



ENCATC

The European network on cultural  
management and policy

**Policy Recommendations  
on the Multiannual Financial Framework  
of the European Union**

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## Culture at the core of a competitive and strong new European vision: ENCATC calls for ambitious investment in Research, Education, and Creative Sectors in the EU's Future Budget

**ENCATC** is the European network dedicated to cultural management and policy education. Established in 1992, it brings together over 100 member institutions—including universities, training centres, cultural organisations, and public authorities—from more than 40 countries across Europe and beyond. The network represents all disciplines in the arts and culture sector.

As an NGO officially partnered with UNESCO, in consultative status with the United Nations / ECOSOC Committee, and holding observer status to the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Culture, ENCATC plays a pivotal role in professionalising the cultural sector to ensure its sustainability. The organisation fosters networking and dialogue among stakeholders, advocates for evidence-informed policies, and contributes to the development of a sustainable, inclusive, and democratic cultural management and policy education landscape. Through its diverse activities—including the ENCATC Congress, Academy, publications, and various projects—ENCATC facilitates the exchange of knowledge, methodologies, and experiences, thereby enhancing the capacity of cultural professionals and institutions across Europe.

In addition, ENCATC demonstrates a strong commitment to advancing the European Research Area by actively supporting excellence and innovation in cultural policy and management research. The network runs a dedicated Research Strand that provides a platform for scholars and practitioners to share cutting-edge research, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and contribute to shaping the research agenda in the field. This includes organizing the annual ENCATC Research Award on Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, supporting emerging researchers through mentorship and mobility initiatives, and publishing the *ENCATC Journal of Cultural Management and Policy* as well as the *ENCATC Book Series on Cultural Management and Cultural Policy Education* with Routledge. By promoting transnational cooperation and encouraging open access to research outputs, ENCATC plays a key role in strengthening the research ecosystem and aligning cultural research with broader EU policy priorities.

As the European Union advances the strategic design of its post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), ENCATC—the European network on cultural management and policy—emphasizes the imperative to enhance support for research in the cultural and creative sectors (CCS).

In the face of rising societal challenges—including geopolitical changes, climate transitions, peace and digital evolutions—the EU's long-term vision must fully recognize the essential role of culture. These challenges are not solely technical or economic; they are inherently cultural. Accordingly, the MFF must acknowledge and support research and practice in the cultural and creative sector not merely as an auxiliary domain, but as a critical axis and transectoral point for sustainable development, cohesion, and innovation.

## Key Recommendations

- ***Support research in cultural and creative sectors as a tool for strategic development of Europe***

### **1. Enhanced Investment in Research in the Cultural and Creative Sectors**

The forthcoming MFF must ensure a substantial increase in funding for research and development in the cultural and creative sectors within the EU's broader research and innovation framework. Dedicated financial instruments must support research and knowledge and innovation production in cultural management, policy, and education—both within Horizon Europe's successor and other major programmes such as Erasmus+, the Cohesion Policy funds, and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

### **2. Embedding Culture in Europe's Strategic Vision**

Research in the cultural and creative sectors must be elevated as a strategic tool for addressing key EU objectives, including democratic resilience, ecological transition, social inclusion, and international engagement. Cultural management and policy research provide vital insight into the values, governance models, and societal practices that shape the European project.

### **3. Fostering Policy Coherence and Cross-Sector Integration**

The MFF must promote coordinated, cross-sector investment in research. Research in the cultural and creative sectors intersects with numerous fields—health, education, digital innovation, international cooperation, social affairs and welfare, economics, management, technology, urban and territorial development, climate action and sustainability—and deserves structured pathways for interdisciplinary collaboration. Greater synergy across EU funding programmes will foster a more coherent and impactful research ecosystem.

#### 4. Guaranteeing Participation and Access

Research support must be comprehensive and accessible. The MFF should allocate specific resources to ensure equitable participation by researchers from diverse geographical, institutional, and socio-economic backgrounds. This includes enhanced mobility schemes, capacity-building measures, and institutional support across the EU and its partner regions.

- ***Strengthening the role of culture and creativity for innovation and development in the European Union***

#### 5. Strengthening the role of Cultural and Creative Sector Through Support for Researchers and Practitioners in the CCISs

To build a stronger research and innovation ecosystem, the MFF must invest in the wide range of professionals contributing to knowledge production and cultural and creative development—including researchers, practitioners, cultural and creative workers, and cultural and creative organizations—across Europe's highly diverse territorial landscape. Targeted support is essential to empower professionals operating in both urban and rural contexts, acknowledging the distinct challenges and opportunities each setting presents. Measures should include dedicated funding for community-based research and development, practice-led inquiry, research exchanges and collaborative projects that bridge academic and non-academic expertise. Such investment will foster a more representative, dynamic, and territorially balanced cultural research sector, reinforcing the EU's commitment to cohesion, equity, and territorial integration.

#### 6. Increasing Education, Training, Mobility and Capacity Building Opportunities through Erasmus+

Education and training are fundamental pillars for Europe's long-term sustainability, competitiveness, and democratic vitality. The next Multiannual Financial Framework must include increased and stable funding for the Erasmus+ programme as a separate initiative, recognising its essential role in advancing skills development, cross-border learning, mobility, and capacity building in the cultural and creative sectors and beyond.

To support a cohesive and inclusive European research and innovation ecosystem, Erasmus+ must continue to foster higher education cooperation, trans-sectoral and cross-sectoral collaboration, reinforce the mobility of students, educators and researchers, and enable structured capacity-building actions—especially for institutions and individuals in less advantaged regions. A greater investment in education also reinforces the EU's broader objectives for green and digital transitions, social resilience, and inclusive prosperity. A reinforced Erasmus+ programme will better equip the cultural and creative sector's professionals and institutions to respond to Europe's evolving societal challenges.

#### 7. Reinforcing the EU's Cultural Programme

In addition to research and education, the EU's specific programme for culture—Creative Europe—must be significantly reinforced and maintained as a standalone programme with

dedicated and clearly defined financial allocation in the next MFF. Given that, in 2023<sup>1</sup>, cultural employment in the EU accounted for 7.8 million people—representing 3.8% of the total workforce—the cultural and creative industries are not only vital to Europe's identity but are also a key pillar of its economy. Their scale and cross-cutting impact fully justify a standalone programme with adequate resources to match their strategic relevance.

Moreover, culture and creativity are not only drivers of innovation and growth, but also critical enablers of social cohesion, community resilience, civic engagement, and wellbeing across urban and rural contexts. The cultural and creative sectors operate at the crossroads of identity, participation, and social development, making it essential that Creative Europe be empowered to support cultural actors, institutions, and projects with long-term and diversified funding. Increased investment in this programme will ensure that cultural and creative initiatives can continue to foster intercultural dialogue, safeguard cultural diversity, enhance the social fabric of Europe. Moreover, strengthened financial support has the potential to unlock the transformative power of culture and creativity as key drivers of sustainable innovation and inclusive development across the European Union, recognising that culture operates in a trans-sectoral manner, generating impact across various fields of European economies and societies.

## Conclusion

The Multiannual Financial Framework is not merely a financial tool—it is a statement of the European Union's long-term priorities and a document about the strategic development vision of the EU.

ENCATC calls upon EU institutions to adopt a bold and future-oriented MFF that recognizes the strategic importance of culture in shaping tomorrow's Europe. Investing in research in the cultural and creative sectors today is investing in the Europe of the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture\\_statistics\\_-\\_cultural\\_employment#SE\\_MAIN\\_TT](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment#SE_MAIN_TT)