

Research shows it's easier for Britons to get culture than for people in any other European country

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Forget the opera houses of Italy or the concert halls of Vienna—it's easier for people in Britain than in any other European country to get

culture, new research shows.

Overall, people in the UK are more likely to have the income, time and cultural education to visit galleries, concert halls and music venues and to feel they have the cultural knowledge to enjoy this, the study says.

Dr. Tal Feder, of Tel Aviv University, analyzed [survey data](#) on 27,000 people in 29 European countries to ask them how easy it was to access culture. The survey asked participants which were the main barriers to taking part in [cultural activities](#).

Dr. Feder told the European Sociological Association conference in Manchester, UK, today [Thursday 22 August] that people in the UK and the Republic of Ireland found it easiest among all the countries studied to find the time and money to attend cultural events.

They were also among the most likely to feel they knew enough about culture to attend.

Using data from the 2007 survey, he found that Britons were 69 percent less likely to report having no time to take part in cultural activities than the average for people in other European countries.

They were 35 percent less likely to report that taking part in cultural activities was too expensive for them than people in other European countries, 81 percent less likely to report having limited choice or poor quality of cultural activities, and 63 percent less likely to report lacking knowledge or [cultural background](#) to take part in cultural activities.

"People in the UK and the Republic of Ireland had exceptionally low levels of price, time and cultural background barriers," he said.

Dr. Feder said that the capability to enjoy and understand culture was an

important aspect of how easy it was for people to get access to it.

"The ease of access among people to culture is built by education, such as formal art education in schools or other educational institutes, or by socialization and connoisseurship in the family.

"People in Britain and Ireland were less likely than those in most countries studied to feel that they couldn't understand culture because of their education and background," he said.

The UK and Ireland also scored around the average for the availability of events close to their homes.

Overall, said Dr. Feder, "Countries with the lower levels of access to [culture](#) are former soviet, eastern European countries, while western European countries with a long heritage of democratic welfare regimes have higher levels.

"Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland constitute exclusively the top access cluster, while the Mediterranean and southern European countries are situated in the middle access clusters."

Dr. Feder found that the richer the country, the more its citizens could afford the price of cultural events—where events were expensive to get into, this discouraged people.

He also found that the cultural policies of governments influenced whether they citizens attending cultural events.

Provided by European Sociological Association

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