

"The Powers of Culture"

*Theme of the 2013 Think Tank of the Forum of Avignon,
to fuel discussion at the international meetings from November 21 to 23, 2013*

No Politics without Culture!

Nowadays, news reflects the mutations of cultural powers: the proposed establishment of a free trade zone between the United States and Europe; Google's agreement with French press publishers, binding the former to payment of 60 million Euros; the increase in private funding of museums or concert halls... The **budgetary deficits** behind calls to cut cultural budgets in **Europe**, and - conversely - the increase of over 23% in spending on culture in **China**, investments of **Middle East** countries in culture as a source of **growth** to offset the anticipated depletion of Black Gold, or access to cultural content – boosted by digital technology – in **Africa** and **India**, do these **bear witness to a upheaval of powers** in cultural matters?

With 6.1% of world GDP for a turnover of \$ 2,700 billion, 4% of the GDP of the European Union and 8 million direct jobs¹, **can business and governments build the future without culture and creative industries?** Citizens, creators, producers, distributors, or politicians – **who holds cultural power?** Is **personal cultural data** a new asset of power? Who is drawing up the new **map of powers?** Who truly **benefits** from **culture?**

Six major debates, six studies and concrete proposals are to be the foundation for this sixth edition, to be held from Thursday 21 November to Saturday 23 November.

After "Culture: Reasons to Hope," the Forum d'Avignon, **think tank** on the links between culture and the economy, and organiser of the **international meetings** on culture, economy and the media, wants to put **culture at the heart of politics and business:**

- by debating on the "**Powers of Culture**" in all their individual and collective dimensions, international and territorial, symbolic and commercial, technological and creative,
- by fuelling public debate **throughout the year with a series of regular discussions, proposals and forums** (cultural footprint, personal cultural data, mobilising for Culture in Europe, etc.)

¹ Source ERSA 2010 'The geography of creative industries in Europe: Comparing France, Great Britain, Italy and Spain'
The Guide for the Development of Cultural and Creative Industries (UNESCO, 2012) puts the turnover of CCI at \$1,600 billion worldwide - more than double that of the sector of tourism - and accounting alone for almost 3.5% of world trade.



Through the positions taken during the year and at the 6th edition of the international meetings in November, the Forum d'Avignon is working to contribute to the integration of culture at the heart of political thinking, especially European. The Forum d'Avignon will make strong proposals to influence the public debate around the European elections of 2014 and take part in the international agenda - renegotiation of the agreements of the WTO, UN 2015 and EU 2020 - so that culture is put at the heart of the discussions and desires of European citizens.

The 2013 Meetings of the Forum d'Avignon

- on its website, for relaying its daily, international articles,
- for **breakfast discussions** with consulting firms, between May and October,
- in **Essen, at the Forum of Avignon-Ruhr, 27-28 June 2013**,
- for the bilingual publication of acts by Gallimard in late June
- and **for the 6th edition of the International Meetings of November 21 to 23** in Avignon and live on the Internet to follow the debates.

The Forum d'Avignon put culture at the heart of politics and business

Since its beginning in 2008, the Forum d'Avignon has had as its **aim to deepen and enhance the links between culture and the economy** and also to play its role in social cohesion and attractiveness of territories. To their credit: a patrimony of 25 international studies and propositions (free bilingual download on the site www.forum-avignon.org), the acts published by Gallimard editions in bilingual version, continual mobilisation of a worldwide network of artists, creators, entrepreneurs, experts, international consulting firms and more than twenty-five public and private partners.

The Forum d'Avignon think tank promotes three areas of reflection: *financing and business models of culture and creative industries, digital technology and innovation, and the role of culture in the development of economies and social cohesion of the regions.*

This work is intended to stimulate public debate on current affairs or prospective questions on society, relayed in national and international bodies. The ideas and proposals of the Forum d'Avignon are echoed at the **international meetings** it supports in **Essen (with the "Forum d'Avignon-Ruhr", 27-28 June 2013)** and in **Avignon (from 21 to 23 November 2013)** and soon in **Spain**.

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