

Nordic Council criticises culture funding cuts

(translation of this text:

<https://www.norden.org/sv/nyhet/nordiska-radet-kritiserar-kulturredskarningar>)

The Presidium of the Nordic Council emphasizes that culture is a unifying force in our region and strongly criticizes the cuts in the cultural budget planned by the Nordic Council of Ministers for 2022-2024.

The draft budget and its implications were discussed at a meeting of the Presidium as part of the Nordic Council's virtual thematic session on 28-29 March. June. The role of culture was also the subject of a vision discussion in connection with the meeting.

“If the plans are not changed, the consequences will be devastating.”

Bertel Haarder, President of the Nordic Council

Need for new investments, not cuts

- The cuts planned for cultural co-operation are deeply worrying, Bertel Haarder summarises. Good understanding of languages and the opportunity to participate in the cultural life of neighboring countries are a sure way to increase interest in all cooperation, says Bertel Haarder.

- I'm especially worried about young people. Increasing their interest in the Nordic region requires new investments instead of cuts.

The President criticized the fact that the draft budget did not take sufficient account of the views of the Nordic Council.

- We find it special that the draft budget now presented does not take greater account of this criticism, especially of cuts in the cultural sector. If the plans are not changed, the consequences will be devastating, he says.

Everyone's right to culture

During the Danish Presidency, the Presidium has negotiated issues that can strengthen Nordic co-operation and help achieve the vision of the Nordic Region becoming the most sustainable and integrated region in the world.

The vision discussion at the presidency meeting was based on a proposal from the President and Vice-President of the Nordic Council for the adoption of a Nordic cultural canon. This would be a kind of constantly updated list of key cultural figures and works that should be accessible to all Nordic people.

Kjell-Arne Ottosson, the Swedish chairman of the Committee on Knowledge and Culture in the Nordic Region, also took part in the discussion:

- Since the establishment of the Nordic Council there has not been a time when there would have been a greater need to pay attention to the issues that unite us. Our common culture is at the heart of this, he says.

The Committee on Competence and Culture in the Nordic Region discussed a similar proposal on the cultural canon, which was backed by the Free Nordic Party group. The Bureau decided that the right of initiative and its follow-up belonged to the committee.