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Ask, Pay, Trust the Artist: campaign roadmap to increase EU cultural funding in the 2028–2034 budget

1. Background

Culture Action Europe has long advocated for allocating 2% of the EU's long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), to culture.

This is the core demand of our [Ask, Pay, Trust the Artist](#) campaign, which has already gathered support from nearly 2000 endorsers.

In July 2025, the European Commission presented its initial [proposal](#) for the MFF 2028–2034, which includes a dedicated Creative Europe – Culture strand (€1.8 billion) as part of the AgoraEU programme.

This is a promising starting point. However, despite the proposed doubling of the culture budget, it still represents only the bare minimum needed to sustain the cultural sector and falls far short of the 2% target.

With important negotiations set to begin to find consensus between the European Parliament and the Council on the MFF proposal, **now is the time to reach out to decision-makers to advocate for stronger funding and opportunities for culture** that will directly shape EU funding for the next decade.

2. What happens now?

The European Commission's first proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework includes [the overall structure and main budget figures](#), along with [draft regulations](#) that form the legal basis for the proposed funding programmes. This marks the start of a long negotiation process. The MFF must be approved by both the European Parliament (representing citizens of the EU) and the Council of the EU (representing national governments of Member States) by the end of 2027. Over the next two years, both institutions will negotiate not only the overall budget but also the content of each programme (the draft regulations that define programme objectives, eligible actions, governance structures, etc.).





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1) The Council of the EU – Member States' Position

The Council's Cultural Affairs Committee is currently [reviewing](#) the AgoraEU proposal (the members of the Audiovisual and Media Working Party and of the Working Party on Fundamental Rights, Citizens Rights and Free Movement of Persons also join the discussion).

The Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU is expected to present a first draft negotiating box to guide further negotiations by the end of this year, potentially **on 17 November or 16 December 2025.**

The negotiating box is a non-binding document drafted by the presidency, which outlines key budget headings, indicative amounts, and trade-offs (often with bracketed options) that help steer discussions among Member States, without pre-empting final political decisions by EU leaders.

What can you do now? By 31 October 2025, send letters to your national ministers to advocate for dedicated funding for culture across other EU programmes, including competitiveness, research, and regional development.

Letter templates and instructions are available [here](#).

2) The European Parliament's Position.

The European Parliament will also begin work on its position, which will take time. The parliamentary committees responsible for the various funding programmes will first draft and adopt their own positions (reports) on each proposal. While there is no confirmed timeline for when the Parliament will adopt its overall position, some political groups in the European Parliament are planning to reject part of the MFF proposal (concerning the National and Regional Partnership Plans, which merge agriculture and regional funding) through a resolution during the 12–13 November mini-plenary session in Brussels.

At the same time, relevant committees have started discussing the new programmes, and the procedural files for their reports are already registered in the system. **This means October–November 2025 is the right time to act. Reach out to Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) now to share your position and recommendations on the future EU budget.**





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3) EU Surveys on the Multiannual Financial Framework

Take a moment to complete the [MFF survey](#), where the European Commission is gathering public feedback on its proposal (scroll down and find a yellow button 'Give feedback', deadline 25 November 2025).

There are several thematic surveys: [MFF survey for culture](#); [MFF survey for competitiveness](#); [MFF survey for external action](#); [MFF survey for regions](#). In each of these surveys, please share your relevant position (comments on the AgoraEU programme in the culture survey; the need for dedicated clusters for culture in the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe in the competitiveness survey; the call to earmark 2% for culture in regional funding in the regional survey).

4) Ask, Pay, Trust Endorsements

In addition, we should **continue raising awareness of the Ask, Pay, Trust campaign** and [collecting endorsements](#). The more people who support putting culture at the heart of changemaking, the more momentum and visibility we get. In January 2026, Cyprus takes over Rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU, and our next meeting with an update on the MFF campaign will take place.

3. Summary of key action points

- **By 31 October 2025:** Reach out to your [national ministers](#).
- **By 25 November 2025:** Complete the [MFF survey for culture](#); [MFF survey for competitiveness](#); [MFF survey for external action](#); [MFF survey for regions](#).
- **By 1 December 2025:** Reach out to Members of the European Parliament.





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Annex : Useful resources for contacting Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

Committee	Chairs and Vice-Chairs	Programme + hyperlink to the procedure file	Rapporteurs and co-rapporteurs	Other relevant MEPs
CULT (Culture and Education)	Chair: Nela Riehl (Greens/EFA, DE). Vice-Chairs: Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski (EPP, PL); Emma Rafowicz (S&D, FR); Diana Riba i Giner (Greens/EFA, ES); Hristo Petrov (Renew, BG).	AgoraEU	Check the links in column 3	Hannes Heide (S&D, AT); Laurence Farreng (Renew, FR)
BUDG (Budgets)	Chair: Johan Van Overtveldt (ECR, BE). Vice-Chairs: Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, DE); Giuseppe Lupo (S&D, IT); Janusz Lewandowski (EPP, PL); Lucia Yar (Renew, SK).	Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034	Check the links in column 3	Hélder Sousa Silva (EPP, PT); Nicolae Ștefănuță (Greens/EFA, RO); Carla Tavares (S&D, PT)
ITRE (Industry, Research, and Energy)	Chair: Borys Budka (EPP, PL). Vice-Chairs: Tsvetelina Penkova (S&D, BG); Elena Donazzan (ECR, IT); Giorgio Gori (S&D, IT); Yvan Verougstraete (Renew, BE).	European Competitiveness Fund, Horizon Europe	Check the links in column 3	Christian Ehler (EPP, DE)





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REGI (Regional Development)	Chair: Dragoș Benea (S&D, RO). Vice-Chairs: Gabriella Gerzsenyi (EPP, HU); Nora Mebarek (S&D, FR); Francesco Ventola (ECR, IT); Ľubica Karvašová (Renew, SK).	European Fund for Regional Development and Cohesion Fund	Check the links in column 3	Marcos Ros Sempere (S&D, ES)
EMPL (Employment and Social Affairs)	Chair: Li Andersson (The Left, FI). Vice-Chairs: Johan Danielsson (S&D, SE); Jagna Marczułajtis-Walczak (EPP, PL); Katrin Langensiepen (Greens/EFA, DE); Georgiana Teodorescu (ECR, RO).	European Social Fund	Check the links in column 3	Miriam Lexmann (EPP, SK)
AFET (Foreign Affairs)	Chair: David McAllister (EPP, DE). Vice-Chairs: Hana Jalloul Muro (S&D, ES); Urmas Paet (Renew, EE); Alberico Gambino (ECR, IT); Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (EPP, RO).	Global Europe Fund	Check the links in column 3	





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Tips for addressing MEPs

1. **Every Member of the European Parliament has a webpage.** To find their email address, look for the small envelope icon under their photo. Right-click on it and select 'Copy email address.'
2. **It's also advisable to copy MEPs' assistants on your email.** On the right-hand side of MEP's webpage, you'll find a tab titled 'Assistants.' You need people under the section 'Accredited assistants.' Their email addresses usually follow the format: firstname.lastname@europarl.europa.eu
3. **Even if the MEP is not the rapporteur for the file, acknowledge their role or relevance.** For example:

'I am writing to share with you our organisation's position on cultural funding in the next MFF, as we know you have long been a strong supporter of culture...'

Or, if addressing a Chair or Vice-Chair:

'We are writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the XX Committee, which will oversee the [programme name] (e.g. Horizon Europe, the European Competitiveness Fund, regional funding) – a programme we believe is also crucial to culture in the next MFF.'

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