

# Cultural participation: New challenges and opportunities

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Governance of culture:  
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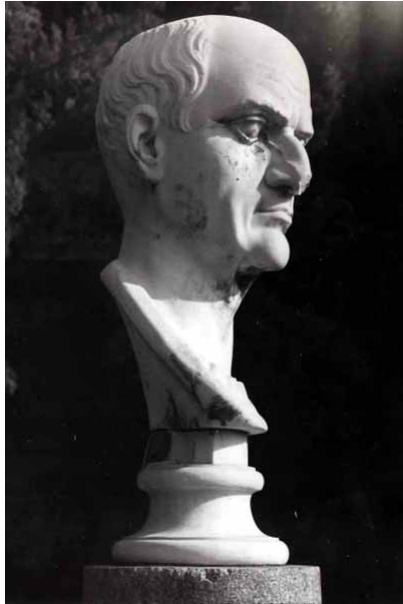
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# From Culture 1.0 to Culture 3.0



# Culture 1.0: classical patronage



- Technological conditions for cheap reproducibility and circulation not existing yet: no structured cultural markets
- Limited audience, coinciding with the patron's acquaintances
- Patronage choices determined by the patron's tastes and interests, mainly for spiritual cultivation and social promotion
- Culture does not generate value added, but only absorbs value produced elsewhere in the economy

# Culture 1.1: strategic patronage



- The target expands strategically beyond the patron's acquaintances to pursue more ambitious consensus policies (civil or religious audiences)
- Patronage choices determined by ideological objectives, in a potentially conflicting dialectics with artists
- Culture is economically non-productive, but can generate a huge political and social payoff, and even economic insofar as it increases the patron's image and bargaining power in economic trade or banking relationships

# Culture 1.2: public patronage



- Culture becomes a more and more universal human right as a basic component of human development
- The State chooses what deserves to be patronized and what not, thereby fixing the dyadic categories of high-(brow) vs. low-(brow) culture
- Audience significantly expands, with outside the market context
- Culture absorbs relatively huge resources, and implies a redistribution from the citizens who don't attend to those who attend
- Access to high-brow culture becomes a sign of bourgeois distinction

# The 1.0-2.0 transition



- Modern cultural markets are created by the concurrent emergence of a wave of technological innovation at the edge between XIX and XX century: modern printing, radio, music recording, photography, cinema
- The fact that for more than one century through the industrial revolution culture is not industrialized, however, creates a permanent frame of mind in Europe according to which culture is un-economical and needs to be subsidized anyway
- The high-brow stigma of patronage makes commercialization of culture problematic to many cultural players and to part of the audiences





## Culture 2.0: CCIs

- Builds and reaches very large audiences
- Is based on the virtually unlimited reproducibility of creative contents once the matrix has been produced
- Generates significant turnover and profits
- Is a distinct sector of the economy, and a part of the entertainment meta-sector
- Generates leisure experiences and occupies (part of) free time of people
- Needs intellectual protection (copyright)
- May also increasingly extend the creative element to functional domains (CIs)

# The 2.0-3.0 transition



- We are now witnessing a new regime transition that is driven by two concurrent streams of innovation: digital content production + digital connectivity
- Standard digital suites provide people with semi-professional packages that are cheap and easy to learn; with a modest investment they can be upgraded at the professional level
- The same packages less than 2 decades ago would have been expensive, would have required bulky hardware and would have been difficult to use
- Contents can be distributed almost without mediators to highly segmented and profiled audiences by means of increasingly specialized social media



# Culture 3.0: Communities of practice and open platforms



- Blurred distinction between producers and users of content: cultural access and production of new contents are two phases of the same process
- Culture can be massively produced and distributed also outside market channels
- Economic and social value is produced not only through priced content, but also through generic participation
- Culture becomes increasingly a precondition of all kinds of economic value generation processes ('culturalization' of the economy)
- Culture is no longer an aspect of free time use but is entrenched in the fabric of daily life

# The evolution of participation



- Culture 1.0: participation as co-optation (limited, passive)
- Culture 2.0: participation as market access (generalized, passive)
- Culture 3.0: participation as community affiliation (generalized, active)
- We need a conceptual scheme that allows us to understand (and capitalize) the socio-economic effects of cultural participation
- The new paradigms of cultural production do not necessarily use the market as the value-generating platform (communities of practice)

# **An 8-tiers approach to the indirect effects of cultural participation**

- Innovation
- Welfare
- Sustainability
- Social cohesion
- New entrepreneurship
- Soft power
- Local identity
- Knowledge economy

# Innovation

## **Ranking Innovation Scoreboard 2008 (UE15)**

- 1 Sweden
- 2 Finland
- 3 Denmark
- 4 Germany
- 5 Netherlands
- 6 France
- 7 Austria
- 8 UK
- 9 Belgium
- 10 Luxemburg

## **(UE27 average)**

- 11 Ireland
- 12 Spain
- 13 Italy
- 14 Portugal
- 15 Greece

## **Ranking Active cultural participation Eurobarometer 2007 (UE15)**

- 1 Sweden
- 2 Luxemburg
- 3 Finland
- 4 France
- 5 Denmark
- 6 Netherlands
- 7 Belgium
- 8 Germany
- 9 UK
- 10 Austria

## **(UE27 average)**

- 11 Ireland
- 12 Italy
- 13 Spain
- 14 Greece
- 15 Portugal

# Culture as a pre-innovation platform?



# Culture as a 'pre-innovation' platform

Active cultural participation stimulates the capability building of people in terms of **attitudes toward the un-experienced**:

- questioning one's beliefs and world views,
- getting acquainted with, and assigning value to, cultural diversity,
- learning to appreciate the transformational impact of new ideas,
- building new expressive and conceptual skills...

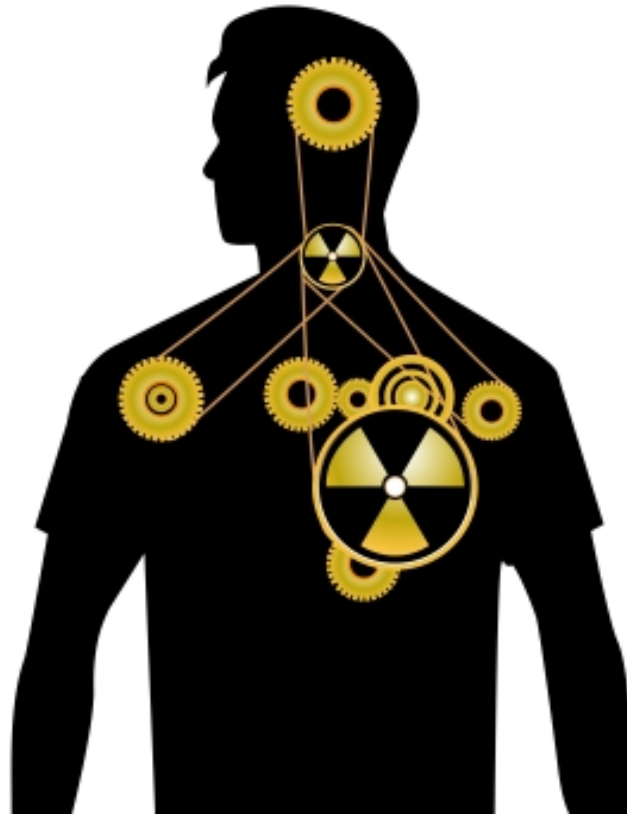
➔ Strong link with innovation systems



# Welfare

- There is a strong statistical association between life expectancy and cultural participation (Konlaan et al, 2000)
- There is an equally strong association between cultural participation and psychological well-being (The Italian culture and well-being study, IULM/Bracco)

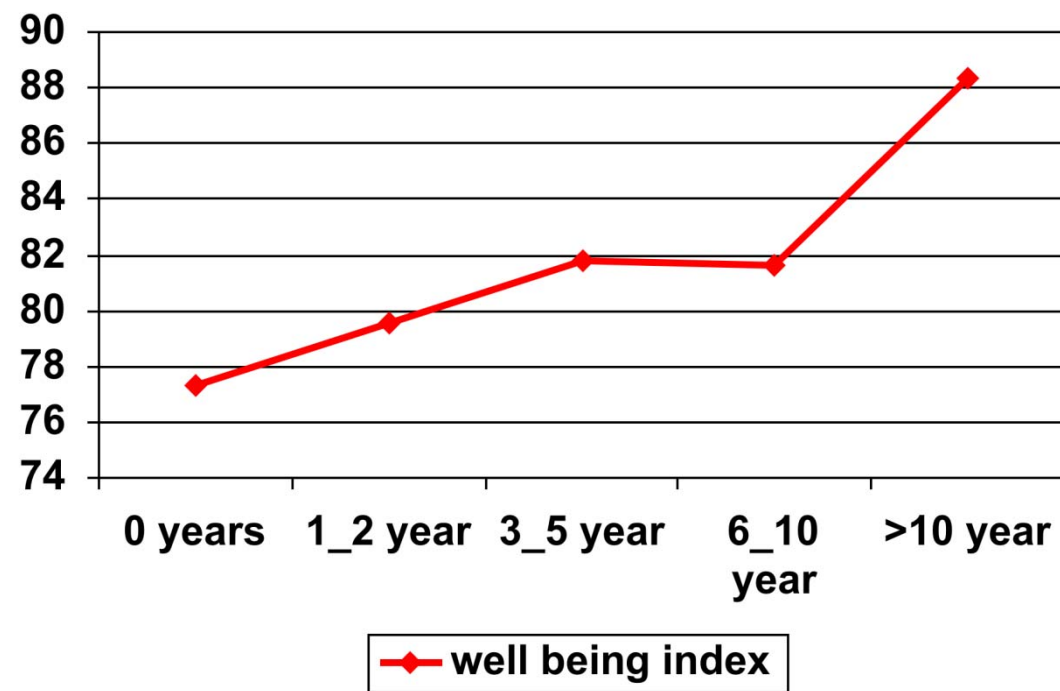
# Hierarchy of factors affecting psychological well-being



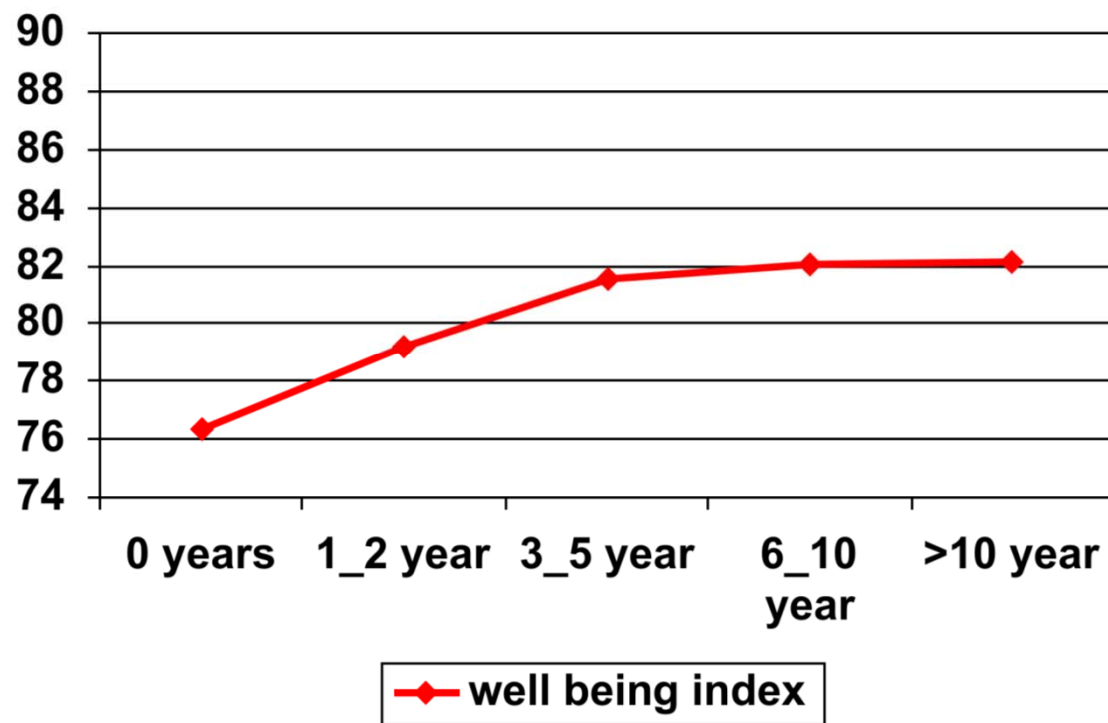
# Hierarchy of factors affecting psychological well-being

- 1 Diseases
- 2 **Cultural participation**
- 3 Income
- 4 Age
- 5 Education
- 6 Gender
- 7 Job
- 8 Geography

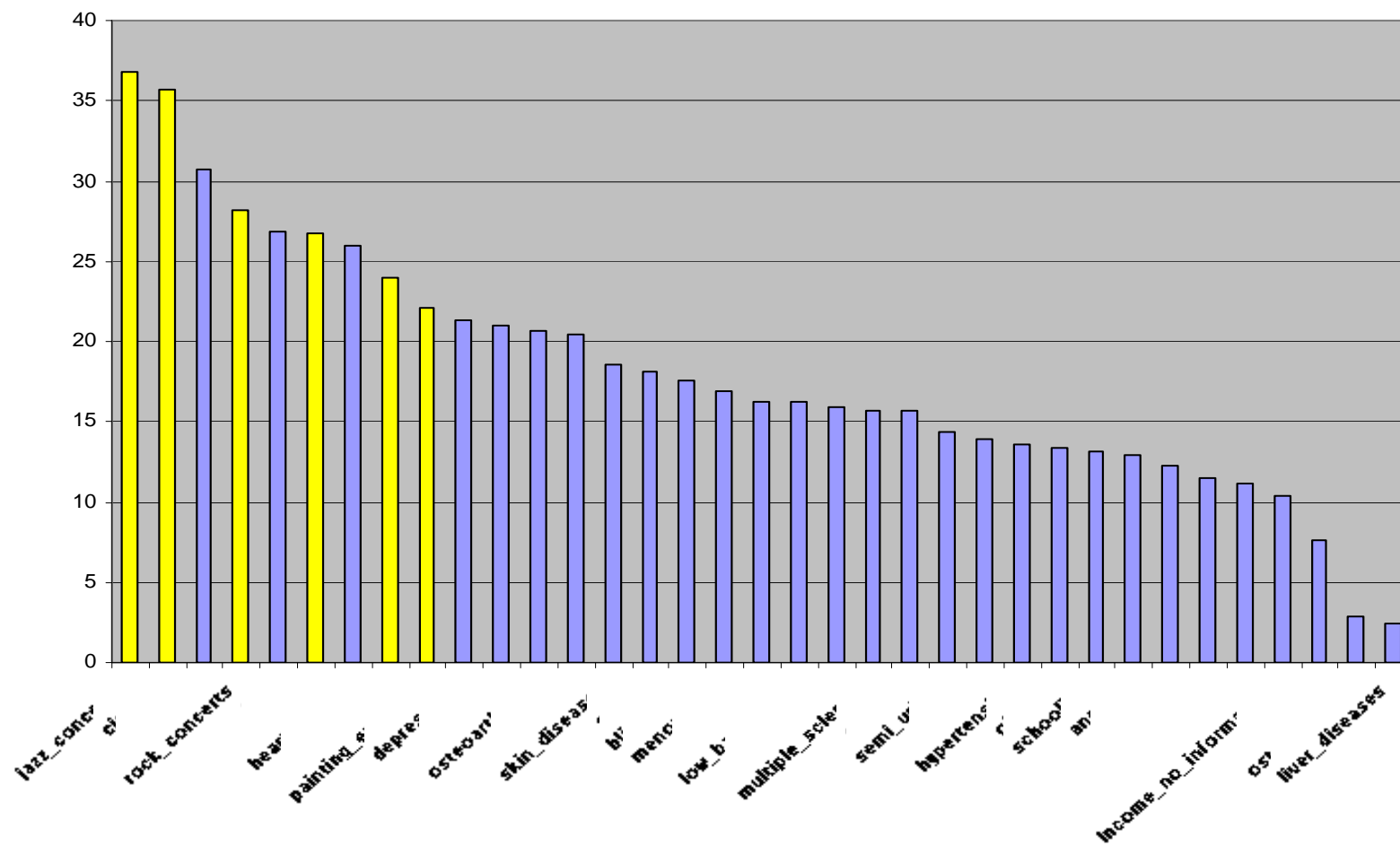
## Classical music concerts



## Theatre



## Which single variables have the strongest impact on SWB?





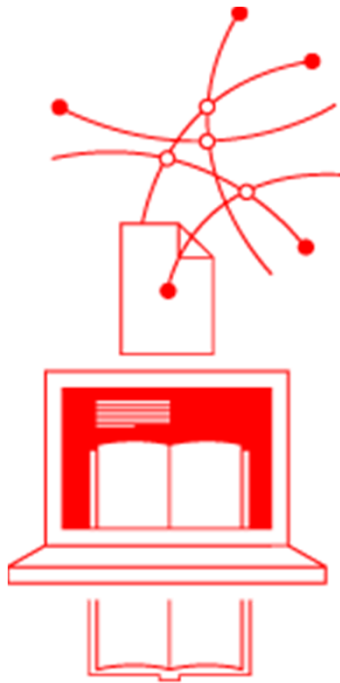
# **Towards a cultural welfare perspective?**



# Towards a cultural welfare perspective?

- The well-being impact of cultural participation is especially strong among the severely ill and the elderly
- Systematic cultural participation in these categories might bring about substantial improvement in their quality of life
- At the same time, cultural participation might significantly reduce hospitalization frequency and duration for chronic pathologies
- If this is true, the whole program could be financed through the consequential saving on general welfare costs

# In a nutshell...



- Culture is not simply a large and important sector of the economy, it is a **'social software'** that is badly needed to manage the complexity of contemporary societies and economies in all of its manifold implications
- The **total indirect macroeconomic impact** of cultural participation is likely to be much bigger than the (already remarkable) direct one
- Once we become able to **measure the indirect effects of culture** on the various dimensions (to 'capitalize' culture), it will be possible to bring cultural policy at the top ranks of the policy agenda
- These effects are further strengthened by the growth of the cultural and creative industries, but only insofar as such growth is as **inclusive and participative** as possible

# Thanks!



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