Culture

Relevance of gender in the policy area

Culture can be defined as the systems of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people. Cultures are shaped by people, and people are shaped by cultures. It is a dynamic interaction. In this broad context, cultural policy is the area of public policymaking that governs activities related to the arts and culture. Such policy governs a sector of immense complexity, embracing a range of activities. These extend from the preservation and restoration of natural, historical and cultural heritage to museums and exhibitions, activities in the arts (music, theatre, etc.), entertainment, media and e-culture platforms.

Gender aspects are relevant both in relation to the broad definition of culture as a 'social construction' and to the way in which cultural policy is designed and implemented. This is true for several reasons. First of all, cultural rights are human rights, and as such are the rights of both women and men. Across all areas of culture, human rights are a precondition for enriching cultural diversity and enabling human creativity. The right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. The promotion of gender equality and the combat against gender discrimination are twin goals of the EU, including in the cultural field. More significantly still, "gender, culture and rights intersect in intricate and complex ways, and cultural rights must be understood as also relating to who in the community holds the power to define its collective identity".

Second, gender is intrinsically linked to culture. The socially constructed roles of women and men are culturally determined, and differ in time and place. Gender is a cultural and social construction, defined by the power relations between women and men, and the norms and values regarding 'masculine' and 'feminine' roles and behaviour. Therefore, collective beliefs about 'typical male' or 'typical female' roles might contribute to the creation of stereotypes that may limit or enable opportunities for women and men to act within their cultural context. For instance, the horizontal and vertical gender segregation of the labour market is an example of structural gender inequality as a result of centuries of gender stereotyping and discrimination. People's lives are embedded in a cultural context that is structured along these asymmetric gender roles. Individual women and men can accept or resist these socially constructed roles: 'Culture and tradition can enable or obstruct, and be oppressive or liberating for different people at different times. There is nothing sacred about culture, and value judgements need to be made about which aspects of culture to hold on to, and which to let go of'.

In addition, traditional and social media play a relevant role in shaping gender roles within societies. With regard to cultural policy specifically, this may contribute to gender inequalities and discrimination in the production of cultural content. As acknowledged by EIGE's Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: women and the media, media content is often characterised by a stereotypical portrayal of women. This may also be due to women's limited access to the creation of media products and to decision-making in the media and culture industries.

Third, patterns in culture consumption and participation differ considerably between women and men. A field study from 2007 shows that gender is a significant factor in the context of participation rates in cultural activities. Accordingly, men dedicate much more time to watching sports than women (53% of men versus 29% of women). On the other hand, women are more likely than men to have read a book (74% of women versus 67% of men), been to the theatre (34% of women versus 29% of men) and visited a public library (37% of women versus 32% of men) over the previous year.

Furthermore, the reasons for not participating in cultural activities are also significantly different for women and men: men (30%) are more likely than women (23%) to cite lack of interest as a reason for non-participation, while women (31%) are more likely than men (26%) to say that expense is an issue. Family responsibilities are also an important factor in explaining low participation rates, as they may "impede cultural engagement most likely via the demands this places on a respondent's time. We see this from the fact that 52% of those living in a household of 4 or more persons say that this can be a barrier, compared to 30% of those living alone".

Fourth, women represent the largest share of graduates in the arts and humanities, and generally speaking, graduates in these disciplines tend to work in the cultural and creative sector. In some countries, evidence is now emerging that women are becoming increasingly attracted to the creative industries. In the UK, for example, "designer fashion in particular appears to be one of the creative sectors [that is] especially appealing to women in terms of employment opportunity and new venture creation".

Despite the relevance of gender equality in the cultural sector, there are several gender gaps hampering women's equal participation in this field. These are as follows:

gender stereotypes in the cultural sector
segregation in the cultural sector labour market
limited participation of women in decision-making positions.

Issues of gender inequality in the policy area
Gender stereotypes in the cultural sector

The role of the cultural industry – and in particular the media industry – has always been considered crucial for the promotion of gender equality. The media not only reflects but also creates sociocultural patterns and norms, and is increasingly seen as a powerful actor in shaping public opinion and culture.

The media in general continues to depict public life as a male domain and even seemingly insignificant factors may contribute to strengthening or perpetuating traditional gender stereotypes and stereotyped attitudes. Recent and ongoing social changes make it obvious that the traditional role model associated with women is no longer appropriate and realistic, in that increasing numbers of women are playing a leading role in society. This development should be more appropriately reflected in the media.

At the same time, advertising and marketing not only reflect culture but also contribute to the creation and perpetuation of gender stereotypes. Even if advertising is basically a marketing tool, advertisements convey values, attitudes and stereotypes, potentially influencing general behaviour beyond purchasing decisions and proposing an outlook on the world through their cumulative effects.

The culture sector is also crucial in breaking through outdated harmful stereotypes and promoting cultural diversity based on gender equality. For example, the relevance of culture to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment has been stressed with regard to some women's movements in Latin America. These movements have managed to negotiate and contest meanings associated with culture and as a result have reconfigured gender values, attitudes and behaviours. For example, the movement of Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo questions the cultural construct of motherhood and the traditional role of the mother caring for the family within the home.

Segregation in the cultural sector labour market

Several reports (UNESCO 2015, UNESCO 2014, EIGE 2013, FIA 2008) note that despite the high number of women graduates in education and training in the cultural sphere, women are more often employed in low-paid jobs. They still struggle to advance their careers because of several persistent inequalities such as (horizontal and vertical) segregation patterns and/or the phenomenon of the gender pay gap.

Sexism in society and culture creates conditions of profound difference and inequality between women and men. This has marked effects on all forms of work, and such difference and inequality is likely to assume particular forms in the cultural industries, due to their distinguishing features compared to other industries.

In the cultural industries, public relations and marketing are the roles that are most often performed by women rather than by men. Broadly speaking, and in terms of the composition of its workforce, the coordination and facilitation of production remains a markedly women-dominated subsector of the cultural sphere. This relates closely to a third area of occupational segregation: the fact that 'creative' jobs tend to be occupied by men. A further form of occupational segregation by sex can be observed in the cultural industries. Men tend to dominate technical and 'craft' jobs, such as camera operators and editing staff in television, and technical staff and road managers (or 'roadies') in the music industry.

According to EIGE's study on women and the media, these disparities are rooted in a phenomenon of progressive segregation into different career paths. Persistent inequalities in the form of under-representation, glass-ceiling barriers to advancement and low pay (compared to men) remain firmly embedded within the media sector. There is a large degree of vertical segregation within media organisations, where women remain vastly under-represented at higher levels. A considerable body of work shows that a glass ceiling prevents the advancement of women into higher-ranking jobs. Studies also suggest that women and men are progressively segregated by different functions, with different degrees of importance and/or prestige (e.g. magazines versus newspapers) and roles requiring different skills and competences (e.g. low representation in technical areas).

The study Creative industries: focus on employment, conducted by the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport in 2014, shows that the creative economy employs a lower proportion of women than the wider economy of the UK. In the creative economy, 35.8% of jobs are filled by women, compared to 46.9% in the country as a whole. Information technology, software and computer services accounted for around a third (31.5%) of all jobs in the creative economy. However, this group also had the lowest proportion of posts occupied by women (18.4%). The group with the highest proportion of posts occupied by women was museums, galleries and libraries (69.5%). Furthermore, a 2012 study on women in journalism, carried out by the UK-based Women in Journalism group, indicates that just over one fifth (22%) of front-page by-lines were attributable to women. This suggests that the most significant news assignments continued to be delegated less frequently to women.

Gendered division of labour in the arts and culture sector can also be observed in Finland. A policy analysis survey showed that jobs in the culture field are mostly held by women, but there is clear gender segregation in many occupations and organisations, both between and within different cultural fields. In public museums in Finland, in 2013, women accounted for 80% of all staff and 75% of senior management positions. Yet, in 2003, 73% of artistic directors of theatres and 68% of all theatre directors were men. Similarly, in the film and music industries, women are clearly in the minority. For instance, in 2009, of all the artistic directors and conductors of member orchestras of the Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras, 29 were men and only one was a woman. In 2007, 34% of all permanent orchestra players were women, and 66% were men.

Women in decision-making in the cultural sector

EIGE's 2013 study on women and the media underlines that, in the years surveyed, women represented 40% of journalists in European newsrooms, but held only 3% of the decision-making posts. Governance roles for women range from 17% in France to 37% in the UK, while top management roles range from 20% in Germany and Spain to 33% in France. In Hungary, among the 50 largest companies examined, women held 42% of management positions, but these positions were stratified in a pyramid structure. Women held 29% of the positions in the middle range, 21% at the executive level, but only 7% at the highest (CEO) level. Furthermore, the report emphasises that much of the media sector continues to be dominated by men. Bearing in mind the importance of the media as opinion-shapers, this imbalance inhibits women's efforts to progress in their careers, and, equally, to influence media content.

With reference to specific countries, very large gender gaps are reported in the UK cultural sector. A 2013 Centre for Women and Democracy report states:

> *"Of the national and regional museums and galleries surveyed, only 28% have a female director. The boards of these institutions are 72.6% male and men account for an even more alarming 90.7% of chairs. The situation is not much better when it comes to the world of theatre; the report finds that women make up only 31.8% of chief executives of national theatre companies – 85.8% of these companies' boards are chaired by men."*

In Germany, women continue to be under-represented not only in leadership positions in the cultural policy sector but also in artistic professions and cultural institutions. However, more recent studies indicate a certain trend towards greater involvement of women in decision-making positions in cultural institutions and cultural public policymaking. Only 16% of the country's culture departments have women in decision-making positions, but 48% of the cultural administrations are led by women. Women hold a position as minister or state secretary for culture in just 3 of the 16 states of the Federal Republic.

Gender equality policy objectives at EU and international level

EU level

With individual EU Member States responsible for their own culture sector policies, the role of the European Union, and in particular of the European Commission, is to help address common challenges. These include the impact of the digital shift, changing models of cultural governance and the need to support the innovation potential of the cultural and creative sectors.

European Commission

Equality between women and men has been a common value and a principle of the EU since the founding Treaty of Rome (1957). The Treaty of Lisbon (2009) reconfirms that gender equality is a founding value (Art. 2), and an internal objective which shall be promoted by the EU (Art. 3). The EU is duty bound to strive for equality between women and men in all its activities, including culture. Building on a solid EU and international legal and policy framework on gender equality, in 2010 the European Commission renewed its commitment to promoting gender equality in all its policies by launching the Women's charter ([1]). This policy framework is the basis for the EU Strategy for equality between women and men 2010 – 2015, which spells out actions under 6 priority areas. These are relevant to all sectors and policy areas, including the cultural sector ([2]).

The priority area of 'horizontal issues' pays particular attention to the promotion of good practices in gender roles in youth, education, culture and sport, highlighting the role of men in promoting gender equality. Another key action foreseen under horizontal issues is the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), including the development and updating of indicators, with the support of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). This implies the use of sex-disaggregated culture statistics, and the focus of specific attention on women and the media.

The EU strategy to achieve these goals is based on a twin-track approach: on the one hand, gender mainstreaming (working from a gender equality perspective in all policy areas), and on the other, specific measures targeted at particular groups (women, men or both), with the aim of achieving gender equality.

Furthermore, the European Commission has supported 14 culture open method of coordination (OMC) ([3]) groups since 2008, working on important issues such as:

- cultural and creative industries
- intercultural dialogue
- access to culture
- culture and education
- mobility of artists and culture professionals
- mobility of works of art.

These groups have produced several reports, some of which also focus on gender issues. These include policies and good practices in the public arts and in cultural institutions in terms of promoting better access to, and wider participation in, culture.

Furthermore, some European Commission interventions in other fields are particularly relevant for mainstreaming gender in the cultural sector. These are summarised below.

1   Entrepreneurship (related to the EU objective of boosting creative industries)

The main European Commission gender equality objectives in entrepreneurship support are deployed within the following:

> the 2008 Small Business Act, which provides for better access to finance for women, development of entrepreneurial networks for women and targeted support measures

> the European Commission Regulation No 800/2008, which extends the granting of state aid to new enterprises created by women and has supported the creation of networks of women entrepreneurs

> the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, adopted in 2012, which urges Member States to design and implement national strategies for women's entrepreneurship that aim to increase the share of women-led companies; collect sex-disaggregated data and produce annual updates on the state of women entrepreneurs nationally; continue and expand the existing networks of female entrepreneurship ambassadors and mentors for women entrepreneurs; and implement policies enabling women to achieve an adequate work–life balance

> within the priority of equal economic independence, the EU Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010 – 2015, adopted in 2010, includes references to women's entrepreneurship.

2 Regional development, and in particular EU funds

Regional development, and in particular EU funds, is another intervention field in which the European Commission priorities indirectly tackle gender equality in the cultural sector. As detailed below, culture is a specific objective of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which also promotes social infrastructure aimed, inter alia, at ensuring a better work–life balance.

Furthermore, gender equality is at the centre of the European social fund (ESF). The main European Commission gender equality priorities that are promoted by ESF funding and relevant to gender equality in the cultural sector are as follows:

> increasing the sustainable participation and progress of women in employment

> reducing gender-based segregation

> combating gender stereotypes in the labour market

> promoting the reconciliation of work and personal life for all

> promoting the equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men, in the case of ESF.

[1] The Women's charter was launched to mark the 15th anniversary of the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Beijing United Nations World Conference on Women, and the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

[2] These areas are equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; gender equality in external actions; horizontal issues.

[3] The open method of coordination is a light but structured technique used by EU Member States to cooperate at European level, including in the field of culture.

International level

UNESCO

The UNESCO culture conventions represent a global policy framework for good governance in the area of culture. This policy framework respects cultural diversity and is fully in line with existing international human rights instruments. Gender parity is promoted among participants and experts in UNESCO's programmes and workshops to promote equality in decision-making processes, education and empowerment opportunities. UNESCO states that:

"

"The different Conventions have developed gender-sensitive and gender-responsive actions that aim to reduce the gender gaps in the cultural sector by strengthening the knowledge base (e.g. gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data), building up individual and institutional capacities and technical skills, conducting targeted women's empowerment activities, developing tool kits and guidelines, and supporting the inclusion of gender equality in cultural policies among Member States." [Unesco, 2014]

Gender equality is a key priority within UNESCO's work on heritage, creativity and cultural diversity: "The equal participation, access and contribution to cultural life of women and men are human rights as well as cultural rights, and an important dimension for guaranteeing freedom of expression for all". UNESCO's recent report Gender equality: heritage and creativity highlights the need to be proactive in order to accelerate the process of putting policy into practice by promoting equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, and girls and boys, in the fields of heritage and creativity.

Policy cycle in culture

The gender dimension can be integrated into all phases of the policy cycle. For a detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in each phase of the policy cycle, visit EIGE's Gender mainstreaming platform.

Below, you can find useful resources and practical examples of mainstreaming gender into cultural policy. The resources are organised according to the most relevant phase of the policy cycle that they may serve.

Practical examples of gender mainstreaming in the cultural sector

Spain

The Spanish Act 3/2007 for equality between women and men provides recommendations on gender equality in cultural. The ACT urges policy makers in the cultural field to mainstream gender equality in their policies and practices in the cultural field, with particular regards to creation, artistic and intellectual production, and to dissemination of arts and culture. The Act also foresees the implementation of active policies, supported by economic incentives, and the enhancement of gender balance in artistic and cultural public offerings. To support the concrete implementation of these policy measures, the Institute for Women promoted a funding line dedicated to promoting gender equality in the field of art and culture.

Furthermore, the 7/2010 Act on Audio-visual communication promotes the prevention and elimination of gender discrimination in this area. The Act was adopted following previous measures to promote gender equality, such as the 1/2004 Act on integrated protection measures against gender violence, addressing advertising and media, and the above mentioned Act 3/2007 on gender equality.

Another initiative promoting gender equality in the cultural field regards the programme Pioneers in Europe. The Ministry of Culture promoted it in 2010. The initiative is implemented in 17 state museums consists in the design and implementation of museum itineraries around women and art. The online catalogue Heritage of femininity is one of the main outputs of the initiative. In 2011, the Ministry of culture also published the book Women and culture: equality policies, which discusses developments of gender equality in the cultural area.

The Festival Ellas Crean/They Create, launched in 2014 by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality is another initiative aimed at promoting gender equality in the cultural sector. The Festival aims to enhance and make known women's creative potential. Through the activities promoted by the Cervantes Institute, the Festival is now carried out in 30 cities across 5 continents.

Denmark

The 2004 Act on Gender Equality urges all public authorities to take action for promoting gender quality in public administration. In this context, in 2005, the Ministry of Culture published a report on gender equality in the Ministry and other 22 cultural institutions. The report states that, since 2003, there has been an increase in the number of women leaders of cultural institutions.

The 2011 governmental programme A Denmark that stands together also promotes gender equality in the cultural sector.

Germany

Gender equality in culture is a major concern of public institutions in this sector at both local and regional level. Various Länder ministries for cultural affairs enhance gender equality in culture by providing funding to projects addressed to or targeting women in the cultural field. For instance, Frauenkulturbüro NRW, an office for female artists in North Rhine-Westphalia, is one of the initiatives sustained in this area.

Initiatives to promote gender equality in the cultural sector at local level have also been promoted along the years, such as, for instance: the Frauen Museum in Bonn and Wiesbaden, the women's film festivals Feminale in Cologne and the Femme Totale in Dortmund. At local level, it's also worth recalling the work of the local gender equality offices that promote numerous initiatives in these areas.

The Gabriele Münter prize to professional women artists over the age of 40, awarded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth also is another relevant initiative for enhancing gender equality in the cultural sector.

Sweden

Since 2006, gender and diversity mainstreaming into policy initiatives and services is mandatory for all Swedish agencies and institutions in order to commit all bodies towards the long-term objective of achieving gender equality in all areas. In the cultural area, the Swedish Arts Council (Kulturrådet) is committed to this objective, through the obligation. The Swedish Arts Council is in charge of monitoring and promoting improvements in gender equality in the performing arts field. Since 2006, the Council has taken several measures to promote gender equality in its work and organisation, such as, for instance: mainstreaming gender equality in the funding lines of the Council; financing long-term projects that promote gender equality in the performing arts, reports on gender equality in performing arts such as the 2006 and 2009 reports that analyse funding for gender mainstreaming in the performing arts and produce policy recommendations for further achievements in this area

Austria

There have been several studies that investigate the situation of women in art and culture – for example, on gender budgeting, the symmetry of genders and women in cultural professions and the creative industries.

The key milestones of the EU culture policy are presented below

Council of Europe Recommendation R(84)17 on Equality between women and men in the media

Read it here.

1984 - 1984

Establishment of the programme Cultural capital of the European Union

Read it here.

1985 - 1985

Treaty establishing the European Community

Treaty establishing the European Community (Amsterdam consolidated version) – Part three: Community policies – Title XII: Culture – Article 151 – Article 128 – EC Treaty (Maastricht consolidated version) – Article 128 – EEC Treaty. Read it here.

1992 - 1992

Council Regulation (EEC)

Council Regulation (EEC) No 3911/92 of 9 December 1992 on the export of cultural goods.Read it [here](#).

1992 - 1992

Council Directive 93/7/EEC

Council Directive 93/7/EEC of 15 March 1993 on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State. Read it [here](#).

1993 - 1993

Decision No 719/96/EC

Decision No 719/96/EC of 29 March 1996 establishing the KALEIDOSCOPE programme to support artistic and cultural activities in Europe. Read it [here](#).

1996 - 1996

Adoption of the Ariane and Raphael cultural programmes.

Adoption of the Ariane and Raphael cultural programmes. Read it [here](#).

1997 - 1997

EU Parliamentary Resolution

EU Parliamentary Resolution of 25 July 1997 on discrimination against women in advertising. Read it [here](#).

1997 - 1997

Culture 2000 programme

Decision No 508/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 programme. Read it here.

2000 - 2000

Directive 2001/29/EC and Decision No. 1855/2006/EC

Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society.

Decision No. 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing the Culture Programme (2007 to 2013).

2001 - 2001

Resolution of the Council

Resolution of the Council of 16 November 2007 on a European agenda for culture. Read it here.

2007 - 2007

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world {SEC(2007) 570}. Read it here.

2007 - 2007

Resolution 1557 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Resolution 1557 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, entitled Image of women in advertising focused on women and advertising and the multiple problems of stereotypes deeply rooted to the image of women in society and which we also encounter when dealing with the media as a whole. Read it here.

2007 - 2007

Europe 2020

Europe 2020: the European Union strategy for growth and employment (digital culture initiative, media initiative and copyright initiative).

2010 - 2010

Green Paper

Green Paper – unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries. Read it here.

2010 - 2010

AC opinion on breaking gender stereotypes in the media

European Commission Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, opinion on breaking gender stereotypes in the media. Read it here.

2010 - 2010

Creative Europe programme (2014 to 2020)

Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC Text with EEA relevance. Read it here.

2013 - 2013

Work Plan for Culture (2015 – 2018)

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015 – 2018). Read it here.

2014 - 2014

Current policy priorities at EU level

Culture has been recognised as a European competence firstly by the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), which states that 'the Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common heritage to the fore' (Art. 128). The Lisbon Treaty (2007) reinforced Europe's competencies around culture (Art. 167 Lisbon Treaty), with the inclusion of more references. Since then, the EC and the European Parliament have set out to recognise the cultural sector's value, also considering cultural issues into other parts of Commission activity such as innovation policy. For regional policy, the communication on regional policy contributing to smart growth in Europe (COM (2010) 553) highlights the role of culture and creative industries. They are described as being in a 'strategic position to link creativity and innovation' and as catalysts for structural change in many industrial zones and rural areas. They have the potential to rejuvenate their economies and contribute to a change of the public image of regions. In fact, culture is one of the intervention areas funded under the 2014 – 2020 ERDF. The 2014 – 2020 ERDF regulation foresees that

"in order to maximise their contribution to the objective of supporting employment-friendly growth, activities supporting sustainable tourism, culture and natural heritage should be part of a territorial strategy for specific areas, including the conversion of declining industrial regions. Support for such activities should also contribute to strengthening innovation and the use of ICT, SMEs, environment and resource efficiency or the promotion of social inclusion." *European Commission, Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013*

The 2007 EU cultural agenda foresees the following priorities for EU action in the cultural field:

promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue
promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth, employment, innovation and competitiveness
promotion of culture as a vital element in the EU's international relations.

These priorities are further developed within the 2015 – 2018 Work Plan for Culture, which sets the main priorities of action for policymaking in the cultural field:

accessible and inclusive culture
cultural heritage
cultural and creative sectors: creative economy and innovation
promotion of cultural diversity, culture in EU external relations, and mobility.

To address these 3 main priorities, the Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) has undertaken several initiatives under the European agenda for culture in recent years [1]. The agenda for culture was the basis for the Work Plan for Culture 2011 – 2014, which provides 6 priority areas for culture under which specific activities will be pursued:

Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and accessible and inclusive culture: This area includes issues such as cultural participation by disadvantaged groups, and support to culturally inclusive cities.
Cultural and creative industries: This area includes the promotion of culture in local and regional development, support for cultural and creative industries, and the development of

cultural tourism and the establishment of the European Creative Industries Alliance.

Skills and mobility: DG EAC plans to identify different types of successful creative partnerships as a basis for a policy handbook to promote such partnerships, and to develop a good practice manual.

Cultural heritage: The work includes the digitisation and mobility of collections and the development of a toolkit on the fight against trafficking of cultural goods.

Culture and external relations: This area particularly focuses on the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expressions by EU and partner countries beyond the EU.

Culture statistics: Improvement of sampling of data on mobility of artists and culture professionals, and of methodologies, to contribute to a new edition of a Eurostat 'pocket book'.

A funding programme, Creative Europe, will run between 2014 and 2020. The culture sector can be an excellent conduit for improving relations between Member States, as well as furthering social inclusion. The agenda thus contributes to both the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs, and satisfies Europe's commitments to international agreements such as the United Nations Conventions on Culture. Europe 2020 is about delivering growth that is smart – through more effective investments in education, research and innovation – sustainable and inclusive.

[1]

For example, the Council Work Plan for Culture 2008 – 2010 defining the culture-related initiatives to be carried out at national and EU level between 2008 and 2010, followed by the Work Plan for Culture 2011 – 2014, adopted on 2 December 2010.

Want to know more?