

Declaration of the European ministers of culture

TO REVIVE EUROPE THROUGH CULTURE

We, the European Ministers of Culture, want to affirm our will to make culture a cornerstone to revive Europe and to take the cultural issues into account – especially the European digital agenda – when dealing with the ongoing reforms.

As the European project is called into question, it is vital to renew our commitment to Europe through culture, knowledge, creation, and innovation. Europe that is too often perceived as an economic area only is above all an area where knowledge, ideas, and culture circulate. It is a land of freedom and of vitality for creation. It is indeed through culture that Europe's identity in its diversity is defined. To make the Europe of culture tangible for the European citizens, we need new concrete projects and new political directions.

Following up on our conversations during the informal meeting in Frankfurt on 11 October, 2017 – these conversations being meant to continue through regular meetings of the European Ministers of Culture –, and in preparation for the Council of the European Ministers of Culture on 21 November, 2017, we, the European Ministers of Culture, commit to presenting an ambitious roadmap in the Council of the European Union, and before the European Commission and the European Parliament. This roadmap will focus on the following topics:

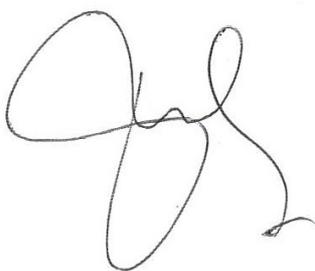
1. **Favouring mobility of culture professionals.** Heritage and art scenes including music, dance, theatre, street theatre, visual arts, and cinema have always been forerunners of the European project in many ways. However, mobility of artists and more broadly of culture professionals only concern few of them. We believe it is necessary that the European Union increase its support to culture professionals' meetings and exchanges at a European level, to share and discover new knowledge, ideas, and cultures, and to oppose the lure of isolationism. Thus, we propose the creation of a mobility plan for the cultural inspired by the remarkable success of the Erasmus programme. With this goal in mind, particularly for the financial perspectives 2020-2027, a pilot project of this "Erasmus of culture" should be launched in 2018 in the field of cultural heritage.
2. **Protecting and putting forward our cultural heritage.** Our heritage is the bedrock of our common identity and the bridge between our past, present, and future. The European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 must be the opportunity to reclaim this common European heritage in its diversity. In this respect, we are calling for the organization of a European summit during which we could launch a strategy for heritage on a European level and start a reflection on how to highlight a common base of cultural works in every field and the monuments of each European country. We also want to renew our commitment to combat trafficking of cultural goods and our support to the creation of a Community instrument that is relevant, flexible, and efficient. Finally, following the Declaration of the European ministers of culture at Florence, we invite the European Commission to set up a structure dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage situated in crisis areas, leaning on the experience and skills of the Member States' experts. We also consider that the European Union could support the UNESCO in its efforts to defend imperiled cultural heritage.

3. **Developing young people's interest in culture.** We believe that it is necessary to make culture accessible to children at an early age. Following up on the national initiatives, we commit to reflecting together on the opportunity of a European “cultural passport” that could enable us to increase our mutual knowledge of our common culture.
4. **Defending a more open and united Europe.** We believe that the Europe of culture will become more tangible with a more open and united Europe. As Europe is going through an identity crisis and the welcoming of migrants is a major societal issue, we want to promote initiatives that will enable culture and arts to contribute to bringing European citizens and peoples together, by favouring their taking part in the cultural life and in society.
5. **Supporting linguistic diversity.** Linguistic diversity is an extraordinary asset for Europe. Our languages convey the diversity of the imaginaries we share. For young European people, speaking several languages is a necessary condition for communication and mobility. That linguistic diversity also implies the importance of translation. To facilitate the circulation of works, ideas, and knowledge, not only within Europe but also with all our partners, we need to consider the importance of the issues concerning the translation, the broadcast, and the release of audiovisual works in the framework of the European funding programmes, following the example of ARTE Europe.
6. **Developing an environment that favours creation in Europe.** The European Union, as it is reforming copyright law, needs to provide our cultural and creative industries with the economic, legal, and competitive environment to enable them to grow in the digital age and to make sure creators receive a fair compensation for whatever use is made of their works. Thus, it seems important that we reaffirm our commitment to defend copyright as a legal and economic base for compensating creation. We will also make sure that the principle of territoriality, which is the cornerstone of creator's funding especially for the audiovisual sector and cinema, is not called into question whether directly or indirectly. Moreover, freedom of contract must not be jeopardised with unnecessary new exceptions when they could undermine the economy of the sectors in question without any relevant justification. Finally, we need to think about implementing efficient tools to tackle piracy and promoting international cooperation in that field. Finally, in the context of the review of the directive on audio-visual media services, it is important to impose an equality of treatment between all audio-visual media services, whether there are established in the country they target or not.
7. **Making sure that value is fairly shared.** The digital revolution has been transforming the existing economic models with new opportunities and new habits. It has also been favouring the emergence of global actors that capture an important part of the created value without contributing to its funding. In this new context, we are calling for an ambitious solution from the European Union concerning the key issue of fair value sharing between the creators and the major platforms that distribute their works. We are also calling for a greater accountability of these digital intermediaries regarding the protection of copyright and the fight against piracy. Finally, it is important that these new stakeholders contribute fairly to the funding of creation, as guaranteed by the proposed revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

8. **Promoting ambitious cultural policies.** European cultural industries, which represent 4.2% of the European GDP and over 7 million jobs, show the extraordinary creativity of the European artists and firms. It is the national and European decision-makers' responsibility to foster their development and support the quality and diversity of the artistic productions with policies that are adapted to their needs, such as the fixed book price that some member states advocate or policies promoting architectural quality. On the European scale, we also wish to implement ambitious policies in the cultural sector and in the audiovisual field by supporting the possibility of a reduced VAT on digital books and online press, by facing the issue of interoperability of digital books, and by supporting the project of the European Accessibility Act.
9. **Guaranteeing pluralism in the media and the freedom of the press.** An independent, strong, and pluralist press is still today the pillar of our democratic vitality and the best shield against extremisms. In the digital age, and against fake news and manipulation attempts to manipulate, European policies must be responsible for supporting pluralism by providing the media with an environment that enables them to produce high-quality journalistic and editorial contents. We want to affirm our will to enshrine related rights that would enable to recognize the additional economic value created by press editors, and would favour fairer trading conditions with the other representatives of the digital ecosystem. The legitimate reforms on other matters such as data protection must not set aside the issues regarding the funding of cultural industries and the defence of pluralism.
10. **Putting the battle for culture at the heart of European policies.** We strongly believe that we need to keep defending the cultural exception, which shows how much Europe supports cultural diversity, in the framework of international commercial negotiation. But culture cannot be an exception only. Culture is what makes and unites us. The creation and circulation of cultural works are at the centre of European exchanges, yet they are not among Europe's priorities. Through the building of the Internal Market, framework for state aid, commercial negotiations, decisions regarding taxation, many Community initiatives have a direct and immediate impact on the cultural sector. Thus, there is an important need for a political and strategic framework that would enable to rank culture higher in the hierarchy of European policies and to favour a virtuous ecosystem to support European creation.

As of now and in preparation for both the 2019 European elections and the post-2020 financial perspectives, we are ready to fight the battle for culture in Europe with enthusiasm and determination.

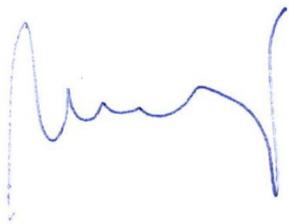
Mr Boil BANOVA
Minister of Culture of Bulgaria



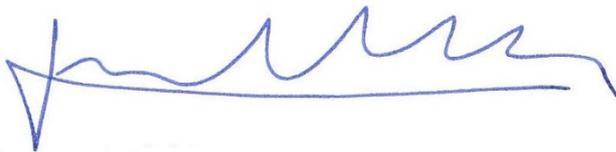
Prof. Costas KADIS
Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus

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Mrs Nina OBULJEN
Minister of Culture of the Republic of Croatia

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Mr Íñigo MENDEZ DE VIGO Y MONTOJO
Minister of Education, Culture and Sport of the Kingdom of Spain

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Mrs Françoise NYSSSEN
Minister of Culture of the French Republic

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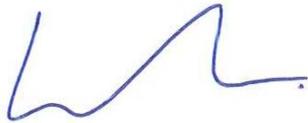
Mrs Lydia KONIORDOU
Minister of Culture and Sports of the Hellenic Republic

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Mr Dario FRANCESCHINI
Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism of the Italian Republic

Dario Franceschini


Mr Owen BONNICI
Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government of the Malta Republic


Owen Bonnici

Mr Luís Filipe CASTRO MENDES
Minister of culture of the Portuguese Republic

Luis Filipe Castro Mendes

Mr Lucian ROMASCANU
Minister of Culture and National identity of Romania

L. Romascanu
