

TC Berlin 2017 - English

The European Union promotes a wealth of culture and creativity. Culture and creativity are at the core of the European project. Culture shapes our identities, aspirations and how we relate

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to others ~~and the world~~. It also shapes the places and landscapes where we live and the lifestyles we lead. The ~~rapidly~~ changing pace of technology presents both opportunities and challenges for Europe's

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cultural and creative sectors. The European Union is committed to helping all those involved in these ~~sectors~~, from local communities celebrating their ~~cultural~~ heritage to the producers of a

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~~award-winning~~ film, to embrace the opportunities that come their way ~~and overcome the obstacles they face~~. The challenges are significant. Cultural diversity is an asset for the European

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Union, but linguistic and cultural differences lead to market fragmentation. New digital technologies are having a great impact on traditional distribution methods. For instance, vast libraries

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have come off the shelves and onto hard drives, ~~but it~~ ⁶ ⁷ ¹ ² is difficult to build ₃ ₄ ₅ sustainable business models. Europe's

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cultural and creative sectors contribute to economic growth, employment,

innovation and social cohesion. In addition, Europe's cultural ~~and creative~~ sectors have proven to be more resilient than other sectors in times of economic downturn and contribute to the

development of skills and urban regeneration, while positively impacting other sectors such as tourism and information and communication technology. In this context, the countries of the

~~European Union~~ all have their own ways of dealing with issues relating to aspects such as culture and audiovisual policy. The work done by the European Union integrates this and adds a new dimension

to it. Information gathered from the European Union ~~as a whole~~ can be used to support national policy decisions or provide ~~ex~~amples of best practices that others can share. Dedicated cooperation

mechanisms ~~among~~ European Union Member States have been established for this purpose. A single market for audiovisual media and the establishment of a ~~safer~~ Internet program to protect children

online across the European Union are ~~just~~ two ways in which a European Union-wide

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approach can go further than tackling such issues at national levels. Many ~~regions~~ and ~~cities~~ see how culture and

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the creative sectors contribute to their economic competitiveness and create jobs. This fact is why European Union regional policy supports strategic investments in culture and the ~~cultural and creative~~

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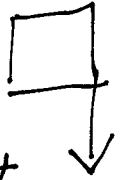
sectors through ~~dedicated~~ funds. In order to deliver its agenda for culture, Europe relies on solid partnerships between all actors, including ~~the~~ Member ~~States~~, regions, cultural organizations and other

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cultural operators. Among their activities, they propose grassroots projects to enhance cultural tourism or urban regeneration in culturally ~~significant~~ areas or support the

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distribution of independent films. All these and many other goals are best achieved when organizations at ~~different~~ levels combine their efforts ~~and~~ ~~resources~~. National authorities, European

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Union institutions and the cultural sector across Europe have been working ~~closely~~ together for years to pursue ~~three~~ main objectives. The first one is about cultural diversity and

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dialogue between cultures. The second one is about culture as a catalyst for creativity and innovation. The ~~third and last~~ one is about culture as part of the ~~European Union's~~

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international relations. In this cooperation framework, national authorities can appoint representatives for European Union-wide expert groups where national and regional best

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practices and new ways of working together on priority topics are discussed in a form of governance based on voluntary cooperation between Member States. So as to make the most of the

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expertise that already exists when it comes to formulating policies, the European Commission regularly exchanges views and information with organizations from the cultural sectors. This

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structured dialogue covers a whole range of key issues such as: ~~cultural and~~ creative industries, intercultural dialogue, cultural heritage and access to culture. Furthermore, there are

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independent groups across Europe ~~dedicated~~ to fostering culture. The European Commission provides the opportunity for stakeholders and policymakers to meet and debate the most

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crucial issues for the sector through biannual forums. The European Union also fosters cultural cooperation with individual countries outside the European Union as well as with regional and

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international organizations. For years, culture has been increasingly perceived as a strategic factor of political, social and economic importance contributing to external policy

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objectives. Furthermore, the European Union is committed to making cultural diversity an essential element of its external action and to developing a new and more active cultural role for Europe

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in international relations. Concerning the audiovisual sector, at a national level, European Union countries support their audiovisual industries in a variety of ways with budgets allocated

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from national tax revenues, contributions from television, and in some cases grants from lotteries. All have national film institutes or similar bodies that support their film industries. When it

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comes to film production, there are rules European Union countries have to follow to ensure fair competition for all films

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across the European Union. For example, national aid, should in principle not

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exceed half of the production costs.

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Concerning independent groups, there are many organizations set up ~~by citizens~~ across the European Union to make the audiovisual sector more competitive ~~and~~

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~~to foster creativity~~. Involving citizens around the European Union in culture and audiovisual expression is vital if we are to achieve the goals of inclusion, mutual ~~respect~~ and economic growth brought by

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the creative industries. That is why there are ~~several~~ prizes, awards and labels. Concerning TV, if every European Union country were to have its own different rules, it would be difficult to watch TV programs transmitted from other European countries. For this reason, the European Union adopted a directive, making a common set of minimum rules for the entire European Union. Internet-

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enabled TV and new ways of circulating audiovisual programs present regulators with new challenges, such as protecting young people from harmful content and banning incitement to hatred while

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ensuring freedom of speech. The directive covers all audiovisual media services and

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establishes a number of general
requirements for them. These ~~requirements~~
 cover the identification of media service

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providers, the ~~prohibition~~ of incitement
 to hatred, the accessibility for people
 with disabilities, ~~measures for the~~
~~promotion of European works,~~ certain
 qualitative ~~requirements~~ for commercial

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communications, sponsoring and product
placement. Besides, the audiovisual media
 services directive takes into account
 the degree of user control over the
 service and therefore ~~treats~~ linear and

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on-demand services differently. On-demand
 services are thus subject to somewhat
~~lesser~~ regulation that matches the
 relative ~~impact~~ they have on society as a
 whole. On the ~~contrary~~, television

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broadcasts are subject to more stringent
~~requirements~~, in particular in the field
 of ~~advertising~~, protection of minors and
promotion and distribution of European
 works. As far as the promotion of

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European works is concerned, with respect
 to broadcasting, the rules require that
 the ~~major~~ portion of the transmission
 time shall be reserved for European works
 of ~~different~~ genres. Also, broadcasters

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have to reserve at least a portion of their transmission time or programming budget for European works produced by independent producers. In the case of video on-demand services, Member

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States have a broader discretion on how to promote European works. They can ~~for~~ example introduce measures regarding the share of European works in catalogues, measures to ensure the prominence of ~~such~~

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works or impose a financial contribution on video on-demand service providers regarding the production and acquisition rights of such works. In any case, the audiovisual media services directive

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extends the country-of-origin principle to all audiovisual media services. It means that ~~each~~ service must comply with the rules of the country in which its provider is located. The enforcement of

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the rules is the responsibility of that Member State. Recently, as the convergence between traditional broadcasting and the online world becomes increasingly visible, the Commission

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launched a public consultation to explore what this convergence could mean for Europe's economic growth and innovation, cultural diversity and consumers. Another important aspect related to

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culture is the title of European Capital of Culture. Being a European Capital of Culture can give cities new ~~creative~~ impetus, build new local audiences for culture and help local cultural operators

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develop networking activities on the European and global scenes. It can also be a ~~unique~~ opportunity for cities to regenerate themselves, change their image or raise their profile internationally,

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which can in turn contribute to developing tourism and attracting new investment. The European Capitals of Culture can make a ~~valuable~~ contribution to social inclusion and intercultural

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dialogue as well, for ~~example~~, through imaginative community ~~outreach~~ programs and the effective use of volunteers. But above all European Capitals of Culture offer citizens from Europe and beyond the

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possibility to discover the ~~great~~ cultural diversity of our continent and to look ~~freshly~~ at our common roots.

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