

ETFF 2023



Opole

Recommendations

European Commission

Foreword

Since its early ages, European history has been closely intertwined with theatre and the multifaceted faces, tales and ideas brought to life by actors and comedians.

In 2023, taking stock of this long and rich artistic tradition, of its innovative and pioneering proposals, and reflecting on the lasting constraining forces pressing on the theatre community, we brought together the European theatre sector for a unique consultation exercise as part of the European Theatre Forum in Opole, Poland. I am particularly pleased to see the enormous engagement and support of the theatre community with more than 200 practitioners joining forces in this transformation exercise throughout three days of meetings.

With the Opole Recommendations, the European theatre community affirms its cohesiveness and shared, strategic vision. It takes ownership of the major role it plays in fostering a sustainable, inclusive and forward-looking industry and stands up as a leading partner for European institutions in achieving this aim. The European Commission hopes that, by bringing together all the segments of this broad community at the 2023 European Theatre Forum, it will help put theatre on the European policy map.

It is the tradition of theatre to represent an agora where people are stimulated to reflect and engage with each other on questions of their concern and, eventually, the way they want to live together in Europe.

In receiving the Opole Recommendations, the Commission confirms its trust and commitment to work hand in hand with theatre professionals and practitioners.

The Creative Europe programme will continue to provide many opportunities to the theatre sector so that it keeps on inspiring, enchanting and challenging our realities.

To overcome challenging crises and to bring our European values to the fore, Europe needs its theatre and the stories it alone can tell.

Georg Häusler

Director for Culture, Creativity and Sport, at the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (European Commission)



European Theatre Convention

Foreword

“Not to teach others, but to learn with them.”

It is in this spirit, a quote by renowned Polish theatre director Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999) about why we make theatre, that the European Theatre Forum 2023 was conceived. The programme of 37 artistic panels, roundtables, and discussions about the future of theatre — about theatre’s role in democracy, the green transition, and adapting to developments in digital technology — took place at JK Opole Theatre, in the same city that Grotowski developed his iconic training methods at the Theatre of the 13 Rows in the early 1960s. The potential to learn from each other, to build an agora for theatre, to shape the cultural debate across Europe in a modern-day echo of Grotowski’s impact was both exciting and inspiring. I am proud that ETC was able to curate the second edition of this unique, high-level initiative by the European Commission.

It enabled our wide theatre sector to engage in essential dialogue and I am honoured to present the outcome of these profound discussions, the Opole Recommendations. They encapsulate the collective needs and desires of our vibrant European theatre community, and their publication is a testament to our collective efforts to develop a more fair, sustainable, diverse, and open European theatre sector in the coming years. The over 200 attendees set out their vision for an inclusive and supportive ecosystem for the performing arts: one that embraces emerging voices, promotes sustainable practices, and celebrates the boundless creative diversity that defines our European theatre heritage and its innovative future.

We thank the European Commission for instigating this crucial process with the first European Theatre Forum in 2020. We are now one step closer to the creation of a permanent policy framework for theatre, with the European Theatre Initiative, which will be aided by the roadmap within these Opole Recommendations.

I am also thrilled to announce that the dialogue continues in 2023, at the new annual event, the “European Theatre Talks” at the Festival d’Avignon, organised by ETC. This gathering will provide a platform to discuss the content of the Opole Recommendations with artists and policy makers, forging deeper connections across our theatre communities.

As a sector we possess the power to drive positive change, inspire audiences far and wide, and shape the future of European theatre. I extend my deepest thanks to each of the participants at the European Theatre Forum for their invaluable contributions and ongoing commitment to developing the sector.

Heidi Wiley

Executive Director, European Theatre Convention (ETC)



2023 – Where are we now?

March 2022 in Mariupol, Ukraine. The city's frightened residents seek refuge in the basement of the Donetsk Academic Regional Drama Theatre, which served as the city's public theatre and largest air-raid shelter. Numerous air strikes from Russian forces reduce the theatre to rubble. Estimated deaths range from dozens to hundreds.

On a symbolic level, the siege of the Mariupol theatre powerfully demonstrates the integral role of theatre as a foundational force – and literal safe haven in democracy. The siege also points to its fragility: it showed in the starkest of terms that theatre as an institution, a force and democratic space must be strengthened and defended – future-proofed, in other words, to ensure that Europe's theatre sector can become more sustainable, equitable and resilient to cope with today's many challenges.

This document strives to build a roadmap for addressing the critical priorities and main challenges that the theatre sector will face in the next 4 years. It is intended to guide the dialogue between creative and policy professionals to collectively chart this future course, continuing the policy conversation that kicked off in November 2020 at the first European Theatre Forum. The Forum culminated in the Dresden Declaration, a set of cultural policy recommendations that sets the agenda for the European theatre sector.

Then, as now, European theatre is in a beleaguered state: while the Dresden Declaration was written against the backdrop of Covid-19 and the climate crisis, in the intervening years the largest war since World War II has broken out on European soil, simultaneously unleashing food, energy and refugee crises – while uncertainty has led a proportion of the population to question democratic institutions.

Then as now, our goals are clear. With these recommendations and the European Theatre Forum, we strive to:

- **address** the geopolitical and climate-related crises and their implications for the sector
- **address** sustainable, digital and social challenges and practices in the sector
- **develop** and adopt a comparable sustainability assessment tool for the whole sector to measure and reduce its carbon footprint

The shift to a polycrisis world raises the question: Where do we stand now? How can the theatre sector respond to shifting – worsening, as some would argue – circumstances for the sector and for society?

This policy document builds on the achievements of the Dresden Declaration while breaking new ground. It lays out hands-on, practical steps that will outline the policy priorities for the theatre sector in the coming years and is relevant for policymakers to operate on a European level to shape European cultural policy, based on the topics that are covered in the European Theatre Forum 2023.

The need for a robust European policy framework for theatre

European Theatre Initiative

The background to the current policy document began with a theatre mapping exercise in 2019 and the first European Theatre Forum in 2020. In 2022, the European Commission published 'The Situation of Theatres in the EU Member States',¹ a study prepared by cultural policy centres PPMI and KEA European Affairs. Among findings about the challenges to become a professional in the theatre industry, and the efforts needed to reduce the carbon footprint of theatre activities, the study concluded that there is a need to improve understanding of the value of theatre that is both qualitative and quantitative. Doing so can help theatre realise its potential to stir creativity, improve social cohesion and wellbeing, and add value in building Europe's identity.



The European Theatre Initiative pursues these objectives in a way that complements other policy developments related to theatre. These include the #CulturalDealEU campaign,² created by Culture Action Europe, the European Cultural Foundation and the European Cultural Alliance, which aims to mainstream culture across all policy fields, including the digital shift and the green transition. Another initiative, the EIT Culture & Creativity KIC (Knowledge and Innovation Community), by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology,³ attempts to broaden collaborations between culture and wider industry to enact social change. An IETM policy statement, endorsed by several major European cultural networks, calls for the 2023-26 Work Plan for Culture to embrace important developments in the cultural and creative sectors⁴ In 2022, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers recognised the transformative role of culture in sustainable development, calling for it to be integrated into relevant policies.⁵

[1] <https://www.europeantheatre.eu/news/eu-releases-first-ever-study-of-theatres-across-europe>

[2] <https://culturaldeal.eu/https://culturaldeal.eu/>

[3] <https://eit.europa.eu/eit-community/eit-culture-creativity>

[4] <https://www.ietm.org/en/advocacy/policy-papers/policy-statement-recommendation-for-the-work-plan-for-culture-2023-2026>

[5] [https://www.coe.int/en/web/cdcp-committee/-/new-recommendation-on-culture-cultural-heritage-and-landscape#:~:text=2022\),to%20help%20address%20current%20challenges.](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cdcp-committee/-/new-recommendation-on-culture-cultural-heritage-and-landscape#:~:text=2022),to%20help%20address%20current%20challenges.)



European Theatre Forum



The European Theatre Forum (ETF) 2023 brought 200 key stakeholders from the theatre community together with policymakers to build a roadmap for addressing the critical priorities and main challenges that the sector faces this century. Organised by the European Commission, the event followed on from the first European Theatre Forum in 2020 to establish structured, open discussion between representatives from the entire theatre ecosystem and from member states, European institutions and civil society. The ambitious three-day programme of artists talks, panel discussions, participatory workshops and networking events was informed by the values and impetus of the European Commission. The Forum took place at JK Opole Theatre in Poland to amplify the importance of international collaboration, turning a community of interests into a community of practice. It was designed to reflect the diversity and state of knowledge throughout Europe, united in the goal of finding a common voice and vision to transform and future-proof the theatre sector in Europe and beyond. The Forum highlighted the renewed added value and political necessity of theatre and paved the way for European Institutions to go further in their specific support for the theatre sector. Through the range of 37 sessions, created to be equally inspiring and participatory, three 'Century Challenges' facing the theatre sector were addressed: Democracy, International Collaboration and the Power of Theatre, Sustainability and Green Transitions, and Digital Readiness.





Opole Recommendations

The Opole Recommendations are the result of this strong policy foundation.

Building on the success of the new form of structured dialogue with civil society, first developed at the ETF in 2020, the European Theatre Forum 2023 harnessed the momentum to collectively formulate a vision for the future and create a roadmap consisting of actionable steps for making Europe's theatre sector more sustainable, equitable and equipped to deal with present and future challenges.

The Recommendations are informed by all sessions during the European Theatre Forum 2023 that reflected on the key needs and requirements for the theatre sector, in which stakeholders exchanged reflections and grounded themselves in the emotional necessity of theatre while creating a framework for action. These ideas were ultimately delivered in a set of key recommendations,

conceived in the 'Backstage Talks' session during ETF 2023, and presented at the closing panel 'Towards a European Theatre Policy', ensuring the voice of civil society is heard.

In line with ETF's identified priorities and programme the collective group of participants put together a roadmap, with recommendations grouped around the following challenges and policy areas .



Part 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provide detail on the three identified “Century Challenges” for theatre, stemming from the European Commission Creative Europe Programme’s priorities, the Council Conclusions on Culture for 2023-2026, and the values pursued by the Swedish Presidency of the EU, that all underpin the European Theatre Forum 2023. In doing so the Opole Recommendations are directly embedded in a strong political framework and address clear cornerstone questions of the European agenda on Culture.



These “Century Challenges” considered are:

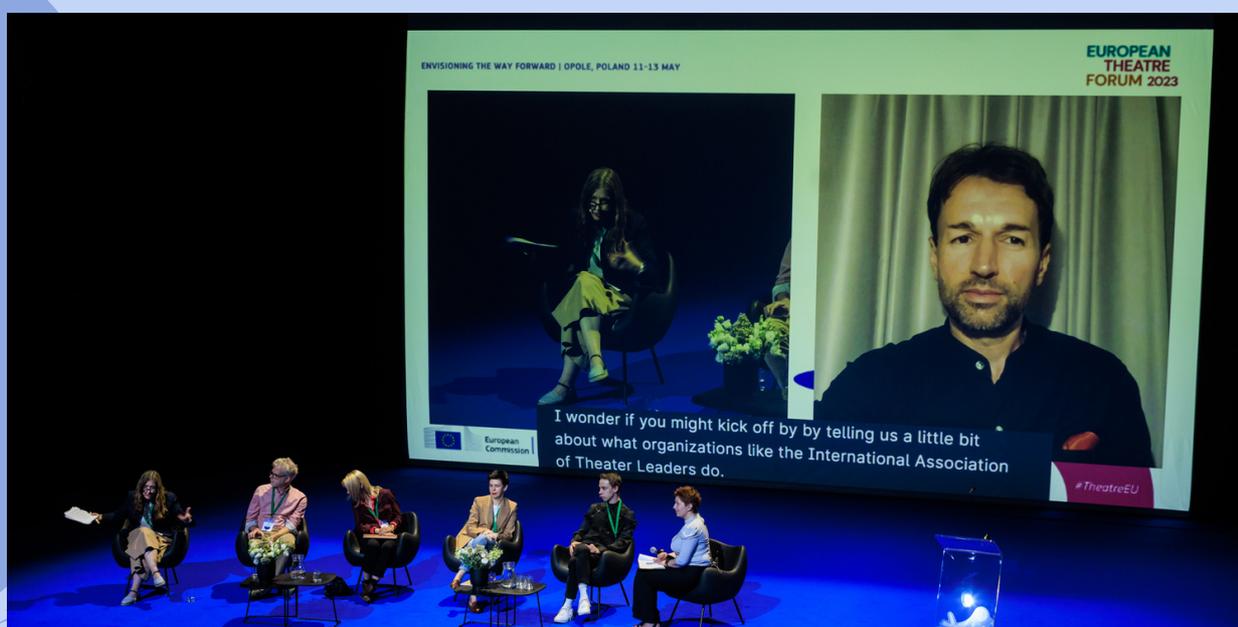
1. Democracy, International Collaboration, and the Power of Theatre
2. Sustainability and Green Transitions
3. Digital Readiness

In pursuit of these overarching goals, over the coming years we advocate focusing on the following key six policy priorities:

1. #FragileContexts: Strengthening democracy & Reacting to the new normal
2. Mental Health and Social Inclusion
3. EU Green Deal & #NewEuropeanBauhaus: mainstream sustainable thinking across European audiences
4. #Mobility and Emerging Artists
5. #FreetoCreate: Artistic Freedom and Experiments
6. Working Conditions of Theatre Professionals

Democracy , International Collaboration, and the Power of Theatre

The European Theatre Forum 2023 goes back to theatre's roots, taking inspiration from its genesis in ancient Greece. Indeed, theatre's constitutive role in democracy is clear: born at the same time, theatre and democracy developed hand-in-hand, with the theatre serving from the beginning as a public space for presenting, debating and negotiating democratic values that were in turn reflected in democratic frameworks and institutions. The interplay between theatre and democracy underlines its essential role in promoting democratic, free societies.



Now, however, just like democracy, this art form that has endured for millennia is now buffeted and battered by today's challenges;⁶ in the case of the Mariupol theatre, it is literally under attack – as a physical manifestation of the threats faced by democracies everywhere. As the European Theatre Forum demonstrates in its opening ceremony and discussion panel, we need to consider theatre and democracy as its twin developments with a shared past, present, and future: in a symbiotic relationship, strengthening theatre will strengthen the bedrock of democracy. Theatre is able to bring audiences together to share a vision of a different future – something that can not only entertain and inspire, but also remind society of what it is capable of achieving when working together. It enables encounters between different contexts, languages, and cultures with dialogue and multiple perspectives.

[6] Panelists from Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus illustrated and gave examples of how theatre as an artform, with its structures and artists, has been threatened by governments, to the extent for the artists being imprisoned or surviving in exile. Yet on the other hand there was a the strong plea for the power of theatre of being an artistic form of expression that nurtures social cohesion.

Policy priority

#Fragile Contexts

Strengthening democracy & Reacting to the new normal

As noted in the European Commission Work Programme 2023, current crises 'only underline the need for Europe to continue to accelerate the radical transformation' now underway across many sectors. In concrete terms, we need to ramp up current efforts in the transformation strategies being implemented in the theatre sector: alongside sustainability, digital and diversity, we need to promote international collaboration as a 'fourth pillar'.

Cooperating across borders could be called an 'empathy exchange': it is a process that teaches us both about how others - and ourselves - think, feel and work. It is an act of exchange that is not only fundamental for artistic growth but also fundamental for how we develop as democratic, caring societies.

The European Theatre Forum calls upon the EU to recognise theatre as a vital tool for the strengthening of democracy and freedom of expression as it develops imagination, responsibility, empathy and tolerance in citizens, including children, and to strengthen the international dimensions of theatres in order to contribute to EU's geopolitical aims and objectives.



As part of these efforts, we recommend the following measures:

Hard Change

- Increase structural support for international collaboration within and beyond Europe through augmented and continued funding for co-productions, travel and networking to help promote Europe's diverse theatre programme and activities across the globe
- Promote equitable international collaboration by ensuring the survival of minority languages and enabling translation⁷
- Support the incorporation of theatre in educational systems with art practitioners and underscore the importance of theatre as a pillar of teaching democratic values
- Invest in broader cooperation projects with countries where democracies are under threat e.g. with Ukraine.

Mild Change

- Ensure theatre is accessible to everyone, especially children and young people, so their voices are heard on European and international levels
- Encourage the creation of stories on stage about fragile areas of difference, so that audiences participate in such a cultural conversation -- and EU identity is strengthened
- Recognise the need and provide the means to share Europe's rich dramaturgical heritage across the continent in an all-inclusive way, paying special attention to minorities and people who have been marginalised.

[7] In light of the power dynamics inherent in language use, this is essential to overcoming these power imbalances and pursuing inclusive theatres both on and off-stage

Policy Priority: Mental Health and Social Inclusion

After multiple years of the pandemic, the mental toll of the polycrisis environment has gained a new prominence. Theatre can make a major contribution to improving the quality of life for Europe's diverse populations,⁸ which in turn brings social and economic benefits. In line with the EC's aim to develop a comprehensive approach to mental health,⁹ we believe theatre must be represented in debates on global, public and mental health alongside other cultural sectors.¹⁰

As mental health is closely related to social inclusion, theatre needs to unleash its full potential to empower people with a participatory approach that includes professionals and amateurs. This way, theatre can contribute to building healthy democracies with healthy citizens.

Theatre must be an open public space with a public mission to improve the quality of people's lives; indeed, it must be incorporated into future designs for urban and living environments.

In line with these goals, **we support pioneering theatre that reflects the diversity and needs of our local communities and enables theatres to remain collective, participatory, and accessible spaces.**



[8] <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-psychogeriatrics/article/abs/does-theatre-improve-the-quality-of-life-of-people-with-dementia/F50EE253D257393C642E5D7F969DAD5D>

[9] <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-and-parliament-discuss-culture-as-a-driver-for-health-and-well-being>

[10] <https://voicesofculture.eu/2023/01/07/brainstorming-report-youth-mental-health-and-culture/>

In order to improve mental health and social inclusion, we advocate for the following policy measures:

Hard Change

- Create a legal and financial framework to ensure that
 1. theatre is included in health care discussions;
 2. artists are recognized as contributing to the wellbeing of society and support prevention as well as recovery;
 3. mental health support is normalized and accessible for students, theatre workers and artists, including safe working spaces that protect workers from sexual discrimination and harassment;
 4. inclusive and fair codes of conduct are key in the sector;
 5. theatre promotes healthy citizens, thereby cutting costs over the long-term for stretched public services.
- Ensure good practices regarding mental health and wellbeing are written into theatre education.

Mild Change

- Promote social cohesion by encouraging theatres to design and target activities for underserved populations
- Foster knowledge exchange and access to the latest research developments key for policy work and public-private partnerships.



Sustainability and Green Transition

As noted in the European Commission Work Programme 2023, 'accelerating our green transition is essential to tackle the climate crisis and to strengthen our economies and security' as part the European Green Deal and #NewEuropeanBauhaus. The theatre sector fully supports this transformation by taking steps to becoming climate-neutral and sustainable. Theatre can show leadership by bringing sustainable thinking into the mainstream and transforming theatre productions, operations and buildings.¹¹ Furthermore, the vast reach of the theatre can help disseminate these ideas and practices to wider audiences. Indeed, as the 2022 'Stormy Times' report by the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) group of EU Member States' on culture and sustainable development writes, "culture is needed as a catalyst and accelerator of multifaceted changes today and tomorrow in Europe and beyond. Hence it is high time that we solved the problem of the absurd underuse of cultural power for sustainable development".¹²

It is essential to emphasize the role of networks to drive sustainable change, and to remember that not all organisations start from the same place, knowledge or political context when working on the climate crisis.

Hence ongoing education and support for an eco-approach and sustainable methodologies is necessary, both for higher education and vocational training within the sector. This gradual approach is aligned with the Greening the Creative Europe Programme Study's strategy and transformation theory.



[11] Since 2020 the sector developed self-empowerment tools for guidance and training, e.g. the Theatre Green Book, ETC's and Mitos21 Fundamental Course for Sustainable Cultural Management in European Theatres, IETM's Green School, Ki Culture's - Ki Future's training programme with a pilot on Performing Arts, the European Forum: Where to land, embedding performing arts in the climate regime, ETC Green Toolkit, to name a few

[12] <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0380f31c-37c9-11ed-9c68-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

Policy priority: European Green Deal and #NewEuropeanBauhaus

We recommend the following measures to promote sustainability across the sector:

Hard Change

- Develop the newly created European Green Theatre Certification, presented during the European Theatre Forum, as a tool to measure the impact of sustainable activity, track progress and ensure **sector's accountability**
- Initiate a coordinated roll-out of the new tool on a sectoral, Member State and EU-level
- Include a requirement in EU grants for applicants to provide a plan for the circularity of materials used in theatre productions, thereby reducing waste to a minimum
- Standardise procedures to provide a legal framework for upcycling, recycling and reusing leftover materials, taking into consideration safety and intellectual property, and establish a certification scheme and an independent audit body for validation
- Harmonise regulations across Europe so that historical buildings can be renovated for sustainable and inclusive purposes.

Mild Change

- Provide the means for the training of the sector to use international standards in terms of carbon assessments and sustainable practices
- Create (or provide the means for the creation of) regional platforms where arts organisations can share leftover materials and adapt the conditions of the aforementioned circular economy grant for their own institutions.

Policy Priority: #Mobility and Emerging Artists

The theatre sector needs to become more diverse and inclusive so that opportunities are open to everyone. There is clear evidence that diversity breeds more diversity: the EU study Gender Equality and Diversity in European Theatres found that performances written or directed by women were more likely to be gender-balanced than those by men. It is essential to enable opportunities for the next generation of artists to ensure the sustainable development of the theatre sector, which includes an understanding of the time and skill needed to be successful when submitting grant applications that require different criteria at a European and local level.

The sector also needs to promote mobility in multiple directions: European theatres need to expand touring routes beyond Europe in a sustainable way, while also developing multiple pathways to bring artists to Europe. This involves better coordinating programming with other artists and moving away from competition and exclusivity. In uncertain contexts such as Ukraine, it is important to collaborate and coproduce with NGOs and state-funded cultural organisations that have a strong understanding of the reality on the ground.



Policy priority: #Mobility and Emerging Artists

We recommend the following measures:

Hard Change

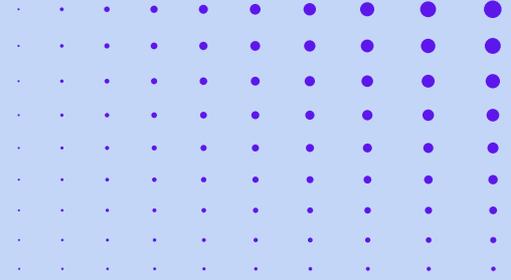
- Create dedicated mobility schemes for Ukrainian artists, to facilitate their work across Europe
- Forge new private-public partnerships to finance mobility programmes, in particular so that the theatre sector can learn about mobility approaches from partners in other sectors.

Mild Change

- Promote and develop EU-instruments to improve accessibility, such as Culture Moves Europe, Perform Europe and the European Fund for the Emerging Artists – EFEA, which are examples of fruitful dialogue between the sector and EU which is led by the needs of artists, rather than politics¹³
- Commit to hosting more editions of the European Theatre Forum, paying attention to the geographic and theatrical significance of the hosting location¹⁴
- Keep the focus on diversity and sustainability, as well as equal opportunities and inclusivity, which should be considered within the artistic discourse and cultural context.

[13] The permanent dialogue between the sector and EU has already brought some great results: Perform Europe (managed by IETM, European Festivals Association - EFA, Circostrada, European Dancehouse Network – EDN and IDEA Consult and Pearle) has become pivotal as a touring vessel for a number of the artists and companies across Europe. European Fund for the Emerging Artists – EFEA (managed by EFA) has been establishing itself as leading EU program in providing a platform for the development and launching the careers of the young artists who are making their first steps of their career paths. Those are the examples of the most fruitful dialogue between the sector and EU.

[14] Another great innovation which deserves a further development is the European Theatre Forum - ETF (the first onsite edition was held at the Theatre of Jan Kochanowski in Opole Poland). ETF 2023 has shown how much the encounter between the theatre professionals and the EU partners is crucial in understanding the sector, its needs and potentials. European Theatre Convention – ETC has given a high level of expertise in organising such a summit and it is recommended to continue doing so. It was particularly good to choose Opole to host the summit. It is Eastern Europe and Poland and definitely decentralised and theatrically so significant as the point where Jerzy Grotowski, one of the most important theatre directors in history, has started his unique theatrical journey.



Digital Readiness

By supporting the wide-scale implementation of digital tools, theatre can increase accessibility to cultural experiences in a post-Covid world.¹⁵ One of the legacies of the pandemic for theatre is the understanding that streamed and digital productions can reach people who were unable to attend performances, either because of cost, personal responsibilities, or because of disabilities.¹⁶

Ensuring that the co-existence of digital and live theatre can overcome physical boundaries in the name of broadening the sector's impact, and thereby support social cohesion both in urban and rural areas, allowing theatres to better understand audiences for online hosted theatre.

While digital theatre is an adventure for theatre makers and audiences, theatre's primary role is as a physical, in-person activity. The sector's ability to help people grow, socialize, and build solidarity suggest that it can do more in EU integration once effective digital strategies are unlocked.



[15] The ETC study 'Digital Theatre – Strategies and Business Models in European Theatre' informs that digital theatre ticket sales increased by nearly 800% during 2019-2021.

[16] See the Digital Access Research Project, run by metaLAB at Harvard University, for information on the impact of digital theatre on accessibility

Policy priority: #FreetoCreate: Artistic Freedom and Experiments

The theatre sector can help Europe become equipped for the digital age with the following measures:

Hard Change

- Ensure online discoverability by creating a framework and policy regulations to support the visibility of theatre (and especially minority voices) in online spaces alongside other art forms and forms of entertainment
- Support the creation of new artistic and/or creative platforms owned by civil society organisations. In parallel, we call for the further development of open access tools for developing theatre projects, such as Creative Commons.

Mild Change

- Build awareness about the opportunities - and risks - of digitality in terms of audience and community building, and recognise that it is a different skill to interacting with local audiences
- Provide additional training for actors and theatre professionals to work with new digital tools and platforms.



Policy priority: Working Conditions of Theatre Professionals

The pandemic took an enormous toll on the theatre sector. An already precarious sector needs new business models to cushion the financial effects of inflation and the ongoing crises described above and expand the concept of working conditions beyond purely economic factors, considering legal, social and sustainable aspects.¹⁷ Having a digitally skilled theatre workforce facilitates collaboration with other cultural sectors, which face similar challenges, as set out in the Cultural Deal for Europe. Similarly, theatre professionals working in settings such as schools, prisons and hospitals are affected by the resources and working conditions in those environments. It's time to think about culture within EU institutions much like climate, equality, and sustainable development and also think about the potential impact of advances in digital technology, particularly artificial intelligence.

The following incremental steps can help lessen the economic hardship facing theatre and its practitioners and prepare for the future:

Hard Change

- Make a Codex of Fair Working Conditions which includes a minimum fee and social assurances for artists and other cultural workers
- Develop EU policy on AI to protect member states from unexpected results
- Develop a financial instrument to support EU-funded projects with reserves to counteract external factors affecting prices
- Support the harmonisation of laws on digital copyright for online performing arts. This could include the elaboration of EU standards and principles and good practices for developing digital projects across borders in Europe.

Mild Change

- Support the creation of a Fair Condition Champion position at arts organisations, focused on fair working conditions and training for staff – in terms of digital challenges and the balance between regular staff and freelancers
- Create an agency to track the consequences of Artificial Intelligence on the labour market and working conditions.

[17] <https://www.ietm.org/en/advocacy/policy-papers/policy-statement-eu-action-towards-a-sustainable-and-fair-situation-of>

Part 2

ROADMAP

Spearheaded by the European Commission as a consultation exercise with representative from the sector, the European Theatre Forum 2023 sets the stage for making Europe's theatre sector more sustainable, equitable and better equipped to face current and future challenges for theatre in supporting the strengthening of Europe's identity and to fully untap its potential to support EU integration strategies.

This roadmap lays out the policies that the European Commission help to implement in coordination with the Member States, across the upcoming funding period (2024-27) **to best equip the theatre sector with a holistic and cross-sectoral approach from a policy-making point of view to address global challenges, the implications of the geopolitical and climate-related crises** - in particular from a sustainable, digital and social perspective.

In addition, it **calls on the European Commission to work and coordinate with the Member States**, to make key decisions:

1. Adopt a comparable sustainability assessment tool for theatre to measure and reduce its carbon footprint;
2. Embed the 'New European Theatre Initiative' as a policy action in Creative Europe's work programme in a permanent fashion. Doing so empowers theatre to address the climate crisis in a sustainable manner for the years to come.
3. Set up a specific prize under Creative Europe alongside other sectorial prizes (architecture, music, heritage) to leverage the visibility and coherence of the Theatre Sector at the European Level
4. Consolidate relations with the Sectors' representatives through regular consultations exercises

The roadmap follows the framing of the European Theatre Forum 2023 and is structured according to the three 'Century Challenges' for the theatre sector. Each of these challenges contains two '**key priorities**'.

Democracy , International Collaboration, and the Power of Theatre

Fragile Contexts & Mental Health and Social Inclusion

NOW -
2023-
2024

- Commit to hosting the European Theatre Forum as a regular event that connects theatre makers and policy stakeholders for regular discussions on the sustainable, digital and social challenges facing the sector. Align the event with other European Theatre Actions such as the Perform Europe Scheme
- Expand the event gradually into both a European **theatre market of interest for international partners to promote European theatre** in the world and establish a European Theatre Prize to recognize the contributions towards European integration

2025

- Thrive to incorporate theatre in secondary education systems in Creative Europe countries and promote theatre as a means to improve mental health and well-being facilitating social inclusion at the institutional level through synergies with ERASMUS+ and other relevant European Union's programmes and at the local level by promoting and celebrating on-going initiatives that are contributing to this dynamic.
- Increase structural support for European collaboration with an international dimension through clear budget lines for coproductions and networking that create synergies with organisations in other continents - to promote the diversity of European theatre across countries and minority languages around the world

By 2027

- Actively promote the creation of a broader cooperation projects with Ukraine to rebuild its theatre sector once the war is over
- Develop a legal and financial framework for theatre to be included in the delivery of health care and contribute to the wellbeing of society
- Embed the New European Theatre Initiative as a policy framework and action in the next Creative Europe's work programme

Sustainability and Green Transitions:

EU Green Deal and New European Bauhaus & Mobility and Emerging Artists

NOW -
2023-
2024

- Include in the Creative Europe Greening Strategy the shared assessment tool for a European Green Theatre Certification based on the presented model ETC Theatre Green Book to measure and certify sustainability in theatre, then roll this out on a Member-state and EU level
- Develop a requirement in EU grants for applicants to provide a plan for the circularity of materials used in productions

2025

- Continue to increase funding lines for new sustainable touring concepts, building on the conclusions from Culture Moves Europe and Perform Europe, and including support for relevant public-private partnerships on mobility
- Support the creation of regional platforms where arts organisations can share leftover materials and adapt the conditions of the aforementioned circular economy grant so that institutions applying can use the funds for their own institutions
- Support on European level standardisation procedures to provide a legal framework for upcycling, recycling and reusing leftover materials, taking into consideration safety and intellectual property

By 2027

- Harmonise regulations across Europe so that historical theatre buildings can be adapted and renovated for sustainable and inclusive purposes
- Create synergies between EU and local/regional/national funding so that payments are decoupled from the quantity of work proposed and produced -- so that theatre organisations can produce less, and be more sustainable, without losing public income

Digital Readiness

Artistic Freedom and Experiments & Working Conditions of Theatre Professionals

<p>NOW - 2023- 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote solutions and studies on fulfilling artist’s rights in a digital streaming context• Support the creation of a Codex of Fair Working Conditions which includes a minimum fee and social assurances for cultural workers
<p>2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the creation of an entity to track the consequences of AI on the labour market and working conditions, including in culture, and develop EU policy on AI to protect member states• Provide funding and a legal framework for theatres to fulfil copyright obligations for digital work across borders and online over short and long-term durations, moving towards harmonisation of laws across Europe
<p>By 2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the creation of new online artistic platforms owned by civil society rather than large corporations to improve discoverability of theatre and the cultural sector• Ensure online discoverability by creating a framework and policy regulations to support the visibility of theatre (and especially minority voices) in online spaces alongside other art forms

ETF 2023

EUROPEAN THEATRE FORUM 2023



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