

Current draft cultural budget means cultural recession for Berlin.

Commentary on the proposed budget by Council for the Arts Berlin

The Council for the Arts sees the current budget proposal of the grand coalition as a dramatic erosion for Berlin's arts and cultural landscape. Despite the commendable efforts of the Senator for Culture, Joe Chialo, to avoid cuts in the cultural budget and also to increase it minimally in numerical terms, the proposed budget is in fact a clear-cut for art and culture in many places.

The increases cover only to a small extent increased rents, energy and infrastructure costs as well as tariff adjustments. In the overall picture of the sectors and especially in the area of art production and independent artists and projects, massive austerity measures are planned, so there can be absolutely no question of a necessary compensation for inflation or even increased funding for actual art production. The concrete threats to Berlin's cultural diversity that would result from this draft budget can be read in detail in the knowledgeable analyses and statements of the various associations and sector associations: The current draft budget in no way takes into account the significance and importance of Berlin as a lively, diverse, active and growing cultural metropolis. Developments that have already been set in motion are stopped and set back instead of further developing their potential in a positive way.

The current draft budget does not contain any guidelines for the future of Berlin's culture, nor does it set priorities for a prosperous cultural landscape. This does not do justice to the importance for Berlin. This is an alarming signal from the Senate. Cultural policy needs a political will to shape cultural urban development that supports and promotes sustainability, resilience, participation, diversity, accessibility and fair working conditions. Arts and culture must be recognized on an equal footing with other departments as an important factor in Berlin's urban development as a livable city known worldwide for its diverse cultural landscape. On behalf of Berlin's culture, we urgently call on the government to readjust the cultural budget in line with the justified demands of artists and cultural actors in order to avert the looming cultural recession.

Even if the budget is not sufficient for the preservation of the current cultural diversity, it still offers room for maneuver if it were based on a transparent understanding of and empathy with Berlin's culture. We therefore call on the two coalition parties to negotiate a comprehensible vision as soon as possible. The Council for the Arts remains ready to talk.

<http://www.rat-fuer-die-kuenste.de/selbstverstaendnis/> (German only)

Spokespersons for the Council:

Sabine Kroner, Franziska Werner, Oliver Baurhenn

Deputies: Fatima Çalışkan, Daniel Neugebauer

RfdK.Berlin@gmail.com

(deepl translated)