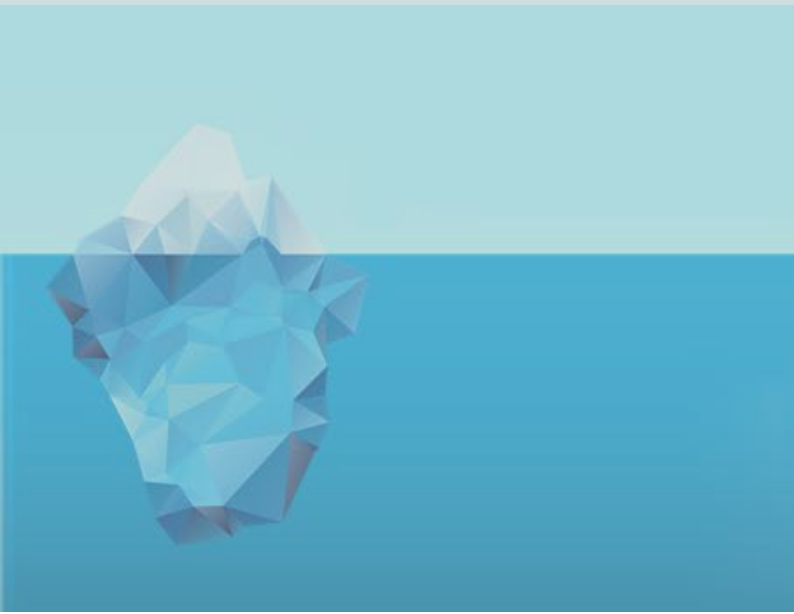


# invent

EUROPEAN INVENTORY  
OF CULTURAL VALUES



**NEWSLETTER ISSUE III**

**AUGUST 2023**



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## EUROPEAN INVENTORY OF CULTURAL VALUES



# 1. Introduction

## INVENT - European Inventory of Societal Values of Culture as a Basis for Inclusive Cultural Policies in the Globalizing World



Susanne  
Janssen



Over the past three decades, Europe and the world have undergone significant transformations, yet cultural policies still have to adapt effectively. To aid the development of more inclusive cultural policies, we embarked three years ago on an EU-funded project, *INVENT - European Inventory of Societal Values of Culture as a Basis for Inclusive Cultural Policies in the Globalizing World*. Our primary objective was to explore how European citizens perceive and experience the effects of globalization, digitalization, European integration, migration, and rising social inequalities on their daily lives and everyday culture. We also sought to map and understand the barriers, opportunities, and benefits that individuals encounter in participating in cultural activities. Moreover, we analyzed the variations in citizens' perspectives and lived experiences across different countries and social groups and investigated the implications of these differences for cultural policy.

The fieldwork conducted by INVENT specifically targeted nine European countries: Croatia, Denmark, France, Finland, The Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Our international team consisted of more than 50 researchers from these countries and others, creating a diverse group with the necessary expertise to do various types of fieldwork in different settings. The diverse composition of our team also enabled us to thoroughly examine the different cultural policy models and mediascapes across Europe, providing valuable insights and understanding into the workings of these systems in each country.

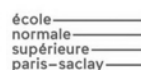
Our research team utilized a comprehensive and diverse research approach, employing multiple methods, including secondary data analysis, surveys, a smartphone study with experimental stimuli, data scraping, and analysis of online content, focus groups, case studies, and interviews. This multi- and mixed methods design allowed us to identify key components that should be incorporated into cultural policy at the national and European levels to achieve a heightened degree of inclusiveness, tolerance, well-being, and social cohesion within and across European societies. Our research also provides policymakers with the knowledge and tools for measuring, understanding, and enhancing the impact of cultural policies.



## The INVENT project has produced several significant outputs, including:

- A comprehensive **research monograph** to be published by Routledge presenting the theoretical framework and empirical findings of the INVENT project;
- A series of **scholarly articles** published in internationally recognized scientific journals, contributing to the academic discourse on cultural policies and societal values;
- **Three research reports** on cultural conversations and cultural advocacy in the digital realm, based on large-scale data scraping and online content analysis;
- Reports documenting **27 case studies** investigating participatory and inclusive cultural practices and policies;
- A **policymaker's guidebook** designed to assist in the development of participative and inclusive cultural policies at the local, national, and EU level;
- A **digital platform** - the "European Inventory of Societal Values of Culture, which will serve as a reference point for EU citizens, researchers, and cultural policymakers and facilitates the sharing and dissemination of tools and measures that promote identity, inclusiveness, tolerance, and social cohesion;
- **Two international conferences** to discuss and showcase the project's findings and engage with relevant stakeholders;
- **Three digital newsletters** and regular publication of **blog posts**, updating subscribers on project activities and sharing key results and insights;
- **Policy briefs** and **consultative workshops** with representatives of EU institutions, cultural policymakers and advisors at the national and local level, and international networks of cultural professionals and educators.

For more information, visit the INVENT website (<https://inventculture.eu/>)





## 2. INVENT 2023:

### Completed data collections, new findings, and our final conference



Alysa  
Karels



Susanne  
Janssen



Sylvia  
Holla

*As we are nearing another summer, the INVENT project has been working together to bring you its third newsletter. With the project coming to a close, we want to share a snapshot of the research we conducted in the third and final phase of our project.*

In our 2022 newsletter, you could read about some of the key findings of our survey research and the new empirical studies we were embarking on, such as the Smartphone Study. Since then, we have completed additional data collections across the nine INVENT countries: Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. To start, we conducted 226 in-depth interviews with both native-born and foreign-born residents in each country. We inquired about the role of culture in their everyday life and how this is affected by wider societal developments such as globalization, migration, increased diversity, digitalization, and rising inequalities. During our interviews with migrants, we specifically emphasized their experiences in their new host culture compared to their home culture (see item 4).

The third phase of the INVENT project had an increasing focus on addressing and informing cultural policy, for which the data we collected through focus groups and case studies proved very valuable. The INVENT team engaged in 36 focus groups with cultural practitioners and organizations to gain insight into the challenges they encounter in their work related to the megatrends of digitalization, globalization, social inequality, diversity, and inclusion. Similarly, the 27 case studies we conducted allowed us to delve deeper into existing cultural policy models and instruments to analyze their successes and challenges in practice.

Finally, our data scraping task force completed its third study. Expanding on the subject of cultural advocacy through online petitions explored during our second data scraping phase, the third phase focused on analyzing intriguing public debates or discussions happening on platforms such as Twitter, Reddit, and various news media outlets in the online sphere (see item 3).





A first glimpse of findings from this expansive pool of rich cultural research was shared at the 2023 INVENT Conference held in Barcelona this past April. The INVENT consortium gave 13 presentations across four different panels under this year's common theme: Societal Drivers and Impacts of Cultural Participation: Key Findings Towards More Inclusive Cultural Policies (Check out the program [here](#)). The conference also hosted two stakeholder sessions with representatives of Barcelona's culture sector (For an impression of the day, view the after-movie [here](#)).

But for those who were unable to attend, fear not! This newsletter will introduce you to some of our most exciting new findings, which will be extended in our upcoming book with Routledge and other publications. We will tell you more about this and where to continue engaging with INVENT beyond the project's completion later. For now, we hope you enjoy reading our third newsletter.



### 3. Cultural Advocacy and public debates:

What our data scraping studies reveal about citizens' cultural discourse online



Alysa  
Karels

*Culture pervades nearly all aspects of our lives, and the online sphere is no exception. In addition to interviews and focus groups, INVENT has also looked at what people openly proclaim about cultural topics on the world wide web. In [Newsletter 1](#), we reported on our first phase of data scraping, where we analysed over 600,000 tweets to figure out what people talk about when they talk about culture online. In this newsletter, we share some key findings that emerged from our subsequent data scraping phases.*

#### Second phase

After exploring the general and various meanings of culture during phase one, we zoomed in on civic understandings of culture through culture-related petitions that are circulated on Facebook. So our new research question became "What do people talk about when they talk about culture with the intention of making a difference or achieving a defined cultural goal?" Narrowing our focus to the phenomenon of online-petitions used for cultural purposes, we scraped over 450,000 Facebook posts to explore digital cultural participation in the form of cultural advocacy. Civil involvement in cultural matters through online petitions proved prevalent across all nine countries, albeit to differing extents. The petition landscape in most countries is fragmented, featuring all kinds of petitions platforms. Some countries have a generalized petition platform that welcomes all sorts of topics, petitioners, and addressees – ranging from regional to national importance. In other countries, the petitioning scene is centralized

**#SIGNED!** THESE ARE EXAMPLES OF SOME PETITIONS EUROPEANS WERE EAGER TO SIGN WITHIN EACH OF THE SEVEN THEMES WE IDENTIFIED.



#### Children and education

"Rejected asylum children must be granted better conditions in home and return centres and a temporary residence permit no later than 18 months after final refusal" (Denmark)



#### Social equality and human rights

"Moms are not alone!" (in support of better maternity/paternity rights) (Serbia)



#### Contested heritage and cancel culture

"Zwarte Piet: End The Blackface minstrel show in the Netherlands!" (The Netherlands)



#### National/international rifts

"Ensure that the UK leaves the EU Single Market & Customs Union" (United Kingdom)



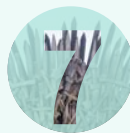
#### Climate change/sustainability

"Establish a per-passenger flight tax in Finland" (Finland)



#### COVID-19 pandemic

"I am deaf and opaque masks isolate me. Approve transparent masks NOW!" (Spain)



#### Popular culture

"Remake Game of Thrones season 8 with competent writers" (France)



in established petitioning channels maintained by governmental bodies. Lowering the threshold to political participation and societal engagement, online petitions mostly aimed at influencing policy and decision-making, and changing a government's course. Yet, we also observed other functions and affordances such as expressing dissatisfaction and frustration, forming or finding like-minded communities, or alerting others. The most trending cultural issues that European citizens advocated for concerned seven major themes: (1) children and education, (2) social equality and human rights, (3) contested heritage and cancel culture, (4) national/international rifts, (5) climate change/sustainability, (6) COVID-19 pandemic, and (7) popular culture. While we found these common threads across all countries, countries differed regarding the specific issues or transformative actions suggested by citizens. Some petitions and the public discussion that surrounded them were increasingly country-specific and presented an opportunity for further exploration in phase 3 of data scraping.

### Third phase

For our concluding phase, we focused on country-specific cultural issues or debates taking place in the public eye of online social media. For each country, we selected a case (with strong implications for cultural policy) whose online discussion we could follow, scrape, and analyse within and across multiple platforms. In total, over 165,000 social media posts across Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and digital news sites were scraped and analyzed using structural topic modeling and thematic analysis. While all nine cases produced numerous, specific insights, three common themes emerged in this phase. First, several cases disputed the value and meaning of culture, and which forms of it are considered 'real' or 'appropriate'. The second theme concerned itself with the criticism of taxpayers' money being spent on culture, and which cultural activities or expressions should be subsidized. Third, in some cases debates transcended the cultural sphere and had

increasingly political consequences, thus involving the politicization of culture.

Curious to find out more about the method of data scraping and the individual country findings? There are extensive reports available about each data scraping phase. You can find them on the [INVENT publications page](#).

### THE 9 ONLINE PUBLIC DEBATES SCRAPED IN PHASE 3:

**Croatia:**  
The rapidly increasing tourism industry

**The Netherlands:**  
Contested Heritage and the Golden Coach

**Serbia:**  
Unregulated Serbian reality TV shows

**Denmark:**  
Digital governance and MitID

**Spain:**  
Bono Cultural Joven – a cultural voucher for the youth

**Finland:**  
The Oodi public library as a new cultural hotspot

**Switzerland:**  
Lauwarm – a case of cancelling and cultural appropriation

**France:**  
Removal of religious statues from public spaces

**United Kingdom:**  
the politicized 'Unboxed/ Festival of Brexit'

## 4. Migration & Integration:

### Migrant perspectives on differences between home and host culture



Jörg  
Rössel



Susanne  
Janssen



Milos  
Jovanonić



Tally  
Katz-Gerro



Alysa  
Karels

A megatrend spanning multiple decades, migration has transformed many European societies into melting pots of different cultures and ethnicities. Consequently, the integration of immigrants continues to be a politically and academically popular topic. Some scholars and political actors plead for more tolerance and less discrimination toward immigrants and, on the whole, look favorably upon current integration practices and the resulting multicultural societies. In contrast, other scholars and political groups highlight integration issues, such as the rise of religious fundamentalism among migrants and the existence of parallel societies.

Cultural integration is a process often judged as being either successful or unsuccessful. For a long time, successful integration equated to one-sided assimilation to the cultural patterns of the majority society (e.g., migrants learning the host country's language). More contemporarily, successful integration recognizes a two-way flow of cultural influence and is more spoken about as a process of acculturation or cultural convergence (e.g., migrant food becoming popular with the majority group). Yet, integration remains a complex, multifaceted, and often nonlinear process whose effectiveness depends on a variety of factors, such as the level of intergroup contact, present ethnic hierarchies, and the socio-cultural distance between the country of origin (CoO) and the new country of residence (CoR).

Migration and integration research has primarily focused on how the host or receiving culture views the integration of the migrant group. Academic inquiry into migrant perceptions of integration into the host culture is only recently up and coming. This new INVENT study contributes to this emerging research area.

Employing semi-structured interviews, we asked over 60 migrants how they perceive the differences between their home and host cultures. The migrants in our sample hailed from countries in Central and Western Europe, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and outside of Europe and have lived in their respective European countries of residence for a minimum of two years.

In discussions of migration and integration, assimilation, acculturation, and enculturation are common terms that may come up.

**Assimilation** is when individuals or groups adopt the host or dominant culture's cultural norms, values, and behaviors. It often involves giving up one's original cultural practices and adopting those of the dominant culture.

**Acculturation** involves the mutual influence and adaptation of cultural elements between the dominant culture and a minority or immigrant culture. It leads to changes in both cultures and a blend of traditions, beliefs, and practices.

**Enculturation** is a process by which individuals learn and acquire the cultural beliefs, values, norms, and behaviors of their culture of origin. Migrants may experience this and want to get more in touch with their home culture while they are integrating into the host culture, as this quote illustrates:

*"I learned to play the saz. I took a private course. The instrument is a Kurdish instrument, just to explain. And I wanted to learn it since I was a child. But with school, etcetera, and in Syria, I didn't have time. I said okay, I will learn it at a later time. And I started last year and learned. I'm still a beginner, but I like it a lot. But I am not very good yet."*

**Woman, age 28, CoO: Syria, CoR: Switzerland**





We found that some of the most common differences between home and host cultures observed by the interviewees pertained to **(1) food** and **(2) interpersonal interaction**. Differing flavor profiles, food customs, and a desire to maintain one's native diet were noted predominantly by migrants from countries that do not belong to Central and Western Europe. Migrants also often noted apparent differences in interpersonal interaction, describing people of the host culture as less warm and spontaneous, and more reserved and distant — this is especially true for migrants whose CoR is in Central and Western Europe. For instance, interviewees observed a more formal attitude among natives when scheduling social gatherings, even with family and friends.

*"The main difference is, actually, the agenda. For example, if I want to make an appointment with my friend or anyone, I just need to make a phone call and say, "Hi, let's meet up today." Here, I think it's different. I think here, for example, brother and sister make appointments. They have to look at their agenda actually, to make an appointment"*

**Woman, age 38, CoO: Syria, CoR: The Netherlands**

Throughout the integration process, migrant perceived also differences related to **(3) values and beliefs** and **(4) cultural activities**. Many expressed that compared to their CoO, the people in their new CoR often upheld work-related values and attitudes such as respect for punctuality, trust in procedures and the enforcement of rules, resulting in well-functioning and safe societies. Additionally, migrants who have moved to or within Europe observed more open and liberal beliefs (ranging from women's and homosexuals' rights to veganism and animal welfare) in their CoR, especially in urban areas. The regional distinction between more urban and rural areas also plays a role in the cultural activities migrants participate in. While most migrants continue to engage in the same cultural activities in both the CoO and the CoR, the more extensive cultural offerings and change of

environment in the CoR can inspire some to pick up a new hobby.

Finally, speaking to themes of openness and a sense of belonging in the host country, migrants noted perceived differences of **(5) prejudice and discrimination** and **(6) identification**. Disclosures of being stereotyped, discriminated against, or receiving unequal assessment compared to migrants of a different CoO, only occurred among interviewees from Eastern and Southeastern or non-European countries. Migrants from Central and Western Europe did not feel personally affected and discussed issues of prejudice and discrimination only in abstract terms. On the matter of identity, given that all interviewees resided in Europe, it is not surprising that most identified as European. However, mentions of pride in the national cultural identity of one's CoO were not uncommon, as was the identification as a 'citizen of the world.'

*"No! (haha) That's [hiking] something new. But reading, listening to music, visiting museums, and theatres, I've always done that. (...)But hiking is something new. I never did that in Serbia."*

**Woman, age 41, CoO: Serbia, CoR: Switzerland**

Another pattern we found was that migrants from Central and Western Europe tend to perceive fewer differences between their home and host cultures. A chapter in INVENT's Forthcoming book with Routledge (2024) will delve deeper into this finding. In the meantime, check out the entries about migration in our online [INVENTORY](#) of Societal Values of Culture.

*"Because it's different if I go to Germany and I say I'm from Romania or I say I'm Spanish. If I say I'm Spanish they try to talk, and you say you're from Romania and they turn away. It's the thing about people's mentality and how they have stereotyped Romania. It is more difficult because you arrive and you have to change this stereotype that they have in their head"*

**Woman, age 41, CoO: Serbia, CoR: Switzerland**

# 5. How often and in what ways do Europeans use the internet for cultural purposes?



Susanne Janssen

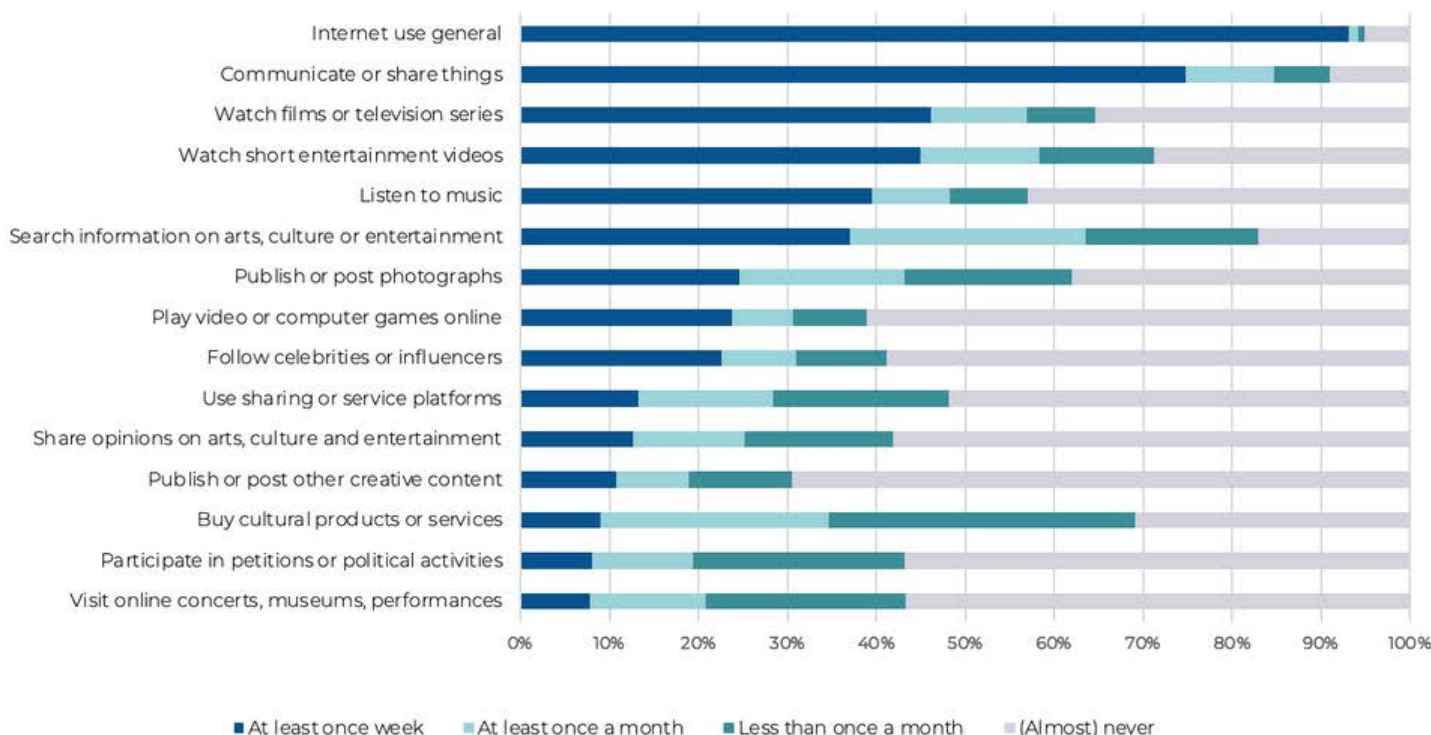


Nete Nørgaard Kristensen

A key question in the INVENT survey was about how Europeans in nine European countries use the internet for cultural purposes. Previous studies have shown that the Internet has opened up new opportunities for engaging with culture, but not everyone benefits equally from these opportunities due to differences in access and skills. In line with the INVENT project's inclusive approach to culture, the survey asked about various cultural activities that people may use the internet for, ranging from everyday practices and communication to the consumption and production of digital culture.

## How often do you do the following things on the Internet?

(Either on a computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone, or smart television)



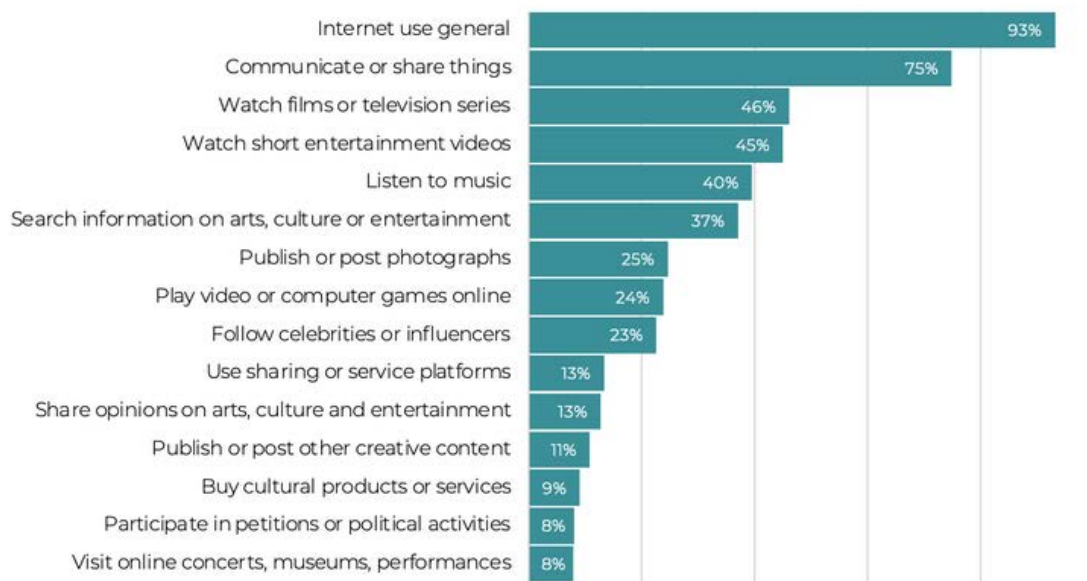
The most common activity when using the internet for cultural purposes is communicating and sharing things with friends and family. Other popular activities include watching short entertainment videos on platforms like YouTube or TikTok and watching films or TV series on streaming services like Netflix or HBO. These activities are more focused on entertainment and can be of varying durations. People less frequently engage in digital activities that require more skills and effort, such as publishing or posting self-produced creative content (like blog posts, videos, podcasts, or online magazines), or activities that are more high-art in nature, such as visiting online concerts, museums, and performances. Similarly,



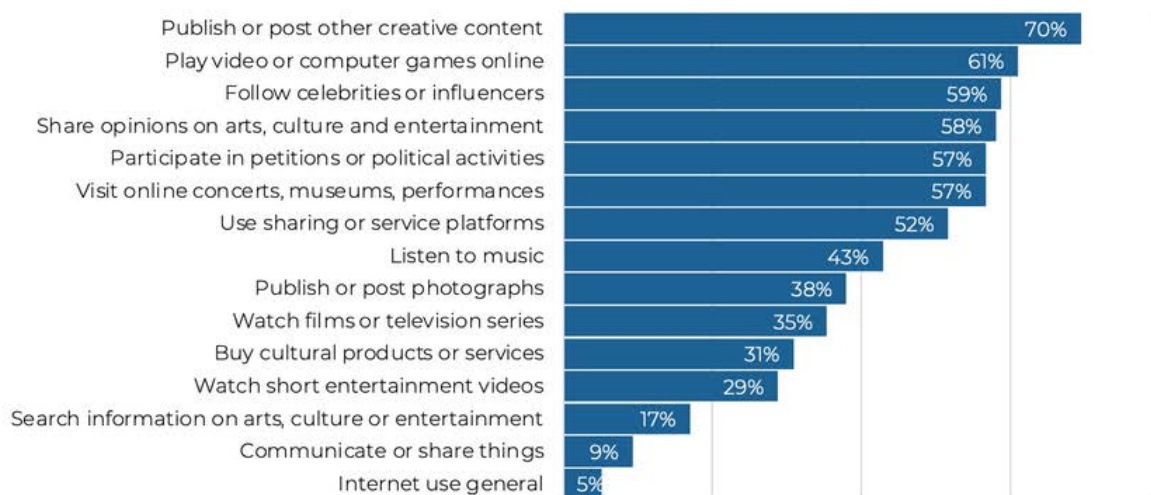


activities with a more politicised dimension, like participating in online petitions or political activities online, are also less common. Following celebrities or influencers on social media and using sharing platforms have moderate participation rates. While a significant portion of internet users (around 22%) follow celebrities or influencers on a weekly or daily basis, a large portion of internet users (around 59%) do not engage in this activity at all. Using sharing or service platforms is done by a relatively large group of people on a monthly or sporadic basis (around 35%).

### Percentage of respondents who use the Internet at least once a week with this purpose

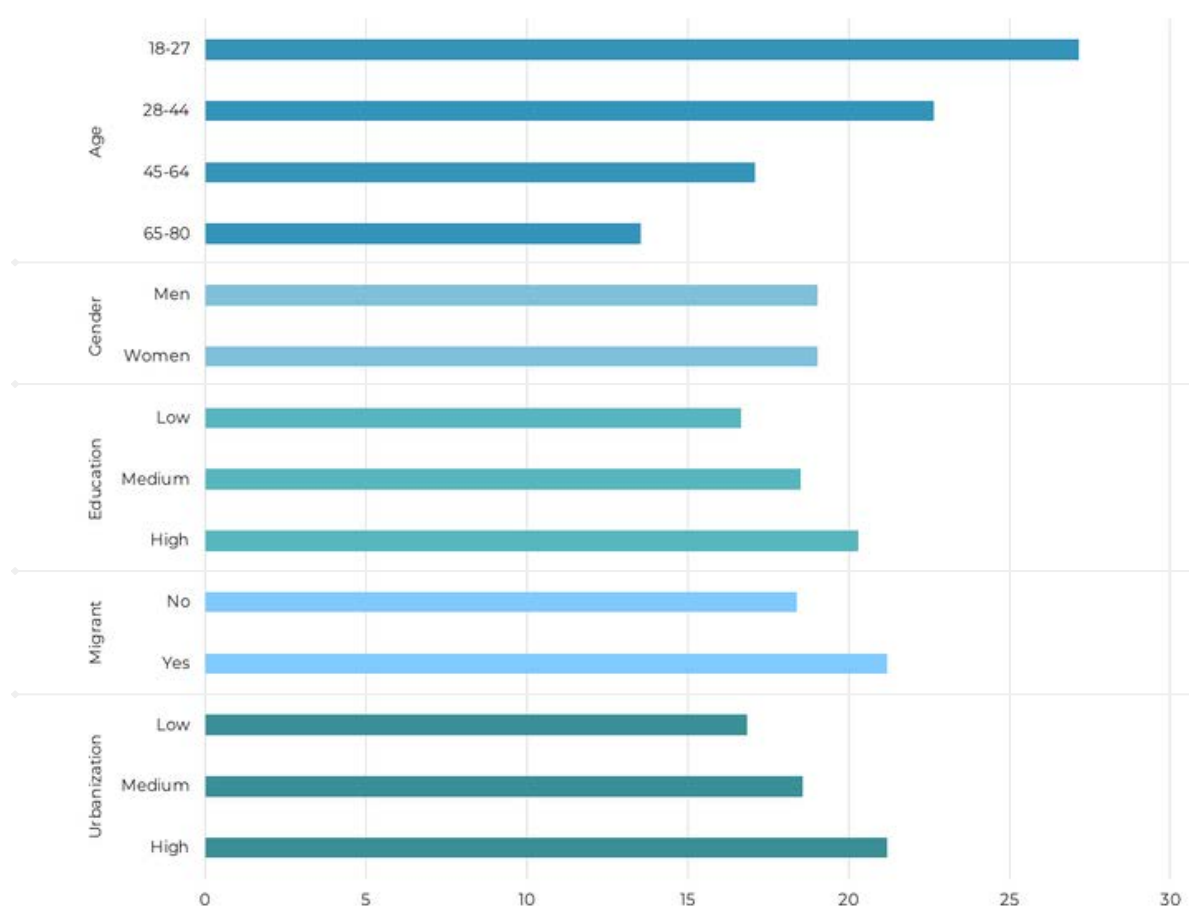


### Percentage of respondents who (almost) never use the Internet for this purpose



There are noticeable differences in how often Europeans use the internet for cultural purposes based on various sociodemographic factors. As people get older, their average participation in digital cultural activities tends to decrease. Those with higher levels of education tend to participate in digital cultural activities more than those with medium or lower levels of education. The same trend is observed for individuals living in urban areas compared to those in less urbanized areas, and for individuals with a migrant background compared to those with a non-migrant background. However, unlike in offline settings, gender differences do not significantly affect the average level of digital participation.

### Average digital participation according to age, gender, level of education, migrant background and degree of urbanization\*



\*Note: Sum score based on the frequency with which 14 digital cultural practices are done. Possible range 0-54



More insights on digitalization and culture can be found in our report on [Digitalization and Culture](#), our [blog](#), the INVENTORY, and forthcoming journal articles and book chapters. Make sure to follow our [website](#) and social media accounts to receive our publication alerts.



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## 6. The riches and reservations of globalization:

what do citizens perceive as the effects on their lived cultural experiences?



Tally  
Katz-Gerro



Neta  
Yodovich



Jörg  
Rössel



Sara  
Sivonen



Joan  
Lloch-Andreu

‘We live in a globalized world.’ ‘People nowadays seem more connected to one another because of globalization.’ — many of us have likely heard similar sayings before. Globalization is a megatrend that has provided us with extensive opportunities to access and engage with cultural products, services, and content from all over the world. Underlying processes of economic alliances, technological advances, and increased mobility and migration enable these opportunities and, at the same time, have the potential to shape our values, norms, lifestyles, ideologies, and identities.

The phenomenon of globalization can be difficult to grasp to its fullest extent. It is related to and often goes in tandem with trends like Europeanisation, migration, or internationalization (see text box for more details). It has political, economic, and cultural dimensions, the latter being one that INVENT is most interested in. While many scholars have dedicated their efforts to mapping the cultural consequences of globalization, few studies have looked at how Europeans assess the impact of this trend on what they perceive as culture.

Through interviews with native and migrant citizens, INVENT has inquired: What do citizens have to say about the effects – good and bad – of globalization on their lived cultural experiences? Our findings show that globalization affects many facets of their lives. We would like to highlight three of them. First, many interviewees regarded globalization as a positive force. They note its facilitating power to create more cultural diversity and openness to new tastes, ideas, and experiences they would otherwise not encounter as easily.

**Globalization** can feel like a convoluted term, especially when it is used interchangeably with terms like internationalization, migration, and Europeanization. Here is what is meant by each:

- **Globalization** - refers to global interconnectedness and interdependence
- **Internationalization** - focuses on activities and entities crossing national borders
- **Migration** - specifically refers to the movement of people across national or regional borders
- **Europeanization** - relates to integration and convergence among European countries, primarily within the EU





*"It's the variety. It's the fact that it's all my culture. I'm a European and it's all my culture. And if I choose to make it my culture, then I'll go and look for it. And if I want to listen to Beethoven while reading a book by an Italian author, then that's my choice."*

**Woman from Switzerland, age 60**

However, our interviews also revealed **different perceptions of globalization in big cities compared to smaller, more rural ones**. Interviewees note how larger, more cosmopolitan cities tend to have a wider range of cultural offerings and experiences and a more open attitude toward them. The reported lack of such diversity in smaller cities often goes together with scepticism or lack of appreciation of diverse cultural offerings and experiences.

*"In Finland, all cultures are very well represented and taken into account, and they try to improve it all the time. Of course, it could be better, and when you go outside the main cities, it's a completely different situation, it's like night and day. People there [in the countryside] may even wonder, in a slightly racist way, about the life and customs of foreigners and why customs of this kind come to Finland, but that's because they don't experience it, they look at it from a distance, they suspect it and don't dare to get to know it."*

**Man from Finland, age 30+**



Most interviewees look favorably upon the possibility to become a cultural chameleon reveling in new cultural products, experiences, and perspectives offered by globalization. However, some do underpin the importance of maintaining elements of their own cultural heritage.



*"I guess, if you take it from an example of living in the UK, you get a lot of people who are just like, 'Oh, but you live in the UK and you should adapt to UK culture.' Well, I kind of feel like I can do both. I can adapt to the culture here, but I can also keep true to my heritage as well."*

**Woman from UK, age 38, born in India**

These are just a few of the themes we identified in our study. In our upcoming book (see item 11), you can learn more about these and other themes that surfaced and about the role of education, wealth, and dispositions of tolerance in how people assess the effects of globalization.



## 7. How culture matters for a good life:

Different forms of well-being enhanced by cultural experiences and activities.



Sylvia  
Holla



Susanne  
Janssen




Franziska  
Marquart



Neta  
Yodovich

Both policymakers and scholars show a growing interest in the link between well-being and culture. Cultural participation is considered beneficial in addressing various crises and challenges, including mental health, health inequality, and migration and displacement. Taking part in cultural activities is believed to improve mental health, promote social and cultural integration, and enhance feelings of belonging and happiness. However, the narrow understanding of culture as "the arts" neglects broader anthropological approaches and interpretations of culture. Therefore, INVENT researchers used a broad definition of culture in studying the connection between culture and well-being. Based on qualitative interviews conducted in Denmark, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, they explored people's experiences of how culture affects their well-being in myriad ways.

When asked about cultural activities that contribute to their well-being, interviewees mentioned a wide variety of cultural offerings. These include arts-related activities (e.g., music, literature, theater, and visual arts), traditional festivities (e.g., carnivals, food festivals), and media entertainment, but also religious practices, socializing with others, sports and exercise. So-called "receptive" activities, such as listening to music, were more often mentioned than "creative" activities (e.g., making music), for which the threshold tends to be higher. In addition, artworks and aesthetic elements in public spaces, hospitals, and other institutions, as well as the presence of nearby green areas, are of great importance to people's experience of well-being too, as one woman from The Netherlands vividly explains:



*"What makes me feel happy or comfortable [is] a nice place to be. I've been in a hospital in [place]. (...) They have all single rooms with their own shower and toilet. And incredibly, that does help to heal (...) they also have very nice curtains [laughter] with very nice prints. They have very nice designer lights (...) And also the parking garage. It's downtown, the hospital. (...) So you actually have kind of lanes, (...) they have all these light lanes. A work of light art, I believe, you walk underneath that. And then there is a really big picture, huge, along the escalator up, that fades to all kinds of colors. Also a work of art. Yes, I find that very pleasant. Yes, maybe a lot of people don't see it at all, but it enriches me, the ease with which I go there. I spent two weeks there the other day and then, yes, that helps. Also a room alone helps, but also a beautiful environment helps."*

**Woman from the Netherlands, age 67**

In addition, the social aspect of cultural activities is deemed particularly important for the experience of well-being. Our interviewees highlight how a sense of belonging and closeness to others is crucial for them. Their well-being strongly depends on social connections, interactions, and joint activities with friends, relatives, and like-minded others, but also on a sense of connectedness with wider communities of which they are part, as a woman from Denmark explains:



*“[Cultural activities] plays a big role in all periods. (...) if we now take the bad periods, it can easily be that you are perhaps also more marked by a lack of energy and desire, but there, it has always been very helpful to have some good friends or family or someone you could lean on. And maybe also (...) do something together again. Go out and experience something helps.”*

**Woman from Denmark, age 59, born in Germany**

In turn, negative experiences at the community level – such as a lack of social cohesion, insufficient opportunities for participation, intolerance, discrimination, or exclusion – have a detrimental effect on community wellbeing.

Finally, our research demonstrates that interviewees’ interpretations of well-being are at least as diverse as their interpretations of culture. People refer to a varied palette of well-being categories that matter to them in relation to culture and their definitions of ‘a good life’. Do you want to read more about the different categories of well-being and how they are related to culture? INVENT’s forthcoming book with Routledge (2024) will feature a chapter on culture and well-being. In the meantime, check out the entries on culture and well-being in our online [INVENTORY](#) of Societal Values of Culture.



## 8. How participating in culture relates to openness and tolerance:

An investigation of liberal, open-minded and critical attitudes towards other cultures



Riie  
Heikkilä



Sylvia  
Holla



Giuseppe  
Lamberti



Željka  
Zdravković

How does cultural participation lead to more open and accepting attitudes toward others? INVENT researchers have examined the relationship between people's cultural participation and their attitudes of openness and tolerance. Openness regards the appreciation of others' cultural practices and, often, participating in these practices in the spirit of cultural diversity and variety. Tolerance refers to a slightly narrower mindset, only tolerating or accepting others' cultural practices, but without any strong interest in embracing them. Drawing on in-depth interviews with individuals from different social backgrounds in Croatia, Finland, the Netherlands, and Spain, the researchers examined different ways in which people can be open and tolerant. They identified three main categories among the interview participants: the culturally open-minded, the liberally open-minded, and the critical.

The first category consists of highly educated women who engage in broad cultural participation and hold open attitudes that emphasize culture as a means of understanding others. For example, a Spanish woman, who shares:

*"In my free time, I like to read a lot, I love it, I love mountains, hiking, I love to dance, I dance a lot, not at a professional level but semi-pro. I love climbing, climbing walls, all that. (...) In the summer it's more activities like beach or mountain and in winter it's more things like inside, isn't it? Climbing walls and things like that, but yes, sport, music, cultural activities on Sundays, museum night, and things like that"*

**Woman from Spain, age 45+**

The second category includes younger individuals who participate in a broader range of popular culture and have liberal attitudes that focus on politics and moral judgments, such as this thirty-something man from Finland, who explains:







*"I think that in Finland, all kinds of cultures are in sight and are taken into consideration pretty well, and I think they are trying to improve it all the time. I think they could be even more efficient about it. When you go outside of Helsinki, it's a different situation, it's like day and night. There they might wonder at foreign peoples' lives and manners in even a bit of a racist way and wonder why these kinds of lifestyles even materialize here, but I guess it's because people don't live in the situation themselves, they look at it from afar, they are suspicious and too scared to find out more"*

**Man from Finland, age 30+**

The third category involves low-status groups with narrower cultural participation and tolerance-based attitudes instead of openness, like this man from The Netherlands:

*"I think it's getting too busy in the Netherlands, let's put it this way. A large proportion are economic refugees. I don't blame them and I still think: if people's existence is threatened by their political convictions or their beliefs, then you just have to offer them something, but we are just dealing with a lot of people who are very badly off in terms of provision, in terms of food and living and you name it in their own country and then they come here. The most extreme are the Algerian and Moroccan youths who have been declared criminals in their own country and come to seek asylum here"*

**Man from The Netherlands, age 60+**

The analysis reveals that broader cultural participation is associated with broader openness, whether culturally or liberally motivated. The study also highlights that openness and tolerance have both cultural and political dimensions. The division between these dimensions suggests that openness is not confined to high-status groups but also encompasses middle-class individuals. Additionally, so-called 'anti-openness' tends to be associated with lower-status groups. These patterns of cultural participation and openness are found across the countries studied, thus transcending national contexts.

This close link between cultural participation and openness and tolerance emphasizes the need for inclusive cultural policies. Lowering barriers to cultural participation and broadening cultural offerings for rural communities, language minorities, and excluded groups are recommended to foster openness and tolerance.

Would you like to read more on this topic? Then stay tuned to our [website](#) and social media channels for the INVENT book (forthcoming 2024), which will include a chapter on cultural participation, openness, and tolerance.

You may also be interested in reading the article published by INVENT researchers Tally Katz-Gerro, Susanne Janssen, Neta Yodovich, Marc Verboord, and Joan Llonch-Andreu) in the *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, [Cosmopolitanism in contemporary European societies: Mapping and comparing different types of openness across Europe](#).



## 9. Tracing digital inequalities:

The challenges and solutions for promoting digital skills and inclusion



Eva  
Myrczik

Digitalization has changed how we look at cultural participation by introducing many new opportunities to engage. However, in our INVENT research, we also notice traces of digital inequalities coming to the surface. There is a growing concern in both society and the academic literature about leaving some citizens behind and creating new forms of social inequality through increased digitalization of public services. For instance, Denmark's introduction of MitID, a digital citizen identity, faced public criticism due to its potential exclusionary effects. To uncover more about these inequalities and discuss current challenges and solutions, the Danish INVENT team conducted a focus group with professionals and volunteers from various organizations promoting digital skills and inclusion. The following sections outline some key themes that emerged during this enlightening focus group discussion.

### Digital society for whom?

In the focus group discussions, participants identified specific groups of people more likely to be challenged by the fast developments in digitalization. In their experience, those people will more frequently need support with digital or IT challenges, for example, IT courses. Among the various groups of interest mentioned are older adults, persons with disabilities, unhoused persons, and socially disadvantaged or vulnerable persons. Even in a highly digitalized welfare state such as Denmark, not everyone can participate in the digital society.

### The centrality of the smartphone as a key to digital participation

Echoing insights from the interviews, the focus group participants highlighted the smartphone's central role in accessing critical digital services. People have become highly dependent on this device to participate in many activities and connect to public life.

On top of that, navigating a digitalized society comes with an overwhelming number of services, apps, and platforms, leading to confusion. As citizens must increasingly use many different platforms to access various (public) services, this is a growing problem. One of the examples mentioned in this focus group interview connects the reasons behind inequality to the production conditions of the technologies. For instance, public library service technologies were outsourced to private companies in the hope for better quality due to competition.

*"But on the whole, the world is moving towards it being smartphones that we use. Our smartphone, I think, it is our wallet today in many ways; it is the one we carry, it is our wallet, it is our handbag for everything. [...] but everything where you need to be a citizen- digital citizen today, it's actually the smartphone."*





*"I am from the library world, where we introduced IT many, many years ago. When we were going to have all that user-generated stuff —where you could also use our catalogues from home and things like that — that whole development came to a standstill because they wanted to make it as perfect as possible. And then all those extra offers came along because they thought competition could make it better, but it didn't. And I think there's a similarity to this with the [public service] mailboxes: you let in some new suppliers and it doesn't really get much better. There are just too many and it confuses people who are not so IT-savvy."*

### Acknowledging that the problem won't just solve itself

One of the participants described an initial hope that problems concerning the digital divide and inequality would solve themselves with time as new generations naturally learn to use new devices and services. However, some years later, this non-interventionist approach has clearly not improved the situation.



*"We have been working with digital inclusion at [name of organisation] since '15, because the first solutions, digital mail, NemID and these self-service solutions, were something we kind of initiated. And then we kind of became aware that there was a group that had difficulty with it and at first I think it was assumed that it would pass when the generations changed. And then suddenly the whole country was very digital. So whether it's parking apps or checking the thermostat, [...] the whole country has been digitalized and everyone has gradually realized that this, it's not going to go away. We've been trying to say that all along, but now the others have understood it too, and that's also why it actually it was added to the government platform. There's the thing about digital inclusion, I never dreamed of that when we started out there in the corner."*

### Solutions

The focus group participants represented different interest organisations that offer various forms of support for people challenged by digitalization. Such activities include so-called IT cafés, IT help, IT volunteers, courses, and personal consultations at public locations such as libraries and mobile services). Central to those activities is the understanding that customized individual help is precious, as many people not only lack the skills but also the confidence and ability to articulate their needs.



*"So a lot of our IT work in the café I'm in is really about, well, we sometimes call it "IT hygge", because it does something; they have to learn, they shouldn't be afraid to use that thing there, it doesn't bite or totally break all the time. So, there's someone like that, of course, you have to learn that just like in theory you should wash and clean your bike and your bike chain and stuff like that, there's some maintenance, but that's all you need."*

The examples here illustrate how digitalization influences and sometimes restricts the possibilities to participate in everyday life and culture, and the approaches that organizations take to help people cope with this development. More insights on digitalization and culture can be found in our report on [\*\*Digitalization and Culture\*\*](#).



# 10. The future of INVENT:

The book, INVENTORY, and all things policy



Alysa Karels



Inga Tomić-Koludrović



Mirko Petrić

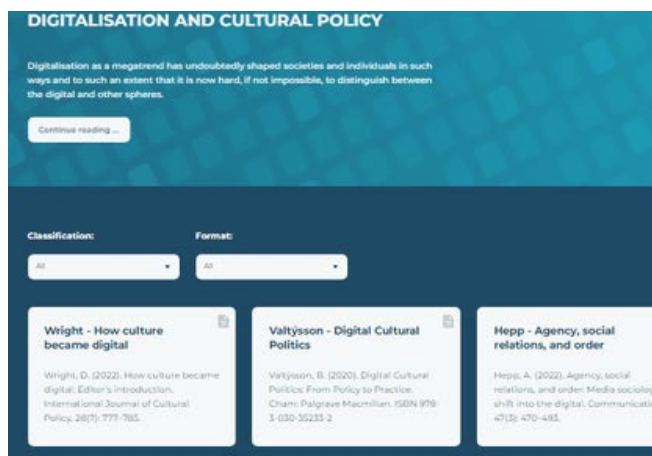
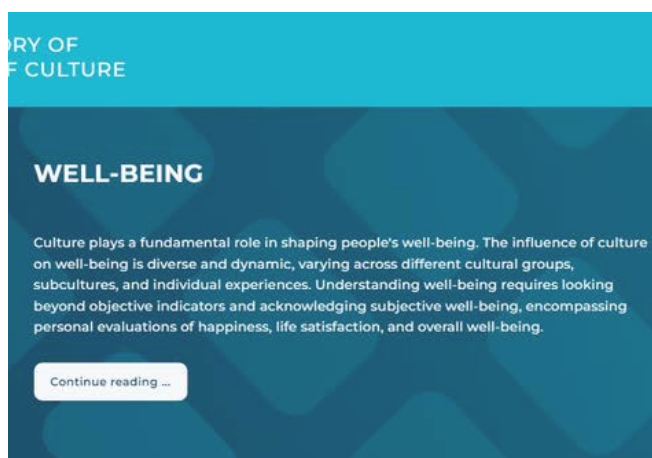
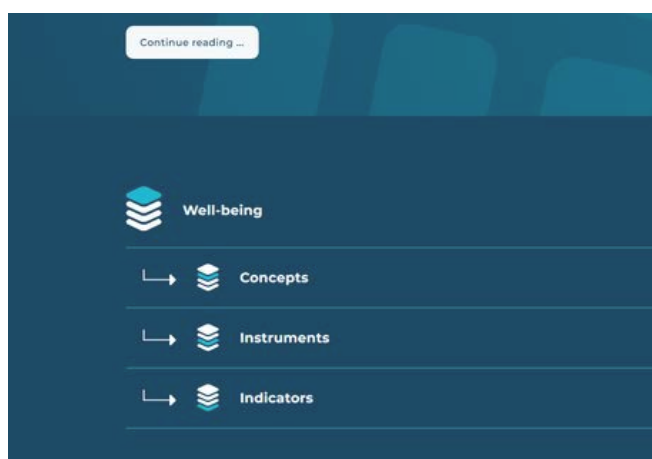


Susanne Janssen

*We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter thus far. In this last item, we would like to tell you about upcoming publications, outputs, tools, and platforms that build on INVENT's work — in other words, the future of INVENT beyond the project's ending.*

The findings presented in this newsletter provided a sneak preview of what is to come in the book the INVENT consortium is currently writing. We are working with publisher Routledge to bring you an edited volume about European citizens' engagement with culture in the course of 2024. The book will dive into people's understandings of culture; trends and patterns in cultural participation; the impact of globalization, Europeanization, migration, digitalization, and inequalities on everyday culture, lifestyles, and cultural participation; and, the affordances and societal values of cultural participation. The book is suited to cultural practitioners as well as scholars and students in multiple fields, including cultural sociology, cultural economics, European studies, cultural policy, cultural management, and media studies. The book will also provide important input to policymakers at national and European levels for the development of more inclusive cultural policies that may promote identity and belonging, inclusiveness, tolerance, and social cohesion.

In the past year, the INVENT team also published multiple reports, articles, and book chapters. You can find them on our publication page. More publications will come out in the coming months. Keep an eye out for [new publication alerts](#) on our website and social media accounts.



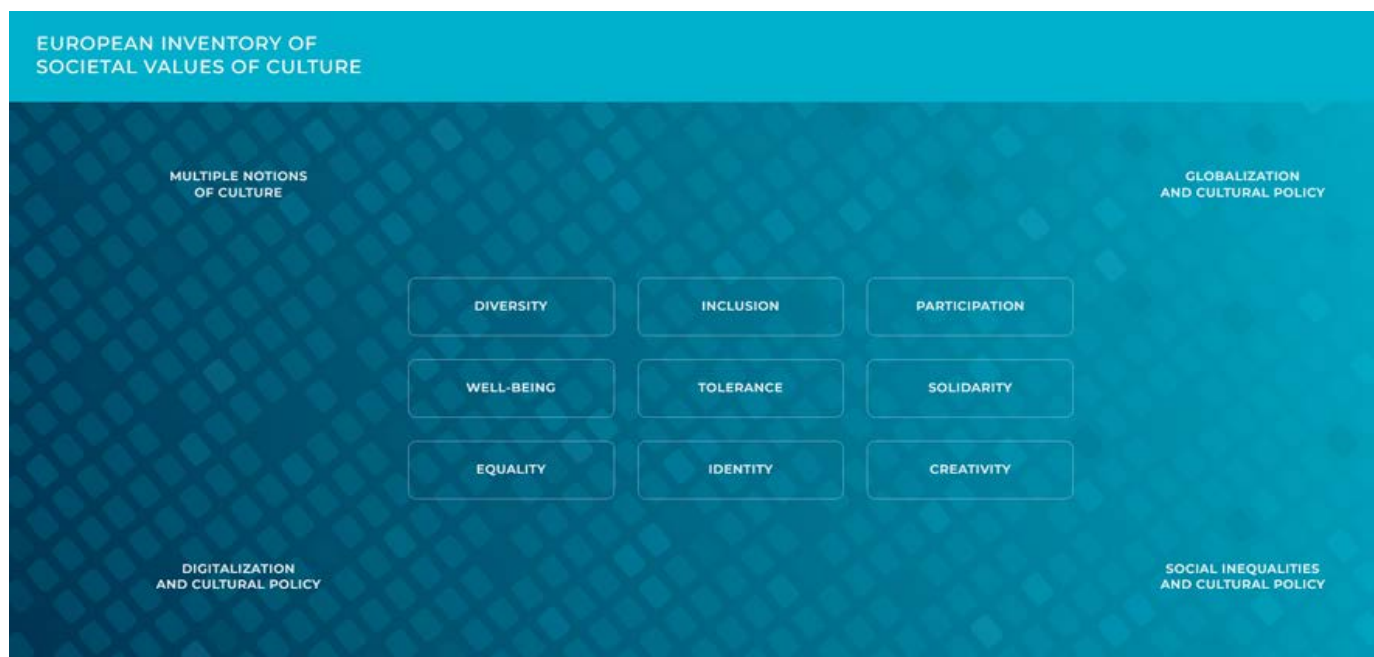
## All things policy

When the project commenced 3.5 years ago, the goal was clear: identifying the multiplicity of conceptions, practices, and values of culture among European citizens as a basis for creating more just and inclusive cultural policies and offerings. This connection of research to policy has been made throughout our project. Our multimethod approach yielded a wealth of insights that can benefit cultural policy creation. But where would one go to find an accumulation of all the best cultural policy guidance and insights INVENT has to offer? Our 2023 policy brief contains policy recommendations based on our latest data collections. A more concrete tool intended for experts is the *INVENT Policy Maker's Guidebook* (forthcoming 2023), which offers extensive guidelines on how to advance the societal values of culture postulated by the New European Agenda for Culture.



## The INVENTORY

Last but certainly not least, we would like to introduce the project's eponymous platform: *The European Inventory of Societal Values of Culture*. A dynamic repository, the INVENTORY is an interlinked e-dictionary containing key project insights on the societal values of culture and their connection to cultural policy knowledge. The INVENTORY will offer continually expanding content based on INVENT's work and inputs from fellow scholars and experts. The INVENTORY is a platform for everyone —engaged citizens, cultural practitioners, policy professionals, researchers, and students — wishing to know more about new understandings, perspectives, and methodologies conducive to creating inclusive cultural policies.





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# invent



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