Public Perceptions of Dutch Cultural Institutions

Exploring Perceptions of Values and Responsibilities of Cultural Institutions with a Focus on Sustainability

Report 2024

A report commissioned by the Boekmanstichting

Authored by H-M.F Holm, K. Bebendorf and T. Bouman

Psychology Department / University of Groningen

university of groningen

Boekmanstichting
Kenniscentrum voor kunst, cultuur en beleid

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This report provides insight into how the public perceives the Dutch cultural sector. This is particularly relevant in light of the approaching Culture Climate Council project, which should consider public opinion in their decision-making, as the public are an essential stakeholder in the cultural sector.

The "Cultuurberaad Klimaat" is a citizen council project initiated by various cross-sectoral parties and umbrella organisations, representing the largest part of the Dutch arts and cultural sector. This council aims to make policy-relevant recommendations that the sector can use to create a framework to tackle the climate and environmental crisis.

This report does not aim to establish actions or responsibilities required by the cultural sector but to identify how the public perceives them. The content of this report can, in combination with previously published reports, inform the cultural sector on differences between public and industry perceptions. As such, this report complements the "Sustainability in the Cultural Sector – edition 2022/2023", the "Act Green" (2022), and "Towards sustainable arts" (2022) reports.

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Artwork generated by Kimberley Bebendorf, using Runway AI (2024, https://runwayml.com/)

Interesting Findings

Survey Overview

763
respondents included in this report

15
minutes on average spent taking the survey

Respondents and the Climate Crisis

49%
of respondents think **human action** is the main cause of climate change

76%
of respondents are somewhat to extremely **worried** about the climate crisis

Key Public Perceptions on Sustainability in the Cultural Sector

58%
of respondents think **festivals** have the **largest carbon footprint**

47%
of respondents think **festivals** are most suitable to become more sustainable

26%
of respondents think **libraries** are best suitable to **educate** on climate change and action

30%
of respondents think **festivals** are most suitable to encourage climate friendly behaviour

Values

77%
of respondents think the cultural sector has a **positive impact** on **encouraging social involvement**

Support for the Cultural Sector

78%
of respondents think the **cultural sector should exist**

41%
are **less likely to visit** an environmentally **unsustainable** institution **5 years from now**

Responsibilities of the Cultural Sector

78%
of respondents think the cultural sector is responsible for **reducing and recycling** their waste

62%
of respondents think cultural institutions should **only sell sustainable products**

63%
of respondents think the **content** should be made **from sustainable materials**

Context

This report investigates public perceptions on whether and how the cultural sector should address climate change. This report takes a stakeholder-oriented approach by emphasising the public's perception (Grüb & Martin, 2020).

The climate emergency is arguably the most defining issue of our time, requiring urgent action to secure our planet's future (IPCC, 2023). **What role does the cultural sector play in this crisis and the transition to a sustainable, liveable future?**

The task list of the cultural sector is extensive, from greening its facilities and logistics to utilising its unique capability to engage the public by increasing awareness and encouraging societal change (Schrijen & Zwart, 2022). **But what value and responsibilities does the Dutch public attribute to the cultural sector?**

> ### The Public as the main stakeholder of the cultural sector
> The Dutch cultural sector is heavily subsidised by the government (CBS, 2021), which means taxpayers indirectly fund the cultural sector. As the public is also the main beneficiary of this sector, they can be regarded as the main stakeholders (Grüb & Martin, 2020).

What we already know

A previous study commissioned by the Boekmanstichting explored how the cultural sector considers sustainability in their work. While the importance of sustainability was acknowledged, respondents perceived only moderate effort devoted to sustainability initiatives. Barriers such as money and prioritising other problems emerged as impediments to sustainability. In 2022, cultural institutions were perceived to give some attention to the climate crisis and sustainability in production and content generation, and an increasing trend was identified. Public reactions to this trend were generally positive. However, the report emphasises the necessity for more insight into public opinion and concludes that only a minority of cultural organisations are operating sustainably, and there is a lack of concrete planning to do so (Schrijen & Zwart, 2022).

A complimentary research project, 'Towards Sustainable Arts' (Petrová et al., 2022), describes inspirational initiatives of cultural organisations in Europe. Examples of initiatives vary from how artists engage with the climate emergency to the role culture plays in the transition to a greener society. However, to holistically address the necessary transition of the Dutch cultural sector, as the Cultural Climate Council acknowledges (Cultuurberaad Klimaat, 2023), stakeholders from outside the industry must be involved.

Context and Methods

What about the public?

Culture can be seen as necessary for sustainable development as well as a means through which social, economic, and environmental sustainability can be understood and accomplished. For instance, culture can facilitate environmental sustainability by influencing social change and the development of ideas (Soini & Birkeland, 2014). As such, one may infer that sustainability should be a visible priority of cultural institutions as a mirror of their time. Indeed, previous research shows that audiences of cultural institutions perceive the cultural sector to have a general responsibility toward environmental sustainability (Raines & Carr, 2022).

In addition to such responsibilities, the cultural sector may mirror our time through the positive impact it may have. The positive impact of cultural institutions, often referred to as the value they hold seems to fall within three interrelated categories: individual, economic, and social (Armbrecht, 2014; Grüb & Martin, 2020). The former concerns positive outcomes for people through, for instance, enjoyment and development. The latter two concern positive impacts on society at large through elements such as attracting tourism (economic value) and providing education and leisure opportunities (social value) (Armbrecht, 2014; Grüb & Martin, 2020; Scott, 2006). Aligned with social values such as raising social issues, we propose that people might also value cultural institutions precisely because of their sustainability contributions. We regard such values as 'social change values' as they emphasise the impact the cultural sector may have on individuals' involvement with social issues. **Whether this is indeed what the Dutch public values and views as a responsibility of the cultural sector will be investigated in the present research.**

Methodology

To evaluate the perceived values and responsibilities attributed to the Dutch cultural sector, we conducted an online questionnaire study. The constructs measured are socio-demographic characteristics, including age, political orientation and education, perception of the reality of climate change, and engagement with the cultural sector. Specific attitudes measured are the perceived value and responsibilities of the cultural sector, support for the cultural sector and perceived impact of sustainability in the cultural sector. Some measures were derived from previous research (e.g., ESS ERIC, 2020; Grüb & Martin, 2020; Raines & Carr, 2022), while others were developed for this research. Responses were collected in 2023, between July and September. The survey was administered in Dutch, thus constructs included in this report were translated.

The Sample

To obtain a comprehensive overview, a representative Dutch sample was required. To this end, we recruited participants via Dynata, an online paid panel service. Criteria for participation were a minimum age of 18, Dutch residential status, and being labelled as a reliable participant in the panel platform. Although quotas were used, the sample demographics were not entirely aligned with the Dutch national averages, according to Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2021; 2023). Thus, post-stratification weights were computed to increase the generalisability of the result.[1]

Responses Collected

July - September 2023

Sample

Total Responses
763

Gender [2]
Women: 51 %
Men: 49 %

Age
18-24: 10 %
25-34: 15 %
35-44: 14 %
45-54: 15 %
55-64: 18 %
 + 65: 28 %

Education [3]
Low: 28 %
Intermediate: 35 %
High: 37 %
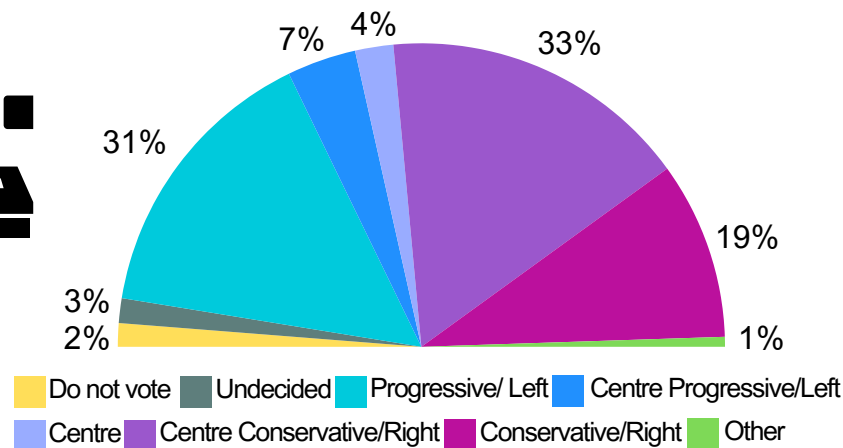
Visiting Profile: *Which subdivisions of the cultural sector do you visit?*

Category	Percentage
Cinema	56%
Museum	49%
Theatre	42%
Library	35%
Festival	29%
Concert	28%
Art Gallery	16%
None	14%

Political Orientation [4]

7%   4%   33%
31%
19%
3%
2%
1%

Legend:
- Do not vote
- Undecided
- Progressive/ Left
- Centre Progressive/Left
- Centre
- Centre Conservative/Right
- Conservative/Right
- Other
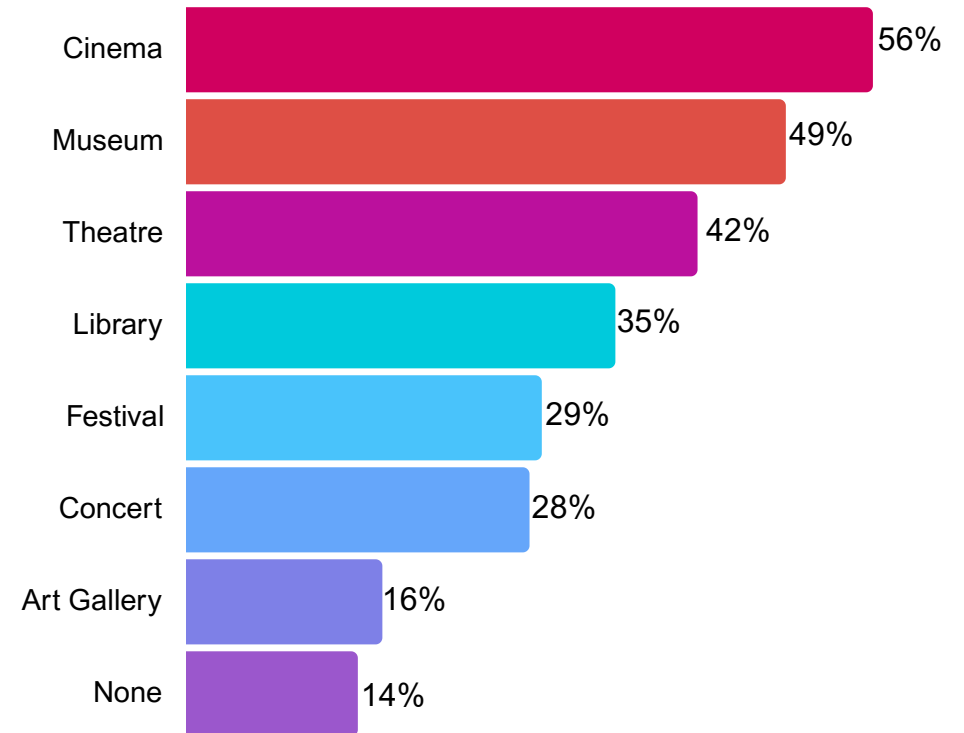
(2) Gender options *Other* and *Prefer not to say* had no responses
(3) Low (Geen opleiding voltooid, Basisonderwijs, Lager beroepsonderwijs (LBO, VBO, VSO), VMBO, Mavo, ULO, MULO), Intermediate (VWO, Gymnasium, Atheneum, HBS, Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (MBO, BOL, BBL)), High (Hoger beroepsonderwijs (HBO) Wetenschappelijk onderwijs (WO))
(4) Progressive/ Left (Bij1, PvdD, SP, Denk, GL/PvdA, Volt), Centre Progressive/Left (CU, D66), Centre (50Plus, NSC), Centre Conservative/Right (CDA, BBB, SGP, VVD), Conservative/Right (PVV, FvD, JA21 and BVNL), Other (selected 'other', but did not specify further) aligned with Kieskompas (https://www.kieskompas.nl/)

Visiting and Support

Frequency of Visits

- 1% Daily
- 5% Weekly
- 36% Monthly
- 44% Yearly
- 14% Never
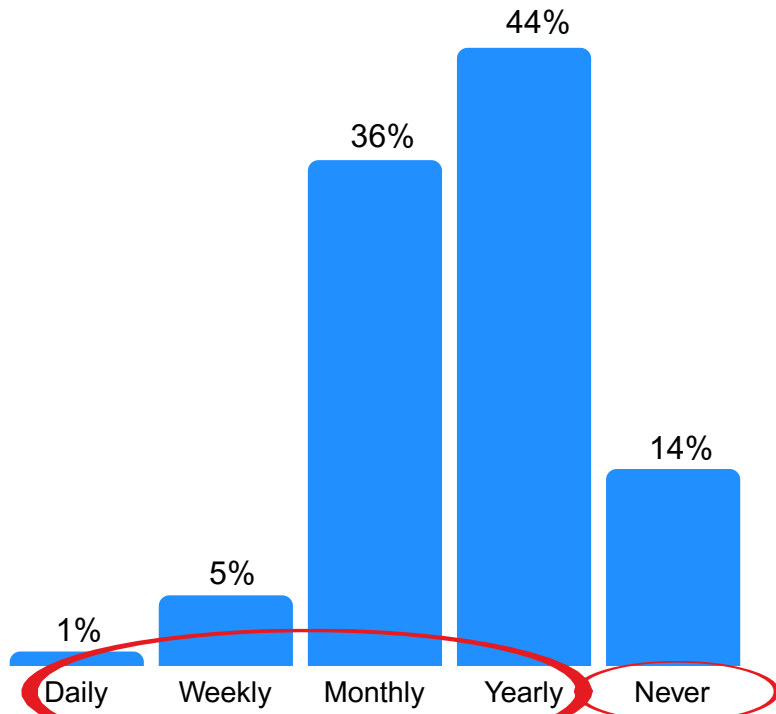
5

"Entertainment"
"Personal Development"
"Outings"
"Educational"

"No interest"
"Too expensive"
"No time"
"Not accessible"

Public Support for the Cultural Sector

The cultural sector...

- ....should exist
- ...is important
- ...should be funded by the government

Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree
Agree | Neutral | Disagree
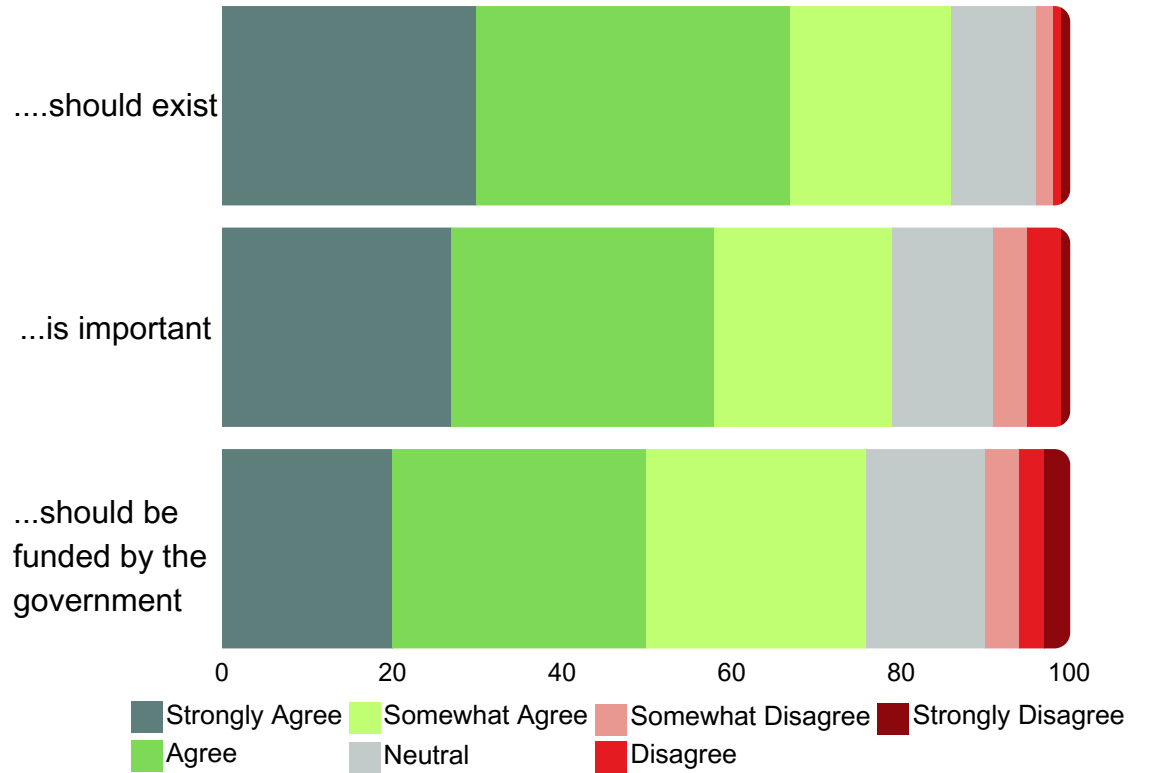
To the left, we see that most of the general public interacts with the cultural sector on a monthly (36%) or yearly (44%) basis, while a small percentage (14%) never does. Of these 14%, people are more likely to be above 55 years of age, have lower educational attainment, have less climate change worry, and vote for centre-right parties. Despite differences in the frequency of visits, we see in the figure to the right that the majority of the general public supports the cultural sector (86% think it should exist, 79% think it is important, and 76% think it should be funded by the government).

Value of the Cultural Sector

What value does the Dutch public attribute to the cultural sector?
Some argue that cultural institutions must demonstrate that they contribute to society (Armbrecht, 2014; Grüb & Martin, 2020). In this survey, we inquired about what contribution the Dutch public perceives the cultural sector to have on people's personal lives (1-5), society (6-9), the economy (10-11) and social change (12-15). In the graph below, we see that the general public agrees, to a large extent, with all elements included. Especially agreed upon are values related to personal lives, such as development and creativity, and values related to society, like regional identity and connection with the region and its culture.

Although respondents generally agree with these values, we see sub-populations with higher agreement. People with centre-to-left-political orientation tend to agree marginally more with the presented values. Moreover, respondents who interact with the cultural sector more frequently tend to express higher agreement. Most pronounced is the difference between individuals who visit daily compared to those who never visit. Although the averages of both groups demonstrate more agreement than disagreement, individuals in the latter group are more likely to take a neutral stance. Lastly, we see a positive, albeit weak, trend between the age of participants and perceiving that the cultural sector positively impacts the suggested elements.

Regional Values

The high agreement with values related to the region reflects a current debate in Dutch society, to which the cultural sector is responding with an increased focus on regional variations and accessibility (Raad voor Cultuur, 2024). This is an indicator that the overall results of this survey reflect current trends in Dutch public opinion.

Social Change Values

Particularly interesting for the context of sustainability and societal transformation is the value the cultural sector holds for encouraging social involvement and change, raising social issues, and encouraging (socially responsible) behaviours. Although not the most supported, the general public does perceive the cultural sector to have a positive influence on these values. Especially important is 'Encourage Social Involvement' as 77% of all respondents perceive the cultural sector to positively impact it.

The Cultural Sector has a Positive Impact on.....

	Definitely Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Neutral	Definitely Not
1. Personal Creativity	18%	38%	27%	13%	5%
6. Regional Identity	16%	37%	26%	15%	6%
7. Connecting with Region & Culture	13%	34%	31%	14%	7%
12. Encourage Social Involvement	11%	34%	32%	16%	6%
2. Personal Development	13%	33%	30%	18%	6%
8. Cultural Capital	13%	33%	30%	17%	7%
3. New Knowledge & Ideas	12%	32%	30%	19%	7%
10. Regional Image	9%	32%	32%	20%	6%
11. Economic Development	10%	31%	32%	19%	8%
4. Personal Identity	10%	29%	33%	18%	9%
9. Social Connectedness	9%	30%	33%	20%	8%
5. Personal Wellbeing	11%	31%	28%	19%	11%
13. Raising Social Issues	9%	30%	30%	22%	9%
14. Encourage Social Change	8%	26%	32%	23%	11%
15. Encourage Behaviours	8%	26%	30%	23%	12%

Responsibility Attributions

Responsibilities relating to the Values the Cultural Sector Holds

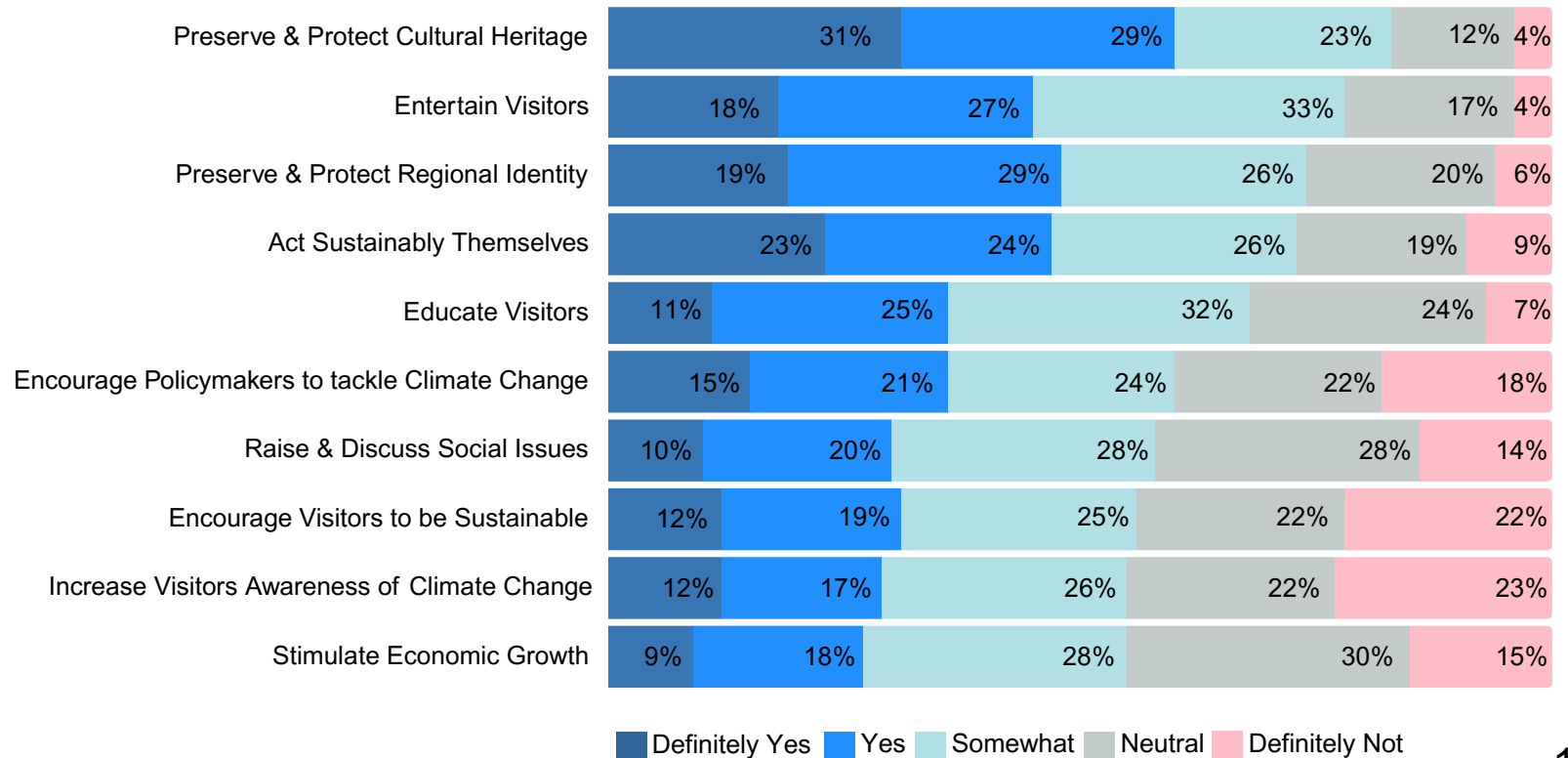The following comparison between perceived responsibilities emphasises the importance of individual and social values above social change values. In the presented graph, we see that the general public finds Dutch cultural institutions to be predominantly responsible for protecting and preserving cultural heritage and regional identity as well as entertaining audiences, all of which relate to social and individual values. Actions related to social change values, such as increasing awareness of climate change and encouraging sustainability, are supported to a lesser extent. A vital difference emerges between internal operational measures for cultural institutions (i.e., act sustainably themselves) and the actions that more directly affect the visitor. 73% of all respondents agree, and only 9% disagree, that the cultural sector is responsible for operating sustainably. The most supported audience-involving measure (i.e., 'Encourage Policymakers to tackle Climate Change') is, on the other hand, supported by 60% of the respondents, while 18% disagree with it. This comparison highlights that, to the general Dutch public, actions related to individual and social values may take precedence over actions concerning social change - especially for actions that impact the visitor. This pattern becomes more prominent for the sustainability-related actions explored on the following pages.

We note that attendance frequency is positively related to the degree of agreement with the proposed measures. Political orientation, on the other hand, is only marginally related to agreement. However, it is more indicative of agreement concerning sustainability and climate change-related initiatives than the remaining measures. Similarly, we see a positive trend between support, especially for sustainability and climate-related measures, and worry about climate change as well as perceiving humans to be responsible for it

How responsible do you think cultural institutions are to do the following?

Action	Definitely Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Neutral	Definitely Not
Preserve & Protect Cultural Heritage	31%	29%	23%	12%	4%
Entertain Visitors	18%	27%	33%	17%	4%
Preserve & Protect Regional Identity	19%	29%	26%	20%	6%
Act Sustainably Themselves	23%	24%	26%	19%	9%
Educate Visitors	11%	25%	32%	24%	7%
Encourage Policymakers to tackle Climate Change	15%	21%	24%	22%	18%
Raise & Discuss Social Issues	10%	20%	28%	28%	14%
Encourage Visitors to be Sustainable	12%	19%	25%	22%	22%
Increase Visitors Awareness of Climate Change	12%	17%	26%	22%	23%
Stimulate Economic Growth	9%	18%	28%	30%	15%

Legend: ■ Definitely Yes ■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ Neutral ■ Definitely Not

Responsibility Attributions - Operational Actions

What aspects of the cultural sector does the public think ought to be sustainable?

Understanding the public's perception of the responsibilities of the cultural sector, especially in the context of climate change, is crucial. This can facilitate cultural institutions in responding to cultural shifts, increasing their alignment with the expectations of the communities they serve, thus ensuring their relevance (Grüb and Martin, 2020; Scott, 2009). The figures presented show perceptions of sustainable operational actions that indirectly affect visitors (right) and the perceived effectiveness of these actions (below).
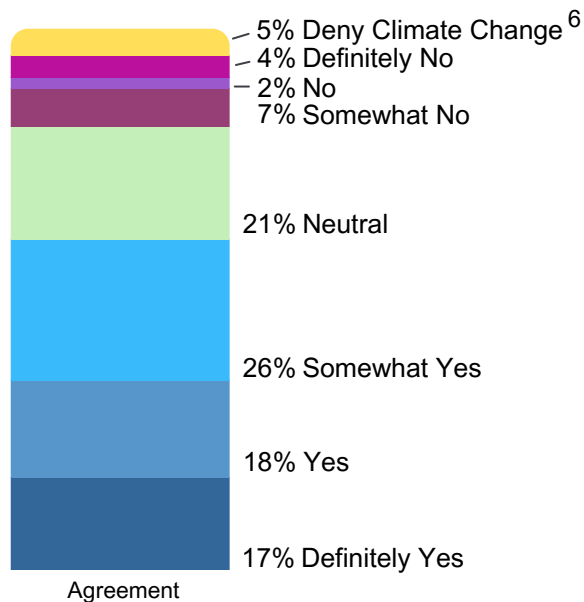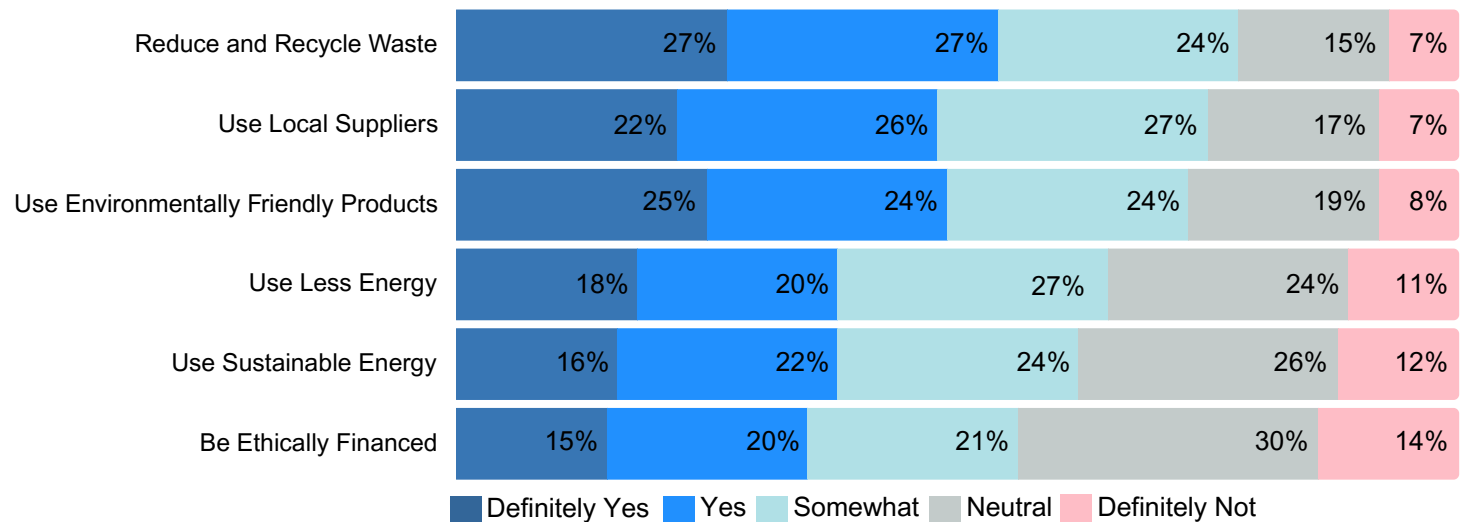
The majority of the general public thinks the cultural sector should take these measures as even the least supported action - whether the cultural sector should only be financed through ethical means - is still supported by 56% of the respondents. The public especially perceives the cultural sector as responsible for reducing and recycling waste and using local suppliers and environmentally friendly products. Notably, 61% of respondents think the cultural sector can help combat climate change by taking these actions.

Although we see a positive trend between agreement and age, frequency of visiting cultural institutions as well as left-leaning political orientation, none of the sub-groups disagrees with the actions. However, confidence in the effectiveness of these measures differs, especially for political orientation. Of respondents who believe taking such actions is definitely effective in combating climate change, 43% tend to vote for Progressive/Left parties, while 19% tend to vote for Conservative/Right parties. Lastly, respondents who attribute climate change to natural causes and those who do not worry about it tend to take a neutral stance yet still lean towards agreeing.

If cultural institutions did these actions, would it help combat climate change?

- 5% Deny Climate Change [6]
- 4% Definitely No
- 2% No
- 7% Somewhat No
- 21% Neutral
- 26% Somewhat Yes
- 18% Yes
- 17% Definitely Yes

Agreement

Cultural institutions should ...

	Definitely Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Neutral	Definitely Not
Reduce and Recycle Waste	27%	27%	24%	15%	7%
Use Local Suppliers	22%	26%	27%	17%	7%
Use Environmentally Friendly Products	25%	24%	24%	19%	8%
Use Less Energy	18%	20%	27%	24%	11%
Use Sustainable Energy	16%	22%	24%	26%	12%
Be Ethically Financed	15%	20%	21%	30%	14%

(6) Respondents who indicated that they do not believe in climate change were excluded from the remaining questions regarding the effectiveness of suggested actions.

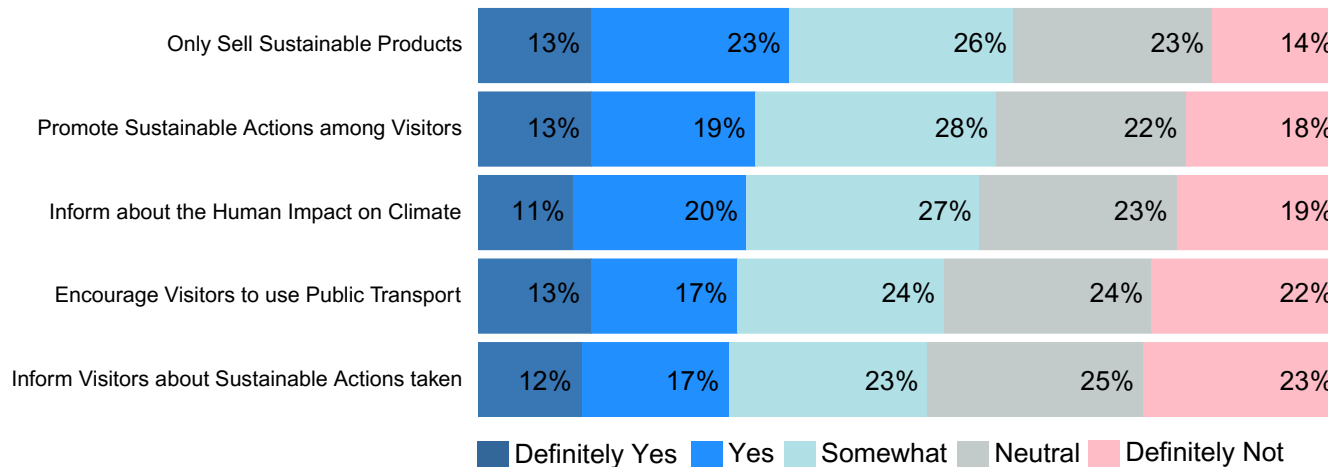# Responsibility Attributions - Actions Involving the Visitor

The previous section explored responsibility attributions to actions that are predominantly operational and internal to cultural institutions themselves, such as reducing and recycling waste. The actions reported below relate to activities of cultural institutions that directly and indirectly involve the visitor. As such, these measures would be more salient to audiences. For instance, a gallery cafe switching to plant-based foods would directly affect the visitor through different choice options.

Interestingly, we see lower responsibility attributions than for operational actions. Notably, disagreement is higher and agreement is lower than for the previous items. 23% indicated that the cultural sector should definitely refrain from informing visitors about the actions the institutions have taken to be more sustainable. Despite this, responsibility attribution remains relatively high, and 57% think the cultural sector can help combat climate change by taking these measures.
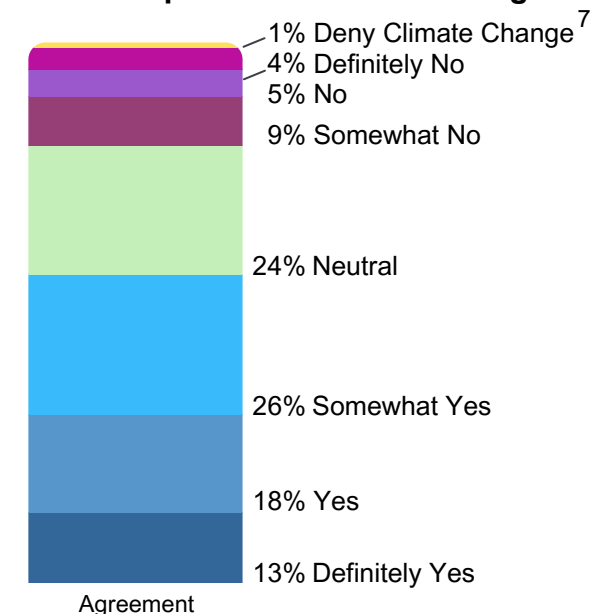
As expressed above, people who worry about climate change and view it as caused by humans agree more with these actions. People who are not worried about climate change and believe it is natural or not occurring are more likely to disagree with these actions. Moreover, people who do not worry about climate change and people who view it as natural are more likely to view the measures as definitely ineffective (61% and 47%, respectively).

We see a positive trend between agreement and frequency of visits as well as voting for Progressive/Left parties. People who vote Conservative/Right and those who seldom visit cultural institutions tend to take a more neutral stance. Respondents who view the actions as definitely effective - thus conveying confidence in the proposed initiatives - are more likely to vote for Progressive/Left parties (48%, compared to 12% Conservative/Right) and to visit weekly (47%, compared to 13% Never, and 28% Yearly).

If cultural institutions did these actions, would it help combat climate change?

Cultural institutions should ...

	Definitely Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Neutral	Definitely Not
Only Sell Sustainable Products	13%	23%	26%	23%	14%
Promote Sustainable Actions among Visitors	13%	19%	28%	22%	18%
Inform about the Human Impact on Climate	11%	20%	27%	23%	19%
Encourage Visitors to use Public Transport	13%	17%	24%	24%	22%
Inform Visitors about Sustainable Actions taken	12%	17%	23%	25%	23%

Legend: Definitely Yes, Yes, Somewhat, Neutral, Definitely Not

Agreement stacked bar:
- 1% Deny Climate Change [7]
- 4% Definitely No
- 5% No
- 9% Somewhat No
- 24% Neutral
- 26% Somewhat Yes
- 18% Yes
- 13% Definitely Yes

(7) Although climate deniers were excluded, we see a small percentage indicating that they do not believe in climate change.
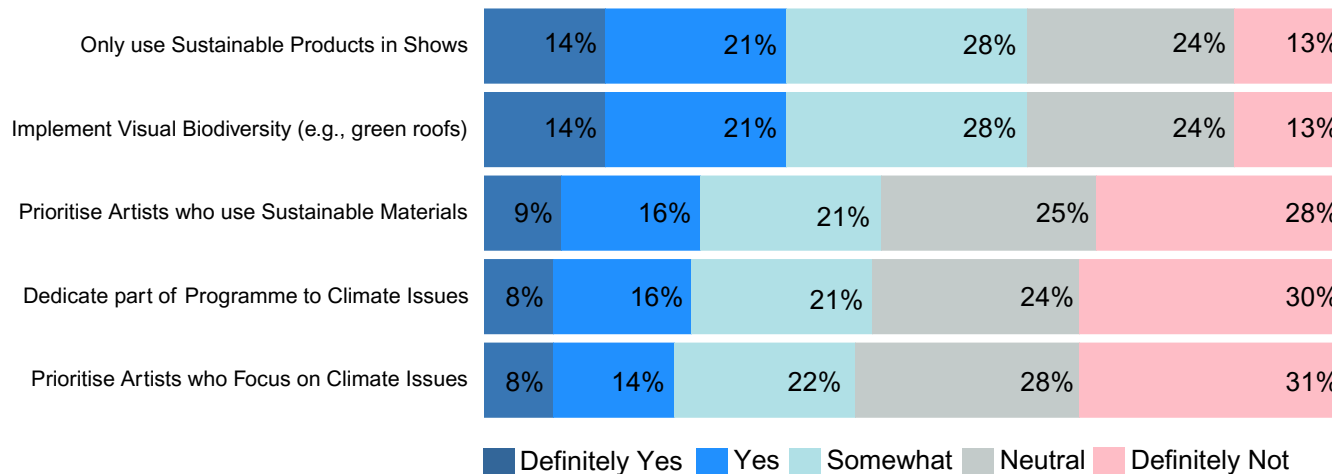
Responsibility Attributions - Content

Responsibilities also relate to the importance cultural institutions place on tackling and discussing climate change in their content. We investigated what content-related responsibilities the Dutch public perceives cultural institutions to have, for instance, by asking how responsible they perceive cultural institutions to be for supporting climate-friendly and climate-focused artists.

Again, people attribute less responsibility for content-related measures than for operational actions. Notably, disagreement is higher than for operational actions and measures involving the visitors. Interestingly, we see higher responsibility attributions for actions concerning displayed materials rather than actions that affect what content cultural institutions exhibit. For instance, 31% indicate that cultural institutions should not prioritise artists focusing on climate change. In comparison, only 13% indicate that cultural institutions should not use sustainable products in shows or increase visible biodiversity.
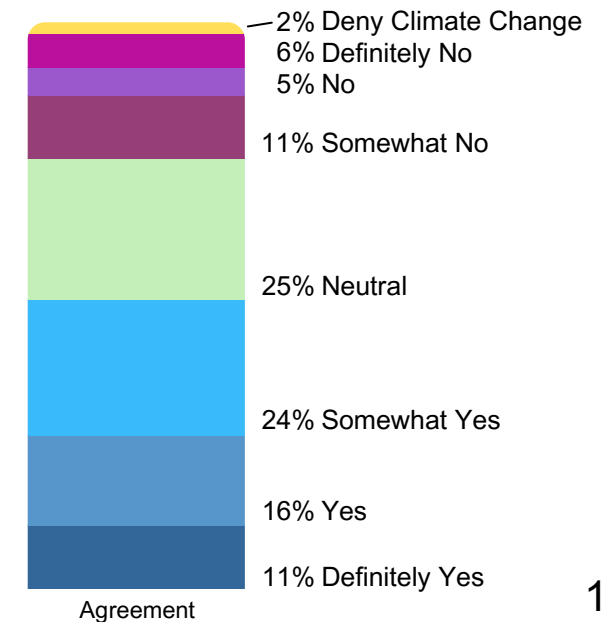
Nevertheless, 51% of respondents think cultural institutions can help combat climate change by taking these content-related actions.

Once more, we see the importance of climate change attitudes. People worried about climate change and people who attribute climate change to human actions agree more with the listed initiatives. People who are not worried about climate change and those who believe climate change is natural or not occurring, on the other hand, express disagreement with many of the suggested measures - especially with the three actions concerning the cultural programme. Disagreement is more common among people leaning towards the political right and among people who seldom interact with the cultural sector. Groups more opposed to content-related measures tend to also perceive them to be less effective ('definitely no' = 47% Conservative/Right; 50% yearly visitors; 61% not worried about climate change).

Cultural institutions should ...

	Definitely Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Neutral	Definitely Not
Only use Sustainable Products in Shows	14%	21%	28%	24%	13%
Implement Visual Biodiversity (e.g., green roofs)	14%	21%	28%	24%	13%
Prioritise Artists who use Sustainable Materials	9%	16%	21%	25%	28%
Dedicate part of Programme to Climate Issues	8%	16%	21%	24%	30%
Prioritise Artists who Focus on Climate Issues	8%	14%	22%	28%	31%

If cultural institutions did these actions, would it help combat climate change?

- 2% Deny Climate Change
- 6% Definitely No
- 5% No
- 11% Somewhat No
- 25% Neutral
- 24% Somewhat Yes
- 16% Yes
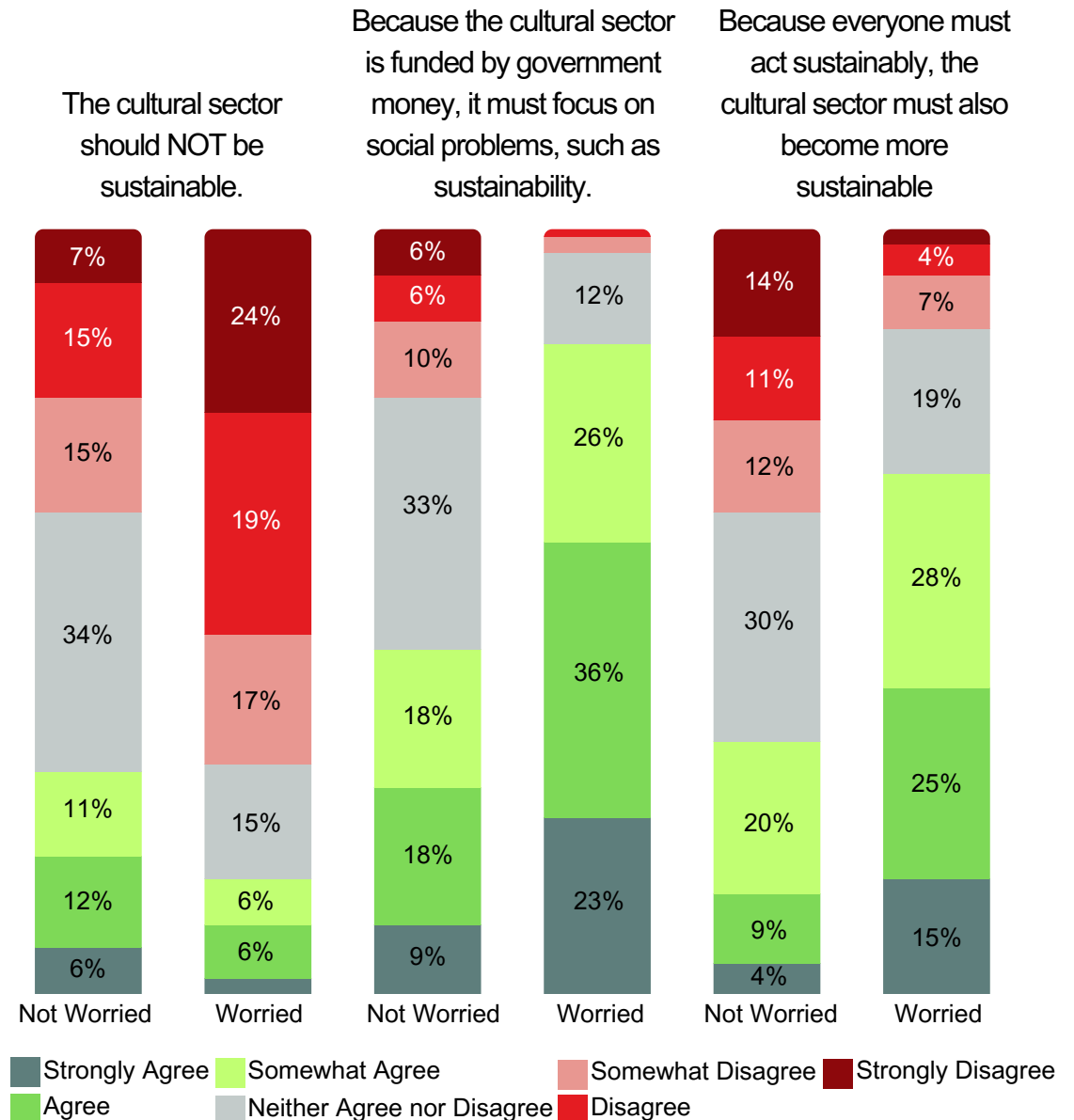- 11% Definitely Yes

Agreement

13

Sustainability in the Cultural Sector

As expressed in the previous sections, the general public thinks the cultural sector positively impacts elements related to social transformation and change and has a responsibility to act sustainably - especially concerning internal operational actions. To build upon this, we explored why the general public may think the cultural sector itself should work sustainably.

A small percentage of respondents (18%) do *not* think the cultural sector should be sustainable. In contrast, approximately 63% of respondents believe it should be. The majority of the general public thinks the cultural sector should be sustainable, mostly because everyone should be sustainable (75% agree) and, to a lesser extent, due to its governmental funding (59% agree).

Although the public thinks the cultural sector should be sustainable, we observe differences in various sub-populations. For instance, in the figures to the right, we see that people who worry about climate change express that the cultural sector should be sustainable both because everyone should and since they are often governmentally funded. Similarly, we see a positive trend between perceiving climate change as caused by humans and expressing that the cultural sectors should be sustainable since everyone should be and because they are often funded by the government. Lastly, respondents with more left-leaning political orientations convey higher agreement, while respondents with more right-leaning political orientations convey a more neutral stance.

The cultural sector should NOT be sustainable.

	Not Worried	Worried
Strongly Disagree	7%	24%
Disagree	15%	19%
Somewhat Disagree	15%	17%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	34%	15%
Somewhat Agree	11%	6%
Agree	12%	6%
Strongly Agree	6%	

Because the cultural sector is funded by government money, it must focus on social problems, such as sustainability.

	Not Worried	Worried
Strongly Disagree	6%	
Disagree	6%	
Somewhat Disagree	10%	12%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	33%	26%
Somewhat Agree	18%	36%
Agree	18%	23%
Strongly Agree	9%	

Because everyone must act sustainably, the cultural sector must also become more sustainable

	Not Worried	Worried
Strongly Disagree	14%	4%
Disagree	11%	7%
Somewhat Disagree	12%	19%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	30%	28%
Somewhat Agree	20%	25%
Agree	9%	15%
Strongly Agree	4%	

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

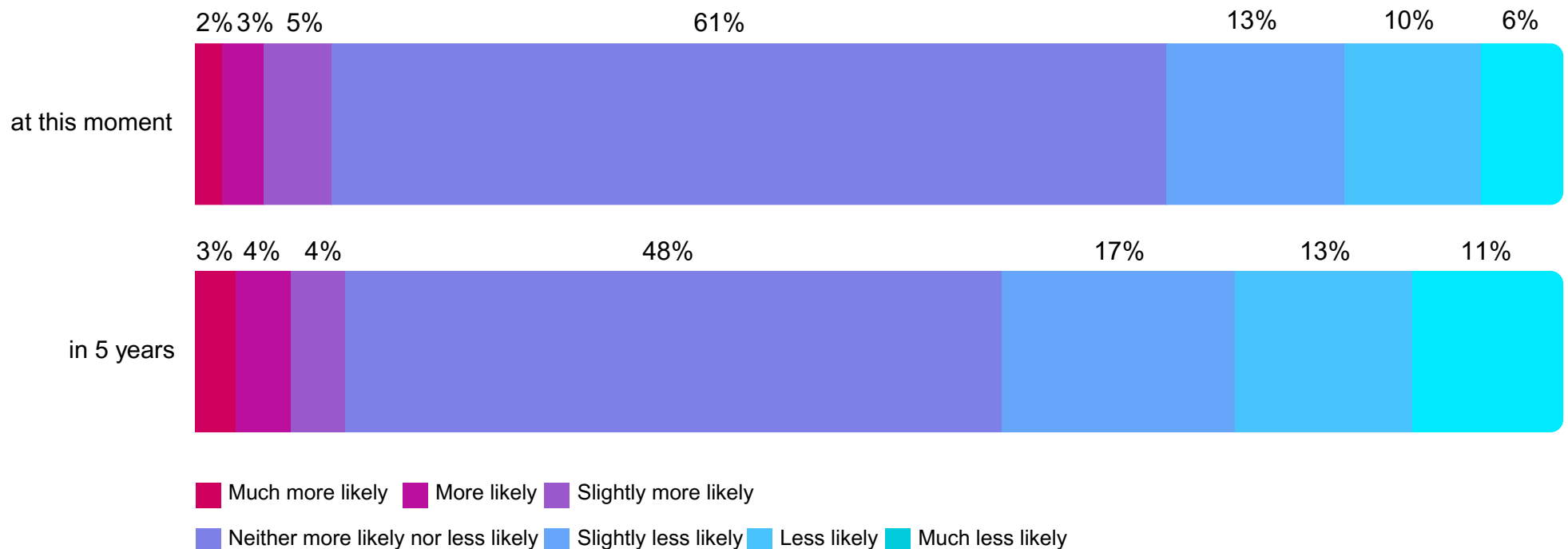# Effect of (Un)Sustainability on Audiences

The previous sections illustrated that the majority of respondents think the cultural sector should be sustainable. This section furthers those findings by exploring whether (un)sustainability in the cultural sector affects people's willingness to engage with it.

People appear to perceive the sustainability of cultural institutions as more influential five years from now. 40% indicate that they are more likely to visit cultural institutions they know are sustainable now. This increased by 8% when respondents considered their behaviour five years from now. Of respondents indicating that they are 'much more likely' (6%) and 'more likely' (14%) to visit a sustainable cultural institution now, 50% and 53% were monthly visitors.

When a cultural institution is not acting sustainable, how likely is it that you will visit it?

The diagrams below show that 29% are less likely to visit unsustainable cultural institutions today. When predicting future behaviours, this increased to 41%. Predominantly, people currently taking a more neutral stance expect to be less likely to visit unsustainable cultural institutions in the future (the neutral stance decreased by 13%). Although most respondents remain indifferent, we see an important behavioural change prediction.

How likely is it that people will attend a cultural institution, if this institution is not sustainable...

	Much more likely	More likely	Slightly more likely	Neither more likely nor less likely	Slightly less likely	Less likely	Much less likely
at this moment	2%	3%	5%	61%	13%	10%	6%
in 5 years	3%	4%	4%	48%	17%	13%	11%

Conclusion

Does the Dutch general public perceive the cultural sector as responsible for acting sustainably, and what responsibilities do they ascribe to it?

Yes, similar to previous findings on frequent cultural attendees in the United Kingdom (Raines & Carr, 2022), the Dutch general public does think the cultural sector should act sustainably. Actions the public perceives the cultural sector to be responsible for relate especially to operational actions and, to a lesser extent, to measures that influence the visitor. Notably, the general public also thinks these actions can help combat the ongoing climate crisis. Hence, the Dutch public partly agrees with the suggested actions presented in the "Sustainability in the Cultural Sector – edition 2022/2023" report (Schrijen & Zwarts, 2022). However, we must acknowledge that the Dutch public views the cultural sector as more responsible for social elements (e.g., protecting cultural heritage) rather than environmental sustainability.

What value does the Dutch public attribute to the cultural sector?

The general Dutch public perceives the cultural sector to hold values related to all included sub-categories (i.e., individual, social, economic and social change values). Aligning with previous findings (Grüb & Martin, 2020), the cultural sector is generally perceived as having a more positive impact on individual and social values than economic values. Additionally, individual, social and economic values are perceived as more positively impacted by the cultural sector than most of the social change values. An important exception

is *Encouraging Social Involvement*, which concerns the idea that the cultural sector can stimulate people to be more interested in societal occurrences.

Although sub-population differences emerged throughout this report, it is important to highlight the 'non-use value' (Scott, 2009). Non-use value indicates that the cultural sector is supported and considered valuable for cultural institution users and non-users alike. Thus, the Dutch general public perceives the cultural sector to be valuable and positive for society.

Future Directions

We regard this report as a starting point to investigate trends in Dutch public opinion as the cultural sector transitions to become more sustainable and to find footing in its role in addressing climate change. We encourage future research to build upon these results by elaborating on the observed group differences, especially the frequency of visits and climate attitudes. Moreover, we urge future research to explore people's motives to prioritize operational changes above audience engagement, differences in the perceived effectiveness of these actions, and what drives the lack of support for climate change content. We conceive a possible connection between this lack of support and the common, yet ineffective (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009), threat-oriented climate change representations. Instead, the public may value and support climate change-related content more if thought of as solution-focused and inspiring (Sommer & Klöckner 2019).

What role does the cultural sector play in the climate crisis and the transition to a sustainable, livable future?

The cultural sector has an active role to play in the transition to a more sustainable and liveable future. Institutions can become a 'mirror of their time' by continuing to positively impact individual and social value creation and stimulating people to become more involved with the ins and outs of society. The extent to which the public wishes cultural institutions to prioritise sustainability in cultural programmes seems moderate. Instead, the general public is more supportive - and perceives it as more effective - for cultural institutions to embrace operational sustainability measures and utilise sustainable materials. As such, the cultural sector holds value and responsibility concerning environmental sustainability. However, to appease the wishes of the general public and ensure the continued flow of visitors, it may be necessary to balance internal operational reflection and external projection, placing a particular emphasis on the prior.

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The General Public's Perceptions at One Glance

- They support the cultural sector.

- They perceive the cultural sector to impact society and individuals positively.

- They perceive the cultural sector to be primarily responsible for operational sustainability actions.

- Although lesser than operational actions, the general public perceives the cultural sector as responsible for informing and influencing visitors concerning sustainability.

- They perceive the cultural sector to be primarily responsible for cultural heritage, regional identity, and entertainment.

- Despite varying degrees of perceived value and responsibility, the Dutch public does think the Dutch cultural sector should be sustainable.

- 40% of respondents indicate that unsustainable cultural institutions may lose them as visitors in the future.

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