

The Agenda 2014 of the Forum d'Avignon : Culture at the heart of politics

By asserting “No politics without culture”, the sixth edition of the Forum d'Avignon establishes several innovative and pragmatic proposals at the national, European and international scale to reaffirm that culture must be at the heart of politics.

Culture at the heart of politics means to encourage the territories rebuilding through culture.

It's promoting benefits in their literally sense, and the symbolic ones of cultural investment, real creator of values, jobs and social bonding effects. Culture is an investment that has its own specificities and that cannot be reduced to its mere economic dimension. Nevertheless, investors must to be convinced that the evaluation of a cultural investment can also be grasped as a function of measurable qualitative criteria. The Forum d'Avignon and its partners in the Catalyse projectⁱ - FA Bilbao (March 2014, 5th to 7th) and FA Ruhr (Essen June 2014, 11th - 12th) – will publish Thanks to an European Union Culture program grant a proposal on **culture as driving force of urban and territorial development.**

Culture at the heart of politics means to facilitate the emergence of a generation of cultural creators and entrepreneurs aiming to change the way we invest in culture.

Facilitating the evaluation and protection of intangible assets (primarily intellectual property - trademarks, patents, copyrights) since the very beginning a project, developing the versatility of training, stimulating the creation of development agencies networks through a certification of general interest, finally, supporting private cultural investment : as the “Creative business angel”, an opening of eligibility criteria of investment funds, collective cultural funding and sponsorship, tools for individual and societal involvement.

Culture at the heart of politics means to consider the protection and valorization of personal data as a key cultural issue.

Considering personal data – especially the cultural ones – left on Internet like a digital DNA of our identity, the Forum d'Avignon calls for [a Universal declaration for Internet users' and creators' rights in a digital era](#) that enterprises, States and citizens must abide by. The politic would pride itself to remember that culture is the essence of humanity. Economic activity indeed, but watch out for the values that culture conveys. And for their respect.

Culture at the heart of politics means to commit to a Europe of culture!

Despite unfortunate prevarications about the cultural exception, the Forum d'Avignon and its participants called for a mobilization of political stakeholders not only to fly the culture and European creation's flag but actually to develop a collective policy for European culture, which promotes economic development and citizens' well-being. If there were to do it over again, should we start with culture?

ⁱ The Forum d'Avignon Bilbao delves into *The City as cultural ecosystem*.