

CULTURAL PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES



A thematic report based
on the Indicator Framework
on Culture and Democracy

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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based on the Indicator Framework
on Culture and Democracy
December 2016

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Cover design and layout: Documents and Publications Production Department (SPDP), Council of Europe

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Printed at the Council of Europe

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Introduction

Have you read a good book lately, seen a film at your local cinema, or visited a new exhibit at a museum? Have you sung with a choir, taken a painting class or started writing a novel? Have you uploaded a video to the internet or created a website? If so, you have been participating in culture. The assumption, then, is that through cultural participation you have been able to express yourself creatively, have been exposed to alternative perspectives, and may have even had opportunities to engage with people with different backgrounds, beliefs or values. In doing so, it might be expected that you would have (or gain) greater tolerance for differences and more respect for and trust in others and that you would acquire the capacity to engage more actively in democratic life.

So, what might uploading a video to the internet or participating in a choir have to do with all this? In a situation where societies are being confronted with all kinds of growing social and economic challenges, and standard political solutions have not been able to adequately address social fragmentation and dissatisfaction, it is no wonder that culture is being leveraged as a resource. By enhancing cultural participation among Europeans, will the values of tolerance, trust and willingness to engage respectfully with others be strengthened, and more open, inclusive societies emerge as a result?

Drawing on data collected within the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD), developed by the Council of Europe and the Hertie School of Governance,¹ and other reliable data sources, we explore what links, if any, exist between a population's cultural participation and the commonly identified characteristics of an open, inclusive society, such as tolerance and trust. In doing so, we seek to trace potential paths for policy and action.

1. The IFCD project was developed in co-operation with the European Cultural Foundation.

Cultural participation and inclusive societies

As noted above, there are expectations that inclusive societies are and can be built through participation in culture. If inclusive societies are the goal, we need to have an idea of what they look like. And if cultural participation is one of the means for reaching the goal, we need to know what possible forms such participation might take. This section of the report offers some answers drawn from policy, scholarly and practitioner literature.

Inclusive societies

Though most European societies have long been diverse to one extent or another, the sense of growing diversity and of the need to manage it has become more urgent as a result of globalisation more generally, enhanced mobility resulting from open borders within Europe and, more recently, the influx of refugees. On top of the movement of goods, ideas and people bringing their various cultures and identities with them to new places, most European societies are experiencing or at least perceiving growing inequalities of income² and, perhaps most worrisome, reduced opportunities for social and economic mobility. This mix, among many other factors, breeds individual insecurity, disaffected voters, fear of “the other” and growing concerns that democracy as we know it in Europe is less than secure.

2. In fact, income inequality measured by the Gini coefficient has increased in some countries between 2004 and 2012 and decreased in others. See the European Commission’s Social Situation Monitor at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1050&intPagelD=1869>.

In the report entitled “State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law” (Council of Europe 2016b: 6), the Council of Europe’s Secretary General names “inclusive societies” as one of five fundamental building blocks of democratic security, alongside efficient and independent judiciaries, free media and freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and a vibrant civil society, and legitimate democratic institutions. Indeed, as the report goes on to say, “a democratically secure Europe is only possible where [it] is guaranteed [that all members of society have equal access to fundamental rights, including social and economic rights] and where citizens, regardless of their background and no matter where they live, enjoy these rights” (Council of Europe 2016b: 83).

There are many views regarding what constitutes, characterises or contributes to building inclusive societies and related concepts such as social inclusion and social cohesion (among them, Council of Europe 2013; The World Bank 2013; OECD 2011; Norton and Haan 2013). For our purposes, we focus on the definition used in the Council of Europe’s “Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies”, which conceives of such societies as those “where individuals maintain their own identities while respecting each other’s differences, united by a set of shared, democratic values” (Council of Europe 2016a: 2). In this view, individuals are not expected to relinquish their (potentially many) identities – be they related to ethnicity, origin, gender, religion or other categories – in favour of other identities or what would be considered mainstream. At the same time, tolerance and respect for others and their legitimate rights to conduct their lives are required on the part of both individuals and institutions. Yet, rather than accepting or creating parallel existences where people live alongside one another without interaction, inclusive societies foster ways of living together and peacefully resolving conflicts on the basis of basic, common values (and practices), which could be called a democratic culture. These are three seemingly simple ingredients or perhaps aspirations, but in today’s climate, they seem harder to recognise, maintain or achieve.

Diverse societies where individuals maintain their own identities are not necessarily less inclusive or less cohesive. Indeed the findings of studies linking diversity and various measures of social capital and social cohesion are quite mixed (see Uslaner 2012, Ch. 2, for an overview). In the US context, Putnam (2007) describes a situation in which ethnic diversity produces social isolation within communities by reducing various elements of social capital, particularly in terms of generalised trust, social relations and civic involvement. By contrast, Gesthuizen, van der Meer and Scheepers (2009) detect little or no association between ethnic diversity at the national level and individuals’ levels of the same measures of social capital in 28 European countries. Similarly, in their effort to measure social cohesion – in which they include aspects of

social and institutional trust, sense of belonging and solidarity, among others – in 34 OECD countries, Dragolov et al. (2013: 44 f.) also find that more ethnically homogeneous societies are not necessarily more cohesive than others: “immigration and diversity are not fundamentally detrimental to social cohesion” at the national level, although religiosity and economic inequality seem to have a negative relationship with social cohesion. In other words, Putnam’s finding that diversity tends to lead to social isolation and declining levels of trust and other elements of social capital does not hold everywhere and under all circumstances.

One of the keys to managing conflicts peacefully within diverse societies comprising many identities would seem to be tolerance of perceived differences among individuals and groups and appreciation of the value of diversity. It is in situations of insecurity and inequality that intolerance, prejudice and discrimination tend to arise or worsen in response to a perceived threat from others who are not like “us”. Yet, tolerance can be learned and developed. Individuals with balanced self-esteem and the ability to regard any situation from different perspectives tend to be more tolerant; these attributes or competences can be developed through schooling and other educational efforts (see, for example, Barrett 2016). In addition, contact between individuals and groups that are perceived to be different can – especially under optimal conditions³ – reduce prejudice; in theory and as observed (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006), the greater the opportunities for interacting with people who are different, the more likely an individual is to hold positive attitudes towards them. Furthermore, individuals living in diverse communities with “bridging” ties to others unlike them tend to be more tolerant than those with none (Laurence 2011). And trusting individuals and societies tend to be more tolerant (Uslaner 2012).

While tolerance and mutual respect enhance the possibilities for co-operation, an overarching set of shared values or ideas is what holds the many individuals and groups together and enables them to not only co-exist, but also to live and work together for the common good. In an inclusive society, such a set of values is part and parcel of a culture of democracy that includes attitudes and practices such as, among others, respect for diversity and even divergent values, lifestyles and norms, a conviction that conflicts be resolved without resort to violence, a commitment to protecting minorities and their rights, and a willingness to engage in dialogue across cultural and other divides (Barrett 2016: 15). Inclusion does not necessarily entail perfect harmony, for tensions and differences are to be expected in pluralistic and increasingly

3. Allport (1954) formulated conditions of “optimal contact” that would lead to changed attitudes. These include equal status between the groups, common goals, co-operation between the groups and a supportive institutional and cultural environment.

diverse societies. But under the umbrella of a tolerant, democratic culture, such tensions can be resolved peacefully.

Ultimately, inclusive societies are about values and norms that are shared by individuals and groups that are likely to hold and express many diverse identities. Such shared values do not depend on homogeneity of ethnicity, religion or way of life, much less on ways of expressing and creating. Rather, they depend on respect for diversity and human rights for all. Calls for social cohesiveness should not be interpreted as calls for exclusion, a warning that bears reminding when rising political forces in European countries construct artificial cultural entities as shorthand for new, socially cohesive groups that include some but exclude many others. Such attempts to engender selective social cohesion may even foster beliefs in some parts of society that democratic standards are no longer essential.

Cultural participation

Taking the operational definition from UNESCO's cultural statistics handbook (UNESCO 2012: 51), cultural participation can be defined as "participation in any activity that, for individuals, represents a way of increasing their own cultural and informational capacity and capital, which helps define their identity, and/or allows for personal expression". Such activities may take many forms – both active, such as creating art or even volunteering for a cultural organisation, and passive, such as watching a movie – and may occur through a variety of formal or informal channels, including the internet.

Active cultural participation refers primarily to artistic expression and creation, which, as Farida Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, noted in 2013, are "an integral part of cultural life" (Shaheed 2013). As such, artistic expression and creativity contribute to both the development of vibrant cultures and, by allowing for the expression of and exposure to multiple, often provocative viewpoints, the functioning of democratic societies. According to the 2013 Eurobarometer (TNS Opinion & Social 2013), some 38% of Europeans surveyed performed or produced cultural activities such as dance, music, singing, painting, theatre and other common art forms; most engaged in more than one type of activity. That same report, however, noted a marked decline in such creative activity since the previous survey of 2007, surmising that the economic crisis that began in 2008 might have had an impact on economic security and therefore the freedom to create and perform.

Beyond the more traditional forms of artistic expression, Europeans today also use digital media to distribute their own cultural content, for example

by creating a website or blog, uploading videos to YouTube or writing and editing Wikipedia entries. Though in 2013 only 11% of Eurobarometer survey respondents contributed their own content to social network sites and only 7% created a blog or website with cultural content (TNS Opinion & Social 2013), Eurostat (2016) estimated that in 2015, 29% of Europeans shared self-created content by uploading it to websites and 9% created a blog or a website.

In addition to creating or producing art, whether in traditional or more contemporary formats, people participate in culture by, for example, volunteering as board members, as guides or in other capacities for organisations engaged in cultural activities. Private donations to cultural institutions could also be considered a form of participation, but current data are hard to come by. More generally, types and levels of such engagement seem to differ along national traditions of private involvement in building and maintaining the cultural infrastructure.

Enjoying (or as some would say, consuming) culture is also generally considered to be cultural participation. Reading a book, visiting a museum, heritage site or library, attending a concert, theatre or dance performance, and even watching a cultural programme on television are just some of the ways people engage with cultural creations and institutions. As noted above, participation in most of these activities declined across surveyed countries between 2007 and 2013, particularly watching cultural programming on television and reading books (TNS Opinion & Social 2013). Like active participation, forms of passive participation can also take place via online channels and include reading newspaper articles (the most common use, according to the 2013 Eurobarometer), seeking information on cultural events or products (the second most common use), visiting museum websites, reading cultural blogs, purchasing cultural products, playing games and listening to music.

If cultural participation means increasing informational and cultural capacity and capital, then it could be argued that pursuing an interest in foreign cultures by, for example, taking up a foreign language or studying abroad might also be considered cultural participation. Language learning, for example, encourages learners to avoid stereotyping individuals, to develop curiosity and openness to difference, to discover other cultures and to understand that interaction with individuals with different social identities and cultures can enrich their lives (Council of Europe 2008).

Similarly, arts education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels and throughout adulthood develops individual cognitive and creative skills, fosters appreciation of different cultural expressions and diversity, and might therefore stimulate enhanced cultural participation. Based on research as part

of the Access to Culture Platform, the European House for Culture's Working Group on Education and Learning (Varbanova 2011: 6) concluded that:

Cultural engagement as part of lifelong learning and education:

...

– Breaks isolation and leads to social cohesion by bringing [together] people from [a] wide range of backgrounds, ages and experiences.

It also contributes strongly to the development of a variety of important competences such as social, civic and cultural awareness, and learning to learn.

The role of culture and the arts in building inclusive societies

Coming back to the question posed in the introduction to this report, we now examine briefly what the policy and academic literature suggests participation in culture and the arts might have to do with building inclusive societies and democratic security (or vice versa). Beginning with the Council of Europe Secretary General's 2016 report (Council of Europe 2016b: 97), culture is said to have a strong effect on democratic security at several different levels. For one, exposure to culture allows people to recognise the importance of diversity, thereby increasing their openness towards other groups in society. Furthermore, active creation of art in whatever form is an essential vehicle for freedom of expression. In addition, creating shared narratives through culture can be a powerful means of reinforcing cohesion in society.

Participating in culture and encounters with arts and heritage bring individuals into contact with a variety of ideas and perspectives on the world around them. Such exposure to culture is said to offer people "a greater diversity of options for social action and relationships" (Stanley 2006: 8) and to stimulate thinking in new ways. Furthermore, encounters with the arts and heritage are "quintessentially social events" (Stanley 2006: 8) that bring people into contact, both with those that share similar interests and values and with those that are different. As noted above, though not always, such contact through shared experiences has the potential to reduce prejudice and engender tolerance and respect for differences. In the United States, Leroux and Bernadska (2014) found that those who participate in the arts – both actively, by creating art, and passively – were more tolerant than those who do not, though they did not test whether cultural participation was the cause of the difference. In the evaluation of the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme (Council of Europe 2015), however, participation in the variety of activities under the programme's auspices "certainly" or "probably" had a positive effect in the majority of cases in terms of formal and informal exchanges between population

groups from different cultural backgrounds, communication between population groups, improved openness and tolerance among the population of a city, and decreased intensity of conflicts. To the extent that participation in cultural and intercultural activities leads to greater tolerance and openness, it can then contribute to democratic security.

The creation of art through composing, writing, singing, dancing and other activities allows for the expression of one's feelings, perspectives and identities. Artistic creation offers opportunities to explore and shape one's own identity and to build self-esteem and confidence (see, among others, Matarasso 1997; Barraket 2005). Those who are more confident of their own identity may have fewer feelings of insecurity and fear of the "other", and thus could be more tolerant, respectful and open (but not always).

Participation in cultural activities can also lead to the creation of shared narratives and shared values. Barraket (2005: 13) summarised the findings of various studies that found that arts-based initiatives, especially community-based ones, seem to be particularly effective in providing social spaces for diverse groups to come together and providing forums in which shared cultural meanings are developed and problems are solved. Along these lines, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers argued in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity" that culture and the arts can "create a space of expression beyond institutions, at the level of the person, and can act as mediators", thus paving the way for the "shared public space(s)" necessary for intercultural dialogue (Council of Europe 2008: 47).

In addition to these effects highlighted by the "Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies" (Council of Europe 2016a), policy literature has pointed to numerous other outcomes or impacts of cultural participation that could be relevant to democratic security. Topping the list are various attitudes and behaviours related to civic and political engagement. Participation in culture and the arts is said to encourage development of critical and strategic thinking skills, one of the competences for democratic cultures that should enable individuals to be more active, more effective citizens (Matarasso 1997; Barraket 2005; Council of Europe 2016a). Furthermore, various studies have found that those who engage in and with culture and the arts tend to be more engaged in community and other civic activities, such as belonging to neighbourhood associations (Leroux and Bernadska 2014); that those who are members of and actively participate in cultural organisations are more likely to be politically active, whether by voting or signing petitions (Delaney and Keaney 2006); and that students who had engaged in intensive arts experiences at school were more likely later to exhibit "civic-minded" behaviours such as volunteering, voting and engagement with local or school politics (Catterall, Dumais

and Hampden-Thompson 2012). Some caution is advised in assessing these results, since, while an association has been identified, it is not clear whether participation leads to more civic-mindedness or whether those who are civic-minded tend to participate more.

Despite the uncertainty of causality found in some empirical studies, links between cultural activity and building inclusive or cohesive societies can be found in the cultural policies of many Council of Europe member states. In Cyprus,⁴ for example, nearly all policy documents and projects produced by the Ministry of Education and Culture recognise the contribution of culture to social cohesion. The federal government of Switzerland⁵ similarly prioritises social cohesion, defined as mutual understanding among different cultural groups, as a goal of national cultural policy and legislation, including the 2010 Languages Act and the 2009 Culture Promotion Act. In Sweden,⁶ policy in all sectors and at all levels is constructed around ethnic and cultural diversity; the central objective of national cultural policy is to improve access for all residents, regardless of background. In other member states, strategies to develop more inclusive societies are specifically framed in terms of economic, educational or territorial inequalities. Improved access to culture has been targeted in Azerbaijan's⁷ State Programmes on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development since 2003. In other countries, such as France,⁸ social and cultural agendas are particularly entwined at the sub-national level. In Italy,⁹ culture and social inclusion are perhaps most strongly linked through partnerships between cultural institutions, foundations and local governments.

Having looked at what the policy and academic literature has to say about the link between cultural participation and inclusive societies, we next explore some of these suggested relationships using data assembled within a new framework.

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4. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/cyprus.php?aid=428.
 5. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/switzerland.php?aid=428.
 6. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/sweden.php?aid=428.
 7. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/azerbaijan.php?aid=428.
 8. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/france.php?aid=428.
 9. www.culturalpolicies.net/web/italy.php?aid=428.

Exploring relationships

At the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture in 2013, ministers called for “work on indicators of the impact of cultural activities on democracy ... to map ... developments at a pan-European level with special regard to access to and participation in culture...” (Council of Europe 2013). As part of that work, the Council of Europe engaged the Hertie School of Governance (Berlin) to develop the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD) (Hertie School of Governance 2016) to enable policy makers, scholars and practitioners not only to trace their own countries’ position on various dimensions of culture and democracy, but also to identify possible connections between these dimensions and opportunities for action. At the time this report was prepared, the IFCD contained 177 variables, combined into 41 indicators, covering a wide range of issue areas and concerns for 37 Council of Europe member states for which data were available¹⁰ (see the appendix for more information about the IFCD).

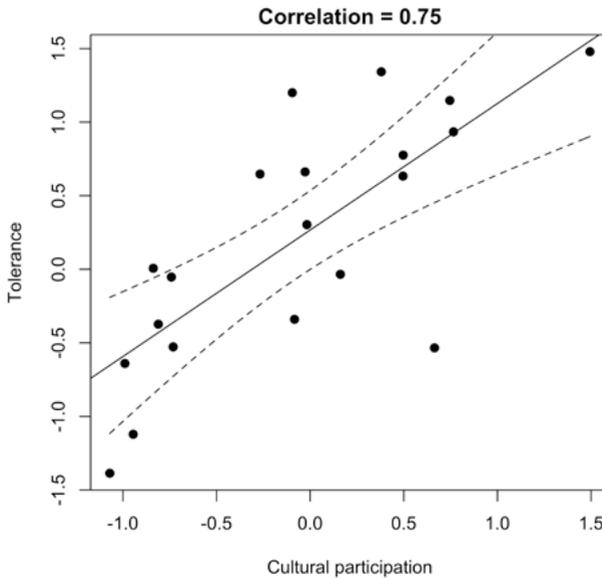
Although measures relating to inclusive societies as such are not part of the IFCD, data contained in the IFCD can be combined with other data from reliable sources to examine relationships and point to possible areas in which policy or other interventions might have an impact. It should be clear, however, that the associations shown here are not direct causal relationships, that is, more of X definitely leads to more of Y, or vice versa. Rather, the correlations should be interpreted as plausible explanations or as evidence of some underlying mechanism or dynamic, and thus as potential avenues towards achieving policy objectives. Furthermore, since the focus of this report is on examining relationships among the various measures rather than individual country performance, countries are typically not named in the analyses or on the graphs.

10. Unfortunately, full data were not available for all 37 countries for all indicators in the IFCD and in the complementary data sets used. The graphs indicate which countries are covered in each analysis.

Cultural participation and elements of inclusive societies

As noted above, many attributes and behaviours have been identified as key elements contributing to or indicators of inclusive societies. For example, tolerance and the acceptance of and respect for differences are considered to be key cornerstones of societies that are more inclusive. One common measure of tolerance is the percentage of people who said they would not refuse having certain people (for example immigrants, people of a different religion or race or homosexuals) as neighbours, as recorded by the World Values Survey (2014). This measure turns out to be strongly associated with the IFCD measure of cultural participation ($r = 0.75$), as shown in Figure 1. That is, where a country's population participates more in cultural activities of various sorts, people tend to be more tolerant than in countries where participation is less common.

Figure 1: Cultural participation and tolerance



Sources: IFCD and World Values Survey (2014)

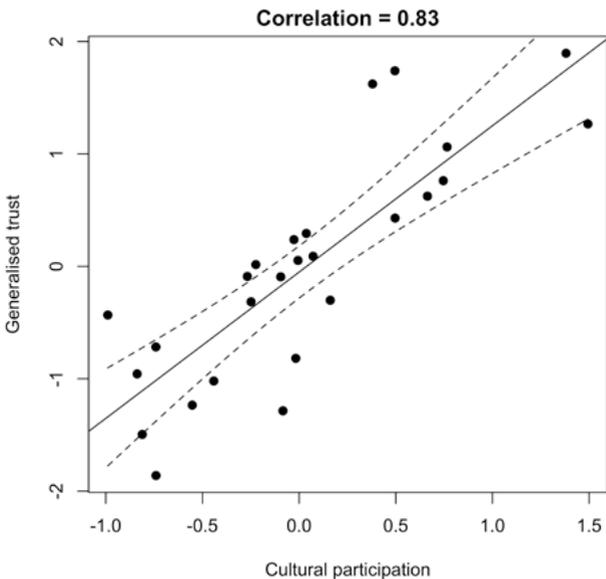
N = 20: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

In addition, cultural participation is at least moderately and positively correlated with several other measures drawn from the European Social Survey (2014) that are indicative of tolerant attitudes, for example having friends of other ethnicities or races ($r = 0.65$) or believing that gay men and lesbians

should be free to live their own lives ($r = 0.65$). Participation in cultural activities and genuine acceptance of different cultures and lifestyles seem indeed to go hand in hand.

Generalised interpersonal trust is often portrayed as an integral part of a society's social capital and is essential to a well-functioning society, as it reduces personal fears and increases feelings of security. Many have looked at the connection between generalised or social trust and civic participation, finding varying links to different forms of political activism and engagement in civic life (see for example, Bäck and Christensen 2016; van Ingen and Bekkers 2015).

Figure 2: Cultural participation and generalised trust within societies



Sources: IFCD and European Social Survey (2012, 2014)

N = 26: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

But is there also a link between cultural participation and generalised trust? Cultural participation is measured using data within the IFCD, while the level of generalised interpersonal trust in a country is assessed using the response in the European Social Survey (2014) to the question: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?". As depicted in Figure 2, participation in cultural

activities is very strongly linked to levels of trust in others ($r = 0.83$). Countries with high cultural participation rates also show high levels of interpersonal trust among the population. Given that more trusting individuals and societies also tend to be more tolerant (Uslaner 2012), it seems logical that the strong link between trust and cultural participation parallels that between tolerance and participation. However, unlike in the case of tolerance, where there is general agreement that it is a value that can be developed, the extent to which generalised trust can be strengthened through policy or other measures is still under debate.

A similarly strong association ($r = 0.84$) is evident between cultural participation and people's perception of the fairness of others,¹¹ which can be taken as evidence of a high level of inclusive social cohesion (Dragolov et al. 2013). Where cultural participation is higher, so is the sense of fairness; where the belief that people will try to take advantage of others is stronger, the level of people's participation in cultural activities is lower.

The culture of democracy that should hold diverse societies together and ensure inclusiveness rather than isolation is both developed and bolstered by institutions and practices that ensure basic human rights. One might then extrapolate that the relationship between cultural participation and the existence and practice of such democratic rights would be strong. Basic analyses of data on both cultural participation and various components on the democracy side of the IFCD reveal a mixed picture. A country's level of cultural participation is rather strongly and positively correlated with its level of freedom of association ($r = 0.66$) and with security and physical integrity ($r = 0.70$), a measure that includes both the existence of institutional guarantees of an individual's protection against physical harm and the translation of those guarantees into crime control and feelings of personal security. Assurance of personal security would certainly enhance an individual's propensity to engage in cultural activity, whether actively or passively. Furthermore, since engagement in the arts and culture is most often also a social activity and frequently takes place through civil society organisations and associations, the freedom to associate with others with the same interests would seem to be essential to thriving cultural participation.

By contrast, cultural participation is only rather weakly, albeit still positively, associated with the IFCD aggregate measure of freedom of expression ($r = 0.32$) and with free conduct of life ($r = 0.36$). Puzzlingly, the correlation

11. The question in the European Social Survey (2014) was: "Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?" Fair is given a higher score.

between freedom of expression and the IFCD indicator of artistic expression and creation is even lower ($r = 0.10$). One possible explanation for the relative lack of correlation at the level of aggregate measures is that those who create art, perform or write are relatively unaffected by whether their right to do so is guaranteed in a country's constitution. By the same token, the rights to express oneself and conduct one's life as one wishes do not always in and of themselves engender creativity and artistic output. That being said, it is notable that when focusing only on the variable indicating whether freedom of expression is effectively guaranteed, the relationship with cultural participation is very strong ($r = 0.83$). Thus, it seems that vibrant cultural participation depends less on constitutional provisions regarding freedom of expression than on measures to ensure that this right is protected and promoted in reality.

In sum, given the IFCD's component measure, a clear link exists between cultural participation and some important elements and indicators of inclusive societies for which cross-national data are readily available.

Cultural participation forms

The IFCD measure of cultural participation includes indicators covering a wide range of forms of individual engagement with culture (see Table 1). As noted earlier in this report, cultural participation can include active involvement in creating, producing or even supporting art as well as passive enjoyment of cultural outputs. Each indicator, with the exception of students in the arts, shows a strong to very strong correlation with the overall cultural participation measurement, a finding that supports the general validity of the IFCD measure. Is it possible that certain forms of cultural participation are more closely linked to indicators of inclusive societies than others?

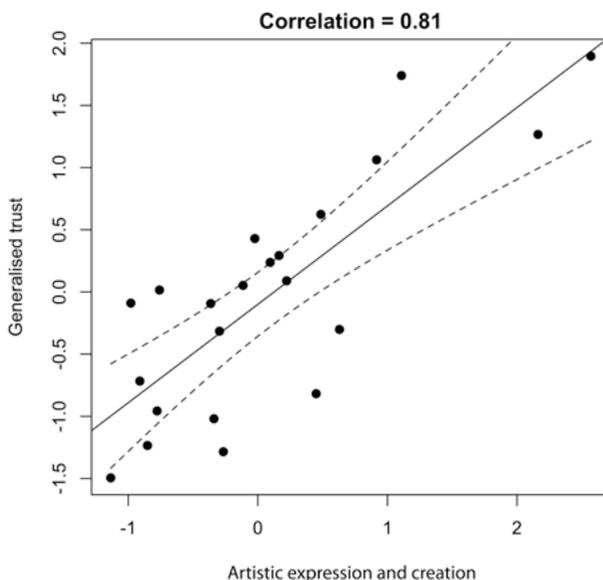
Table 1: IFCD Cultural participation indicators

Indicator	Examples of forms covered
Artistic expression and creation	acting, dancing, playing instruments, singing, producing art, writing a book
Interest in foreign cultures	willingness to learn a new language, study abroad
Non-partisan involvement	volunteering, donating
Online creativity	putting cultural content online, creating a website, uploading videos

Indicator	Examples of forms covered
Online cultural participation	downloading movies or music, reading online newspapers or cultural blogs, visiting museum websites
Passive cultural participation	visiting a historical site, going to a concert or performance, reading a book
Students in the arts	studying in culture-related fields, graduating from college arts programmes

Looking first at artistic expression and creation (Figure 3), there is clear evidence of a very strong association with interpersonal trust ($r = 0.81$). In countries where a larger share of the population makes music, dances, produces art or film and writes, trust in others is higher. Living within a more trusting society likely emboldens those who create art of various forms to express themselves more freely or to engage with others in artistic endeavours.

Figure 3: Artistic expression and creation and generalised trust

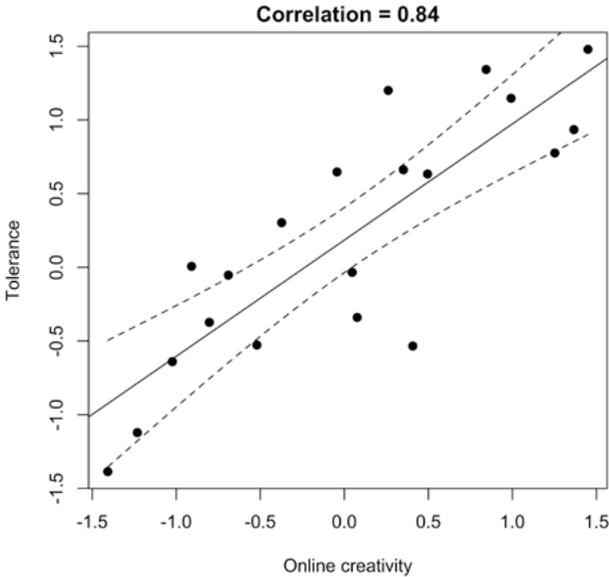


Sources: IFCD and European Social Survey (2012, 2014)

N = 22: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

The artistic expression and creation indicator is also clearly (though less strongly) related to other indicators of inclusive societies, including tolerance ($r = 0.52$), having close friends that are of a different race or ethnic group ($r = 0.56$), and believing in multiculturalism ($r = 0.59$).

Figure 4: Online creativity and tolerance



Sources: IFCD and World Values Survey (2014)

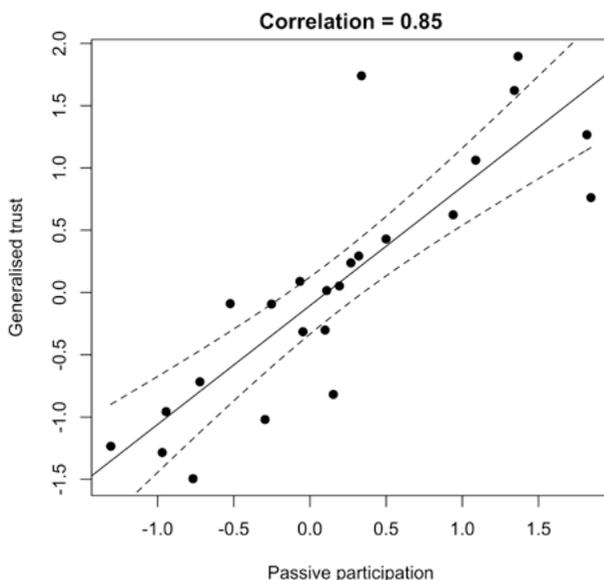
N = 20: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

Figure 4 points towards a strong positive association between the measures of online creativity (IFCD) and tolerance (measured as accepting people of a different race, ethnicity or religion, or immigrants as neighbours – World Values Survey, 2014). “Online creativity” is understood as a set of activities involving the creation of new internet content or of new digital resources (websites, blogging spaces, domains, etc.). Online creativity can stimulate and generate spaces for open discussion, expression of opinions and – as a consequence – exposure to other people’s opinions, behaviour, values and actions in relation to shared content. In contrast with passive online participation (including consumption of online content and sharing of existing online content), active online creativity assumes ownership or at least strong affiliation with the content and may provoke further discussions to support the creator’s position or point of view. Such discussions of created content can vary along the

continuum from adoration to hatred, but at the very minimum they expose the creator to a variety of opinions, variety of people and examples from distant locations that would remain unattainable or unnoticed if not picked up by internet users. Such exposure and awareness, even if not face-to-face contact, would speak for potentially higher tolerance.

On the other end of the cause-effect equation, a high level of tolerance would indicate a person's wider world perspective.¹² As a consequence, such a person would have more points of reference, items of knowledge and matters to share and narrate that could eventually end up online since the internet is increasingly a space for various forms of self-expression.

Figure 5: Passive participation and generalised trust



Sources: IFCD and European Social Survey (2012, 2014)

N = 24: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

12. For example, the correlation between the European Social Survey (2014) question about whether or not a person has friends of a different race or ethnicity with online creativity is strong ($r = 0.67$).

Like artistic expression and creation, passive cultural participation (attendance at various cultural events and sites such as cinemas, museums, concerts, historical sites and the like) is very strongly associated with generalised social trust ($r = 0.85$). As shown in Figure 5, those countries with higher levels of trust also exhibit higher levels of passive participation. A similarly distinct, though somewhat less strong, relationship ($r = 0.69$) exists between passive participation and tolerance. The most natural interpretation of such a connection lies in the domain of socialisation; taking part in cultural events on many, if not the majority, of occasions would be associated with sharing that experience with another (likely familiar) person or group of people.¹³ Having a reason to spend time with, share a thought with, or agree to disagree with close people feeds into social capital accumulation,¹⁴ and generalised trust is one of the attributes of social capital. But aside from socialising with one's closer circle, passive participation in culture – whether reading books, watching or listening to cultural programming, or attending a performance – also often exposes people to experiences, ideas and interpretations beyond these boundaries. As noted above, such exposure holds the potential to foster greater openness to and tolerance and respect for other perspectives and values.

Yet, not all forms of cultural participation included in the IFCD measure are as strongly associated with these indicators of inclusive societies, even if all associations are positive. For example, interest in foreign cultures, as evidenced by willingness or ability to speak a foreign language, interest in the arts of other countries and study abroad, is only moderately related to trust ($r = 0.57$) and only weakly to tolerance ($r = 0.38$). Similarly, non-partisan involvement in culture, such as volunteering for a cultural organisation, and online passive engagement in the arts show at best a moderate relation to tolerance and trust. Finally, the measure of students in the arts, covering the share of pupils enrolled in arts classes and students and graduates of college arts programmes, is only weakly related to indicators of inclusive societies. This finding, we suspect, could reflect the fact that the surveys do not address children under the age of 15.

Enhancing cultural participation

Indeed there appears to be clear evidence of a link between cultural participation and indicators of inclusive societies, with the caveat that the direction of cause and effect is uncertain. Assuming for the moment that increasing

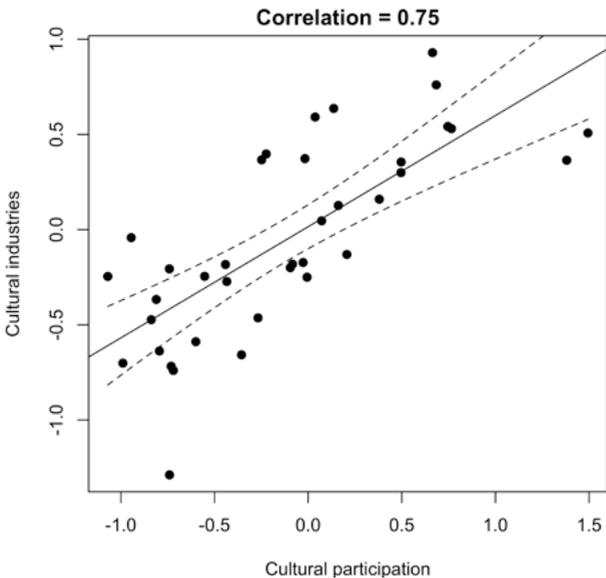
13. Recent findings from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) survey on arts participation found that 73% of Americans attend art events to socialise with friends or family, the most frequent response (National Endowment for the Arts 2015).

14. OECD insights: What is social capital? See www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf.

participation in cultural activities would lead to more inclusive societies (at least the dimensions covered in this report), what other factors might then contribute to enhancing engagement with culture?

The relationship between cultural participation and cultural industries, for example, can be seen as part of the demand and supply sides of a culturally enabling environment. An enabling environment refers to a set of tangible (such as buildings) and intangible (such as policies) conditions that allow for the creation of a vibrant and sustainable culture. Figure 6 shows that there is a strong positive association ($r = 0.75$) between the level of development of cultural industries and cultural participation, meaning that satisfying the supply side of the equation (that is, increasing cultural employment, cultural export, production of cultural goods, providing ICT for the creation of new business models and growth of the cultural sector) might also increase participation in cultural activities by providing more opportunities for engagement. In the opposite direction, the demand for culture, seen as cultural participation, needs to be satisfied.

Figure 6: Cultural participation and cultural industries

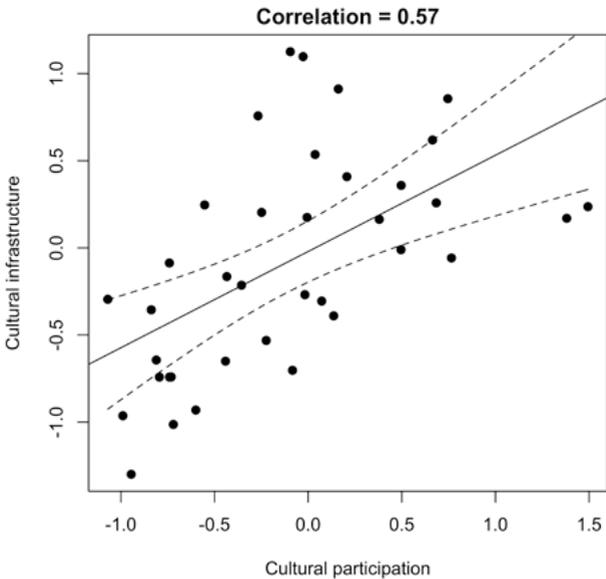


Sources: IFCD

N = 36: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

As Figure 6 clearly shows, cultural participation and the development of cultural industries go hand in hand. In fact, none of the Council of Europe member states is found in the top left of the figure (highly developed cultural industries and low cultural participation) or in the bottom right (high cultural participation, low development of cultural industries). While one might imagine a situation in which unsatisfied demand for culture without such an industry would still find ways to be expressed (online, on the street or in informal gatherings), national economies would benefit from satisfying such demand with investments in and development of cultural industries. And if one assumes that cultural participation contributes to the development of inclusive societies, then strengthening the cultural industries would make sense.

Figure 7: Cultural participation and cultural infrastructure



Sources: IFCD

N = 36: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

Similarly, the availability of infrastructure, that is, spaces in which culture and the arts can be created, performed or experienced, would seem to be a prerequisite for people’s engagement with culture. There is a distinct relationship between the IFCD measure of cultural participation and its measure of cultural infrastructure (see Figure 7). That the correlation is only moderate ($r = 0.57$)

might be surprising. Yet it is less surprising if one takes into account several important factors. The first is that the availability, coverage and comparability of data on cultural infrastructure leave much to be desired. Certainly there are many more types of built infrastructure than the museums, cinemas and heritage sites included in the IFCD measure. Furthermore, other types of cultural activity such as festivals are not yet regularly covered by data-collection efforts. Another, and for the future increasingly significant, factor is the inability thus far to appropriately define and capture the contribution of the internet to the cultural sector's infrastructure. It is no surprise that digitisation (measured among others by variables complementary to, but not within, the IFCD dataset relating to the share of households with internet access, the percentage of individuals using the internet, and activity on social media platforms) correlates strongly ($r = 0.84$) with cultural participation. If online creativity and even passive consumption of culture through the internet expands, as it seems to be doing, then greater consideration will need to be given to measuring its value.

Among the policy instruments examined within the IFCD, cultural funding and cultural education both show positive, albeit rather weak, relationships with levels of cultural participation ($r = 0.37$ and $r = 0.44$, respectively). The relatively weak link between cultural participation and the IFCD measure of cultural funding is due, in part, to the aggregation of more direct instruments of cultural funding, such as public expenditures and tax advantages for selected cultural industries, and more indirect instruments, such as efforts to encourage private sponsoring of culture. When only direct cultural funding is considered, the relationship is stronger ($r = 0.54$; and with outliers removed, $r = .60$).

Even so, the link between direct or indirect funding for culture and cultural participation is unlikely to be direct. Indeed, as for other policy areas, many other factors mediate the relationship between investments in culture and the objective of high levels of participation. For one, enhanced cultural participation may not be the main objective of expenditures. Furthermore, government spending priorities differ from country to country, with some investing more in libraries or museums and others in visual or performing arts, some investing more in artists directly and others in industries and infrastructure. Finally, the balance between public and private financing and provision differs across countries, making it difficult at best to trace a direct impact.

Like cultural funding, cultural education is arranged quite differently throughout Europe, with some governments prioritising either arts education or intercultural education and some giving attention to both. This variation would explain at least in part the relative weakness of the relationship. From the data available, it cannot be assumed that one more hour of arts education or one

more intercultural education programme will directly lead to an increase in a person's engagement with culture since many other factors are involved. That being said, cultural education does appear to be a contributing factor.

Given the many policies and programmes to encourage cultural openness through promotion of cultural diversity, one might expect these efforts to be also correlated with cultural participation. However, there is no direct, linear relationship between the IFCD measure of cultural participation and its measure of support and promotion of cultural diversity, which includes a variety of initiatives such as multilingual education, funding for immigrant organisations and promotion of the use of minority languages. This finding might indicate the existence of a missing link, perhaps the cultural industries, that translates these initiatives promoting cultural diversity and openness into real opportunities for engaging with and participating in cultural activities.

Improving access (both physical and programme-based) to cultural sites would seem to be a natural target for cultural policy seeking to enhance cultural participation and all the positive outcomes proven or even thought to be attributed to such participation. The evidence base for this assumption, at least that provided currently in the IFCD, is rather thin, however. The IFCD composite indicator for equality of access to cultural sites and events¹⁵ is negatively, albeit weakly, associated with the IFCD cultural participation measure ($r = -0.11$). Even removing outliers, the relation becomes positive, but still very weak ($r = 0.16$). Looking beneath the composite indicator to various socio-economic variables such as age, location of residence, income and education reveals similar correlations.

Nevertheless, a few observations stand out. For one, the equality of access based on where an individual lives (rural vs. urban) is more strongly related to cultural participation as a whole, artistic expression and passive participation,

15. Cultural access is calculated using the aggregated share of respondents to the Eurobarometer 79.2 who indicated that at least once in the past 12 months they have seen a ballet, a dance performance or an opera [qb1_1]; been to the cinema [qb1_2]; been to the theatre [qb1_3]; been to a concert [qb1_4]; visited a public library [qb1_5]; visited a historical monument or site [qb1_6]; or visited a museum or gallery [qb1_7]. Equality is the absolute distance between the percentage share of the respective subgroup and everyone else, meaning that the indicator score would be high for a country where cultural participation is equal between subgroups (for example young people participate as often as middle-aged people) and low for a country where a difference is observed (regardless of whether young people participate more or less than middle-aged people). The six subgroups are respondents below the age of 25 [d11], above the age of 64 [d11], who most of the time have had trouble paying bills at the end of the month [d60], women [d10], people who live in rural areas or villages [d25], and those who received no full-time education past the age of 15 [d8r2]. [The labels within the brackets identify the questions on the survey questionnaire.]

than is equality based on income, education, age or gender.¹⁶ This means that for countries with a higher level of cultural participation there tends to be fewer differences between people living in rural and urban areas in participating in culture. By contrast, in countries where people living in rural areas engage more (or less) in culture than people living in urban areas, cultural participation overall tends to be lower.

A second observation is that equality of access to cultural sites and events based on location of residence, income and education is somewhat more strongly (though still weakly) related to cultural industries than to the IFCD measures of, for example, cultural infrastructure or cultural openness. It seems that the strength of a country's cultural industry is related not only to the level of cultural participation, but also – even if less so – to the level of equality of access.

16. Eurobarometer 79.2 did not collect data on respondents' ethnicity, religion or other socio-economic variables. Such data would certainly enrich the analysis.

Conclusions

The process of bringing together data from the IFCD and other comparative sources has provided some support for the common belief that participation in cultural activities is related to aspects of inclusive societies in Europe. Cultural participation more generally and specific forms of cultural activity, especially artistic expression, online creativity and passive participation, are indeed strongly associated with trust, tolerance and related dimensions of an inclusive society. The analysis has also revealed that stronger cultural industries and – to the extent measured – a more solid cultural infrastructure coincide with higher levels of cultural participation and could therefore provide clues regarding where policies or initiatives might contribute indirectly to improving social cohesion.

There is still much work to be done to understand the relationships that have been identified, both those that are clearly strong and those that are not. Part of the work has to do with data availability and country coverage. Since the IFCD relies on secondary sources, information on many potentially interesting variables relating to both more established and newer forms of cultural participation simply did not exist, and few data sources cover all Council of Europe member states. In addition, due to resource constraints, the indicators are based on only the most recently available data and therefore do not allow for the tracing of trends over time.

These quantitative analyses could also be extended through qualitative research at the national and sub-national level so as to unpack and more closely examine the circumstances behind the relationships. The diversity within each of Europe's societies is evident also between them. Each has a different history, socio-economic context and approach to culture and cultural policy which will undoubtedly play a role in how cultural participation and inclusiveness work in tandem.

Indeed, culture has a long tradition as a project of integration in Europe, especially in the 1970s when cultural policy gained a new status by trying to include as many people as possible in a “democratic” cultural mainstream represented by the existing infrastructure. In Europe today, however, it should be remembered that culture has been and can be used as a tool for exclusion as well. As Jermyn (2001) pointed out, culture and the political production of cultural identity are two edges of a sword that can foster solidarity but can also emphasise differences essential for defining the “us” and excluding the “other”. Perhaps the lesson to be learned is that the values of tolerance and trust – both considered to be essential to inclusive societies and found to be strongly linked to cultural participation – are the keys to avoiding the turn to exclusion.

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Appendix – The Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy

The Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD) has been developed by the Council of Europe, in collaboration with the Hertie School of Governance (Germany), and with support from the European Cultural Foundation and member states. It is part of the process initiated by the ministers participating in the 2013 Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture on “Governance of Culture – Promoting Access to Culture”:

To launch a medium-term working process that should include work on indicators of the impact of cultural activities on democracy as well as the economic efficiency of financing culture in order to improve the effectiveness of cultural policies, to map related trends and developments at a pan-European level with special regard to access to and participation in culture and help generate harmonised national and European surveys.

The IFCD sees culture and democracy as separate domains or systems that shape society both independently and in concert, akin to the workings of the circulatory and nervous systems in the human body. In other words, culture has an independent and dependent (via democracy) effect on how society works; just as democracy has an independent and dependent (via culture) effect on the workings of societies.

The framework employs the following working definitions.

Culture in a narrow understanding is defined as cultural activity that is based on cultural values emphasising cultural freedom, equality and pluralism. Cultural activity includes cultural action, products, services and intellectual property, as well as market and non-market activities which are carried out by any type of individual or collective actor. Furthermore, cultural activity is generated in the policy, civic and economic dimensions, and as an aspect of freedom and equality.

Democracy is a form of government where citizens have opportunities to choose the representatives that reflect their values and opinions, and to influence decisions via direct democratic participation; where party competition is institutionalised and executive power is controlled; and where basic civil rights and liberties are protected by an independent and impartial judiciary.

To enable closer examination of these relationships and to systematise data collection and analysis, the IFCD identifies for each domain a set of dimensions, or analytical lenses, which are further broken down into one or more components, each comprising a number of indicators, as shown in the table below.

IFCD dimensions, components and indicators

Culture		Democracy	
Dimension	Components/ indicators	Dimension	Components/ indicators
Civic	<p>Cultural participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Artistic expression and creation ▶ Interest in foreign cultures ▶ Non-partisan involvement ▶ Online creativity ▶ Online cultural participation ▶ Passive cultural participation ▶ Students in the arts 	Civic	<p>Political participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Institutionalised participation ▶ Non-institutionalised participation

Culture		Democracy	
Dimension	Components/ indicators	Dimension	Components/ indicators
Policy	<p>Cultural funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cultural funding legislation ▶ Direct funding of culture <p>Cultural openness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Support and promotion of cultural diversity <p>Cultural education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Arts education ▶ Intercultural education 	Policy	<p>Government capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Analytical capacity ▶ Central bank independence ▶ Confidence in political institutions ▶ Political independence ▶ Political competition ▶ Political competitiveness ▶ Political party finance ▶ Rules for contestation and competition <p>Safeguards and checks and balances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Constraints on government powers ▶ Judicial review <p>Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Absence of corruption ▶ Informational openness
Economic	<p>Cultural industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cultural industry outputs ▶ Intangible assets ▶ Size of the cultural industry <p>Cultural infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Size of the cultural infrastructure 	Rule of law	<p>Equality before the law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Judicial impartiality ▶ Judicial independence <p>Quality of the legal system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Confidence in the justice system ▶ Judicial efficiency and professionalism

Culture		Democracy	
Dimension	Components/ indicators	Dimension	Components/ indicators
Freedom and equality	Cultural access and representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Access to cultural sites and events ▶ Public measures for equality 	Freedom and equality	Individual freedoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Freedom and neutrality of the press ▶ Freedom of association ▶ Freedom of expression Individual liberties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Free conduct of life ▶ Security and physical integrity Political representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Equality of participation

The IFCD has been built to take into account a diversity of concepts and approaches. Key features include the incorporation of different units of analysis (institutions, organisations and individuals) into each main element; consideration of three phases (inputs, throughputs and outputs) of the process unfolding within each of the two domains; and aggregation to the nation state or country. The scores for each of the variables are calculated using z-score transformation, which assigns all variables a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. This makes it easy to identify countries that perform above (positive scores) and below (negative scores) the average for the entire set of countries in the framework. All individual variables are aggregated into single indicators, which are in turn aggregated to components, and which are finally aggregated to the level of the four dimensions for both culture and democracy. The different scores are aggregated by taking the simple, even-weighted average of each data point.

As of October 2016, the IFCD contained 177 variables, combined into 41 indicators, 17 components and 8 dimensions, covering a wide range of issue areas and concerns for Council of Europe member states, though data coverage varies among countries. To avoid significant bias in the aggregated scores for domains, components and indicators, the framework currently covers those 37 Council of Europe member states for which data are available on at least 50% of the variables.

The data are available in various formats (.xlsx and .csv) for further individualised analyses, and are accessible via a user interface (www.governancereport.org/fileadmin/governancereport/ifcd/).

For more information, see “Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy – policy maker’s guidebook”, published by the Council of Europe in 2016.

A link has been made in recent years between a strong, well-functioning democracy and an abundance of cultural opportunities for all. Societies are said to be more open, tolerant and economically successful when people have easy access to a wide range of cultural activities and when participation rates in these activities are high. This first Council of Europe thematic report on culture and democracy specifically explores the relation between cultural participation and aspects of inclusive societies in Europe, such as tolerance and trust, and underlines the potential power of culture in nurturing them. The report is based on the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy, developed by the Council of Europe and the Hertie School of Governance, in co-operation with the European Cultural Foundation.



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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