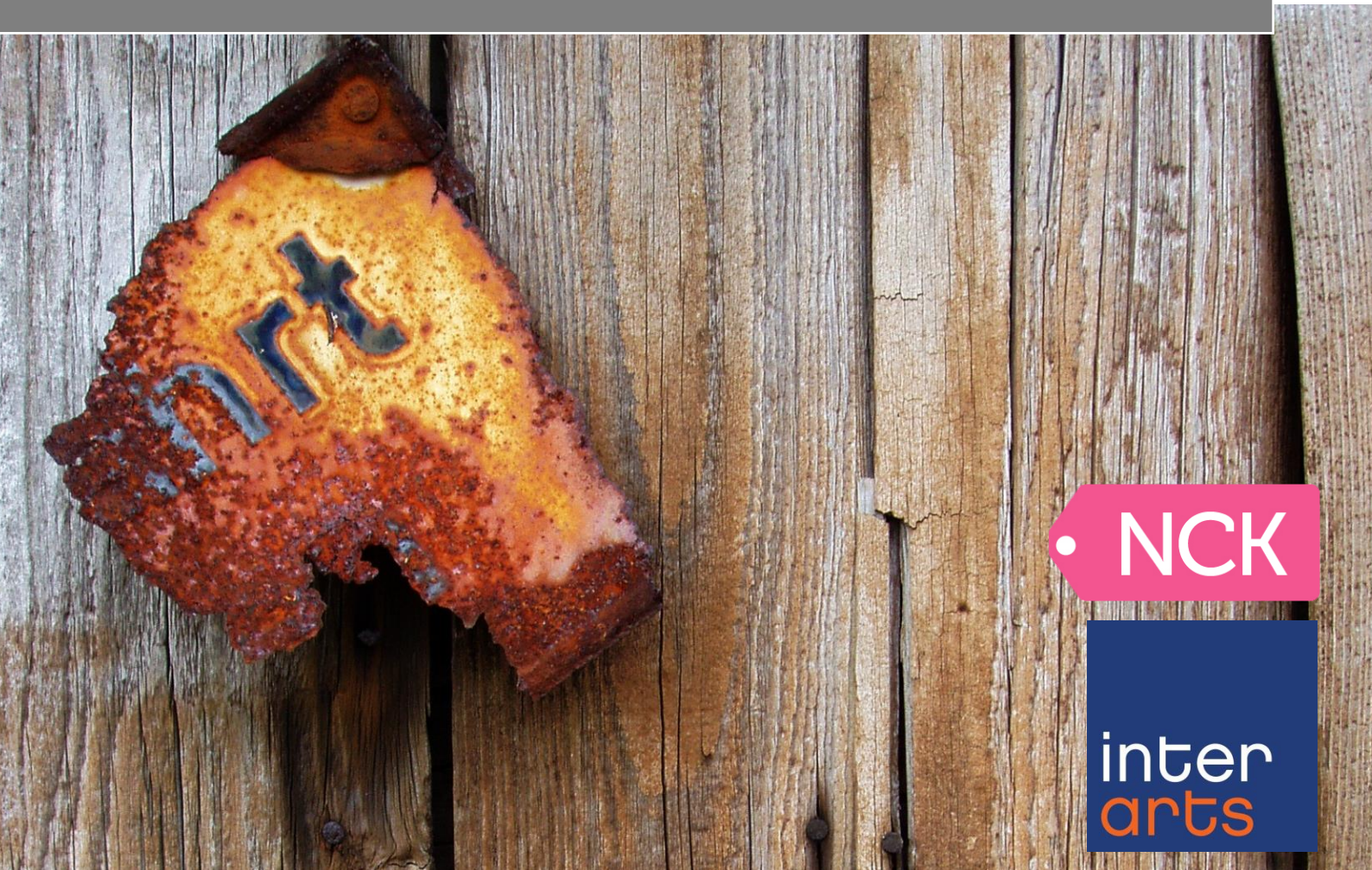


Access to Culture – Policy Analysis Review on the Policies at European Level



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Access to Culture – Literature review on the policies at European level

Prepared by the Nordic Centre for Heritage Learning and Creativity (NCK), the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO) and the Interarts Foundation. October 2013.

This document summarizes the positions on access to culture as stated in official policy documents, policy papers, research studies and reports. In the context of the *Access to Culture – Policy Analysis* project, this review aims to examine the current context of access to culture policies at European level, on the basis of recent literature, and to inform subsequent steps of the project.

In the first section we provide an overview of the relevant policy framework as defined in key EU documents. The second section brings forth a summary of the selected research reports. The studies are mostly responses to the growing awareness of the need to target access to culture simultaneously attempting to provide a more succinct and grounded definition of the area which is sometimes lacking in policy documents.

Overview of the EU policy framework

The starting point of EU political emphasis on the access to culture is the European Commission's *European Agenda for Culture*, which perceives globalization as an opportunity for cultural exchange and curiosity about different cultures, and also as an opportunity to question European identity (**Commission 2007**). Access to culture is not the main topic of this document but provides an integral part of it, not always clearly and explicitly separate from other policy areas. The European Union is seen as a social and cultural project where culture should be the driver of economic success and democratic development, taking into account Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and the subsidiarity principle.

Access to culture is explicitly targeted in the strategic objective number three focusing on the European Union's international relations. It is specified in the following way "*[c]ulture is a resource in its own right, and access to culture should be considered as a priority in development policies*" (p 10). The role of culture in international relations regarding access to culture is integrated into a set of specifically defined objectives in this document: the promotion of market access; preservation of and access to cultural heritage; and ensuring that all cooperation programs take into account local culture and contribute to people's access to culture. The importance of education, including advocacy for the integration of culture in educational curricula is emphasized.

The Council of the European Union adopted a resolution as a result of the political process after the publication of the Commission's communication on the European Agenda for Culture

(**Council 2007**). The Council shares the view that culture should be better recognized in the Lisbon Agenda, considers the fact that culture should play an important role in EU's external relations, underlines the strong link between culture and development, and stresses the importance of deepening of the intercultural dialogue.

Access to culture is mentioned in the introductory part in the context of '*... taking note of the suggestion by the Commission to enhance mobilization and diversification of funding in favour of increased access of local population to culture, and of cultural goods of those countries to European markets*' (**Council 2007**, p 1). The document outlines six priority areas for the period 2008-2010, access to culture being one of them. It is stated that it should be prioritised through the promotion of cultural heritage, multilingualism, digitisation, cultural tourism, synergies with education, especially art education, and greater mobility of collections.

Apart from responding positively towards the European Agenda for Culture document, the Council also gives specific guidelines for the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), the policy-exchange methodology which was to be implemented subsequently. These include using a flexible approach, minimising financial and administrative burdens, implementation through triennial work plans, the leading role of the Council in ensuring continuity, preparing Member States' progress reports, informing cultural actors and the public. Regarding the horizontal aspects of cross-sector policy making the Council invites the Commission to improve cultural statistics, welcomes the creation of an inter-service group, and recommends strengthening the interface between cultural aspects and other Community policies.

The first Open Method of Coordination working group dedicated to the issue of access to culture was set up by the national ministries of culture following the initiative from the Council and Commission in 2008 (**Council OMC 2010**). Their report on developing synergies with education, especially arts education. and the final recommendations have placed special focus on formal compulsory education and a tendency primarily to look at the arts. The report results in recommendations about promoting transdisciplinarity, heritage education, media literacy and creative media use, as well as, to evaluate the creativeness acquired by children's use of new media, promote and invest in collaboration and partnerships between schools and cultural organizations, strengthen training of teachers, artists and other professionals in the field and relevant evaluation approaches. On the level of policy measures and instruments the report recommends that actions should be taken to raise the status of arts education and to establish a European observatory aimed at monitoring the development in the respective areas. Particular emphasis is placed on the access to arts and culture education, rather than access to education through the arts and culture. The potential synergy between education and culture is used in close relation to youth policy in a broader meaning and especially with an ambition to stimulate more creativity in children and young people.

Another OMC group was established by the Council in 2010 with the purpose to collect and analyse good practices in policies with regard to access to culture (**Council OMC, 2012**). Its main areas of interest, as shown in the best practices collected and the recommendations produced, included (1) defining whose access (identified as non-users), (2) removing obstacles, (3) building an audience through both formal and non-formal education, (4) digital access and (5) special attention to stimulation of creativity. The concept of "access" focuses on enabling

new audiences to use the available cultural offer, by opening the doors to non traditional audiences, so that they may enjoy an offer or heritage that has been difficult to access because of a set of barriers. The emphasis on participation (to decision making, to creative processes, to construction of meaning) recognizes the audience as an active interlocutor, to be consulted or at least involved in planning and creating the cultural offer. The study also refers to the key European lifelong learning competence of cultural awareness and expression and many of the best practice examples are interpreted as stimulating it. The study highlights this key competence as a precondition for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. Thereby 'cultural awareness and expression' becomes a broker or facilitator for other elements of other key competences in the field of lifelong learning, as identified by the EU. The study recommends that Member States in the future should have a clear view on why particular measures to increase access to culture are devised. It is also recommended that studies and assessments on access to culture policies cover the full chain of defining the users and non-users, design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation. Assessment of indicators should also focus on partnerships which are seen as key to success on increasing access. Cultural education is seen as necessary to develop what is referred to as the "demand side" of access to culture.

The Council Conclusions on access to culture for young people (**Council 2010a**) were adopted in the wake of the EACEA-commissioned *Study on the Access of Young People to Culture* (**Laaksonen et al. 2010**; see further below) and followed, among others issues raised by the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009,. The young people are here particularly seen as users/consumers and as participants/creators.

The conclusions invite the Commission and Member States to take into consideration all the recommendations made in the study commissioned by EACEA. In addition, specific recommendations are made, among others, to facilitate access of all young people to culture, reducing relevant obstacles and fostering opportunities particularly in the educational system; promote long-term coordinated cultural, youth and education policies; deepen the knowledge on the access of young people to culture; exchange and promote experiences, practices and information of all relevant stakeholders in the field of access of young people to culture; support quality education, training and capacity building of youth workers and youth leaders; promote access of young people to culture as a means of promoting social inclusion.

The Council Conclusions on culture in combating poverty (**Council 2010b**) partly draw inspiration on policies related with human rights issues, by arguing that *'everyone has the right to have access to cultural life and to participate in it, to aspire to education and life-long learning, to develop his/her creative potential, to choose and have his/her cultural identity and affiliations respected in the variety of their different means of expression.'* The document highlights the ways in which access to culture can foster social inclusion.

On this basis, it argues that *'it is important for a cultural dimension to be incorporated into national and European policies against poverty and social exclusion'*. This mainstreaming of cultural aspects refers both to their tangible dimension and to a more anthropological notion. Council proposes that steps should be taken in order to take a comprehensive, coherent and participative approach in order to promote the cross-cutting contribution of culture; strengthen links between education, training, economy, employment and culture;

mobilise the potential of culture to combat stereotypes and prejudice against particular social and cultural groups experiencing poverty or social exclusion; remove obstacles to access to culture, including by promoting greater awareness within the cultural sector, circulating easily accessible cultural information, improving access to new information and communication technologies and pursuing policies designed to cut the cost of access to culture for specific target groups and enhance participation in cultural life and cultural expression.

Another set of Council Conclusions (**Council 2011**) refers to the role of culture for the achievement of the *Europe 2020* strategy, drawing inspiration in particular on recent policy documents regarding the potential of the cultural and creative industries for growth and for regional development. No reference is actually made to access to culture. However, when referring to culture's contribution to inclusive growth a mention is made of culture's role in promoting intercultural dialogue and strengthening social cohesion.

The text includes several recommendations addressed both to EU institutions and to Member States. In particular, the need to promote partnerships between education, culture, research institutions and the business sector; to explore the role of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in community development and in promoting active citizenship; to promote the digitisation of and access to cultural heritage and contemporary cultural content, including audiovisual works, in particular through the Europeana project, thus also promoting and preserving cultural diversity and multilingualism in full respect of the copyright and related rights, and to explore how to strengthen a strong cultural component in lifelong learning in order to contribute to the development of key competences should be noted. The conclusions call Member States and the Commission to deploy the statistical framework being developed by ESSnet culture.

The formal answer to the political question about access to culture from the sector of arts and culture itself was formulated by the 'structured dialogue' platform on this issue created by and on the initiative of the European Commission in 2008.

The Access to Culture Platform produced its first tangible output in summer 2009. Dominating inputs to the document from participants in the platform were from perspectives of learning, creativity and participation (**Access to Culture Platform 2009**). The document uses a definition about access to culture which highlights understanding the needs of the public for getting access (linguistic barriers, ITC and mobility), and development of the audiences to improve access (audience development and learning through culture).

The political profile of the document is predominantly on access to experiences with arts and culture for public and individual development. Access to culture gives "access" to other parts of life. The document also highlights the needs of professionals in arts and culture (easier funding opportunities, stronger political positioning of arts and culture). Recommended indicators are data collection, overcoming linguistic barriers, resources and regulations for professional development, funding procedures, mobility, ICT facilitation, stimulation of learning through culture, access to culture policy positioning in political landscape and actions for awareness-raising on access to culture.

The policy definition of access to culture has slowly evolved over the years, often as part of dealing with broader societal challenges or within long-term strategic considerations. In the initial documents it was a part of a discussion on the position of the European Union in the globalized world. Access to culture was mentioned as one of the priorities in development policies (Commission, 2007), not necessarily the most important one. The Council of the European Union (2007) added to the definition the need to increase the access of local populations to culture. Open Method of Coordination working groups emphasized the role of formal compulsory education (Council OMC 2010) and also the need to enable access to culture to new non-traditional audiences (Council OMC 2012). The Council of the European Union recommended facilitating stronger access of young people to culture (2010a) and fostering social inclusion (2010b). In recent Council conclusions (2011) the role of culture in achieving the Europe 2020 strategic goals was emphasized, although no explicit mention of access to culture was made. On the other hand, the cultural sector has also provided its own views on the issue, including an identification of challenges and needs among individual professionals and organisations and a reflection on obstacles and difficulties hindering access (**Access to Culture Platform 2009**).

Review of research reports and studies

A study by Laurence Cuny and Richard Polacék, *Arts and Human Rights*, produced within the Access to Culture Platform analyses the legal framework of the field of human rights and artistic freedom. The study analyses the artists' right to expression and protection of artistic freedom when it comes under attack (**Cuny and Polacék 2012**). It gives an overview of the possibilities and actions of the UN special rapporteurs on cultural rights and human rights defenders, UNESCO, the European Parliament and the external action service, the Council of Europe and OSCE. The study analyses real and legal censorship as well as self-imposed censorship as limitations to access to culture. In the study it is demonstrated through examples how governments, industry and religious groups all can be regressive actors in terms of access to culture. The study primarily proposes to look at the amount and seriousness of critical reports on limitations to artistic freedom and reviewing policy standards.

Laaksonen and a group of European experts and national correspondents (**Laaksonen et al. 2010**) conducted a study on the *Access of Young People to Culture* which collected data on cross-country trends in this field. The study bases its analysis on references to access to culture in international law and other international standards, including the UNESCO Recommendation on Participation by the People at Large in Cultural Life and their Contribution to It (1976), where access to culture is defined as: *'concrete opportunities available to everyone, in particular through the creation of appropriate socio-economic conditions, for freely obtaining information, training, knowledge and understanding, and for enjoying cultural values and cultural property.'*

Among the key issues identified by the study which have policy relevance are the following: money, geographical constraints (e.g. rural vs urban areas, transport limitations, etc.) and time which remain the main obstacles in terms of access of young people to culture; digitalisation can be used as a motor of cultural participation; better knowledge on youth participation and access to culture should be developed – i.e. need to promote information

and research in this field; need to promote access to information on cultural opportunities for young people; need to improve the media image of young people. The study highlights that no indicators on access to culture, or on the impact of policies aiming to foster access, have been found. On the other hand, the study's recommendations include the need to '*develop a set of indicators and follow-up systems to measure the access of young people to cultural institutions, activities, equipments, education, cooperation and intercultural communication*' (p. 176) as well as to measure the impact of policies in this field.

An independent study by Laaksonen, *Making Culture Accessible. Access, participation and cultural provision in the context of cultural rights in Europe*, commissioned by the Council of Europe analyses provisions for access to culture in the legislation of European countries, as well as policies and programmes in this field (**Laaksonen 2010**). Specific reference is made to individual groups in society, such as people with disabilities, ethnic, national and linguistic minorities, the ageing and the young, but also to broader schemes. The study does not provide a common definition of 'access to culture', but rather examines the issue from a range of perspectives and analyses the prevailing approaches in legislation, policy and academic literature. On the other hand, the research is based on the recognition of cultural rights in international law. Among the key policy issues identified by the study are the need to make cultural provision universal, by addressing inequalities and basing policy on values and principles that have equity, non-discrimination and dignity at their root; the need to promote research and discussion on different forms of access and participation in cultural life; the need for cultural policies that answer the needs of 'users', including young people, cultural minorities, etc.; the need for fostering dialogue between different actors, also including interdisciplinary networking and cooperation; the need to make successful experiences more visible and accessible; the need to have better and more accurate statistics; the need for capacity-building for professionals working in the cultural sector and the need for good legal instruments and follow-up of their implementation.

A list of indicator fields for the evaluation of a cultural rights approach to policy is presented in the study. The list includes 13 fields- all of which could be assessed as regards their legal development (structural), administrative level (process), civil society (outcome) and cultural institutions (process/outcome). The fields identified include 'specific groups (people with disabilities, minorities, women, groups in danger of social exclusion, people in institutions, children and young people)', 'access to heritage' and 'access to other cultures'. Rather than identifying specific indicators, the list operates as a general framework and a checklist (i.e. is there legislation / policy / structures / procedures in the relevant field?) which may later inspire more specific indicator suites.

The Access to Culture Platform through the Work Group on Education and Learning collected examples of best practices on learning and educational experiences through arts and culture from different fields and from all Europe (*We are more! The overlooked potential of learning through cultural engagement*). The examples were analysed by the Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and categorized from the perspective of the eight European key competences. Firstly, the analysis demonstrates that experiences with arts and culture – when of best possible quality – are relevant for all the eight different key competences and that experience with arts and culture is highly relevant in a lifelong and life wide learning perspective. Secondly, the

study shows that arts and culture do have the competence to produce and offer relevant and attractive learning experiences which addresses the European lifelong learning agenda (**Zipsane 2011**).

In *Untraditional Creative Partnerships – Seven Wonders of Arts and Culture in Education* (**Zipsane 2012**), the analysis of seven different arts and cultural activities, where collaboration with others is central, illustrates some of the factors which seem to be the important key to success: It is important for cultural institutions to really recognize partners with competences and capacities which can give added value to a product from arts and culture. It is equally important that the potential of the arts and culture in relation to learning become more widely known and in that respect it is especially the potential of individual and social capacity building through self-esteem which grows when arts and culture go into partnerships with private companies and public authorities and institutions (**Zipsane 2012**). This study uses the perspective of access to culture as a facilitator of learning for some people who may be difficult to reach by formal education and as stimulator of learning more or better in some areas which are natural for arts and culture. This is the case for almost all learners. Access to culture is seen as a way to overcome social and economic barriers for participation in learning and educational activities. The key point in the study is that access to culture in relation to learning and education should not be limited to formal education only and should not be exclusive for children but should be recognized as a learning tool and learning facilitator in a lifelong and life wide perspective and as an asset in both formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Measuring Cultural Participation (**Bollo and al. 2012**), the handbook from UNESCO is one of a set of handbooks commissioned by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) to facilitate the implementation of the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics, by exploring the key topics behind the issues raised therein and presenting existing methodologies to measure them (**Bollo and al. 2012**). By comparing existing approaches to the measurement of cultural participation, the document does not aim to present a reductionist vision, but rather to lead to a deeper understanding of cultural participation and what it involves.

The report focuses on cultural participation rather than access, although references to access are interspersed across the document. Rather than providing a single definition, authors prefer to examine previous definitions of cultural participation and identify common elements among them. Relevant aspects include the agreement that cultural participation is part of everyday life, something which improves quality of life, and a conscious act. Given the study's main focus on the measurement of cultural participation, the key policy issues identified refer to the refinement of definitions and the improvement of research and measurement tools, rather than actual measures to support access to and participation in culture.

The handbook also presents a draft checklist to measure cultural participation that identifies a dozen relevant topics or areas of focus, which involve both actual attendance / participation and non-attendance / non-participation. Each issue is complemented with one or more suggested indicators, sample questions to be used and examples of countries or contexts in which these indicators have been applied. Most of the indicators suggested are of a quantitative nature, although a few qualitative examples are included as well (e.g. 'Reasons for participating / attending', 'Reasons for not attending', 'Meaning of participation', etc.).

Cultural Policies in Times of Change is the report for the Council of Europe prepared by Péter Inkei in order to summarise the findings of a survey sent to ministries in charge of cultural affairs in 49 countries covered by the Council of Europe's programmes, in preparation of the Ministerial Conference held in Moscow in April 2013 (**Inkei 2013**). Evidence was obtained from approximately 21 countries. Questions addressed existing policies to foster access to culture, relevant initiatives in this field, the role of the digital technologies to enhance access and participation and current models of financing in the cultural field.

The document does not present a clear definition of access to culture, but rather focuses on governments' identification of policy priorities and existing measures in this field. However, the case is made for access to culture to be considered a fundamental aspect in the promotion of democracy and something which contributes to tackling social challenges and fostering social inclusion. In this respect, several examples of public and private programmes are presented aiming to foster access to culture by disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities, the elderly, disadvantaged sectors among children and young people, the homeless, migrants, marginalised Roma communities, women at risk of poverty and social exclusion, etc.

The following areas of policy focus are identified throughout the document: exploratory research, including analyses of existing patterns of cultural access and participation; measures aimed at enhancing active participation in cultural life; measures aimed at reaching people who are prevented from participating in culture for social reasons or to use culture in various ways to alleviate social problems; specific measures to foster access to culture among children and young people, both through cultural education at schools and through initiatives by cultural institutions; specific measures to foster cultural participation among the elderly; specific measures to address other social groups, including women (although this only featured in the replies of two governments), the unemployed and people with disabilities, including among others the setting-up of consultative panels of disadvantaged people; specific measures with regard to cultural minorities, including both autochthonous ethnic minorities and migrant groups and new opportunities brought about by the new digital technologies, including through the setting-up of new databases and library catalogues, content digitisation, digital displays, new media literacy schemes, etc.

Di Federico and others produced a background paper entitled 'Governance of Culture – Promoting Access to Culture' for the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture held in April 2013 in Moscow (**Di Federico et al 2013**). The authors take a cultural democracy approach claiming that culture is vital in promoting and maintaining healthy democratic societies, particularly in enabling bottom-up approaches through involvement, equality and diversity. The authors recall the 2005 Warsaw Summit where the political leaders of Europe agreed on the standard-setting potential of the Council of Europe in suggesting cultural policies to Member States that would reflect various democratic values.

The authors define culture as a basic human right and state that *'[t]he right to culture implies equal access, regardless of gender, ethnic and other cultural differences, and requires special attention to the needs of the young, the excluded, the disadvantaged and the disabled'*. And at another place in the paper: *'[a]ccess to culture – whatever the definition – is always unequal as it depends on the necessarily unequal distribution of cultural opportunities*

(institutions, venues, facilities) and personal "resources" (skills, schooling, interests, income, information, leisure time, and household facilities). Greater autonomy of citizens in defining their cultural priorities and habits; giving people a say in matters of public culture; local communities as key arenas of cultural democracy; the need for more convincing proof of supporting the role of culture for democracy; more focus on non-participation. The following indicators for understanding non-participation are suggested: Physical barriers, Psychological barriers, Economic barriers, Social barriers and 'The alternative', i.e. what people do *instead* of culture: "What activities can be considered informal access to culture?", "What activities belong to a broader anthropological conception of culture?" and "What other occupations qualify as cultural on closer inspection or from a different angle?"

The authors outline a number of possible indicators for measuring democratic governance in culture: appropriate strategies, other tools for support, multi-stakeholder approach towards a shared governance of culture, education policies, social policies, architecture and urban planning, immigration policies. Fostering cultural participation as the common denominator, to put the public administration of culture into the broader political, cultural and societal context; the segmentation of non-participation along socio-demographic lines; the implications of the digital era, international dimension, a consensual minimum of shared European standards in terms of: the nature and degree of access to culture; indicators of access and participation; desired effects expected from improved and increased access; and basic criteria of the democratic governance of culture.

An additional background paper was produced by Corina Suteu for the purposes of the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture entitled 'Governance of Culture – Promoting Access to Culture' that was held in April 2013 in Moscow (**Suteu 2013**). The author discusses the European project in the context of globalization, technological change and strong neo-liberal influences in policy-making. The author believes that the Council of Europe should be the leading force in keeping Europe ahead of the game within the global system. She also acknowledges the diversity within Europe, especially emphasizing the 'lack of cultural democracy' in post-communist Europe.

Suteu outlines in the paper that '*Access is the key in enabling the creation of anti-elitist, purely democratic – i.e. egalitarian – societies. If only the few access the arts and cultural goods, the very notion of governance on a broader scale is denied to the citizen*'. There are many issues identified related to access to culture which include external and internal ones. The external issues are the globalization of cultural goods and transversal consumption; the emergence of a global cultural system; information transfer supported by the new technologies and the internet; reconfiguration of cultural participation of audiences, artists, producers and mediators; and the global economic crisis. Internal issues include: the fragmentation of European societies; increasing regionalization; the need for greater access for the neglected citizens; and the increasingly important role of large companies, private projects and advertising agencies.

Instead of indicators on a concrete level the author offers cultural policy recommendations. Initiatives should address the still existing democratic deficit(s) in Europe by means of national cultural policies, by promoting integrated and, as far as possible, co-ordinated cultural policies focusing on education/youth, human rights, employment and cohesion and, by doing so, reinforcing the notion of a European identity based on certain

socio-political and economic values with democratic governance as a supporting pillar. The cross-cutting character of cultural policies should become visible through legislative instruments initiated in this connection by each Member State. The complex relationship between culture and individual freedom, as well as creative freedom, needs to be reconsidered and taken into account in the national cultural policy framework. Cultural policies need to adapt to the fluidity of cultural production today, to the unprecedented interaction between traditional and contemporary and culture and to process-oriented, interdisciplinary and globalised forms of cultural and artistic practice. In order to maintain its role as a laboratory of democratic governance, the Council of Europe should initiate co-operation with all generations and types of users and producers of culture today and take into account the irregular aspect of all systems where art is produced and distributed beyond the boundaries of traditional cultural administrations.

The author recommends making a convincing case for culture, which means inventing better argued narrative on Europe. In addition she recommends that the Council of Europe should more aggressively and resourcefully continue to provide support for encouraging Member States to fully finance research in the field of cultural policies, comparative practices and mapping cultural behaviour. In this connection, there are still considerable disparities between Member States and the reliability of information coming from observatories and research centres in different countries. This becomes a main impediment to the coordination of policy actions that might be effective at European level.

This study highlights the present “weakness” of ministries of culture as trend setters for a visible cultural policy. Awareness-campaigns like *We are more* should be engineered in favour of the Council of Europe’s work, but also in order to raise awareness of the importance and relevance of ministries of culture in the Member States. Immediate action should be taken by the Council of Europe to urge private companies, advertising agencies and strong networks to enter into partnerships with NGOs and flagship projects supported by the ministries of culture in Member States and the Council of Europe’s own flagship projects. These partnerships can be a fertile ground for making sure that different sets of values are incorporated into the purely market- and consumption-oriented way in which cultural events are designed.

Finally, the author stresses the need to ensure the non-negotiability of certain cultural rights and collaboration with UNESCO, and promotes “culture” in relation to “governance” and “democracy” as a 4th pillar of sustainable development. The Council of Europe should consider joining forces with the organisers of the Agenda 21 for culture in order to work on the promotion of culture as the 4th pillar of development. This pioneering idea contains all the ingredients necessary for a democratic and participatory way for citizens to be seen as the supporters and beneficiaries of holistic cultural policies.

Specifically on the digital agenda of access to culture the research efforts have intensified during the last few years. When considering access issues related to digital culture the focus of the early writings have been initially placed on general connectivity and providing access to infrastructure (technical access issues), but in recent analyses, real participation opportunities for users and their required skills and competences have been taken into account as well.

In the background paper 'Assessing the impact of digitisation on access to culture and creation, aggregation and curation of content' (also written for the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture held in April 2013 in Moscow), Frau-Meigs explores '*the policy-relevant consequences of the changes brought about by ICT-mediated culture*' (Frau-Meigs 2013). In the digital domain, access issues are placed in a wider framework of ensuring balance between commercial and public interest and ensuring active users' full engagement with creation, curation, and aggregation of content, that also involves awareness of new literacies needed (i.e. 'screen-smartness', etc). Thus issues related to copyright, net neutrality and open access represent a relevant framework for considering access in the digital domain as well.

When considering access to culture issues in the digital context, the current general imbalance should be taken into account. The author quotes from the available studies that indicate that internet use remains strongly correlated with gender, age, education, nationality and household income. This indicates that the digital divide is therefore a cultural divide that prompts development of policy measures that would minimize inequalities in access to culture. Additionally 'practices such as commercial bundling and locked-in systems try to fence in users behind digital pay-walls' making open sharing more difficult.

The author claims that there is a lack of information on how supply and demand sides interact to determine the online value of content creation and appropriation. Cultural institutions that often serve as intermediaries and provide access to cultural content have strongly felt the change of the overall context of their work. In the digital context, a significant impact has been made by the restrictions due to IP rights. It is necessary to reconsider the role of museums, archives and libraries in the digital era and propose solutions to ensure that the values they defend (protection of heritage, equity of access, etc.) are transposed to networked cultures. The author warns that it is also important to recognise new repositories of culture emerging online and see how they fit with the current heritage policies as '*for most people non-official sites have become the first place they go to in order to have their first encounter with culture, be it by browsing or more participatory activities.*'

The digital environment enables different ecosystems where different cooperation models such as crowd-sourcing and open-sourcing could bring new social benefits and new opportunities for creative practices and education, provided that the public interest and users' rights of access and expression are preserved in such ecosystems.

The paper concludes by drawing attention to the importance of preserving public interest and the hard-won freedoms of the pre-digital era in the digital environment and it stresses that '*[I]egacy arts and infomediaries such as publishers, libraries and museums are at risk if they are not given legal and regulatory support by states and civil society. Their legitimacy in terms of public goods, which are of interest to all citizens, with opportunities for self-actualisation, life longings and civic agency, needs to be retooled and reasserted for the digital age.*'

In the study *Public and Commercial Models of Access in the Digital Era*, produced on a request from the European Parliament, the authors explore the public and commercial digital models of access to culture (Feijoo, et al. 2013). The study provides an overview of the status and evolution of the way in which cultural and creative content (both commercial and public) is delivered to and accessed by the wider public in Europe. The study has put in focus the media and content sector that encompasses a set of industries including music, film and video,

publishing, according to their existing value chains with three main stages: production, distribution and consumption.

The study analyses commercial content and public content separately. It starts with an analysis of four of the main (commercial) industries in the media and content sector (film, videogames, books and newspapers), aiming to highlight the disruption brought about by digitisation, their common attributes as well as their dissimilarities across the industries and possible implications for their future developments. The public content has been examined separately, due to its distinctive features (e.g. regulatory and public good implications). The study does not provide any explicit definition of 'access'. It approaches the subject from the perspective of business models applied in the analysed sectors, focusing on models of delivering content to their users: e.g. via web browser, client applications, mobile applications, etc.; and payment models: subscription, pay per download, *freemium* model, etc., open or closed environments etc.

Digitisation has brought radical transformation to the cultural industries sector, reducing production and distribution costs, as well as changes in user consumption and perception of media and content. These changes have changed the structure of the content industries and posed new challenges. New entrants and new media have appeared and new digital stakeholders are currently leading the process of re-intermediation. Public information and content is only starting to use the potential of these new entrants and new media, and has yet to work out a model to reconcile public objectives and commercial interests in the digital environment. From the consumers' perspective, there is now considerably less difference between public information and content and commercial products/offers. The study outlined a number of recommendations to address the challenges identified in the transition to the digital era.

The first set of recommendations of the study focuses on the need for *further funding* of digitisation, preservation, and technical and business innovations. This investment is needed because of the positive economic and societal externalities arising from digitising content. However, funding schemes need to be re-thought. Further funding should: involve continued support for the digital transformation of media and content industries; focus on research into and development of technical and business innovations; consider cross-media production as a prime opportunity; establish new forms of long-term orientated funds, particularly for non-profit organisations; create specific programs and tools for entrepreneurs and innovators in digital media and content; aim at creating European multi-sided platforms and ecosystems in digital media and content, in particular using the sectors and areas in which Europe is leading; promote cross-sector and cross-border production and distribution of content; encourage PPP in the public domain for the acquisition of expertise, the use of existing technologies and for funding initiatives; and re-design existing programs to avoid duplication of initiatives.

Together with funding, European policies should also be orientated towards *increasing coordination and creation of economies of scale* in the use of technical infrastructures: create economies of scale both in technical infrastructures and management units for production and distribution of digital content and media; encourage centralised or coordinated rights management agencies; investigate and reduce transaction costs in the provision of digital media and content throughout Europe; fight insufficient provision of digital content and media across EU territories due to market barriers; coordinate activities in the digital public provision of content, including production, distribution, consumption and negotiations with existing

platforms; bring content to wherever the user is, e.g. by placing content in existing platforms; foster coordination among initiatives, and at all levels, in the digital provision of public content particularly in their relationship with commercial initiatives; and adopt a harmonised framework and package of measures – promotion of legal offers, user awareness, collaboration of players involved in transactions with content and media, specific legal measures – to fight online copyright infringement to “keep honest users honest”.

Specific recommendations regarding the improvement of *multi-territorial licences and revision of the intellectual property regime*: improve harmonisation of framework for digital intellectual property rights and review the intellectual property regime to foster innovative and creative developments, which is particularly needed for orphan works; consider an improved multi-territorial licence regime – including speedy implementation through coordination of existing licences – for media and content to bypass existing barriers to distribution and consumption inside the EU; explore, research – and promote – new avenues in the intellectual property regime (common policies, open licences, etc); promote open access to orphan and out-of-commerce works; and guarantee educational use of public content under special conditions (open access is recommended).

The fourth set of recommendations is orientated towards the *improvement of access to public content and the promotion of innovation* around it: re-think public policy on media and content, including the assessment of direct provision of content and information through diverse variations on public service; consider in particular commercial initiatives and social innovation to meet the objectives in public production and diffusion of content; create an ecosystem around public content: open data and distribution platform initiatives; experiment and use – for specific types of public content – new flexible business models taken from commercial content initiatives; in particular consider the “freemium” model as it makes a clear distinction between public service, basic objectives and further commercial interests; investigate and promote the role of users as “prosumers” of content of public interest; and promote the creation of innovative user experiences from the wealth of public content, eliminating the current barriers so that innovators and entrepreneurs can use it fairly.

The final set of recommendations is orientated towards raising *user awareness and education of highly skilled professionals*. In particular policies should be oriented to: raise user awareness of digital European heritage; invest in talent: create positions in the public sector with the required digital expertise; and to create a forum with the industry to work on a European curriculum for the media and content sectors.

Unlike policy definitions of access to culture, researchers usually try to provide a more comprehensive and holistic view of the factors necessary to ensure and increase access to culture. Cuny and Polacék (2012) discuss different kinds of censorship as limitations to access to culture. Laaksonen et al. (2010) claim that certain social groups need to be specifically targeted to increase access including people with disabilities, ethnic, national and linguistic minorities, the ageing and the young. Their study does not provide a definition of access to culture but discusses the issue of cultural rights in international law. Similarly Zipsane (2012) focuses on access to culture as key to overcoming social and economic barriers for participation in learning and educational activities. Bollo et al. (2012) consider cultural participation instead of access, claiming that participation in general improves the quality of

life. Legal rights and democratic aspects of access to culture are once again emphasized in the study by Inkei (2013) who believes that culture is a fundamental aspect in the promotion of democracy and social inclusion. Di Federico et al (2013) emphasize access as important in overcoming cultural and social differences. Suteu (2013) believes that access can enable anti-elitist and truly egalitarian societies. Frau-Meigs (2013) emphasizes the importance of media and information literacy to access new types of cultural content and engage in cultural production. Feijo et al (2013) also look at the changes brought forth by the digital environment and consider different business models for delivering appropriate content to interested users. These definitions revolve around a core of similar and related issues such as democratic rights, education, social inclusion, quality of life, media and information literacy, etc.

Conclusion

This short literature review serves to place the 'Access to Culture – Policy Analysis' project in the broader context of recent contributions to this issue at European level, thus enabling project partners to build on existing knowledge. Among the issues which stand out in the analysis is the progressive assumption of a rights-based approach to access to culture. By placing this objective among other human rights and highlighting its links with human dignity, the recent understanding of access to culture has also increasingly explored connections with other areas of welfare and public policy, including lifelong learning, social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, employment and citizen participation. A more complex approach to access to culture emerges therefrom, which needs to take account of several aspects:

- the **obstacles**: information, price, skills, physical barriers, etc.;
- the different **layers** or **levels** of access and participation: from *non-users* or *non-audiences*, through attendees, to active participants, which include those who develop their creative skills and those who take part in decision-making, among others; and
- the different **domains** in which access to culture takes place nowadays, including the digital sphere (with policy implications including how to address the digital divide), the informal areas of cultural practice and the more traditional spaces of cultural access and participation.

These elements will inform the next steps in the development of the project.

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