.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Europe has witnessed how so many individuals, groups and organisations have experimented with ways of adapting to stark new realities. Joint actions, movements and initiatives have shown the power of increased sectoral unity. Our Working Group is part of that. EU institutions and member state governments have a key role to play to ensure the cultural and creative sector emerges from this crisis stronger and more resilient than before, so too do the individuals and organisations that

make European culture and creativity such a rich asset. This is a time for not only imagining what is possible together but acting on it.

This article was first published in #CriticalThinking on 3 May 2021.

Rent control and public housing for artists will breathe new life into European cities

Una Mullally, Writer, LGTBQ activist and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

As our cities across Europe ‘re-open’ with a focus on outdoor socialising, conversations and debates around planning, public space and urbanism more generally are taking place in urban areas where life has been significantly altered since the outset of the pandemic.

The pandemic has revealed many underlying ailments within society, particularly in urban areas. The vital need for public spaces, more parks, public seating, public toilets and outdoor culture that can be enjoyed safely has become amplified.

What has also been evident is how desolate many city centres become when they are geared primarily towards consumerism and tourism. Nobody is arguing against the need for thriving commercial districts, but that is also not solely what cities are in totality. We are at a crucial moment now for urban planning, including pedestrianisation and better cycling infrastructure, and must bring forth new ideas that better equip cities for those who live in them.

“We now need to have a continent-wide conversation on rent control and affordability”

An overarching aspect of this relates to affordability: who gets to buy, own, occupy and enjoy cities across housing, hospitality, recreation and public space. Many cities will have experienced a ‘tumbleweed’ factor in 2020 and early 2021, where an over-concentration of shopping districts and tourist hotels meant that without consumers and visitors, streetscapes were devoid of life. So how do we reintroduce and support diverse urban life in a sustainable way that makes our cities exciting again?

Corporate gentrification in cities is an EU-wide issue. A lack of affordability in housing does not just have an impact on the city itself and its surrounding areas, but also in our neighbouring cities across the European Union. We now need to have a continent-wide conversation on rent control and affordability.

Keeping young people in cities where they can rent affordably, and supporting those on lower incomes so that they can thrive in and participate in urban cultural life, is vital to the creative vibrancy of Europe.

In Dublin, where I am from and where I live, a fierce debate has been ongoing – well before the pandemic – about the demolition of cultural spaces including nightclubs and theatres, overtaken by commercial office and hotel development. We are in an amenity crisis in Ireland’s capital, where land speculation has

driven a wave of homogenous, short-sighted development that was already instigating a new wave of outward migration of artists and young people to our neighbouring cities across the EU.

In a connected Europe, where movement is both a freedom and a privilege, what happens in one city in one country doesn’t just impact that country’s social fabric, but it also has a knock-on effect in other European cities.

“Discomfort regarding cities becoming overly touristic is no longer limited to the ‘snow globe’ style of European city”

When there is a perspective that other cities are ‘cheaper’ to live in, allow for people to have a better quality of life, where rent is lower, where there is a thriving creative culture – day and night – those cities become attractive to people priced out of their own, who move and instigate another process of gentrification in the place they move to.

This cycle has seen countless people priced out of cities such as Dublin, moving to cities such as Berlin, Barcelona and Lisbon. These are all great cities, yet they are now also being impacted by rising rents and corporate development driven by global capital that has no attachment to the existing cultural fabric of the city in question.

We already know and understand the impact of cities disproportionately focusing on tourism has. Discomfort regarding cities becoming

overly touristic is no longer limited to the 'snow globe' style of European city, where the city becomes an outdoor museum. The contemporary era of tourism, driven by cheap air travel, Airbnb and an experience-economy, has instigated a different kind of change. Where previously tourists were separate to the fabric of cities, now the fabric of cities is often pulled, threadbare, with rental housing stock made available to tourists and those seeking to rent pushed out.

Rent control and an increase in public housing stock is the best way to ensure a diversity of people from all socio-economic backgrounds can exist within a city. Cheap and affordable rent means those who are not driven solely by big salaries can stay and contribute to a city's cultural landscape. We need artists and creative people who exist on the fringes, who

are drawn to a city's creative underground and edge and who birth alternative scenes, to be able to choose to stay in the city they grow up in and have an impact on that city's life and future.

City councils, local governments and cultural organisations should come together to envisage and develop key principles by which we can be guided at a time when local and national power is often superseded by global capital and development detached from the character of cities. Only by facilitating those whose value is rooted in creative contributions can we begin to imagine what a vibrant Roaring Twenties of the 21st century may look like.

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Why arts and culture must be the cornerstone of European recovery plans

Anne-Solène Rolland, Head of the Museum Department at the French Ministry of Culture and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

The COVID-19 pandemic sent shockwaves that have rippled across the globe. The arts and culture sector has been among the hardest hit since lockdowns began.

For artists, cultural institutions and industries, this has been one of the worst crises in decades. By suddenly cutting the link between art and its audiences – for months or maybe even years in some countries – this pandemic has threatened the very existence of arts and culture. As with everyone working in the cultural sector, I have witnessed this hardship – first-hand – for months.

What is a museum without its visitors? What is the meaning of performing arts without its audience? What is a movie if no one sees it?

Throughout the lockdowns, cultural institutions have lived up to their social responsibility, finding new ways to keep in touch with their communities. The pandemic has created an array of new digital offers, providing an alternative link between institutions, artists and their audiences. But is that enough? Can it be a new paradigm for arts and culture in the future?

Some might say that the arts are only reserved for a small elite, but that's not true. For instance, museums offer the unique experience of real contact with creation, and it is our duty to help as many people experience this as possible. The arts, from performing or visual arts to literature and everything in between, are essential – even more so during and after the crisis. Whether its live music and dance, visiting exhibitions and libraries, or going to the movies, we simply cannot live without real contact with art.

Culture is a cornerstone of togetherness and social life. Enjoying the arts is both an individual and collective experience. Culture is also an important tool for improving inclusion because it can open doors to new worlds and different ways of life. Arts and culture can rebuild communities, reignite a spirit of inclusion and togetherness, combat social withdrawal and offer hope after crisis.

For these reasons, arts and culture is key to recovery, and support for the sector must be a priority in recovery plans throughout Europe.

So, how can arts and culture be supported?

“Culture is a cornerstone of togetherness and social life”

“Many of these initiatives already exist on smaller scales, but they require time and money to grow and develop”

Firstly, increased efforts in building bridges between culture and education is fundamental. Access to arts in schools, at all levels and in all educational centres, must be prioritised as a means to positively influence the lives and well-being of individuals and build a more inclusive society.

Special funds should be allocated to innovative initiatives, such as the long-term presence of artists in schools, in-depth programmes that introduce pupils to the arts, or long-term partnerships between schools and cultural institutions that facilitate students’ sense of belonging in a museum, library or theatre. Many of these initiatives already exist on smaller scales, but they require time and money to grow and develop. Linking the arts and education has to be part of a large scale and long-term ambition within Europe.

Secondly, on a wider scale, helping artists and cultural institutions come closer to their audience or even their ‘non-audience’ can support access to the arts. Throughout lockdowns, museums and theatres have found new places to perform or show works, instead of waiting for their own doors to reopen. What if such projects were a funding priority at the European level?

Cultural projects, or tiers-lieux as they are called in France, encourage institutions to go beyond their own walls and meet new

audiences in public spaces that are easily accessible to citizens. Such projects should be more widely supported across Europe not only to bring people together through the arts, but also to revitalise public spaces.

“Arts and culture for all must be a top priority in securing a more inclusive and creative society”

Additionally, introducing the arts to a wider audience can be instrumental in fostering transnational cooperation and building a common, European identity.

So, finally, supporting cultural mobility and transnational projects is another avenue for supporting inclusivity and solidarity. This could be done by bringing artists from different countries together to build common projects that would tour schools, institutions and public places throughout Europe, encouraging public institutions to invite and host EU artists, or even, very simply, reinforcing travel fellowships for artists, who require support to start new projects again.

To paraphrase Jean Vilar, the great French theatre artist who fought for wider access to the arts, “[culture] is a food as necessary as bread and wine”. Arts and culture for all must be a top priority in securing a more inclusive and creative society.

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Digital for arts and culture during the pandemic recovery

Amit Sood, Director of Google Arts & Culture

10 years ago, a small group of art-lovers at Google wondered how we could turn our passion into a project. Empowered by the recent technological innovations in smartphones, cloud storage, ultra-high-resolution digital photography, and the synthesis between them, this small group felt compelled to approach museums eager to make their collections more accessible through digitisation.

Early partners, such as the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, the Uffizi Gallery in Florence and the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, asked us how we could help with their digital transformation in the long term. We started with 1,000 artefacts from 17 of the world's most acclaimed art museums, and it's grown ever since. In short, we supported cultural institutions who realised that they too can benefit from these brand new platforms by sharing their treasures with everyone.

Our partners told us that for most cultural institutions, the primary mission is education, which is easier to facilitate if they possess multiple ways of engaging with different audiences, especially younger demographics.

“Cultural institutions worked hard to stay connected to their audiences virtually”

The group's art project grew into Google Arts & Culture, and today, millions of people from across the world have used the app to educate themselves about artworks, antiques and historical artefacts held by more than 2,000 museums, archives, world heritage sites and local communities. Users explore objects ranging from a 230,000 year-old figurine to a modern day particle collider, while utilising augmented reality to bring these artworks into their homes, schools and workplaces.

Along the way, the project has developed a strong European presence through its Google Arts & Culture Lab in Paris, which seeks to bring artists and creative technologists together while reflecting the continent's rich cultural heritage. Europeans have discovered a wealth of art, both old and new, using Google Arts & Culture to immerse themselves in high-resolution images and machine learning experiments. Above all, we have been privileged to help institutions use modern technologies to build a deeper relationship with people.

Technologies have proven particularly vital this year because the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we live, work and play. It has been a tremendously difficult time during which art and culture have been huge sources of support. Despite these difficulties, cultural

institutions worked hard to stay connected to their audiences virtually. In enabling these connections, Google Arts & Culture was humbled to play a supporting role. This provided education and entertainment for those stuck at home, whether they learnt about Indian miniature paintings or travelled all over the world virtually, visiting archaeological sites, discovering new crafts and exploring amazing museums.

“Let culture be the destination”

As we have done over the past 10 years, we continued to support cultural organisations throughout the pandemic to tell their stories. We worked with the Croatian National Tourist Board to create Croatia: Hearts & Crafts, a virtual travel hub celebrating the country’s intangible cultural heritage. To keep events alive, we partnered with the Greek Ministry of Culture to create YouTube live broadcasts from the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, the birthplace of theatre. It was spine-tingling to see 2,400 years of history broadcast in 4K. We also worked with La Scala in Milan to celebrate the theatre’s past and present: 92 artists from five countries have come together to create La Scala’s first opera performed in quarantine. And in France, we were honoured to collaborate with Centre Pompidou to launch the first virtual exhibition about Kandinsky, which incorporated machine learning to highlight Kandinsky’s unique ability to see (and paint) sound through synaesthesia.

While working with our European partners, we realised these virtual experiences were a great way to raise awareness for natural and cultural treasures. Today’s situation is reminiscent of when we launched the initial idea of the art project in 2011; people argued it would stop in-person visits to museums. Of course, it doesn’t work like that. If one sees a beautiful image of something online, one wants to experience it in real life. Let culture be the destination. As vaccination programmes roll out and restrictions start to lift, culture is a key motivator for potential tourists planning a holiday. So, Google Arts & Culture will continue to expand its partnerships with European cultural organisations and iconic destinations as the world begins to (safely) travel again.

One of the things we are proudest of is that everyone can find something that resonates. This was made possible thanks to our partners’ outstanding curatorial expertise and the artefacts they share. I’ve been awed by their drive to innovate, connect with audiences and keep art alive as a beacon of hope. As life gradually returns to a new normal, I hope Europeans will be inspired by the art they’ve enjoyed during lockdown to go and see some new cultural treasures in person – and inspire our next decade.

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Changing the paradigm for arts & culture funding in Europe

Jakob Haesler, Managing Director at Foxdixneuf and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

It's 2021 and cultural life across Europe is slowly picking up again. Only after football stadiums were allowed to reopen could museums, theatres, concert halls and opera houses welcome visitors again. However, this reopening contends with a significant reduction in numbers, making these cultural institutions economically unsustainable to operate in the long run. Meanwhile, the overwhelming presence of US-founded distributors on the digital front has even further driven out locally-made European content.

To bounce back from this pandemic, the arts and cultural sector requested funding. But this government spending causes a stir amongst critics when so many other problems caused by the pandemic still need to be addressed, notably a significant increase in inequality, impaired mental health, and an increasing lack of citizen engagement for democratic values. This is a serious point, particularly because efforts to 'democratise' access to culture have achieved only limited success, mostly because they are 'too little, too late'. 'Too late' because we treat 'democratising access to arts and culture' as a repair job instead of an investment in our youth; 'too little' because when compared to the government spending and tax advantages in other areas or for other populations, arts and culture as a sector consistently lags behind.

But it doesn't necessarily have to be this way. Money well spent on arts and culture can transform the role they play in our lives and for the fabric of society, be it as part of education, artistic production, or how we consume art.

"An adage worth remembering is make art – not bricks"

Having access to an environment which gives rise to cultural expression is imperative for all. In order to address the fact that the foundations of creativity and civic development are established at a very young age, a possibly publicly-funded programme for children from kindergarten through to 4th grade, across all socioeconomic areas, should surround cultural institutions. In addition, by acquainting children (and their parents) from low-income areas with these institutions, there is greater opportunity for social cohesion as these institutions would be regarded as serving all citizens, and not just an 'elite bubble'.

There are, of course, well-documented examples which can be replicated: the establishment of the Children Choir at the Opéra Comique, for example, focuses on children from low-income areas, or the creation of orchestra classes which enable children to learn an instrument as part of their regular school curriculum.

As arts and culture funding often responds to the desire of leaders to build their legacy, there is a disproportionate amount of funds siphoned into creating new institutions and buildings, whereas the focus on operating existing institutions or directly funding artistic production perishes because it is seen as less glamorous. An adage worth remembering is make art – not bricks. This includes funding for professional artists, but also the many local amateur cultural and arts initiatives which create the real tissue of the artistic network. Two concrete ideas are initiating a moratorium on creating new brick and mortar institutions, and redirect funding to artistic production to make ‘every European an artist’. Furthermore, a general review and benchmark of good practices in running institutions should provide some headroom to direct funding to artistic production.

“We often confuse the great richness of cultural traditions in Europe because of the Union’s market fragmentation driven by national borders”

Increasing STEM competencies is rightly viewed as a key ingredient for societies to master their digital transformation and adapt to new economic realities, including those of the workplace. However, there are other key competencies that are just as vital that our educational systems, with the exception of well-funded private schools, risk neglecting. These skills include project-based learning, creativity, out-of-the box thinking, an experimental mindset, and tolerance for and resilience to

failure. As conventional educational systems are struggling to adopt this kind of upskilling, arts and cultural education are in a prime role to offer help. Moreover, cultural institutions can benefit from these ways of learning by providing their services to students and, most importantly, to the teachers who are often isolated within their inflexible and bureaucratic administrations that otherwise may not provide such development.

Funding could happen directly from the bottom up, bypassing the endless and highly political proclivity for curriculum reform, thus helping to overcome the traditionally unproductive divide between education and cultural ministries. This will require the use of digital platforms to make local projects replicable and scalable to allow for adaptation based on impact assessment data. Area9 is one such platform which is currently tested across Europe with EU-funding, focusing on STEM, but a proof of concept for cultural and artistic learning projects is currently being planned for projects in Germany and Denmark that aim to bring together museums and educators to develop scalable, local approaches.

One of the distinctive features of the European arts and culture landscape is its incredible diversity in terms of art forms, local, regional and national traditions, languages, historical and religious experiences, and so on. We often confuse the great richness of cultural traditions in Europe because of the Union’s market fragmentation driven by national borders. While we are contemplating the disappearance of local and regional cultural

customs and art forms, we are witnessing the market dominance of US-owned distribution systems become even stronger, such as the FAANGs (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix, Google), which are increasingly determining the way European art and culture are being viewed and consumed. But the ensuing threat of uniformization of our culture is not inevitable. Locally, European culture is still vibrant and produces outstanding works, be it in the classic cultural centres or at the fringes.

“The EU recovery plan, which has enabled Europe to tackle a key challenge together rather than separately, could be the inspiration for orienting cultural spending”

What we need is better access to this richness. This is based on key levers that we need to address. First, we must create European distribution platforms to create scalable access to these often-immaterial creations. Second, we must connect the national cultural spheres through cultural decision-makers and tastemakers from national European media organisations, which today is very limited. Third, we must make better use of, and improve the accuracy of automatic translation software to create systematic subtitling of European TV and movie productions, which would give an immediate access to the incredible diversity available today with efficient high-quality subtitles. Fourth, we must improve recommendation algorithms to bring more diversity to bear, instead of strengthening monocultural echo-chambers, for example,

by connecting lovers of similar niche cultural practices across Europe to create critical mass in each.

The EU recovery plan, which has enabled Europe to tackle a key challenge together rather than separately, could be the inspiration for orienting cultural spending. Strengthen Europe as a leader in artistic creation, the broad anchoring of cultural practices, and celebrate the diversity of European identities, that which makes Europe Europe.

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The role that arts and culture can play in the recovery

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Across borders, spanning decades, arts and culture have always been an essential part of our European way of life. In dire times, arts and culture are there to offer comfort, to inspire dreams, to share feelings. The emotions that books, music, films, plays, photographs, paintings and sculpture offer us, both individually and as a society, are invaluable.

So too are the cultural and creative sectors. They are among Europe's strongest assets. They have a role to play in Europe's recovery, and the European Commission is committed to supporting them through different channels.

First is the safe resumption of activities. The pandemic greatly affected the cultural activities we enjoy sharing with others so much. Revenues dropped between 75% to 80% for museums in tourist areas, while cinemas and music venues saw a 70% and 64% revenue drop, respectively. In June 2021, the European Commission decided to commemorate the reopening of cultural venues and sites by launching EU guidelines to foster coordinated and proportionate measures across all EU countries.

“Cultural and creative sectors will also benefit from significant investments from the Recovery and Resilience Facility”

Second, before the sanitary crisis, we had decided to substantially increase our financial support to EU cultural and creative sectors, with almost €2.5bn from Creative Europe and close to €2bn from Horizon Europe dedicated to cultural and creative projects for the period between 2021 and 2027.

In addition, cultural and creative sectors will also benefit from significant investments from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the EU's unprecedented financial plan of €672.5bn. Money, in the form of grants or loans, will support reforms and investments designed and undertaken by member states individually.

The Commission is proud to report that, on average, at EU level, cultural and creative sectors will receive slightly more than 2% of this instrument. I welcome the large allocations to the cultural and tourism sector planned by member states in their national resilience and recovery plans.

“To artists and culture professionals: you represent the soul of Europe”

Third, listening to the cultural and creative actors, we have heard their calls for easier access to information on the EU funding opportunities. Later this year, we will publish an online guide on EU funding for culture, bringing together in one place all the different EU funds available. This will be a unique one-stop-shop to help cultural professionals navigate the complexity of EU programmes, and have better chances at finding subsidies.

Lastly, looking back at past 18 months, we will launch an expert group on Understanding Digital Audience to explore new ways to

promote cultural content by learning from practices stemming from the pandemic experience.

To artists and culture professionals: you represent the soul of Europe. You are the bridge to renewed and sustained activities in all corners of Europe, but you are also a promise of vivid exchanges and valuable insights on our society for which I will always be by your side.

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Is the way we fund arts today promoting inequality?

Alexandra Dariescu, Award-Winning Concert Pianist, Producer of "The Nutcracker and I", Creative Entrepreneur and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Worldwide, only 5% of music scheduled in publicly-funded orchestras today is written by female composers, according to a recent report published by the Donne Foundation. In the United Kingdom, over 60% of women in theatre are considering leaving the industry, with 85% worried that gender inequality will worsen in the post-COVID era as male work, considered 'a safe bet', is prioritised. In terms of ethnicity and diversity, just over 1% of the pieces programmed today are by black and Asian women, and just over 2% are by black and Asian men. What are the factors that lead

to this inequality, and to what extent do we contribute to and reinforce this structure in the arts and culture?

Traditionally, arts producers maintain a significant role in shaping our world and the way we interact with each other on a daily basis. We consume arts like the air we breathe. Art influences society, shaping and changing opinions, while instilling values and translating experiences across demographics and generations. Research has shown that art affects the fundamental sense of self. The arts

are often considered to be the repository of a society's collective memory, so if we are to truly promote equality, diversity and inclusion, we must, first and foremost, start by addressing what we ourselves consider valuable from one generation to the next.

Having worked as a freelance musician in classical music for the last 15 years and in most European countries, I have observed the way in which creatives communicate their art to the public. The protagonists who transmit the message of our 'product' – meaning headline artists, including the composers, conductors and soloists whose names are publicly advertised and marketed – continue to be mainly white and male. The statistics are truly shocking and surely not where we ought to be in the 21st century.

“Programming’s success is largely determined by box office results”

All too often, we have heard the argument that it's the role of artists, producers, agents and all those responsible for what goes into programmes to bring about change. But it isn't that simple. Programming's success is largely determined by box office results which ensure the organiser's future viability, making it a much more complex system of various stakeholders. In addition, arts and culture are wholly subjective, so how can we expect those responsible to programme in imaginative or socially innovative ways, when they themselves have been caught up in the same cycle of a white male-dominated art form?

The predominant role of the aforementioned headline artists is to ensure audience engagement which, by and large, translates to box office success. While artists themselves can play a part in bringing about change, and they are invited to do so, the majority who appear on programmes worldwide have little or no incentive to engage with issues concerning the lack of diversity, inclusion and equality.

On stage, I represent myself as an artist, storyteller and citizen of the world. I have made it one of my personal missions to tell audiences just how diverse and inclusive the art form I love can be, despite the shortfalls of the past. I have undertaken extensive research to be able to offer producers a balanced portfolio of work by female and male composers, including composers from a variety of backgrounds. It is inspiring to discover and engage with work which hasn't found its way to being published or promoted by the decision-makers on grounds of background and tradition rather than virtue of quality or relevance.

“We should be asking ourselves if we can truly justify allocating taxpayers' money towards promoting inequality”

Not only have I discovered new composers, but it has changed my relationship with the dominant tradition. My own approach includes thematic links to the traditional repertoire that we have all learned to love and that we want to continue to see on our concert programmes. More often than not, however, I find myself being asked to play the traditional repertoire

by white male composers as if it is taken for granted.

All this further underlines the fact that bringing about change cannot be solved by producers and artists alone. The issue is far more complex. It requires a more serious engagement at all levels but most importantly at the funding level. As a society, we should be asking ourselves if we can truly justify allocating taxpayers' money towards promoting inequality in the way that we currently are. Adopting a 50/50 approach at the level of headline artists, coupled with a fair representation of minorities in programmes, would undoubtedly go a long way towards enthusing and educating the younger generation about great artists, regardless of their background and gender.

After all, a wider range of role models is what inspires all generations to work hard, never give up and continue to break down those unnecessary barriers that we, all too often, still put around ourselves today.

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