

Culture Action Europe

**Culture in EU regional funding
in the Multiannual Financial
Framework 2028-2034**



23 September 2026



Croatia, Small Roman Theatre, Pula

ERDF, Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020

Total budget: €2.37m, **EU contribution: €1.13m**

Photo: ing-grad.hr



Slovenia, Maribor Puppet Theatre, Maribor

ERDF, Operational Programme for Strengthening Regional Development Potentials 2007-2013

Total budget: €14.2m, **EU contribution: €6.4m**

Photo: lg-mb.si

Culture in EU cohesion funds 2021-2027



Under four cohesion funds (European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund Plus, Cohesion Fund, Just Transition Fund), in 2021-2027, for intervention field 166 'Cultural heritage and cultural services', the following contributions are planned:

- **EU contribution planned: €5.10 billion**
- National/other co-financing: €1.54 billion
- Total planned investment: €6.64 billion

[Source](#): European Commission, Cohesion Open Data Platform, 2021-2027 Cohesion Intervention fields – amounts planned', updated 18 September 2026

EU cohesion funds 2021-2027

- Goal: to reduce regional disparities and improve equal access to opportunities across the EU
- Shared management: Commission + national/regional authorities
- Beneficiaries apply to calls under national/regional programmes, not directly to the Commission
- 379 national and regional programmes in 2021-2027
- Financing: €378 billion EU funding, around €545 billion with co-financing

EU Recovery and Resilience Facility 2021-2026



- Main tool to address the consequences of the pandemic
- Member States needed to prepare National Recovery and Resilience Plans and implement reforms (with focus on green and digital transition) to receive money
- Budget €573 billion

INCLUDE CULTURE IN YOUR NATIONAL RECOVERY STRATEGIES AND REACTIVATE CULTURAL LIFE IN EUROPE

*Heads of State and Government,
Ministers for European Affairs,
Ministers for Finance,
Ministers for Culture*

*President of the European Commission
President of the European Parliament
President of the Council of the EU
European Commissioners*

As a powerful vector for the future of Europe and a key asset for the continent's social, environmental, and economic sustainability, culture is more than a sector that needs urgent support. Culture is key to healing wounds in times of crisis, to keeping our societies together, and to making them more resilient. For these reasons, we believe it should be at the heart of Europe's recovery from the pandemic.

Ensuring that culture is explicitly included in the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) will help secure both the future of the sector and its important contribution to Europe's future.

Quick quiz:

How much funding from the EU's pandemic recovery plans for 2021-2026 was planned for culture across the EU?

- A. Around €2 billion
- B. Around €6 billion
- C. Around €12 billion
- D. Around €19 billion

Quick quiz:

How much funding from the EU's pandemic recovery plans for 2021-2026 was planned for culture across the EU?

- A. Around €2 billion
- B. Around €6 billion
- C. Around €12 billion - target 2% for culture achieved, 18 countries included culture**
- D. Around €19 billion

Culture Action Europe's [analysis](#) of cultural measures included in EU Member States' national recovery plans — a useful reference for what could be supported under the new NRPPs

Updated [Commission's analysis](#)

CULTURE IN THE EU'S NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLANS

The state of play one year after the launch of the campaign to earmark 2% in the post-pandemic strategies



From EU funds to National and Regional Partnership Plans

How cohesion, agriculture and other funding would be organised in the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework

Infographic visualised by AI based on data from the European Commission's 2025 proposal on National and Regional Partnership Plans

1 Existing funding streams

2021-2027 framework + Social Climate Fund*

COHESION

- 01 European Regional Development Fund
- 02 Cohesion Fund
- 03 European Social Fund Plus
- 04 Just Transition Fund

AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- 05 European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
- 06 European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

FISHERIES & MARITIME

- 07 European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund

MIGRATION, BORDERS & SECURITY

- 08 Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
- 09 Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy
- 10 Internal Security Fund

SOCIAL CLIMATE TRANSITION*

- 11 Social Climate Fund*
2026-2032 | ETS-funded, outside MFF ceilings

2 Proposed common framework

2028-2034 | One fund, distinct components

National and Regional Partnership Fund

€865.1bn

TOTAL FUND | current prices

ALLOCATED TO THE 27 PLANS

€782.9bn

National and Regional Partnership Plans
WITHIN THIS ALLOCATION (APPROXIMATE)

€748.9bn

General allocation

Broader NRPP policy objectives

€34.2bn

Reserved allocation

Migration, borders and internal security

PLUS: OUTSIDE THE €865.1bn FUND

€50.1bn

Social Climate Fund

Implemented through the national plans

SEPARATE COMPONENTS WITHIN THE FUND

Not pre-allocated across the 27 national plans

EU Facility

€71.9bn

EU actions, crisis response and emerging priorities
€63.2bn Union actions + €8.7bn budget cushion
Can provide additional support to national plans

Interreg Plan

€10.3bn

European territorial cooperation: a separate plan

Technical assistance: up to 0.5% within the envelope.

3 27 National and Regional Partnership Plans

One per EU Member State | Largest to smallest

€ BILLION

Poland	123.3
France	90.1
Spain	88.1
Italy	86.6
Germany	68.4
Romania	60.2
Greece	49.2
Hungary	37.7
Portugal	33.5
Czechia	29.4
Bulgaria	22.3
Slovakia	19.9
Croatia	16.8
Lithuania	14.2
Ireland	12.2
Austria	10.7
Sweden	10.3
Finland	9.7
Latvia	9.3
Belgium	8.8
Netherlands	8.5
Denmark	7.6
Estonia	6.5
Slovenia	5.4
Cyprus	2.3
Malta	1.3
Luxembourg	0.6

Country totals include home affairs and Social Climate Fund.
EU funding only; loans and national co-financing are excluded.

HOW TO READ THE SCHEME

* 10 funds/instruments in the 2021-2027 MFF, plus the Social Climate Fund. Its plans would become separate NRPP chapters from 2028.

The pipes show the proposed funding architecture, not a transfer of unspent 2021-2027 budgets. Pipe widths are schematic; bars scale to country totals.

General allocation of €748.9bn sums rounded country figures; the legislative totals imply about €748.7bn. Rounded components may not add exactly.

Additional loan support of up to €150bn (Catalyst Europe) is outside the amounts shown. Figures are rounded, in current prices; proposal, not adopted allocations.

Sources: Commission COM(2025) 565, Arts 10, 26, 80-83

| Commission: Member States allocation (July 2025)

Independent visualisation of Commission data | 20 September 2026

Cohesion funds (2021-2027)

- Essence (the purpose of support)
- Co-financing requirement

Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021-2026)

- Management through national plans
- Performance-based logic



National and Regional Partnership Plans (2028-2034)

EU Requirements for NRPPs (Article 22 of the NRPP Regulation)

- A. Address key European Semester challenges (*annual EU check on how each Member State's economy and social policies are doing*)
- B. Align with relevant national and EU strategies
- C. Contribute to the Fund's objectives
- D. Include reforms and investments with milestones and targets
- E. Reduce economic, social and territorial disparities
- F. Involve regional, local and civil society partners
- G. Respect the rule of law and EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- H. 'Do no significant harm' and equality principles
- I. Meet social and climate spending requirements
- J. Sound financial management

Projection: 2% for culture

Allocating 2% of the proposed NRPP general allocation to culture would amount to around €15 billion over seven years.

Illustrative projection only. The proposed €750 billion general allocation for NRPPs is shared across many policy areas and already includes substantial earmarks and minimum requirements, including for agriculture, social objectives and less-developed regions. These requirements can overlap. The final allocations remain subject to the MFF negotiations.

Two levels of action

- **EU level:** make culture visible in the NRPP framework (rules, guidance, strategic priorities). See [CAE's letter](#).
- **National level:** ensure national government write culture into the country's plan. They need to hear from their citizens! National advocacy matters.

Article 3 Specific objectives of the Fund

1. The general objectives referred to in Article 2 shall be pursued across all regions through the following specific objectives:
 - (a) to support the Union's sustainable prosperity across all regions by:

■ ■ ■
 - (e) to protect and strengthen fundamental rights, democracy, the rule of law and to uphold Union values by:
 - (I) sustaining and further developing open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies, including by building civil society and social partners' capacities to uphold Union values, citizenship education and youth participation;
 - (II) promoting and upholding the rule of law through strengthening justice systems, anti-corruption frameworks, media pluralism, information integrity, media literacy, and effective checks and balances;
 - (III) enhancing the efficiency of public administration and the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders at national, regional and local level;
 - (IV) promoting culture as a catalyst for European values and supporting a vibrant and diverse cultural sector.

Culture in the NRPP Regulation

Joint Declaration ‘Europe for Culture - Culture for Europe’

10. Culture and cultural heritage foster **regional and territorial development, resilience, social cohesion and convergence** between Europe’s regions. They also need to be protected in times of crises, including from risks such as the effects of climate change. We commit to:
- Untapping the potential of culture and cultural heritage, in synergy with other areas, in boosting attractiveness of all territories and addressing territorial challenges, including countering demographic decline, especially in peripheral, rural, remote and underserved areas, and EU outermost regions.
 - Advancing sustainable cultural tourism, respectful of cultural heritage, landscapes and community practices, and contributing to regional and local development.
 - Exploring different ways of integrating culture and cultural heritage into cooperation on crisis preparedness, security and crisis preparedness planning, crisis and risk management, post-crisis reconstruction, recovery and peace-building processes.

Leaked Commission's draft guidance on NRPPs

- Cultural infrastructure and heritage preservation appear as examples of possible investments. Limitation: ordinary building maintenance would generally not qualify, while substantial renovation, accessibility, energy-efficiency could.
- Culture can be connected to **several NRPP objectives**, incl. democracy, social inclusion, skills, territorial development and urban regeneration.
- Governments must identify a concrete problem, target group, territory, investment or reform, budget, indicators, milestones and expected results, so ask for concrete reforms in your national advocacy.
- Pay attention to **community-led development** (p. 41) and **Local Action Groups**.

[Draft guidance](#), 22 July 2026, shared by Contexte. Not yet adopted.

What to do

- Find out which authority (e.g. ministry) is responsible for drafting and coordinating your country's NRPP.
- Understand their timeline and consultation process. Consultations are already underway in many Member States!
- Bring national and regional cultural organisations together (the more the merrier) and agree 2-3 shared priorities/topics to be addressed. Take into account existing cultural landscape, national strategies and overall context.
- Turn needs into concrete reforms or investment proposals. You can check what culture measures governments proposed in their national recovery plans during the pandemic.
- Engage with the coordinating ministry, culture ministry and regional authorities, share your proposals.
- Start now!

What one cultural need/reform could an NRPP address/implement in your country?

NRPPs Timeline

- **Now-2027:** national preparation & consultations
- **from June 2027:** Member States can submit draft NRPPs to the Commission
- **by 31 January 2028:** Member States must submit their initial NRPPs to the Commission
- **up to 4 months (by end of May 2028):** Commission assesses whether the plan meets the Regulation's requirements
- **within another 4 weeks:** Council approves NRPPs. 31 July 2028 - approval after that date means the Member State would not receive the 2028 pre-financing tranche.
- **2028-2034:** implementation
- **from 2029:** annual reporting and monitoring. By 15 February each year, Member States report progress up to the end of the previous year
- **by 31 March 2031:** mid-term review and amended plans

The dates are tentative and subject to negotiations.

Payment

- **2028-2030:** pre-financing 4% + 3% + 3% of EU allocation
- **during implementation:** Member States can request payments up to 6 times/year, by 31 October, based on progress, milestones and targets. The Commission then has up to 60 days to pay
- **from 2029, by 15 February annually:** implementation & assurance reporting. If that package has not been submitted, new payment applications are not admissible



Thank you!

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