



YOUR GUIDE TO

**CULTURAL
POLICIES**



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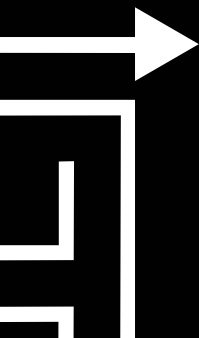


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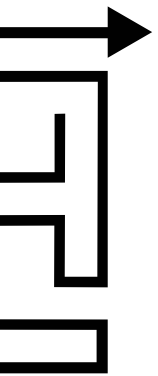
INTRODUCTION

A SLIPPERY DEFINITION

A **POLICY** is «a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed to officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government, or a political party» (Oxford Dictionary)

As a consequence, **CULTURAL POLICIES** can be defined as the sum of all decisions governments take (or do not take) in relation to culture.

This definition, though, is not entirely accurate, and does not necessarily help our understanding of what cultural policies actually are...





THE COMPLEXITY

OF CULTURAL POLICIES

MUST BE CONSIDERED

IN ORDER TO CLEARLY

UNDERSTAND THEM.

THE COMPLEXITY OF CULTURAL POLICIES

Different definitions of «Culture»;

Different levels of intervention;

Different (macro) categories;

Different actors involved;

One long, maze-like process.



02

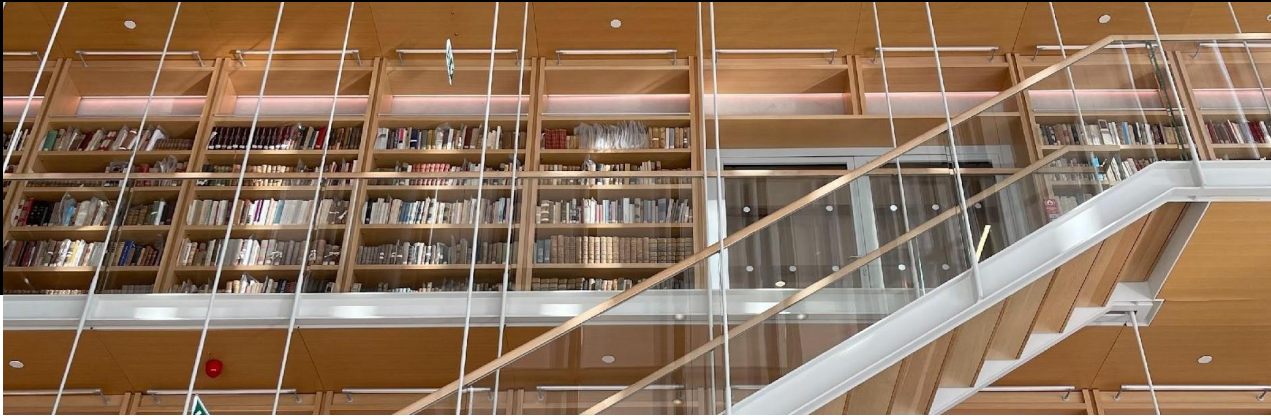


**DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS
OF «CULTURE»**



THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL VIEW

Culture as the system of signs, symbols, behaviours and beliefs that distinguish the way of life of a society or group.



THE ARTISTIC VIEW

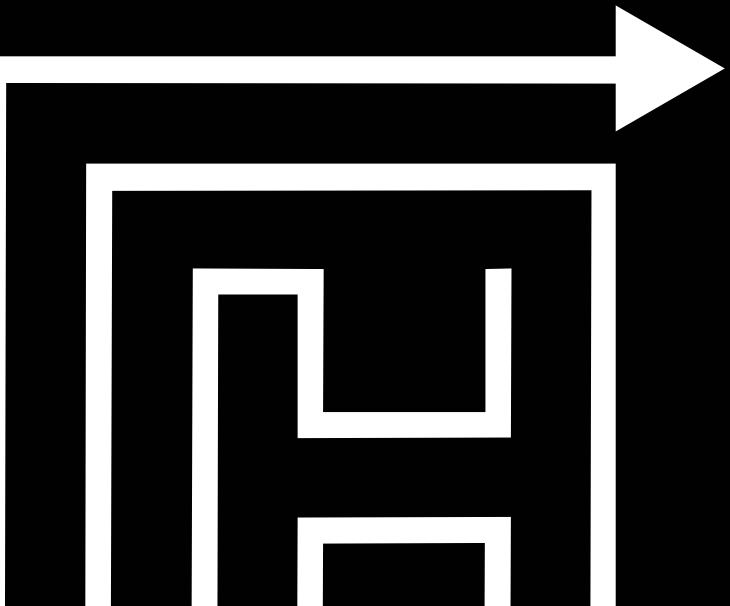
Culture as the sum of artistic and intellectual practices and products of a society or group.

WHICH ONE DO WE USE?

In the Global North, cultural policies tend to focus on the artistic (and material) view of culture, with a range of included cultural activities that expanded over time.



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**DIFFERENT LEVELS
OF INTERVENTION**

A person wearing a white hijab and a black jacket is leaning against a wall covered in graffiti. The graffiti consists of various geometric shapes and symbols, including triangles, circles, and lines. The person is looking to the left. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the person and the text overlay.

CULTURAL POLICIES

CAN EMERGE AT

INTERNATIONAL,

NATIONAL, AND

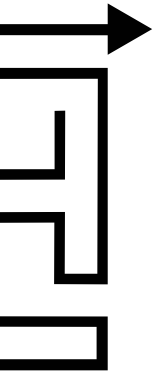
REGIONAL LEVEL.

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL POLICIES

At the international level, cultural policies can emerge from decisions taken by policymakers operating at global (UNESCO) or European (European Commission) level.

Their goal is usually the protection of cultural diversity, the safeguarding of cultural heritage, the assistance of the cultural and creative sector, and the support to specific activities of individual States.

Quite often, agendas and priorities are established at international level and acknowledged by the underlying ones.

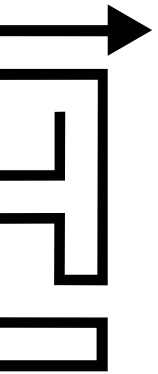


NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICIES

At national level, cultural policies emerge from the decisions of specific Ministries dedicated to culture, or equivalent organisations under governmental supervision.

Priorities may vary, but activities are usually geared towards ensuring the protection of national culture(s), increasing the accessibility of the sector and the audience participation, and supporting individuals and institutions engaged in cultural activities.

National cultural policies are usually in line with agendas and priorities defined at international level, and might use international funding to achieve their goals.

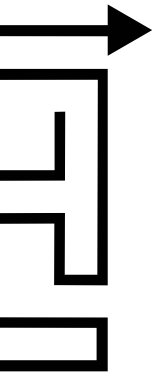


REGIONAL CULTURAL POLICIES

Even though regional competencies vary greatly among nations, regional and local levels are seen as the best-suited ground for bottom-up initiatives that see local authorities cooperating with their communities.

Most of the areas of intervention highlighted at international and national level are often addressed at regional and local level as well, but ideally with a more fine-grained knowledge of the actual needs of cultural actors based in the area.

Regional and local cultural policies can mobilise their own resources to finance their activities, but also receive financial support from international actors.



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**DIFFERENT (MACRO)
CATEGORIES**



EXPLICIT CULTURAL POLICIES

Cultural strategies that explicitly address culture as their area of intervention can be defined as «explicit».

These are conscious courses of action that intend to shape a community's culture or cultural production.

e.g. Creative Europe is the EU flagship programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors.

IMPLICIT CULTURAL POLICIES

Implicit cultural policies are usually defined as the «unintended» cultural consequences of other types of policies (healthcare, social welfare, urban planning, local development). This phenomenon is increasingly defined as «policy attachment».

e.g. An healthcare policy relying on the role of arts and culture to improve people's wellbeing.



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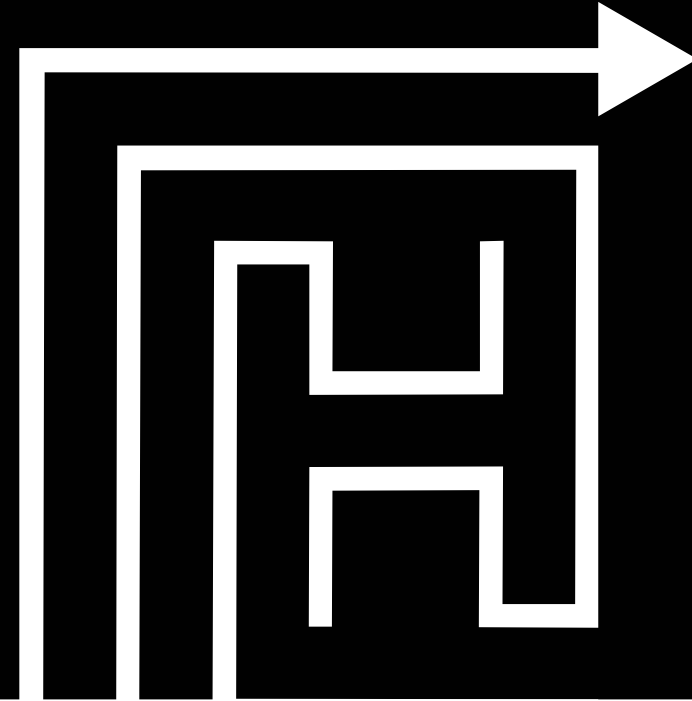


**DIFFERENT
ACTORS INVOLVED**

CULTURAL POLICIES ARE NOT

A PREROGATIVE OF GOVERNMENTS

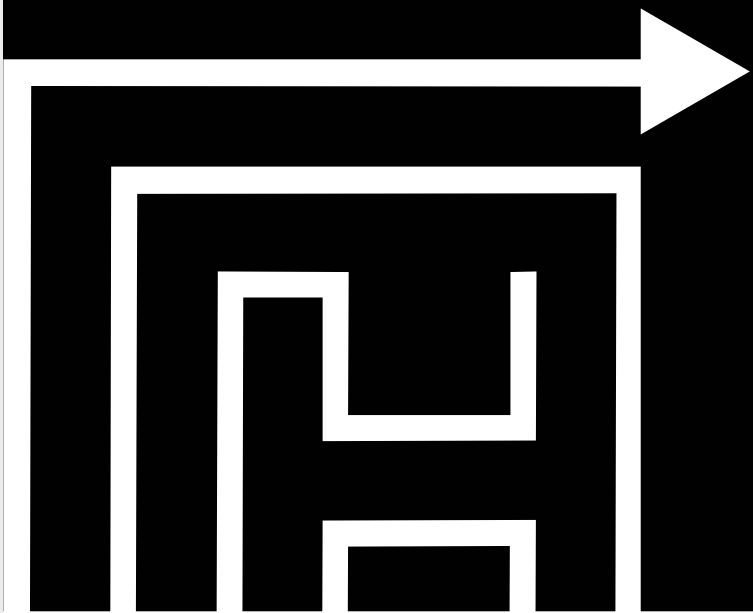
OR OTHER PUBLIC AUTHORITIES



Aside from ministers and other civil servants, the «canonical» policymaking process also includes think tanks, lobbyists, consultants, academics, enterprises, and the general public.

Hybrid actors such as foundations are also increasingly influential in setting the agenda for cultural initiatives.

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**ONE LONG,
MAZE-LIKE PROCESS**

CULTURAL POLICIES ARE MORE THAN THE CALL FOR GRANT.

The full policy cycle includes agenda setting, policy formulation, legitimation, implementation, evaluation, and policy maintenance, succession or termination.

Different actors intervene in each step of this (iterative) process.





CONTEXT AND TIME

The rationales behind cultural policies inevitably evolve according to time, place, socio-economic and political context.

As such, the trajectory of cultural policies changes over time, often with significant shifts.

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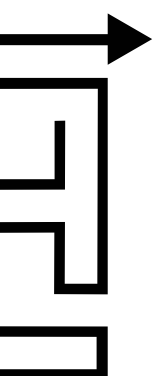


**WORKING WITH
CULTURAL POLICIES**

INSTRUCTION SHEET

Implicit cultural policies are increasingly frequent at all levels. As such, opportunities and funding might be found in «unlikely» places.

Requirements for participation and **expected results** are increasingly formalised. All available policy documents and info should be consulted to construct a clear picture of the road ahead.



The **wording** of policy documents is the result of rounds after rounds of discussion and confrontation. **Keywords** and recurring expressions are important hints and should be mobilised accordingly.



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