

Joint Statement

A Cultural Deal for Europe

A central place for culture in the EU's post-pandemic future

Culture is what brings us together. It is at the basis of the European project and a catalyst for the future of Europe. Culture carries tremendous intrinsic value and contributes significantly to the economy. Culture has always been a “social glue” and vibrant resource, able to heal wounds in times of crisis. The gravity of the continuing crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges ahead call for an unprecedented and coordinated action.

Today more than ever, we need to act together: EU Institutions, Member States, regional and local authorities, cultural, creative and heritage organisations, civil society, as well as philanthropy must work together to find sustainable solutions for the future.

As representatives of the wider European cultural community, we are convinced that culture is a cornerstone for the revival of Europe and must be put at the centre of the political debate and decision-making. Culture is more than just a sector. It is a vector for positive change.

We therefore propose a transversal and overarching Cultural Deal for Europe, which should demonstrate the EU's political commitment to place culture at the heart of the European project.

The proposed Cultural Deal for Europe aims to mainstream culture across all policy fields to fully realise its potential¹: from the green transition to Europe's geopolitical ambition, and from the digital shift to a value-driven Union. It brings together both short-term and long-term perspectives. It eyes the immediate recovery of our societies with the ambition to build a new paradigm for designing the Future of Europe.²

¹ “The Value and Values of Culture”, Culture Action Europe, 2018

² European Heritage Alliance Manifesto “Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe”, 9 May 2020

A Cultural Deal for Europe must entail the following:

- **Devoting at least 2% of the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility for culture.** As emphasised in an [open letter](#) co-signed by over 110 European networks and organisations, we call on the EU to earmark at the very least 2% of the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) to culture. This echoes one of the main points of the European Parliament's Cultural Recovery for Europe resolution from September 2020. The RRF represents 85% of the Next Generation EU Recovery Fund and will be implemented through national plans that are crucial tools to empower and enable cultural operators to act on a European scale.
- **All national recovery and resilience plans must show due evidence of cultural and European relevance.** We call on the EU Institutions to encourage and monitor the Member States to consult cultural operators in the design of the plans, as well as allocate and implement the Next Generation EU funds based on transparency, accountability and relevance for Europe in economic, social, environmental and cultural terms. This should guarantee that recovery funds effectively reach cultural, creative and cultural heritage actors in EU Member States and their regions, cities and citizens.
- **Full inclusion of culture in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the European Green Deal.** A holistic strategy for an inclusive, fair and [sustainable development](#) needs to have a strong cultural dimension. This is key for addressing societal, environmental and economic challenges that need the most transversal and multidisciplinary responses. Many components of the European Green Deal, such as building renovation, circular economy or the 'Farm to Fork' and biodiversity strategies, are inseparable from cultural values and resources. Thus, culture and cultural heritage can be crucial in achieving its ambitious and vital goals.
- **Make sure funding for culture is mainstreamed into other relevant EU programmes and actions,** notably Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Digital Europe, European Skills Agenda, Cohesion and Regional Development Funds as well as Europe's external action. Having advocated for the doubling of the financial envelope of the Creative Europe programme, we praise the increase of this envelope by one third. Creative Europe is the cornerstone of European cross-border cultural cooperation, which should be further strengthened in view to building a resilient European cultural space.
- **Relevant and timely support to cultural workers.** The COVID-19 crisis has enormously affected cultural, creative and heritage workers, many of whom hold precarious, hybrid, and atypical jobs. As a result, we should enable policies and measures to improve their employment and working conditions. We need a clear inclusion of artists and cultural workers in the European instrument for temporary Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE). The REACT-EU initiative for workers in regions and sectors most affected by the pandemic must reach cultural operators. This should trigger a discussion towards the adoption of a comprehensive European framework on the Statute of the Artist and Cultural Workers.

A Cultural Deal for Europe must entail the following:

- **Philanthropy to be associated strategically in the recovery of Europe and design of its future** by enabling a legal and fiscal framework for European philanthropy to unfold, and new forms of public-philanthropic partnerships to develop. The foundations' sector in Europe amounts to a €60 billion budget annually and significantly supports culture. We call on EU institutions to enable a public-philanthropic partnership model, which would allow strategic pooling of resources, scaling up and greater impact. The readiness of philanthropy to partner in the recovery of Europe through culture, is an opportunity not to be missed.³
- **Upholding democracy and rights for a values-based Europe.** Culture has a powerful potential to advance the European values, which are central to our democratic societies. Together with media and academic freedom, artistic freedom provides an essential counterweight to injustice and oppression, as well as raise awareness, challenge perceptions and stimulate public debates, in the EU as well as in candidate and potential candidate countries.
- **Culture is key for the EU's external relations.** We reiterate the need to strengthen the role of international cultural relations in the EU's foreign, neighborhood and sustainable development policies. Culture is key to peace, mutual understanding and trust, it contributes to democratic, free, and sustainable societies. International relations boost opportunities for inter-connecting cultural communities.
- **Culture for the future of Europe.** The Conference on the Future of Europe is an opportunity to engage in a democratic debate about our future and the future direction of the EU. We believe that culture must be a key contributor to the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe. Artists, creatives, cultural workers, heritage operators, independent, amateurs, non-profit, volunteers, and civil society organisations must be made an intrinsic part of the process.

We call on the EU and national policymakers to commit to an ambitious Cultural Deal for Europe, an umbrella strategy for reviving and reimagining Europe through culture.

³Preview of study "Imagine Philanthropy for Europe" by Wider Sense, published by ECF and Allianz Kulturstiftung, November 2020.

Background

On 18 November 2020 **Culture Action Europe (CAE)**, the **European Cultural Foundation (ECF)** and **Europa Nostra**, also in its capacity as coordinator of the **European Heritage Alliance**, held the online debate **"A Cultural Deal for Europe"**.

We engaged in conversation the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth **Mariya Gabriel**, the Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) **Sabine Verheyen**, the President of the European Committee of the Regions **Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, the Secretary General of Culture Action Europe **Tere Badia**, the European Cultural Foundation's Director **André Wilkens**, the Secretary General of Europa Nostra **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic**. We received video contributions by the **President of the European Parliament David Sassoli** and the **French Secretary of State for European Affairs Clément Beaune**, with **visual story** by artist **Menah**. The webinar, moderated by Friends of Europe's Director of Insights **Dharmendra Kanani**, brought together MEPs, policy experts and stakeholders, and **over 450 participants from the European cultural community** who showed strong support for the advancement of **A Cultural Deal for Europe**.

We are convinced that together, we could build on the important steps made by the EU institutions in response to the 2020 sanitary crisis, notably: the **European Parliament Cultural Recovery for Europe resolution** (14 September, 2020); the **State of the European Union speech** by the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (16 September, 2020) opening to a new transversal cultural project for Europe; the **agreement** on the EU budget for 2021-2027 achieved by the European Parliament and the EU Council (10 November, 2020), which includes a long-awaited increase for the Creative Europe programme.



About us

Culture Action Europe (CAE) is the major European network of cultural networks, organisations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers. CAE is the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the EU. As the only intersectoral network, it brings together all practices in culture, from the performing arts to literature, the visual arts, design and cross-arts initiatives, to community centres and activist groups.

www.cultureactioneurope.org

European Cultural Foundation (ECF) promotes a European sentiment through developing and supporting cultural initiatives that let us share, experience and imagine Europe. The first foundation with a European mission and vision (founded 1954), ECF believes in the power of culture to achieve a united Europe of diversity, democracy and freedoms, where solidarity, mutual respect and collaboration contribute to a shared sense of belonging.

www.culturalfoundation.eu

Europa Nostra is the European voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting cultural and natural heritage. It is a pan-European federation of heritage NGOs, supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals. It is recognised as the largest and the most representative heritage network in Europe. Europa Nostra actively contributes to the definition and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a participatory dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3

www.europanostra.org