

Final cuts for the Arts and Culture in the EU budget ?

The EU is in the process of reviewing its budget for the period 2013-2020. Budget cuts are likely. The culture budget amounted to 400 million for the period 2007-2013. There is an additional 700 million Euros to support European films. Some structural funds also benefit the cultural sector (around Euro 3 bn of the 350 Bn EU structural budget). Overall less than 0.1% of the overall EU budget is spent on culture. Innovation and creativity are a priority sector of the EU 2020 Strategy so is the Digital Agenda. Cuts in the culture sector are unacceptable given these priorities and given its enormous potential for Europe. There is a need to make a strong case for the sector.

Why should the EU spend on culture? Herewith a few arguments for cultural activists and lobbyists:

1. There cannot be European integration and mutual understanding without cultural dialogue. Look what is happening to Belgium. The country is divided over language issues and lack of cultural exchanges. The same is threatening the European project.
2. Europe lacks a spiritual and emotional dimension. Culture and arts are a powerful means to convey meanings and common European values. Europe is foremost a cultural project based on common values. Where have the values underpinning the European project gone?
3. The economy of culture represents 3% of Europe's GDP – this is more than car manufacturing.
4. The economy of culture represents 6 million jobs and it is one of the few sectors in the economy where employment is growing. Have you read KEA's study on the [Economy of Culture in Europe?](#)
5. Culture is a driver of new technology take up (broadband, smartphones, etc) and contributes to make technology relevant (and successful!). Art and Culture are key elements of the digital agenda (or should be!).
6. Art and culture are key tools to build social cohesion and improve public services (health, security, education).
7. European cities are the most attractive in the world because of their cultural institutions and creative environment.
8. Subsidiarity is a false excuse for no EU action. All important regulations affecting the economy of the arts and culture industries are now taken in Brussels (copyright, competition (state aid to culture), trade law (WTO)).
9. Art in education is key to stimulate creativity and innovation.
10. EU diplomacy needs to implement its Treaty objective of promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the world. It is Europe's mission to sustain diversity in the face of globalization.
11. Emerging economies are looking at Europe to help them build a sustainable creative economy. With its mix of public/private investment /regulation Europe is an example of cultural policy management.
12. Culture-based creativity makes the economy and industry more competitive (design, art, disruptive thinking). Have you read KEA's study on [the Impact of Culture on Creativity \(2009\)?](#)
13. Europe badly needs a branding strategy to make it "creative Europe" and rather than "Old Europe".
14. Europe has some of the best artists, designers, architects, advertisers and culture / creative industries in the world.

15. First and foremost Europe cannot do without culture and art to invent a new society led by imagination, solidarity, participation and poetry.

Please add your own arguments or comments on the above and let us know on www.keablog.com or on the “CREATIVE EUROPE” groups on [facebook](#) and [linkedin](#).

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