Reducing obstacles to young people’s access to culture

Democratising the cultural participation of young people is a key priority of the State-led policies and policies run by local authorities and private not-for-profit structures alike (associations, foundations, etc.).

With a view to reducing obstacles to cultural access and participation, the Ministry of Culture has drawn up a pricing policy and schemes for freely accessing the permanent collections of 50 national museums and national monuments [1]. Applicable since 4 April 2009, this measure applies to young EU residents under 26 years of age, as well as the whole of the educational community.

Cultural democratisation forms the backbone of what the Ministry of Culture does in a bid to reduce barriers to cultural access through “cultural development [2]”, a policy which results both in support for the cultural offering in its diversity and in actions that make culture more accessible to youngsters. Cultural development also extends to people who, because of their social situation, find themselves the most removed from culture: prisoners or socially or geographically excluded people for example. Disabled people and hospital patients also form target groups for cultural development policies.

Cultural development relies on the partnership between the Ministry of Culture and its deconcentrated directions, other government departments concerned, the artistic public institutions, cultural facilities, associations and non-formal education networks. It is materialised through an array of measures:
• Support for trials aimed at diversifying the ways in which culture can be accessed (*creative digital practices, amateur practices*);

• **Plan for Artistic and Cultural Education (plan pour l’éducation artistique et culturelle)** launched in 2008 renewed in 2019 and 2020;

• **Setup of partnerships with the endowment fund InPACT** ([Initiative for sharing culture](https://www.inpact.org/)) in March 2012, bringing together a dozen businesses and sponsors. InPACT supports innovative cultural initiatives aimed at people who are the furthest removed from culture.

InPACT works in close collaboration with the services of the Ministry of Culture and more specifically with the DEDAC (Department of Education and Arts and Cultural Development) at the central level, and the DRAC (Regional Directorates of Cultural Affairs) at the regional level. The DRACs support InPACT in its mission of observing the initiatives carried out within the territories by providing expertise regarding artists, artistic projects, social and territorial issues. They can also be solicited to allow the networking of structures, associations, artists, institutions, etc.

The various ministerial initiatives aimed at **reducing barriers to access to culture are financed by public funds**, voted by parliamentarians. These actions are financed under various budget programs, including the 224 program "Transmission of knowledge and democratization of culture", one of whose objectives is to "promote access to culture throughout France, particularly through the development of artistic and cultural education".

In 2019, this program's appropriations totaled 541 million euros.

The action "Support for democratization and arts and cultural education" in program 224 is aimed specifically at reducing inequalities in access to culture: it amounts to € 199 million (2019).

In particular, it finances arts and cultural education (EAC), organized around five main axes:

1. artistic practice at school and out of school:
2. book and reading
3. image, media and information education
4. Training of actors in arts and cultural education
5. strengthening partnerships with local and regional authorities to improve the coherence of arts and cultural education policies.


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**Culture Pass (Pass Culture) for young people**

In 2018, the Government launched the [Culture Pass](https://www.gouvernement.fr/culture-pass) scheme for young people;

This project has three objectives:

1. Facilitate access for all to culture,
2. Promote cultural diversity,
3. Foster independent thinking in young people towards culture, 18 year olds in particular.
To put the project into action, the Ministry of Culture has developed a digital platform for cultural mediation in the form of a mobile app with a number of features, which provides a national calendar of cultural opportunities while also suggesting specific, location-based opportunities for 18 year olds. Each resident who is 18 years old will receive credit worth €500 in goods or services which can be put towards a whole range of cultural activities. A trial run is being carried out in some départements in 2018 and 2019 before the scheme is rolled-out fully.

Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

The various stakeholders advocating cultural participation among young people promote cultural opportunities through a range of actions: events, national campaigns and use of information dissemination tools.

Internet users can find out what's on culture-wise on the institutional websites:

- The website [http://www.culture.fr/](http://www.culture.fr/) of the Ministry of Culture gives the lowdown on cultural events in France and is also a resource base on art.
- The website [http://www.culture.fr/juniors](http://www.culture.fr/juniors) shows what cultural events are happening for young people: family outings, exhibitions, performances for children, workshops in museums, releases of new cultural digital apps and so on.
- The DJEPVA website, [http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/interministeriel/loisirs/culture/](http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/interministeriel/loisirs/culture/) also provides information on schemes for accessing culture that are particularly geared towards youngsters.
- The Culture Pass ([Pass Culture](http://www.culture.fr)) website, which is linked to an application enabling young people to find out about existing cultural activities taking place where they live.

In addition to websites, so-called "general public" events are also put on to promote existing cultural opportunities.

Since 2015, for example the nationwide annual book festival for youngsters, "Partir en livre" ([Partir en livre](http://www.culture.fr)), has been organised by the CNL - National Book Centre (Centre national du livre) with input from the Youth Press and Book Salon (Salon du Livre et de la presse jeunesse). This free festival sets out to pass on enjoyment for reading as well as familiarise young people with the people and places involved in the book industry as a whole. Over 3,000 free events are held throughout mainland France and overseas territories as part of this festival.

Moreover, youth information facilities, forming as they do a France-wide Youth information network ([See 2.7](http://www.culture.fr)) and under agreement with the Ministry of Youth, also play a part in promoting the national and local provision of cultural activities. These facilities (offices, youth information points) may sell tickets, give out invitations and offer discounts for cultural events.
Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

Raising young people's awareness of cultural heritage is one of the objectives of cultural associations and institutions, not least the Ministry of Culture which, through various initiatives, educates youngsters in history and history of art or in vocational training in the heritage occupations.

Such actions are run all year round. They aim at raising young people's awareness of the history of their society and of their living environment (heritage, architecture, landscape, etc.) through diverse approaches: tours, workshops, encounters and personal accounts, local arts and craft practices, etc. These projects may be embarked on during school time, initiated by teachers, or during children's free time, with their family or while attending holiday clubs and other "youth" facilities (Youth and cultural centres [Maison des jeunes et de la culture], etc.).

A whole host of stakeholders are involved in this education and promotion of heritage for young people: heritage sites, heritage advocacy associations, volunteering programmes (chantiers de bénévoles, see below) or the network of Towns/Cities and Regions of Art and Culture (Villes et pays d’art et d’histoire) [11], etc.

These stakeholders jointly with the Ministry of culture implement initiatives for accessing cultural heritage. Some examples include:

- "That's my heritage!" (C'est mon patrimoine !)

"That’s my heritage!" (C’est mon patrimoine [12] !) is an initiative that has been organised by the Ministry of Culture for 6 to 18 year olds from deprived backgrounds since 2005.

It seeks to open children's and adolescents' eyes up to the sheer range of heritage out there through multidisciplinary extra-curricular activity programmes: workshops, dramatised tours, treasure hunts, readings, dance, performances or digital art practice. The activities put on are the result of a call for proposals [13] for the attention of cultural stakeholders. Their project proposals can be legally overseen by a heritage institution or association.

This scheme is overseen by the Ministry of Culture and CGET - General Commission for Territorial Equality (Commissariat Général à l’égalité des territoires), [14] in partnership with social centres, youth and culture centres, holiday clubs and rural development associations (foyers ruraux). It is also rolled out via national or local partnerships with the CMN - Centre for National Monuments (Centre des monuments nationaux) and diverse institutions across the heritage spectrum. Local authorities can also get involved in this project, either by stumping up funding or by fronting projects.

In 2019, nearly 60,000 children and adolescents from 6 to 18 years old, two-thirds of whom came from disadvantaged urban cities took part in this event.

- Heritage volunteering programmes (chantiers patrimoniaux de bénévoles)

Several associations that protect and promote heritage, including Rempart [15] and the CHAM - Chantier Histoire Architecture Médiévale), [16] subsidised by the Ministries of Culture, organise international heritage restoration programmes on a volunteering basis (bénévolat).
• **Family visits**

With a view to helping the most deprived families to enjoy heritage visits, the Ministry of Culture has published, with input from its General Directorate for Heritage (Direction générale des patrimoines), a guide on cultural family sightseeing: *Visiter en famille, socialisation et médiation des patrimoines* [Family sightseeing, socialisation and mediation of heritage] [17] for the attention of cultural mediation professionals.

• **Europe-wide events**

Over and above these national initiatives, some heritage promotion events have a European dimension, such as the European Heritage Days [18], launched by the Council of Europe and organised annually jointly with the European Union.

In France, the European Heritage Days are organised by the Ministry of Culture. They call on the CMN, the network of Towns/Cities and Regions of Art and History, the Heritage Foundation (Fondation du Patrimoine) and heritage preservation associations present.

**Funding**

Heritage is the subject of a budget program: the 175 "Heritage" program. These funds finance, in particular, the protection and restoration of heritage.