



# EU FUNDING FOR CULTURE 2021-2027

---

AN INTRODUCTION INTO 13 EU  
PROGRAMMES AND THEIR FUNDING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CULTURAL AND  
CREATIVE SECTOR

**PUBLISHED BY THE CREATIVE EUROPE DESK KULTUR (DE)**

## CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION
2. CREATIVE EUROPE
3. AMF
4. CERV
5. DIGITAL EUROPE
6. ERASMUS+
7. EAFRD
8. ERDF
9. ESF+
10. ESC
11. HORIZON EUROPE
12. INTERREG
13. INVESTEU
14. NDICI

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is considered an important pillar of the EU as it significantly contributes to social cohesion, building a common sense of belonging and promoting shared values and cultural diversity. For that reason, the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU defines culture as a cross-cutting area that builds bridges and synergies to other policy areas. As a result, a wide range of European

funding instruments is open for cultural and creative projects and complements the support that is provided by Creative Europe, the EU's main programme addressing the cultural, creative and audio-visual sector across Europe.

Against this backdrop, this publication intends to provide a first glance on the new generation of EU funding programmes 2021-2027 that are accessible for the cultural and creative sector. Apart from Creative Europe, insights into 13 programmes are presented on the following pages.

The publication is a result of the “Infodesk Corona”, a project implemented by the German Creative Europe Desk KULTUR and supported by the German Minister of State for Culture and the Media in the light of the German EU Council Presidency. The “Infodesk Corona” aims at providing insights into current and future EU support measures for the cultural and creative sector.

The **Creative Europe Desk** **KULTUR** is the national contact point in charge of promoting Creative Europe Culture, the only EU funding programme explicitly dedicated to the cultural and creative sector. It helps German cultural and creative organisations to find suitable funding for their projects and to prepare their applications.

## THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS OF THE EU BUDGET

Due to the spread of Covid-19, the Brexit and further political and societal transformations across Europe and the world, 2020 has been an extremely challenging year. Moreover, it represents the end of the current EU household 2014-2020, the so-called Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) that covers a period of seven years. Consequently, the EU institutions have been discussing the future budget determining the financial regulations for 2021-2027.

Due to the current pandemic, the next MFF is supplemented by Next Generation EU (NGEU), an additional budget for Europe's recovery from this crisis. After successfully negotiating with the European Parliament, the Council has finally adopted the new long-term budget on December 17, 2020. Accordingly, the MFF comprises 1074.3 billion euro, while the NGEU provides further 750 billion euro, resulting in an overall EU household of 1.8 trillion euro for the upcoming seven years. Being divided in seven different areas, the budgetary plan sets the conditions and framework for the political and economic priorities and activities including the design of the almost 40 funding instruments.



## EU SUPPORT MEASURES IN TIMES OF COVID-19

It is evident that the ongoing pandemic has tremendous effects on the European economy and society. Thus, the EU and its Member States have been forced to quickly react to the frequently evolving challenges deriving from the spread of Covid-19. To begin with, the EU has demonstrated great flexibility in terms of current funding which guaranteed that most of the running projects could adapt to the new circumstances without losing their financial support. Additionally, the EU has introduced several support instruments for assisting the Member States to respond to and recover from the severe consequences of the virus, amongst others the Recovery and Resilience Facility, ReactEU, RescEU and SURE. While some of these instruments have been

implemented relatively quickly, e.g. SURE, others are still under negotiations. However, in both cases, the measures are usually foreseen to supplement national policies. As a result, it mostly depends on the individual Member States to decide how to define the areas benefitting from this additional support.

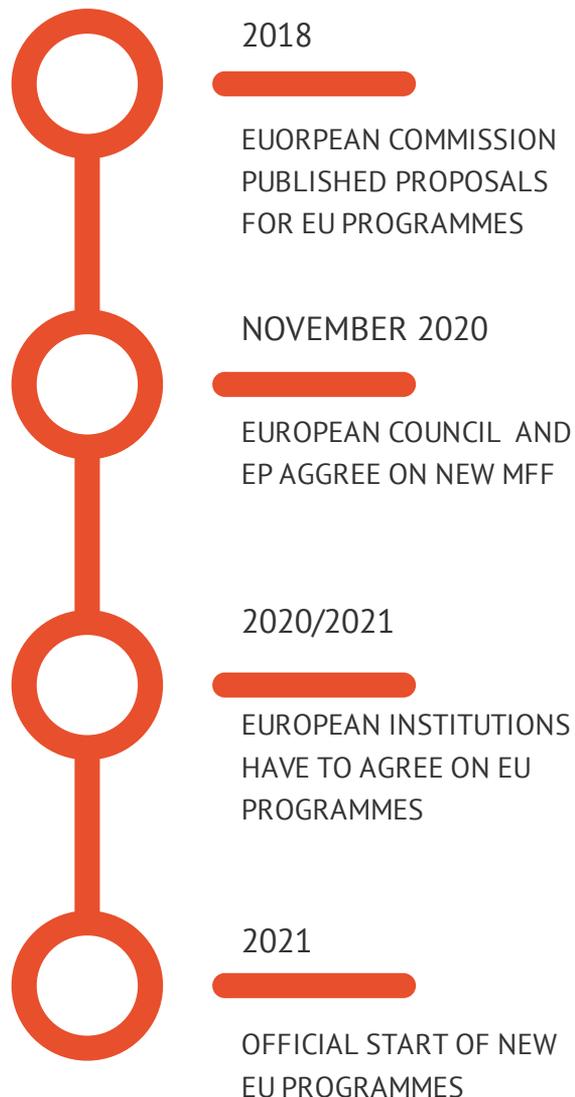
With view to the cultural and creative sector which has apparently been heavily affected by the pandemic, this means that it is up to the national recovery plans and strategies to incorporate additional financial assistance directed towards cultural organisations and professionals.

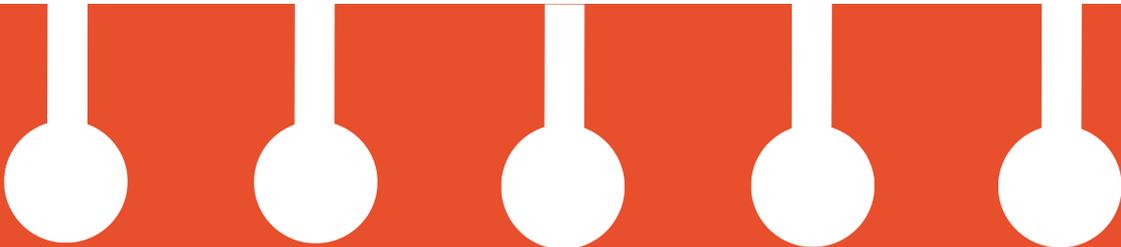
However, the European Parliament is calling for a 2% earmark for culture within the Recovery and Resilience Facility (part of NGEU). At the time of the publication a decision was not yet made. Furthermore, looking ahead to the new funding period starting from 2021, the EU has ensured that the new generation of programmes offers support for navigating through and regenerating from the current crisis.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT?

The final adoption of the MFF paves the way for negotiating and adopting the wide range of programmes that shape the EU's funding landscape. While the European institutions have already reached provisional agreements regarding a number of instruments in December 2020, their final conclusion is necessary for the programmes to be able to start at the beginning of 2021. Once this is done, the guidelines and work programmes relevant for each fund will be published and provide concrete information on the priorities, procedures and calls. Depending on each programme, this is most likely to be expected in the first half of 2021.





## REMARKS FOR READING THIS PUBLICATION

The information provided in this publication only represents the current state of play and provisional architecture of the programmes according to the latest updates from December 17, 2020. These insights are mostly based on the proposals of regulations published by the European Commission for each programme in 2018 as well as additional material made available by the EU institutions [1]. As they are gradually negotiating and adopting the new programmes starting from 2021 onwards, this is only a preliminary overview of programmes to get a first idea about their design and future opportunities, with main emphasis on the cultural and creative sector. For that reason, detailed funding possibilities, participating countries and further criteria are yet to be known.

The budgets are indicated in fixed prices from 2018.

[1] This publication relies on the information provided on the websites indicated for each funding programme as well as the official documents published by the European institutions on EUR-Lex.

# CREATIVE EUROPE



## **budget**

2.24 bn €



## **target group**

cultural and creative sector



## **objectives**

to support cultural diversity and cultural heritage in Europe and to increase the competitiveness of the CCS

Creative Europe is the only EU programme specifically dedicated to the cultural, creative and audio-visual sectors. It promotes the European cooperation between cultural organisations and the protection of the common European cultural heritage and the cultural diversity in Europe. Furthermore, it aims at increasing the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audio-visual sector. The new Creative Europe programme receives 2.24 billion euro which is an increase of 800 million euro in comparison with the previous funding period. It continues to be divided into three sub-programmes:

- Culture
- MEDIA
- Cross-sectoral strand

The Culture sub-programme is open to all cultural and creative sectors, from performing and visual arts to music and the creative industries. It provides financial support to projects with a European dimension aiming to share cultural content across borders. The four main funding schemes as known from the previous programme will be continued:

- Cooperation projects: Support to cooperation between at least three different organisations from the different eligible countries
- Networks: Support to networks which represent a cultural sector and which help building capacity in their field

- Platforms: Support to platforms which facilitate the access to the European market for emerging talents
- Literary Translation: Support to publishers and publishing houses for the translation of European literature

In addition to these schemes, support for the mobility of individual artists is foreseen. The sector specific funding for music will be introduced within the next seven years, building on the experiences of Music Moves Europe. Additional support to the following sectors was announced: architecture and cultural heritage, design and fashion, cultural tourism.

The MEDIA sub-programme supports the EU film and audio-visual industries. It aims at stimulating collaboration, and innovation in the creation and

production of European audio-visual works. MEDIA will support the development of audio-visual works, production of innovative TV content and serial storytelling, the distribution of these works through various means (festivals, fairs, VoD etc.). Throughout all measures, it will specifically strive for more gender equality within the sector.

The cross-sectoral strand will support cross-sectorial approaches combining innovative ideas from both the cultural and audio-visual sectors. In addition, the strand will fund projects to support a free, diverse, and pluralistic media environment, quality journalism and media literacy.

More information [here](#).

# ASYLUM AND MIGRATION FUND (AMF)



## **budget**

8.705 bn €



## **target group**

local and regional authorities, civil society organisations



## **objectives**

to support early integration measures of asylum seekers and migrants

The Asylum and Migration Fund is the EU's support in the field of asylum, integration and migration. Previously, it was called AMIF and was established in response to the high migratory movements to Europe since 2015. The new programme mainly focuses on early integration measures, while other aspects are also addressed by programmes such as the European Social Fund+ or Erasmus+. Yet, the overall objectives of the fund are:

- Developing and fostering the Common European Asylum System

- Supporting legal migration to the MS and contributing to the integration of third-country nationals
- Reducing irregular migration and improving the effectiveness of return and re-admission in third countries

A large part of this funding is managed by the individual Member States in accordance with their specific needs and national integration programmes, but a smaller part of the programme is also administered by the European Commission, thereby facilitating transnational projects. As a result, the relevant priorities can differ from country to country and the given context.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

In this context, cultural and creative stakeholders can mainly contribute to the second priority with emphasis on integration measures. For that purpose, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue plays a crucial role as well as the general exchange and dialogue between migrants and the local society. Thus, cultural projects can help foster the migrants' active participation and inclusion in the receiving society while simultaneously contributing to the society's acceptance and tolerance of its new community members. Furthermore, the cultural and creative sector can also help to develop and create new approaches for trainings and integration programmes dealing with education, language, civic orientation or professional guidance.

More information [here](#).

# CITIZENS, EQUALITY, RIGHTS AND VALUES (CERV)



**budget**

1.6 bn €



**target group**

local and regional authorities, NGOs



**objectives**

to promote European rights and values and to bring Europe closer to its citizens

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) is a new programme merging two previous funding instruments: Europe for Citizens and Rights, Equality and Citizenship. By means of the new programme, the EU aims at promoting the values it is based on – amongst others equality, freedom and democracy – in order to oppose the increasing extremism, discrimination and inequalities it is facing lately. With the intention of fostering an open, inclusive and democratic society, the new programme provides funding in the following categories:

- Equality and rights strand
- Citizens' engagement and participation strand
- Daphne strand

During the latest budgetary negotiations, the European institutions have agreed on a significant increase for the programme resulting in 1.6 billion euro which equals more than doubling the foreseen amount of 0.6 billion euro. This highlights once more how pressing and crucial the reinforcement of the European values when looking at the current economic, political and social developments.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

European citizenship and culture are mutually interlinked as they both rely on common history, cultural diversity, remembrance and shared values. Therefore, there is a strong synergy between Creative Europe and CERV.

Activities funded under the citizens' engagement and participation strand are supposed to bring the EU closer to its citizens by improving their understanding of Europe's history, diversity and cultural heritage. Thus, it facilitates encounters and exchanges of people from different countries and cultures as for example through transnational town-twinning projects or collaboration of civil society organisations. Creating opportunities for citizens to meet and enter into dialogue about their ways of living shall contribute to increasing the mutual respect

and tolerance as well as to building a common sense of belonging within the EU. In this regard, historical, cultural and intercultural aspects play an important role; both for remembering Europe's past and for building its future. In this context, the cultural and creative sector can actively participate in encouraging citizens to engage with each other as well as with the common history, rights and values. This also builds a bridge to the equality and rights strand whose emphasis lies on protecting and supporting rights of children, women and people with disabilities and fighting intolerance, discrimination and racism. Cultural projects can possibly contribute to achieving these goals, e.g. through raising awareness or developing creative ways of overcoming inequalities.

More information [here](#).

# DIGITAL EUROPE



**budget**

7.588 bn €



**target group**

innovation sector



**objectives**

to support Europe's digitisation

Supporting the digital transformation of Europe's economy and society lies at the heart of Digital Europe. Thus, this programme aims at improving and fostering the digital capacities and to expand and facilitate the access and use of digital technologies which is also seen as crucial for the recovery from the current pandemic. It provides financial support in five key areas:

- Supercomputing
- Artificial intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- Digital skills
- Deployment and accessibility of digital technologies

Thereby, it offers opportunities for higher education and research institutions, larger companies and SMEs as well as other stakeholders from the innovation sector.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

Given that the cultural and creative sector has proven to be highly innovative in experimenting with digital tools, it is also addressed by Digital Europe, mainly under two priorities.

In the context of deployment and accessibility of digital technologies, financial support strives at ensuring that the public sector and areas of public

interest are able to access and use digital technologies and to adapt to new digital trends. In this regard, cultural projects shall provide creators and creative industries in Europe with access to the newest digital technologies possibly ranging from artificial intelligence to advanced computing. Moreover, the digital exploitation of and access to cultural heritage shall be facilitated in order to promote cultural diversity, social cohesion and European citizenship.

In the light of the area digital skills, support is offered for improving digital skills and fostering professionalization by designing different methods and formats of training. Amongst others, these projects target students, IT professionals, entrepreneurs and small business leaders and related workforce in these areas, thus also include opportunities for cultural and creative professionals to benefit from developing or participating in these kind of courses.

More information [here](#).

# ERASMUS+



## **budget**

23.4 bn €



## **target group**

formal and non-formal education



## **objectives**

to foster the access and quality of formal and non-formal education and to facilitate mobility across Europe

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme for education addressing a wide range of formal and non-formal educational fields such as schools, universities, youth work, sports, vocational and adult education. The main priority is to promote lifelong and inclusive learning across Europe which is facilitated by the following key actions:

- Learning mobility
- Cooperation among organisations and institutions
- Support to policy development and cooperation
- Jean Monnet actions focusing on European integration matters

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

The strong link between education and culture is evident in this programme which is also supposed to complement Creative Europe. Especially in the field of informal learning cultural education plays a crucial role as it helps to experiment with and follow new creative and artistic approaches, formats and methods. In this regard, cultural and creative projects can significantly contribute to improving social inclusion, access to education or intergenerational learning, e.g. in libraries, museums or cultural centres.

Most importantly, the key actions “learning mobility” and “cooperation among organisations and institutions” provide diverse opportunities for the cultural and creative sector to develop and participate in projects funded by Erasmus+. Learning mobility aims at facilitating the mobility and exchange of individuals in the field of education - be it at school, university or in others formal or informal contexts. The participation and contribution of cultural and creative organisations is essential in this context, thereby mainly focusing on adult education and youth work. On the one hand, culture is essential here in the context of capacity-building and improving skills related to topics such as intercultural competences, learning languages and creating inclusive and creative formats and places to learn, e.g. through organising job-shadowing, trainings or exchanges with partner organisations. On the other hand, cultural and art education are crucial in the field of

non-formal education and offer valuable approaches for youth mobility and youth encounters, e.g. through theatre or circus projects.

In addition to that, cooperation among organisations and institutions rather emphasizes the long term perspectives and is also known as so-called strategic partnerships. Public and private organisations shall cooperate in order to build long-lasting partnerships and improve the quality and diversity of learning experiences. Organisations that build a bridge to cultural education are eligible in this context which enables theatres, libraries, museums and other cultural and creative organisations to foster transnational cooperation. Thereby, the exchange of best practices and the development of creative, artistic and inclusive teaching methods – either in the field of adult education or in the context of youth work – shall be at the heart of funded projects.

More information [here](#).

# EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (EAFRD)



## **budget**

77.850 bn €



## **target group**

local and regional authorities, NGO, public and private institutions



## **objectives**

to support sustainable and inclusive rural development

Helping rural communities to develop a vibrant and economically and socially viable environment is the overarching objective of the European Agricultural Fund for Regional Development (EAFRD). While it is part of the common agricultural policy (CAP), its focus goes beyond the agricultural sector and mainly lies on implementing innovative strategies and measures to support rural development from a more cross-cutting and holistic approach.

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

In general, the support for cultural projects is not clearly mentioned in the programme, however the EAFRD facilitates investments in rural infrastructures which does not exclude cultural infrastructures. Against this backdrop, measures to restore and protect cultural heritage in rural areas, to offer cultural activities or to promote rural tourism and related cultural and touristic services are possible ways for the cultural and creative sector to access this funding programme.

Furthermore, the so called LEADER approach has been widely established under the umbrella of the EAFRD both in the past and current EU funding period. Nowadays, LEADER is mainly understood as community-led local development and encourages bottom-up initiatives and cooperation of regional actors to help rural areas all over Europe to develop. Local action groups (LAG) are in charge of implementing LEADER initiatives which means that the national and regional levels pave the way for the content and design of these projects. Thus, if and how the cultural and creative sector can participate in and profit from this funding highly depends on the local priorities. Yet, experiences from the previous programme have shown that there is a wide range of culture-based project financed by LEADER.

More information [here](#).

# EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF)



**budget**

226.9 bn €



**target group**

local or regional authorities, public institutions, NGOs



**objectives**

to support support cohesion policies and sustainable and inclusive regional development

Enhancing regional development and cohesion policies is one of the main investments of the EU which is – amongst others – operationalised in terms of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This financial support contributes to closing the social and economic gap existing between and within EU Member States. As a result, this instrument strives for building a strong relationship between the EU and its regions and cities and helps to modernise the latter. For modernizing its cohesion policies, the EU has defined overall priorities which also apply for the European Regional Development Fund:

- A smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation
- A greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management
- A more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity
- A more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights
- A Europe closer to citizens by foster the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

In general, the programme is in favour of supporting cultural projects, but the preliminary guidelines do not yet present explicit ways of involving the cultural and creative sector. This is partly due to the regional focus inherent in the ERDF which leads to determining additional national and regional priorities.

Nevertheless, evidence shows that the European Pillar of Social Rights which is part of the fourth priority as well as the fifth priority of bringing Europe and its citizens closer together include diverse opportunities for the cultural and creative sector.

Furthermore, investing in the exploitation and protection of cultural heritage and in the development of cultural infrastructures has proven to be feasible and successful in the past programme and simultaneously seems like a promising approach in the future ERDF as well.

More information [here](#).

# EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND+ (ESF+)



## **budget**

87.319 bn €



## **target group**

local and regional authorities, public and private institutions, NGOs



## **objectives**

to build a more social and inclusive Europe

Empowering and investing in people, their skills, education and training lies at the core of the European Social Fund+. By addressing policy areas like education, employment and social inclusion, the EU wants to strengthen its social dimension and find suitable responses to challenges emerging from social exclusion, new forms of work or technological developments. The ESF+ unites several previous funding programmes (Youth Employment Initiative, the Fund for the European Aid to the Deprived and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation) under one umbrella striving for:

- Equal opportunities and access to labour market
- Fair working condition
- Social protection and inclusion

Consequently, supporting actions to obtain fair social protection, a high-skilled workforce and high employment levels is an important step for Europe's recovery from the ongoing pandemic as well as for its transition to a green and digital economy. Hence, all measures shall respect and promote the European Pillar of Social Rights which provides a new framework of rights for citizens encompassing 20 main principles that are at the core of the new ESF+. For that purpose, social innovation and bottom-up approaches shall be encouraged,

especially through facilitating partnerships and cooperation including the public and private sector as well as civil society. The fact that this instrument partly underlies shared management means that the Member States and their regions can influence and adapt the priorities to their specific needs and conditions. Therefore, it depends on their decisions to what extent their regional objectives rely on the cultural and creative sector.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

Both the European Pillar of Social Rights and the ESF+ intend to improve the access and implementation of social rights for European citizens which is often interlinked with cultural aspects and rights. However, the preliminary design of the programme does not foresee an important role for the cultural and creative sector to contribute to its overall objectives. Nevertheless, some of the relevant topics of the ESF+ such as gender equality, lifelong learning, work-life balance, support to children and inclusion of elderly and people with disabilities can theoretically be tackled through cultural and creative approaches and projects.

More Information [here](#).

# EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS



## **budget**

895 m €



## **target group**

formal and non-formal education



## **objectives**

to enhance the engagement of young people and organisations and to foster cohesion and solidarity

The European Solidarity Corps mainly addresses young people aged 18-35 from the EU and partner countries and invites them to participate in voluntary activities usually located in regions facing societal challenges and severe crises. The participants can engage in two areas:

- Strand 1: participation in solidarity activities addressing societal challenges
- Strand 2: European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

The voluntary activities and related topics are diverse and can range from environment, youth work or children care to inclusive work with minorities and can last up to 12

months. Thereby, the participating young people practice solidarity and learn to build a sense of belonging, however only in armed conflict-free countries. Moreover, the volunteers get the chance to improve their social, civic and cultural skills which can help them on their future personal and professional path. That is why the programme also aims at reaching out for young people with different backgrounds and those who usually face more obstacles in accessing educational, cultural or social opportunities and support.

Regardless of the respective field and location of activity, the European Solidarity Corps offers young people to get involved in:

- Volunteering
- Traineeships and jobs
- Solidarity projects
- Networking activities
- Quality and support measures

At the same time, the European Solidarity Corps offers international organisations – both public and private ones – to host and support these volunteers. This involves e.g. organising networking activities or offering trainings and support in administrative issues. The involvement and possible partnership of these organisations also helps fostering European cooperation and solidarity. In order to participate, organisations have to qualify through a national process relying – amongst others – on criteria such as non-discrimination and equal treatment.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

Deriving from the openness of the programme and the diversity of relevant topics and activities, the European Solidarity Corps offers multiple opportunities for cultural projects. What matters is that the key idea of the programme – fostering social skills and professional competences of the volunteers – is considerably taken into account and strongly interlinked with the cultural and creative activities. This is given especially in the context of the first strand participation in solidarity activities addressing societal challenges.

More information [here](#).

# HORIZON EUROPE



## **budget**

79.9 bn €



## **target group**

research and innovation sector



## **objectives**

to support European research and innovation and to increase Europe's competitiveness

Horizon Europe is the main EU funding instrument dedicated to research and innovation. Due to its large size, it has a relatively complex structure which is summarised in three pillars:

- Pillar 1: Excellent Science
- Pillar 2: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness
- Pillar 3: Innovative Europe

Throughout the entire programme, interaction of science, technology, social sciences and humanities is encouraged including the input of the cultural and creative sector. The main aims are to obtain sustainable innovation, to provide attractive and creative jobs, to improve the use of digital technologies, to foster education and citizens' engagement.

## **WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?**

On the first sight, Horizon Europe might not seem very accessible for cultural projects. However, considering that it goes beyond supporting academia and research organisations and also provides funding for a wide range of public and private institutions, Horizon Europe is also open for cultural and creative institutions and industries. Most importantly, there are significant news in the context of the second pillar, as a specific cluster named culture, creativity and inclusive societies has been introduced composed by three priorities:

- Enhancing democracy and governance
- Culture, cultural heritage and creativity
- Management of social and economic transformations

While the first and third priority are also suitable for cultural projects, it is evident that the second priority is most relevant. In this light, activities shall improve the protection and restoration of cultural heritage and facilitate more engagement and better access to it, including digital tools. Raising awareness of the diversity of European cultural heritage and its common roots shall also strengthen the sense of belonging. Furthermore, projects shall help to drive sustainable growth and job creation by enhancing the innovation potential of the cultural and creative industries.

Additionally, further opportunities especially for the cultural and creative industries are hidden behind the cluster called digital, industry and space which is also part of pillar 2. On the one hand, support in the sub-category advanced materials

invites curators, designers, restorers and other creative professionals to react to the growing consumer demands and develop new products and designs and to protect artefacts of cultural heritage.

Apart from these two ways of accessing direct funding, there is another important aspect: the so called knowledge and innovation community for the cultural and creative industries (KIC CCI) which is supposed to start in 2022. Based at the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (Pillar 3), it will form a partnership consisting of stakeholders from education, innovation and research that aims at developing innovative strategies to make the CCI more resilient and competitive. Thus, the results and activities shall contribute to decrease the fragmentation of the cultural and creative landscape and help building a fertile environment for the cultural and creative professionals and organisations.

More information [here](#).

# INTERREG



## **budget**

7.95 bn €



## **target group**

regional and local authorities, NGOs, and public and private institutions



## **objectives**

to support cross-border cooperation for improving Europe's cohesion and quality of life

Interreg is part of the European territorial cooperation (ETC) and as such it is based on the general architecture and principles defining the European cohesion policies as outlined in relation to the ERDF (page 18). Additionally, Interreg specifically aims at:

- Increasing the effectiveness of labour markets and facilitating access to quality employment
- Providing access to education, training and lifelong learning
- Improving the equal access to affordable, sustainable and quality healthcare services
- Enhancing the effectiveness and resilience of healthcare systems
- Fostering social inclusion, facilitating equal opportunities and fighting poverty and discrimination

The related funding for reaching these objectives is distributed according to four regional focuses:

- Cross-border cooperation
- Transnational cooperation and maritime cooperation
- Interregional cooperation
- Outermost regions cooperation

Against this backdrop, the geographical coverage is defined for each of the four categories and results in different programme areas. Consequently, the programme is administered on the national or regional level depending on the composition and location of each Interreg area. Deriving from that, there can be significant differences among the regional priorities and objectives underlying the provision of financial support.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

As part of the cohesion policies, Interreg substantially aims at bridging the gap between Europe and its citizens, most importantly through improving the social cohesion and quality of life in urban, rural and coastal areas. Due to the focus on the local level and its specific needs in the respective programme area it is difficult to make a general statement about the role of culture in this funding instrument. However, several factors contribute to assuming that the cultural and creative sector is active and relevant in this context.

On the one hand, the general priorities of the EU's cohesion

policies as well as the specific objectives of Interreg encompass aspects such as education, social inclusion and integration which are fundamentally linked with culture. On the other hand, cultural projects have clearly been part of the previous programme, e.g. in terms of building transnational networks and activities among cultural stakeholders, facilitating intercultural exchanges, investing into cultural infrastructures, safeguarding cultural heritage or strengthening cross-border media services. Therefore, it is very likely that similar activities with the cultural and creative sector are eligible according to the new Interreg guidelines 2021-2027.

More information [here](#).

# INVESTEU



**budget**

9.4 bn €



**target group**

public and private sector



**objectives**

to facilitate investments and to contribute to Europe's competitiveness

InvestEU unites various former EU financial instruments and is the EU's main support programme for boosting public and private investments. Thus, it provides essential support to all sizes of companies and guarantees that their investments contribute to the current EU's policy priorities such as the European Green Deal and digitisation. Against this backdrop, it has four general policy windows:

- Sustainable infrastructures
- Research, digitisation and innovation
- Social investment and skills
- SMEs

Throughout these priorities, InvestEU mainly addresses SMEs and mid-cap companies including those based in the cultural and creative sector, media, journalism and the audio-visual sector.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

In terms of promoting activities and stakeholders from the cultural and creative sector, InvestEU offers several opportunities, however with strong emphasis on supporting companies and enterprises which makes it more accessible for the creative industries. Most importantly, support for SMEs and social investments and skills refer to the cultural and creative sector, yet there might prospectively be further opportunities in relation to the other priorities.

In the field of social investment and skills, financial support aims at improving social infrastructures, social inclusion, integration of vulnerable groups as well as promoting education and training. Here, cultural activities can play a crucial role in contributing to these goals.

The support for SMEs aims at improving the accessibility and availability of financial support for small and medium-sized enterprises which are often part of the cultural and creative sector. Moreover, COSME which used to be an independent programme from 2014-2020 supporting a wide range of cultural and creative projects will continue running under this umbrella.

Furthermore, the so-called Guarantee Facility for the Cultural and Creative Sector which used to be part of Creative Europe (2014-2020) will be part of InvestEU from 2021 onwards. It aims at facilitating the access of cultural and creative organizations to bank loans and financial support. However, this depends on the individual Member States that have to make arrangements with their national banks. So far, only very few Member States have put it into practice and it remains to be seen how this will be implemented in the future.

More information [here](#).

# NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



**budget**

71.8 bn €



**target group**

external action regarding neighbouring countries and other territories



**objectives**

to strengthen cooperation with non-EU countries and to foster Europe's position in the world

The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument is an important tool to strengthen and modernise the EU's external policies with the intention to foster stability, peace, prosperity and sustainable development and to decrease poverty. The financial support to foster the dialogue and cooperation with countries outside the EU is provided through the following components:

- The geographical pillar
- The thematic pillar
- The rapid response pillar

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR CULTURE?

The role of culture has lately received increasing attention in the EU's external relations and therefore NDICI also supports actions with the cultural and creative sector and is coherent with the logic behind Creative Europe. Most evidently, culture is addressed in three categories of the thematic pillar:

- Human rights and democracy
- Civil society and peace
- Global challenges

Cultural interventions are explicitly highlighted in the frame of global challenges. On the one hand, this entails projects that promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in order to build and strengthen inter-community relations. On the other hand, supporting cultural activities is underlined as important contribution to sustainable social and economic development. Additionally, cultural heritage is another focus.

Apart from this, cultural aspects are also relevant regarding other subthemes – both within the category global challenges and beyond – such as education, human rights, gender equality and

migration. It is not clear though how concretely these additional mentions of culture will result in support for cultural and creative cooperation with third countries.

Besides, the geographical pillar might provide further opportunities for cooperation with the cultural and creative sector especially considering that it shall complement actions and priorities highlighted under the thematic pillar. However, as the respective regions and countries have individual needs and funding focuses, this is yet to be known and can differ from region to region.

More information [here](#).

**Author:** Marje Brütt

**Published by:**

Creative Europe Desk KULTUR  
c/o Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft e.V.  
Weberstraße 59a, 53113 Bonn

Email: [info@ced-kultur.eu](mailto:info@ced-kultur.eu)

Website: [kultur.creative-europe-desk.de](http://kultur.creative-europe-desk.de)

Twitter: [@CED\\_Kultur](https://twitter.com/CED_Kultur)

Facebook: [@CEDKULTURDeutschland](https://www.facebook.com/CEDKULTURDeutschland)

Youtube: [Creative Europe Desk KULTUR](https://www.youtube.com/CreativeEuropeDeskKULTUR)

December 2020

The “Infodesk Corona” is funded by:



Minister of State  
for Culture and the Media



The Creative Europe Desk KULTUR is funded by:



Minister of State  
for Culture and the Media



Creative  
Europe