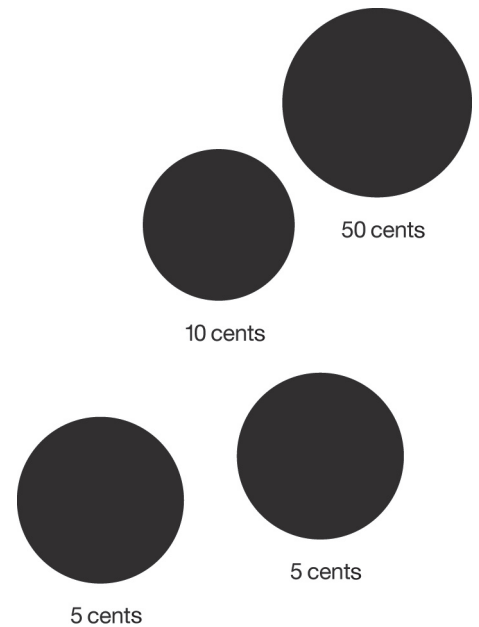


70! Cents! for! Culture!



As Europe expands, what holds us together, what makes us belong?

The answer is culture, says European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

Culture binds us together as Europeans. In the recent words of European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, "The questions of what Europe can do for culture and what culture can do for Europe have acquired a new sense of urgency." Much needs to be done – urgently – to enhance our understanding of our fellow European citizens. Yet, at a critical moment in Europe's development, the EU's budget for culture amounts to roughly 7 cents per citizen per year: a minuscule figure. Today, the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) and the European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (EFAH) are launching a campaign – the '70 cents for culture campaign' – to boost the resources which the EU makes available for culture. At a cost of just 70 cents per citizen per year, the 2007 cultural programme would have a more realistic budget of 315 million euros. The ECF and EFAH support the growing efforts of members of the European Parliament to achieve such a budget.

The process of European integration faces new challenges.

There are now 450 million citizens, several nationalities, dozens of languages, and countless regional variations in culture within the EU. Europe seeks 'unity in diversity', but this can only come about through much greater knowledge and experience of each other's cultures. Arts and heritage have a unique role to play in creating and sustaining this important dialogue. ECF and EFAH strongly support Mr Barroso's statement that "the translation of good intentions into good decisions" is the litmus test for a genuine cultural vision for Europe. Our campaign seeks to help European governments pass that test when they consider the budget for *Culture 2007*, a programme that functions trans-nationally and complements national initiatives.

What would 315 million euros pay for?

- The mobility of 10,000 artists and cultural operators per year
- The building of artistic bridges across borders within the enlarged EU and between the EU and its neighbours
- A boost to the cultural dimension of EU foreign policy
- More and broader journalistic platforms for public cultural debate and citizenship
- The strengthening of networks linking cultural actors across Europe
- The supply of services and information to cultural operators, as well as resources for research into cultural practice
- Measures to enhance Europe's creative competitiveness

315 million euros represent just 0.27 percent of the EU's 2005 budget (116.6 billion euros). Today, the annual budget for culture (34 million euros) represents 0.03% of the total EU budget. Compare that figure of 34 million euros with the annual budget of the Goethe Institute of 270 million euros (2004) or with the budget of Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam of 55 million euros (2003; predominantly the Nederlandse Opera and Het Nationale Ballet) and you realize just how paltry a sum it is.

Who is backing '70 cents for culture'?

Following Mr Barroso's strong statement at November's Berlin Conference (A Soul For Europe, 26-27.11.2004 at www.berlinerkonferenz.net), there is growing support for the 70 cents proposal across the political groupings of the European Parliament. We back the initiative of those MEPs who sent a joint letter on the subject to Mr Barroso and Mr Juncker (President-in-office, Council of Ministers of the European Union), and the formal tabling of an amendment by Mr Graça Moura (EP Culture Committee rapporteur) to increase the budget for culture to 70 cents per citizen. The final adoption of an enhanced programme for *Culture 2007* hinges on the approval of the overall EU budget for 2007-2013 by the various national governments; for this reason, the ministers of finance, culture, and foreign affairs will play particularly crucial roles. The ECF and EFAH believe that there is a real chance of influencing the final funding decision, and we will concentrate our efforts to this end.

Press Information

Press kits and briefings are being prepared; **the launch of the campaign will be held in Brussels on March 15 2005**, at which prominent European artists, cultural actors, politicians and business representatives will speak in support of the campaign.



For details, please visit www.efah.org/70cents or www.eurocult.org; or phone the EFAH secretariat in Brussels (+32 25344002) or the ECF's campaigner, Isabelle Schwarz, in Amsterdam (+31 205733868).

70 Cents for Culture; it's a small price to pay.

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