

# Committing to Canadian Cultural Sovereignty

— Priority issues for  
the cultural sector



Coalition  
for the Diversity of  
Cultural Expressions

# About

For more than 25 years, the **Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions** (CDCE) has brought together the main organizations of Francophone and Anglophone professionals in the cultural sector in Canada and has advocated for the implementation of effective cultural policies in a globalized context. The CDCE represents more than 350,000 creators, artists, and over 3,000 cultural enterprises across the country. Concerned both with the economic health of the cultural sector and the vitality of cultural creation, it focuses in particular on how culture is treated in trade agreements and on the impact of the digital environment on the diversity of cultural expressions, notably by ensuring that public policies actively protect and support our cultural ecosystem.

## International Legislative Framework

*The 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*

At the international level, the CDCE, along with the Quebec and Canadian governments, played a key role in ensuring recognition of the dual value—economic and identity-related—of cultural goods and services. Their mobilization contributed to the emergence of a movement that led to the adoption of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions at UNESCO in 2005, of which Canada was the first signatory. This international agreement recognizes that the free expression of culture enables peoples to transmit their knowledge, strengthen social understanding, and build connections. The 2005 Convention aims to establish a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice, and mutual respect among peoples and cultures. Countries that have ratified the 2005 Convention are obligated to integrate its principles into their national legislation, notably by adopting measures and policies to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions within their territories.

# Context

In a period of profound geopolitical, economic, and technological upheaval, the Canadian cultural sector stands at a crossroads. Its vitality, diversity, and sustainability now depend on the government's ability to make clear, ambitious, and timely decisions.

In 2024, Canada's cultural sector generated \$65 billion in value added and supported 1.1 million jobs across the country, underscoring its significant economic and social weight. Yet the value of culture goes far beyond these indicators. In Canada, higher levels of arts funding are associated with higher overall well-being. Culture carries the stories of our land, nurtures a sense of belonging that is indispensable in times of uncertainty, and projects internationally the values and identities that define Canada.

The Canadian cultural sector is facing major challenges that require strong and concerted political action. Protection of cultural industries in trade agreements, implementation of the modernization of the *Broadcasting Act*, copyright, and artificial intelligence (AI) are at the heart of the concerns of artists, professionals, and businesses in the sector, and require clear and concrete commitments from the federal government.

# The Arts and Culture Sector: Key Figures for Canada in 2024

**2%**  
**OF GDP**

**1,128,000**  
**JOB**



**8%**  
**GROWTH OVER**  
**THE PAST**  
**THREE YEARS**

**\$65**  
**BILLION**  
**IN VALUE**  
**ADDED**



**75%**

OF CANADIANS BELIEVE THAT ATTENDING  
ARTS AND CULTURE EVENTS POSITIVELY  
IMPACTS THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING IN  
CANADA.



Source : Business / Arts & Business Data Lab (BDL). Artworks: The Economic and Social Dividends from Canada's Arts and Culture Sector. Ottawa, October 2025



# The Government Must Not Back Down on These Critical Cultural Issues

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## Protection of Culture in Trade Agreements, Particularly in the Review of CUSMA

### REQUEST

1

Exclude cultural activities, goods, and services from free trade agreements through the inclusion of a general cultural exemption clause in all trade agreements, including those on digital trade, particularly the Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), which is set for review in 2026.

### REQUEST

2

Ensure that no loopholes are created through provisions on digital trade or artificial intelligence.

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## Implementation of the *Online Streaming Act*

### REQUEST

3

Ensure that the implementation of the *Online Streaming Act* by the CRTC remains a priority so that audiovisual and audio streaming services, as well as social media, like traditional media, contribute to the creation, production, and promotion of Canadian and Indigenous music, programs, and films. This flagship Canadian cultural policy must not be subject to negotiation or compromise in the context of the CUSMA review or any other agreement with the United States.

## Direct Support for Creation and Cultural Industries

### REQUEST

4

Make permanent the budget increase allocated to the Book Fund, which is set to expire in the near future.

## Artist Resale Right for Visual Artists

### REQUEST

5

Amend the *Copyright Act* to establish the artist resale right so that members of Canada's visual arts community benefit from the future sales of their works, in line with the federal government's intention expressed in the 2024 Fall Economic Statement and reaffirmed in the November 2025 federal budget.

# The Government Must Commit to Developing a Legislative Framework on Generative AI

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## REQUEST

1

Ensure that the *Copyright Act* is not modified through an exception permitting Text and Data Mining (TDM) or any other exception allowing technology developers or users to use protected works, sound recordings, and performers' performances to train generative AI systems without authorization or compensation.

## REQUEST

2

Adopt national legislation on generative AI that requires developers of generative AI systems to disclose the training data they use.

## REQUEST

3

Adopt legislative provisions requiring public identification of content that is purely AI-generated.

## REQUEST

4

Include the cultural sector in discussions to develop Canada's AI strategy.

## REQUEST

5

Actively support the adoption of an additional protocol to the 2005 Convention in the digital environment, as recommended by the Reflection Group on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in the Digital Environment.

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# Longstanding Commitments for the Cultural Sector at No Cost to the Government

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## Fair Compensation for Authors and Publishers

### REQUEST

1

Ensure fair compensation for writers and publishers for the use of works in the education sector, in line with the legislative measure announced by the federal government in its 2022 budget.

## Private Copying Regime for the Music Sector

### REQUEST

2

Ensure technological neutrality for private copying in order to restore royalties for performers, composers, songwriters, publishers, and music labels.

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