



ECB LISTENS | 21 OCTOBER 2020

POSITION SUMMARY BY CULTURE ACTION EUROPE

1. What does price stability mean to your organisation?

We understand that maintaining price stability is the core mandate of the European Central Bank. We deem this role especially important at a time of price volatility due to external shocks, both symmetrical, such as a pandemic, and asymmetrical, such as a sovereign debt crisis.

As a cultural network gathering cultural networks, organisations but also artists, policy-makers and activists, an area of our key interest is the inflation-adjustment of multiple contracts for independent workers and freelancers. Cultural work is often precarious and a source of irregular income, which might have a severe impact not only on the working and living conditions of cultural agents, but also on their freedom of expression and ultimately on their contribution to societies.

2. What are your organisations' economic expectations and concerns?

The European Central Bank has proven over the years to be a trusted institutional actor according to European citizens and in the eyes of our global partners, able to foster trust amid economic adversities. However, we hope it could integrate new perspectives and paradigms into its mainstream activities.

The present social and economic model - to put it bluntly - is broken. We think that in order to hold Europe together, the European project should be really inclusive. A paradigm shift switching to a sustainable new social contract is therefore needed to trigger policy innovation.

We believe that such a new paradigm for Europe needs a European Cultural Deal touching upon the very value of culture, that of ensuring diversity in our societies. This involves a paradigm shift in which to include a cultural dimension in the reflection about the way capitalism functions and the way economic goals are prioritised.

3. What other topics matter to your organisation?

Culture, both on its own and through the creative industries, is an asset for the economy. They represent 4.2% of the EU GDP, within which culture represents about 40%. Employment in the sector amounts to 8.4 million people across the EU (3.7% of total employment). Additionally, cultural employment represents a significant point of entry to the labour market for many young people.

However, the cultural ecosystem is not simply and not just an industrial ecosystem. There is sufficient quantitative and qualitative evidence on culture's impact on strengthening our communities, European identity and democratic participation, advancing a future-oriented education, contributing to the overall quality of life and wellbeing, beyond the well documented contributions to a changing economic landscape.



4. How can we best communicate with your organisation?

The recent measures to deal with the shortcoming of the COVID-19 pandemic has put the ECB in the spotlight with its unprecedented PEPP to sustain liquidity, prices and stability in the EU. We have integrated this narrative into our regular briefings on the EU's strategies to respond to the coronavirus multifaceted crisis directed to our members, to make them aware of the actions taken at the EU level.

However, we would appreciate a stronger focus by the ECB on what its policies mean for civil society and upholding democracy in Europe, so to articulate a more complete message that goes beyond its purely economic profiles. In your communication it would be crucial to always spell out the details of your impact assessment in relation to various social groups and sectors like the creative and cultural actors.

ABOUT CULTURE ACTION EUROPE:

Culture Action Europe is the major European network of cultural networks, organisations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers. CAE is the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the EU. As the only intersectoral network, it brings together all practices in culture, from the performing arts to literature, the visual arts, design and cross-arts initiatives, to community centres and activist groups.

www.cultureactioneurope.org

Culture Action Europe authorises the ECB to make this policy summary public and remains available for further exchanges on the subject.