

PRESS RELEASE

Enormous support for cultural offerings in Germany

91 per cent of people in Germany believe it is important to preserve the cultural offerings in theatre venues for coming generations. Such is the finding of the new Culture Relevance Monitor of Bertelsmann Stiftung's Liz Mohn Center.

However, four out of ten young adults feel that cultural offerings do not cater to them. They feel out of place in these venues. Decision-makers in cultural and political institutions should modernise cultural offerings and the way they are communicated in order to do justice to the relevance the population attributes to their work.

Gütersloh, 31 May 2023. People in Germany (91 per cent) believe it is important to preserve cultural offerings in theatres for coming generations. A large majority (76 per cent) is also of the opinion that these should continue to be financed from the public purse. The offerings are part of Germany's cultural identity (82 per cent) and education (91 per cent). Such are the findings of the new Culture Relevance Monitor published by Bertelsmann Stiftung's Liz Mohn Center. With this national, representative forsa survey, the Liz Mohn Center has, for the first time, explored the question of the importance of cultural offerings in Germany today. The survey revealed almost unanimous support across the population: the work of theatre venues is important, should continue to be supported, and be preserved for the future.

"Culture connects us. It builds bridges of understanding in a fragmented world. People in our country can feel this power and want to preserve it. Getting the next generation excited about cultural diversity is an important social mission we should approach together," says Liz Mohn, founder and president of the Liz Mohn Center.

Is the cultural sector fulfilling its social mandate?

There is, however, a discrepancy between the unanimous desire for preserving culture and the actual interest and use of the offerings. Both in the population as a whole and in the generation of young adults aged between 18 and 29, two-thirds are not at all interested or are not very interested in theatre performances, classical music concerts, or opera, ballet or dance performances. Four out of five respondents stated that they did not make use of traditional cultural offerings like these over the last twelve months.

37 per cent of respondents had never attended a classical music concert or an opera, ballet or dance performance (for theatre performances: 10 per cent). Many 18- to 29-year-olds feel

that cultural offerings do not cater to them (43 per cent); they feel out of place there (39 per cent).

“Considering the relevance attributed to them, audiences should be flocking to these cultural institutions. Unfortunately, the opposite is the case at present. Decision-makers in these venues should now use this enormous support to get to know, reach and inspire their audiences better. They should seek to do that through their cultural programmes and on their social media timelines,” says Dorothea Gregor, cultural expert at the Liz Mohn Center.

Clear action recommendations for the future

The survey results provide clear action recommendations for leaders in these institutions and for political decision-makers. Theatres should:

- **get to know and address their target groups better.** There is demand for cultural offerings such as those that are specially directed at children and teenagers (85 per cent), that make people laugh (83 per cent) and that are easy for everyone to understand (81 per cent). The performances should also stimulate social and political discussion (61 per cent) and be new and topical (63 per cent).
- **be more open and network.** Theatre venues should see themselves as a gathering place (80 per cent) and offer amateur theatre groups/orchestras or similar ensembles opportunities to perform (74 per cent). Social and habitual barriers to access must be removed.
- **carry out marketing in social and modern ways.** The pricing structure should be socially fair (89 per cent), and 18- to 29-year-olds in particular need easier access to programme information (42 per cent), for example via social media platforms.

“Political decision-makers have a clear social mandate to preserve and finance existing structures and to support the urgently needed transformation of those structures, in order to preserve this globally unique cultural landscape for future generations,” summarises Gregor.

Additional information:

On behalf of Bertelsmann Stiftung's Liz Mohn Center, the forsa Institute for Social Research and Statistical Analysis carried out a nationwide, representative population survey on the importance of culture in Germany. The new instrument is called Culture Relevance Monitor, and it will be repeated in 2025 and 2027. 2,505 citizens in Germany aged 18 and over were surveyed between 27 March and 14 April 2023. The respondents were contacted by phone and invited to take part via an online panel. The Liz Mohn Center was supported by the Institute for Research on Cultural Participation (IfKT) as an advisory institution.

About the Liz Mohn Center:

The Liz Mohn Center was founded in 2022 as an initiative of Bertelsmann Stiftung, and it continues the work of Liz Mohn in an independent institution. The Liz Mohn Center pursues the goal of promoting global knowledge transfer through a variety of activities in order to improve the quality of decisions made by leaders in the fields of politics, business and culture on the basis of sound evidence; supporting managers to lead in sustainable and responsible ways; developing understanding between nations and cultures; and fostering the personal development of young talents from all social spheres. The Liz Mohn Center is a non-profit limited company. More information: www.Liz-Mohn-Center.de

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About Bertelsmann Stiftung: Inspiring people. Shaping the future.

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Further information: www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de

