

A policy on culture in Europe

Beyond Visions

Presenting voices
from the European Parliament:

Silvia Costa

Jill Evans

Tanja Fajon

Jo Leinen

Arne Lietz

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Julie Ward

With Tibor Navracsics,

*European Commissioner for Education,
Culture, Youth and Sport*

and Vânia Rodrigues,

Member of the European House for Culture



EFA BOOKS 6

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Frans de Ruiter

- 7 Introduction from the President of
the European House for Culture (EHfC)

Darko Brlek

- 9 Introduction by the President of
the European Festivals Association (EFA)

Vânia Rodrigues

- 11 Dinner for two: A shopping list for
a European democracy

Tibor Navracsics

- 23 What role for cultural policy in Europe?

Silvia Costa

- 31 The Four Priorities: What the European
Parliament's Committee on Culture puts first

Jill Evans

- 35 The two cultures of Wales and
their lessons for Europe

Tanja Fajon

- 45 Culture in the EU: Building identity

- Jo Leinen
53 Cultural policy through the crystal ball
- Arne Lietz
59 Martin Luther and the Reformation
- Martina Michels
65 A short and incomplete history of the lack
of a cultural-political debate in Europe
- Marietje Schaake
73 The role of politics in open societies is merely
to facilitate cultural expression
- Helga Trüpel
79 The EU has much to gain from having
a cultural policy
- Julie Ward
85 Culture is the battlefield of European politics
- 93 European House for Culture members on
the future of cultural policy in Europe

Frans de Ruiter

Introduction from the President of the European House for Culture (EHfC)

If Europe has a meaning it is cultural. – Michaël Zeeman

The European House for Culture's 55 members and 10 partners across Europe are working hard to make Michaël Zeeman's statement become reality, using their wide and varied experience to take European Cultural networking to a higher level. The European House for Culture has given itself the task of building networks across borders, offering professional training, promoting knowledge sharing and international projects, and developing public and internal forums for reflection and debate.

We are happy to present this new publication featuring essays by leading lawmakers on the future of cultural policy in Europe. It includes contributions by 9 Members of the European Parliament, representing 5 countries, as well as one by Tibor Navracsis, the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth, and member of the European House for Culture Vânia Rodrigues. All writers have been asked to share their vision of the role culture can and should play in European policy and decision making.

We hope this publication presents a clear agenda on how culture and Europe can further develop a mutually beneficial relationship. We also hope these essays by European opinion-makers and civil society leaders will inspire you to actively participate in Europe and culture.

Frans de Ruiter

President of the European House for Culture

Darko Brlek

Introduction by the President of the European Festivals Association (EFA)

The European Festivals Association (EFA) has brought together distinguished music, dance, theatre and multidisciplinary arts festivals from Europe and beyond for more than 60 years. Ever since festivals have existed, they have ignored borders and cultural barriers, long before Europe became a project of unity and cross-border exchanges.

EFA helps festival directors and staff to meet so they can seek mutual inspiration, exchange knowledge, increase networking opportunities, keep informed about the leading issues in their world and that of culture in general, and speak with a single voice loud enough to shape policy development. Its banner is that of artistic excellence and internationalism.

While all of this is extremely important, we cannot ignore the disturbing times we live in. As Marietje Schaake writes in her essay, “With an unprecedented eruption of violence in countries close to Europe, the impact of war and repression on freedoms and cultural expression should not be underestimated.” We must continue to work doggedly to ensure that culture and politics continue to play a central role in protecting our open societies and free cultural expression.

We believe festivals have a responsibility in the development of the shared, multicultural, free space defended by the European Union. We believe festivals must contribute to shaping the policy developments that offer them the right conditions to continue their vitally important work, and that they have valuable expertise to share with the lawmakers of Europe.

EFA is happy to present this publication jointly with the European House for Culture. It is the sixth in the EFA BOOKS series shedding light on the future of cultural policy in the European Union. Armed with these visions of the future, EFA, its members and supporters can now speak in one voice to European Union decision making bodies like the European Commission and the European Parliament.

Darko Brlek

*President of the European Festivals Association
(Initiator of the European House for Culture)*

Vânia Rodrigues

Dinner for two: A shopping list for a European democracy

I Setting the context

The European House for Culture (EHfC), an initiative of the European Festivals Association, is presenting a new book featuring essays from leading lawmakers from the European Parliament and thinkers from the cultural sector on the future of cultural policy in Europe. These contributors have been asked to share their personal visions for the role culture can play in European policy and decision making.

As the EHfC and many other partner organizations have stated before, Europe's cultural diversity and the power of its cultural activity are invaluable resources and should form the engine that drives the engagement between European citizens and around the project of the European Union. Only by developing a thoughtful framework that effectively acknowledges culture as a provider of strong mechanisms for the development of civic values can we think about the future of the EU outside economic fatalism and outside a narrative of political failure.

The following articles discuss the role that culture play in citizenship across Europe and envision the mutual responsibility that culture and Europe bear towards one another. They represent the individual

visions of nine Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), from the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, Greens/European Free Alliance, and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. And very important, the vision of the commissioner for culture Mr. Tibor Navracsics himself. They are but a few voices, of course, but they may very well serve a major effort: to reach out to other politicians and state, loud and clear, that Europe needs a fresh outlook on its future, and that future is only possible with culture at the centre of political agendas.

Since 2013 the European House for Culture and its partner A Soul for Europe have been working on a European Resolution on Culture urging all political and civic leaders to endorse culture as a tool to develop active citizenship and community involvement that leads to social inclusion, solidarity, responsibility and justice.

Until the end of this legislative term of the European Parliament the challenge is to have this European Resolution on Culture implemented into an official text.

II Facing the challenge

Writing an introductory text to a book that consists of essays by politically-committed and culturally-aware MEPs is a minor challenge. I would rather

be writing an introduction to a compilation of texts, official interventions, interviews and public declarations of all those who daily fail to put culture in their political agenda, or repeatedly fail to be consequent – at decision-making level – with their upholding of culture as an essential part of the European project. But that other book is a nearly impossible task. Why is it so difficult to address people outside either the ‘cultural arena’ or the ‘Brussels Island’ about the pressing challenges for culture and for Europe? The reasons are of course manifold and complex, but for the sake of clarity I will attempt at a simple (even if unavoidably simplistic) answer:

On the political side, the problem seems to be that – if you mention the importance of culture to anyone, *they immediately agree with you*. It is hard to find a politician nowadays (either in a medium-sized city or in sitting in the EP, from left to right-wing) who hasn’t learned at least the basics about ‘the role of culture’, or who cannot elaborate convincingly about the ‘major importance of the culture and creative industries’, by combining a few clichés about creativity, urban regeneration, cultural tourism or going down any other typical mainstream route. “The vital role of culture for/in the European project” somehow managed to be included everywhere from official texts to political jargon, but failed to be included where it actually belongs: in the demands of European citizens, in a solid cultural

policy with sufficient resources at Member-State level, in the political arena as an area we cannot afford to overlook in times of economic austerity. The problem with mainstreaming the discourse about the importance of culture is that we allowed the use of that major argumentative asset without taking or demanding proper action at national or European level – and now this issue is a bit like that music hit that has played a million times on the radio and on the elevator: you just don't pay attention anymore, *because you know the song*.

On the other hand, it is hard to talk to citizens about this. And by citizens I mean friends – be they artists, intellectuals, designers, musicians, restaurant-owners, veterinarians, carpenters, IT engineers or housekeepers. They are difficult to engage in conversations or readings about Europe and or culture, let alone a combination of the two. And it is not that they don't participate in the arts or that they're ignorant about the relevance of culture in society. But they – we all – have been stupid enough to take culture – and Europe? – for granted. We have seen cuts in artistic education in almost every European country¹, we have witnessed strong retractions of public funding for the arts justified by 'austerity measures', we have seen a considerable drop in cultural consumption², we have kissed our friends and relatives goodbye at the airport because they couldn't find a job in the 'creative' sector, but we somehow *knew*

that culture would survive. Come to think about it, it pervades all our life. It is embedded in our habits, it is the music we listen to, the language we speak in, the sitcom we're fans of, it is difficult to imagine a world without all this. Furthermore, prices don't always (or almost never) reflect the actual costs incurred to produce those goods, which adds another layer of invisibility. Also, museums don't close down, do they? (Well, banks didn't use to close too, and those too were seen as solid institutions once – too big to fail? That's in the past). This invisibility of the fragility of the culture sector has a lot to do also with the invisibility of the labour force that sustains it. Yes, culture apparently seems to have a capacity to keep producing, even if the 'supply chain' is full of flaws. But at what cost? Martina Michels reminds us that "lousy payment is typical" in these sectors, and detects a pattern of self-exploitation. She goes further to suggest that "[T]oo often and too easily therefore cultural producers are made to a role model of a new working class: enterprising, self-organized and satisfied with few social protections." This is a central point in the debate and has been subject to an impressive number of studies³, which should remind us: no, this is not about the cultural sector, "it' is about the working world of tomorrow" (MM) and, therefore, should be a preoccupation of each and every one of us, and a clear political priority at European level. We must admit we are quite far from that widespread acknowledgement.

Of course the challenge is a lot bigger than just ‘making the case’ of culture and cultural policies in the context of European democratic development in the face of citizens and politicians. It is about transforming culture from a weak, subsidiary agenda into a strong public policy. But what exactly is a *strong* public policy? According to Portuguese geographer João Ferrão⁴, strong public policies have at least three distinct characteristics: (1) they are integrated into the family of EU policies, which means they benefit from binding legal frameworks for all EU-Member States and significant direct financial support, or at least a favourable funding framework – evidence of these are quite obviously the environmental or agricultural sectors; (2) they mobilize strong economic powers, as is the case with transport or business and technological innovation; and, last but not least, (3) they are under a permanent and intense public scrutiny – such as education or healthcare policies, which are seen to deal with central, inalienable every-day issues that affect citizens directly.

In his words: “The combination of these three factors explains the difference between ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ public policies: they differ fundamentally in terms of the incidence of the rule of law, of public support and funding, of the influence of organized interests and in what concerns the pressure of public opinion. This disparity has a clear expression in government structures, for instance. Can anyone

envisage a government without a Ministry for Economy, or Environment, or Health?" To which one could add: but yet a national government without a Ministry of Culture goes unnoticed by citizens at large, and seems to raise no special interest or concern in the European institutions.⁵

This leads us straight to the point: if we are indeed convinced that the European project does not exist without the cultural bedrock that is its source of strength and meaning, how can we make sure – at national and European level – that culture is more than a ‘guest’ of other public policies, the big ‘hosts’?

Having said this, it is perhaps noteworthy to clarify that I am at all not implying that culture should not collaborate with other agendas – but I am stressing that it is paramount to recognize that as attractive as the invitation might be, there is a huge difference between being invited and being co-author. So even if there are huge gains for citizenship deriving from the integration of culture into other policies and agendas (be they city marketing or social inclusion), that cannot be the only solution. Addressing this issue is the only way of convert those grandiose assertions about culture being at the heart of the European project into true political commitments with real-life impact.

At this point, it is probably clear for the reader that this probably means discussing European intervention in culture, or the need for a European cul-

tural policy. Solutions will not be served in this book; you will not find quick-fixes for such complex problems – rather contributions for action that go beyond the endorsement of a few dramatically underfinanced and politically overlooked EU programmes.

You will read about Arne Lietz belief “that spending on culture should be compulsory and that investing in culture should be an EU responsibility, comparable to investment in the overall European project”; but also Tibor Navracsics urging us to take the results of the ‘Erasmus generation’ further. In the European Resolution of Culture, you will read about the need for direct action towards the EP but also a concerted effort in the local and national contexts to raise awareness to the need for this resolution. Culture remains in the exclusive rule of the National States, thus, a resolution will only be implemented if in each country, if at each level of policy making its values and action points are supported and ultimately felt as essential as active policies in employment, health and social welfare. The goal of this dialogue is to establish a European model for a cultural policy that streamlines and acts as a guiding principle across all levels of governance: a model for positive civic values, social justice, solidarity; citizenship through culture, access to culture, cultural participation and artistic creation.

The European House for Culture is focused on a clear agenda, and on fostering a model for a mutually

beneficial relationship between Europe and culture. The starting point is, thus, constructive. It is about opening up the debate and facilitating action.

Myself, I will not contribute to the discussion around how such an intervention or policy could put the subsidiarity principle at risk – I will not let my voice be trapped in that never-ending and inconsequent rhetoric loop that ignores that the EU is present in every other policy field and in so many invisible details of our daily life. The ‘cultural exception’ should not be used to sustain unfruitful taboos. After all, staying outside the European radar hasn’t helped us much, has it?

III Do ask, do tell. A “shopping list” for an European Resolution on Culture

The third and last block of this brief introduction is a short list of questions I believe we need to address – a ‘shopping list’ to make the European Resolution on Culture an effectively tangible goal. These are some interrogations to put in your shopping basket. Go ahead and choose the ones you are passionate to fight for.

- Can we agree on the fundamental importance of a Ministry of Culture in every EU Member-State Government?
- Can we work towards an agreement as to the minimum budgetary allocation for Culture in

each Member State? If so, how exactly should we go about setting the limits or percentages? What have we learnt with the recent European history regarding maximum public debt percentages and how can we guarantee there will be equal treatment between all Member-States?

- Based on which criteria can the EU and the Member States secure an adequate public funding for culture in times against the backdrop of economic crisis and social emergency?
- What can be done at political level – both national and European – to transform culture into a strong public policy?
- Can we make the meetings between Ministers of Culture of the EU more relevant and transparent to European citizens? Can we agree that citizens need to be able to know – and, put plainly, understand – what kind of actions do their representatives commit to, in public, towards them?
- How can we address the issue of the precarious labour force that sustains the cultural and creative sectors? How can we address issues of inequality among artists working in or across Europe in terms of access to health care, social security, etc? At EU programme level, how can we rightly balance the funding of ‘activity-related’ expenses (communication, dissemination of results...) and the fair payment of intellectual work?

- How can we go even further in terms of mobility opportunities for artists, cultural operators and arts managers? How can we make sure mobility funding does not replace structural funding that is dramatically insufficient in so many European countries?
- What are the implications of leaving the worn-out ‘impacts agenda’ or the ‘economic driver agenda’ behind? Or, better said, how can we devise models that encompass proud public funding for the arts, with minimum political interference on artistic content?

One final remark before I share the last item on my shopping list with you. I will not say we are facing unprecedented challenges – historians tell us that notion is historically wrong and that every generation feels the need to claim the urgency of change in their specific historical moment. But a political discussion around the role of culture in the European project cannot afford to ignore the backdrop against which it is set. Policies do not exist in a political vacuum. As Marietje Schaake sharply states, “just because politics should not interfere, does not mean nothing should be done.” So the need to take on wider contemporary political, economic, social and environmental challenges when answering the above questions is self-evident.

Having said that, I would urge you to think of a European rationale for cultural action that is not

dependent on short-term cultural policy trends or agendas, but rather on a **political, almost existential, need to engage *with each other and with the rest of the world.***

Vânia Rodrigues

Member of the European House for Culture

Arts Manager & Consultant, Portugal

- 1 Cf. <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php>
- 2 “However, cost, as measured by “too expensive” responses, is an obstacle for many Europeans, particularly in eastern European countries (Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary) and in some of the countries worst affected by the economic crisis (Greece, Portugal and Spain).»)
- 3 Menger, Hardt, Negri, and so many others are writing about this.
- 4 Ferrão, João in “Cultural Policies for Development”, ed. ARTEMREDE, coord. By Vânia Rodrigues, Marta Martins and Pedro Costa.
- 5 This was, for instance, the case in Portugal from June 2011 until November 2015, during the period of the bailout and the EU/IMF intervention programme.

Tibor Navracsics

What role for cultural policy in Europe?

As the European Union is going through one of its most difficult phases, it is tempting to see only what seems to be separating us. People, whole nations turning inward, worried, afraid even of what is foreign, other.

Living together has of course always been difficult. It means being confronted with each others' beliefs, habits and customs. And yet this is something we need in order to exist. Alone, human beings wither and die. That is why we must continue learning to live together. And the most important way of doing this is through intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural dialogue helps us to identify both what distinguishes us from each other and what we have in common. It is essential in overcoming mistrust and prejudice, and critical in handling and preventing conflict within and between cultures. This is how, ultimately, intercultural dialogue allows us to build a community in Europe.

Intercultural dialogue therefore needs to be at the centre of our cultural policy. And I mean intercultural dialogue in the broadest sense. It does and should take place between different communities – but also within them. Because every community, every person is multicultural. This requires constant engagement, questioning and negotiation.

This dialogue is today more vital than ever, as the EU grapples with a number of issues that go to the very heart of what it stands for – and how it should evolve; as the refugee crisis, inequalities and exclusion raise deep-seated fears about the future of our societies; as violent extremism threatens our values and our way of life.

Intercultural dialogue has a critical role to play in overcoming these challenges. We may not have a consensual definition of multiculturalism – in my view a descriptive category, not a normative one. But what we do have is a solid foundation to build on. We share cultural heroes, for example. All across Europe, regardless of where they are, children learn about Miguel de Cervantes or Jean Sibelius. And we share fundamental, non-negotiable values that underpin our societies – and the European Union: democracy, rule of law, freedom, including freedom of expression, human rights and human dignity. We share Christian values. We share values that have been with us since the ancient civilisations of Athens and Rome, which have developed through periods such as the Enlightenment.

Building on these pillars, the EU has always supported intercultural dialogue and will keep on doing so. Our role is to facilitate, not to judge. To open channels of communication and exchange, not to decide what is right or wrong. We do this through programmes such as Creative Europe and Erasmus+.

And we do it through our work with Member States, a wide range of organisations involved in education, youth and sport, as well as actors from the cultural and creative sectors.

A lot of this takes place at the local level, in communities. Take flagship projects like the European Capitals of Culture, for instance. For more than 30 years, they have made cities and regions focal points of our culture and history. They involve local inhabitants, while at the same time bringing visitors from Europe and all over the world to these cities, opening up opportunities for exchange and shared experiences. The European Capitals of Culture also boost cities' economic and social development, giving locals the chance to shape their communities and how they live together.

Cultural heritage offers other examples. When we think of the pressing need to protect cultural heritage, the first images that come to mind are of the barbaric, terrible destruction and looting of sites in Syria or Iraq. And while it is crucial and right that the EU is working to stop acts of this kind, preserving cultural heritage is also a big task in Europe. Our history is a central part of who we are. We need to cherish it to keep it alive.

That is why we help cities and regions develop and manage cultural heritage. The European Heritage Label, for example, recognises sites that have played a significant role in European integra-

tion and supports education and tourism activities around them. Like the European Capitals of Culture, this only works if it involves local communities. (Re-)discovering culturally important sites, living with them and having a say in how they are developed helps people come together and is a great way of encouraging dialogue.

That is why we are stepping up efforts to involve citizens from a broad range of backgrounds in cultural heritage. Together with the Council of Europe and a number of regional authorities, the Commission will support the involvement of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in projects designed to experience and manage cultural heritage in their communities.

We are, however, not only promoting intercultural understanding within the EU and its communities. It is equally important to enable exchanges with people from countries outside the Union, in the Neighbourhood countries. The EU already supports a number of projects, but we are also thinking in the European Commission how to bring them together in a more coherent approach. How to establish a cultural diplomacy built on direct contacts between people and organisations that enables them to work and create together so they understand each other better.

We are also responding to the need to integrate the many newly arrived refugees and migrants.

Culture has an important role to play in this. We are preparing to launch a new €1.6 million call under Creative Europe for cultural projects that promote the inclusion of refugees and migrants. These could involve activities like staging plays or performing music, and bring actors from the cultural and creative sectors together with organisations from other parts of local communities, such as schools.

There are many other examples of how action at EU level fosters intercultural dialogue. Just think of the millions of people who have taken the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme and its predecessors. Everyone who has studied, worked or volunteered in another country helps to strengthen intercultural understanding, both at an individual and a broader societal level.

In supporting intercultural dialogue, the Commission relies on the ideas, networks and capacities of many partners. Bringing this diverse range of policies and projects to life would not be possible without the European Parliament, authorities and cultural institutes in the Member States as well as organisations like the European House of Culture and the European Festivals Association. We will need to continue to work together.

For we are never done learning to live with each other. We have to keep working at it, throughout our lives. And we progress in fits and starts. This is not a linear process, neither for people nor for big-

ger communities. There are times when we move closer together. And then we go through phases, like the current one, when some of us are more inward-looking, preoccupied with difficult questions about our own identities.

I am convinced that what we are experiencing is a phase. European integration has come too far to unravel. And we as people have come too close to sever the ties that bind us. The Member States of our Union are so interdependent that they have to work together – whether it is on fighting climate change, responding to the digital revolution or tackling radicalisation. Similarly, Europeans have built much stronger networks and relationships. The fact that German and French students can get together and become friends – not just in isolated cases, but in large numbers – may seem completely normal to the Erasmus generation. It would have been unimaginable 70 years ago.

Globalisation is having a profound impact on our economies and societies, bringing rapid change and fluidity, upending our view of the world – and ourselves. This can sometimes make it seem even harder for us to live together. But I do not believe that globalisation poses a threat. On the contrary, it can make both our identities and relationships richer. We all can have multiple identities – global, national, regional, local identities, ethnic and religious identities, cultural identities. Identities that

find their expression in the books we read and write, the music we listen to and play, the food we cook and share.

Throughout history, human beings have created these multiple identities for themselves, diffusing the tensions that have always existed between the national and the regional or local, for example. Globalisation has added another layer, and I am convinced that we all will find ways of keeping the balance between our identities, as we have always done.

What about our European identity? It exists for all of us, whether we are aware of it or not. And European culture is the most solid pillar of this European identity. We have a common understanding of what it is, a tacit consensus. It is the role of cultural policy to affirm it by keeping the dialogue going, a constantly evolving, open dialogue.

Tibor Navracsics
*European Commissioner for Education,
Culture, Youth and Sport, Hungary*

The Four Priorities: What the European Parliament's Committee on Culture puts first

Europe must set its own cultural agenda, even if cultural policy is a Member State competence. Cultural policy is a sensitive issue and the privileged area for expressions of territorial and national identity. Nonetheless, the EU has the right and the duty to intervene, in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty's principle of subsidiarity.

The EU's role is to safeguard and promote cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as our European cultural heritage (tangible and intangible), when necessary by supporting and integrating the actions of Member States. This is how we support a sector that produces and circulates the kind of content that can make Europe's "cultural biodiversity" into a reality, while at the same time promoting our cultural competitiveness at the international level.

The Committee on Culture and Education has set four priorities. The first concerns cultural heritage, our roots, and devising the tools for its protection, restoration, valorisation, digitisation and "branding" via the European Heritage Labels. Our goal is to protect our cultural heritage and fight against

its intentional destruction in the Middle East. We are pushing for such practices to be recognised as crimes against humanity and for the adoption of a directive forbidding the trafficking and import of cultural goods into Europe.

Our second priority is the cultural and creative industries, a sector representing close to 5 percent of the EU's GDP, over 1 million businesses and 6 million employees, where we must be particularly active now that, thanks to the European Parliament, SMEs can hope for funding from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

Thirdly, we want to look at the Digital Single Market and the challenges it poses. This is an horizontal issue with economic, technological, cultural and social aspects, which also involves fundamental freedoms: from privacy to cyber security, from wider access to culture and knowledge to open data for research purposes.

And lastly, our fourth priority is human capital, meaning the increase of competences, the need for "on-the-job" training and the internationalisation of curricula, facilitated by Creative Europe and the Erasmus+ programmes. This is being developed under the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs announced by Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs Marianne Thyssen in collaboration with Commissioner for Education and Culture Tibor Navracsics.

In conclusion, we must refer to the International situation that has opened up a whole new dimension to increasingly interconnected cultural policies. The conflicts in the Mediterranean area, acts of terrorism in and outside Europe, the emergency caused by the influx of refugees, all make it urgent for us to reconsider our educational and integration models using intercultural and inter-religious approaches. The languages of the arts can help us overcome barriers. We should not forget that the challenge in Europe and the Mediterranean is above all a cultural and educational challenge.

Silvia Costa

*Member of the European Parliament and
Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education*

*Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and
Democrats in the European Parliament, Italy*

Jill Evans

The two cultures of Wales and their lessons for Europe

The promotion of culture as part of our European heritage must celebrate diversity, rather than create a single essentialist pan-European identity. Our mosaic of identities, both historic and those that are still developing, must be allowed to flourish. A European cultural policy will fail if it is overly prescriptive about whose culture and which forms of culture are most worthy. Its effect would be to further alienate regional, local or socio-economic cultures. In contrast, a European cultural policy that respects all cultures and gives an equal voice to all would promote the kind of democracy and citizen involvement that is the cornerstone of 21st century Europe as we would like to see it.

My country, Wales, has a population of just over three million and two national languages, Welsh and English. It follows that we have distinct cultures, one in each language, that cumulatively create Welsh culture. Our challenge is to maintain and support these two national cultures, while also securing a space for migrant cultures, so that all can continue to flourish in the face of global changes and self-inflicted austerity cuts that threaten arts and culture provision.

In Wales, our two national languages and cultures are not the two solitudes of, say, Canada. They co-exist and utilise each other's' expertise and knowledge. *Dwy iaith, un bobl, un wlad* (Two languages, one people, one nation). As our historian Gwyn Alf Williams once said about Wales as a country, we make and remake ourselves in every generation, so it is equally true to say that we must recast our culture because it is our participation in our nation's culture that continually creates and re-creates Wales.

Welsh is one of Europe's oldest languages, part of the Indo-European group of languages and, more specifically, the Celtic family of languages that were once spoken across Great Britain. The most recent national census results from 2011 show that a little less than 600,000 people in Wales, approximately one in five, speak Welsh. The Welsh language has a long history of literary and spoken culture, dating back more than a thousand years.

For long periods in Welsh history, English was the language of the nobility and some of the more anglicised parts of the country, but it is now spoken by almost everybody. There are very few, if any, native Welsh speakers of school age or above who cannot speak both languages.

In such an environment, where one language is spoken by 20 percent and the other by almost everybody, it would be expected that one culture would

be under greater threat than the other. To some extent this is true and the protection of Welsh-language culture has been a key driver in the development of media and culture in recent decades, with the creation of the television channel Sianel 4 Cymru (Channel 4 Wales) and Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru (a Welsh-language National Theatre for Wales). The need to maintain a linguistic and cultural identity that is specifically Welsh remains at the heart of much of cultural production.

However, English-language culture in Wales is also under threat. It may appear counter-intuitive that a culture practised in a language spoken by almost everybody in the country could be threatened. But the reality of English-language culture in Wales is that much of it is created outside our borders, either in England or the United States, and therefore fails to reflect the experience of Wales that people live on a daily basis. Hundreds of television channels broadcast in English to Wales every day, but only a fraction of the programming is made in Wales about Wales, and it is mostly news and current affairs with very little drama and comedy. The situation with radio is slightly better as a result of the dedicated BBC Radio Wales, which commissions its own comedy, and of regional commercial radio stations, but the daily English print media in Wales, with the exception of small circulation newspapers, is written, printed and published in England. Cinema is,

of course, Hollywood dominated, and popular music dictated by the Anglo-American fashions.

It goes almost without saying that the media gaze in the English-language is focused upon England and not Wales, even though we are also the recipients. This is a particular issue in politics, where it is strongly argued that Wales has a democratic deficit – that political decisions made in Wales are not sufficiently scrutinised by the media and the population at large is misled by mass media into believing that decisions made and impacting in England are also applicable to Wales. A 2008 study by Cardiff University, published in the King Report, found that almost every single prime-time health and education story run by the BBC failed to distinguish between those policies affecting England and those affecting Wales.

The Welsh Labour Government this year proposed budget cuts to publishing, an action that would have reduced opportunities for cultural reproduction in both English and Welsh. It is perhaps ironic that cultural production in a majority language can actually reduce opportunities for creativity because of the over-crowded marketplace in which artists find themselves, and limited differentiation from other creative producers.

On the other hand, despite this sombre note, culture in Wales is also thriving in both languages.

In terms of our national institutions, the Welsh National Opera regularly stages high quality and

sell-out productions. The Cardiff Singer of the World competition is internationally renowned. The English-language National Theatre Wales, which hosts events in different locations, produced the highly emotional *Mametz* about Welsh soldiers in World War One and, most recently, blended the linguistic cultural divide in Wales with *Candylion*, an English-language all-ages stage play by native Welsh speaking singer-songwriter Gruff Rhys, who explained that “some songs need a music video, others need a live action Manga stageshow”.

The National Eisteddfod, a Welsh-language travelling festival that includes competitions of poetry, singing, music, dance, and also art, photography and design, attracts tens of thousands of visitors every day when it is held in the first week of August. The Welsh Album of the Year event celebrates new music in both languages. Music is one of the most accessible art forms to the non-speaker of the other language. The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama continues to nurture young talent in the creative arts, ensuring that new faces, art forms and ideas are represented in whatever platform is available. Free entry to our national museums promotes knowledge of Wales and its historical influences. The above list is limited by space, not talent.

The grassroots are also a place of creativity. The Sin Roc Gymraeg (literally the Welsh rock scene, but broadly applied to popular modern Welsh-language

music) is thriving with new bands regularly forming and playing live, while English-language bands like the Manic Street Preachers have reached folk hero status, selling out major sports stadiums, and a BBC Radio Wales show showcasing three hours of new music from predominantly English-language bands every week. Poetry, an art form associated in English-language culture with the high arts, is much more normalised within Welsh-language culture, with rock star status given to prize-winning poets and a thriving circle of young creative literary minds working within, and breaking, the rules of the genre.

Of course, despite these distinct challenges and opportunities, Wales faces the same challenges as other countries. How do we best engage those who neither consume nor produce culture? How can we best promote culture so that, as far as possible, it is not reliant upon public subsidy at a time when public funds are limited?

An international agreement that protects the arts, heritage and culture budgets from austerity cuts would send a signal that these fields are respected and that all European citizens are entitled to a cultural life and access to those forms of the arts they most enjoy. The arts may often be seen as non-essential, or that government investment is easily replaced by other funders and therefore an easy target for budget cuts. Yet extending the provision of arts to all, particularly in deprived areas, is

absolutely in the socialist tradition of betterment because it delivers opportunity to people who may be short of options. It is solidarity in action.

Our proposal, as a party, is to make it a cultural duty for local authorities in Wales to promote participation and experience in cultural activities. We know that artistic participation and cultural experience is lowest amongst those in the lowest socio-economic groups who are deprived of opportunities, through family and peer-group pressure, by cultural choice or cost, to attend or join in at artistic events. While we recognise that cultural choice exist across the spectrum, as suggested by Bourdieu, the use of education at least gives all children an opportunity to experience different artistic forms and believe that they can participate in them. To borrow a phrase from feminist thought, 'You can't be what you can't see', and providing experience and role models will hopefully allow young people to reach their potential. Following on from this cultural duty, we hope to increase the number of apprenticeships available in cultural institutions, both in performance and behind the scenes, recognising the importance of training and further opportunities for people to follow their dreams. I hope that our ideas can contribute to EU guidance to authorities at all levels.

It is fair to say that bilingual artists in Wales have an advantage – drawing upon cultural influences and references from two Welsh cultures as part of

their artistic development process. This ability to speak and reference more than one language and culture is important within the European context, simultaneously and perhaps subconsciously reflecting the mixture of ideas across Europe, creating new and different forms of culture according to the experiences of the creator (and, of course, the audience and their interpretation).

Many of these diverse forms of arts and culture have their roots in local and regional identities, more so than the identity of Member States, which, by the nature of state formation and expressions of power, have seen particular cultural activities or languages given priority status. In developing new Europe-wide cultural policies we must therefore be careful to promote equal status and an equal voice for all, and not merely reinforce existing hegemonies. Reaching the grassroots who promote and reproduce their own cultures is much more important than talking about artistic policy within limited high-level circles. Art and culture must belong to all.

New hybrid cultural identities are being created all the time, both by younger generations making their mark on our historical cultures but also by the continued movement of individuals and groups of people whose experiences and identities are influenced by new host cultures to create new forms of culture on an individual and group level.

Within this context, the role of the European institutions must be to continue to promote artistic development and collaboration across the continent through the learning of new languages. They are a communication tool that also facilitates the understanding of influences upon art and culture in those locations and languages, as well as providing support for linguistic minorities to reach their cultural potential and recognise the importance of their cultural heritage. Strengthening Member State implementation of the Charter for Regional and Minority Languages is one method of achieving this goal.

As we approach a UK referendum on EU membership, I hope the importance of culture in European policy making will play a part in reinforcing the benefits of our membership. It can only further enrich our diverse but united union.

Jill Evans

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Tanja Fajon

Culture in the EU: Building identity

Throughout history, social and political changes have given rise to cultural tensions, and maybe particularly so in the European Union because it is made up of many Member States, each with their own cultures. Ever since the end of the Second World War, the EU has recognised culture as an aspect of human rights. In the same spirit, the EU has worked on strengthening peace and stability across the continent through international cooperation in the cultural sphere, alongside the economic and political ones.

EU enlargement, migration, globalisation, and – last but not least – the migrant and refugee crises we are now witnessing are making ever more urgent the need for peaceful coexistence, tolerance and the strengthening of our social and cultural integration processes. Given the need for better understanding among nations, we are seeing a growing trend to promote cultural diversity, despite the fact that the status of culture within the EU is still unclear.

We emphasise culture in the light of the EU's unifying and positive role and image (reflected in the slogan 'United in diversity'), but on the other hand its position is marginal. Culture is not a common

European policy, and the implementation of cultural policy is limited to exchanges of information, good practices and cooperation, both within and outside the EU. Even the expressions used to describe it are unclear: for the last 20 years we have said 'cultural policy'; before that, most EU institutions spoke of 'cultural activity', and the Council of the EU still uses the term 'cultural cooperation'.

What we mean by culture varies according to context and the state of society. Culture in the narrower sense is defined and measured by different arts practices and forms of expression; in a broader sense it can be understood as an entire way of life that determines how we understand one another as well how we differ, and how much we can and will change for the sake of accepting others.

This duality is also obvious in the way EU cultural policy has been designed. It was not until relatively late, at the time of the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s, that culture was formally defined for the purposes of encouraging cultural activities (culture as art). However, when the Agenda for Culture was adopted in 2007, the definition was broadened to encompass culture as a way of life and system of values, traditions and beliefs that shape society. This meant not only linguistic and cultural diversity, but also respect for human rights, tolerance, solidarity, democracy, and other values upon which the EU is founded.

These are also the values which the EU, through international cultural cooperation, promotes globally, using culture as an expression of soft power.

When we think of European culture we are soon confronted with another form of duality that makes it nearly impossible to establish a common EU cultural policy in the way we did for agricultural and the environment – intercultural exchange within the EU, and the promotion of values through culture beyond its borders.

Culture in the EU is, on the one hand, built on economic foundations created by regulation of the common internal market (cultural services and goods, trading in these, and the like), and on the other a common European identity. In the first case, Member States transmit their national interests up to EU level, where they obtain financial aid or take part in programmes; in the other, the EU uses culture to build and promote the idea of a unified Europe, European citizenship and intercultural understanding. The aim is thus to create an ever-closer Union of European nations that are united in their diversity.

The EU is championing the idea of a common cultural heritage that should serve as a source of ‘European awareness’, while at the same time it stresses the importance of cultural diversity. And it is a duty for us, Europeans, to cultivate and respect both.

Not long ago I read an article by a young Slovenian author, Tanja Kos, who points out that

the word ‘common’, in ‘common cultural heritage’, is problematic: “The process of building a common cultural area,” she writes, “is based on common history and heritage, and the intention is to stimulate and foster a ‘European consciousness’, emphasising the feeling of belonging to the EU.” She sees “nothing wrong with that, as long as the cultural area is not seen as something exclusive and stable”. Kos points out that in Article 167(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, cultural action is limited to the ‘culture and history’ (in the singular) of the European peoples, which could easily be interpreted as a call to create a homogeneous EU cultural entity.

I agree with Kos that such an interpretation is risky, given the histories and cultures we cannot attribute to the ‘European peoples’, such as immigrant communities that are automatically excluded from the debate on the ‘common European area’, even though their influence is shaping European society increasingly. “Encouraging and respecting cultural diversity – that is learning about and from one another and mutual understanding of those who live in the EU – means respecting, including, and understanding people’s cultures and histories,” writes Kos, before setting a challenge. The EU, she believes, needs to think, as the European Commission believes, “if culture is truly at the heart of the European project and the basis of unity in

diversity, whereby respect for the latter and for common values holds out a promise of peace, prosperity, and solidarity.” In the light of the current state of the EU, this makes a lot of sense.

In the past year, as vice-chair of the Group of Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) in the European Parliament and S&D spokesperson for home affairs, I have been dealing with the refugee and migrant crisis. After the financial crisis that severely damaged citizens’ confidence in the EU’s future, this crisis has only worsened intolerance towards immigrants and marginal groups. Fear of “difference” is leading to the spread of stereotypes, hate speeches and populism. In such a climate, it is imperative for the EU, which has hundreds of thousands of refugees knocking on its doors, to lead its foreign policy and act in the international community by using its ‘soft weapon’, the weapon of culture. But to do so, of course, it has to start by defining what it means by its culture.

As I have already mentioned, tensions within society can lead to cultural tensions, and similarly culture, if it imposes its own system of values, traditions and beliefs, can quickly become a reason for political, economic and social strife.

It is therefore essential that the EU firstly defines its own culture and then decides where and how to direct its efforts to use this culture to play a role the international community. In other words: to promote

the model of an open multicultural society – which is constantly subject to changes, including cultural ones –, the EU must think of ways of respecting cultural diversity. Appreciating the cultural richness brought by immigrants and taking a positive attitude towards multiculturalism, while at the same time reducing prejudices, are in my opinion major factors for building intercultural dialogue and a strong and united EU. Only this, and not multiculturalism alone, can guarantee peace, prosperity and solidarity.

Beneath the expression ‘common European cultural policy’ lies another potentially thorny issue, and that is identity. There is no need to stress what a sensitive issue this is for each and every Member State and its citizens. I remember that the fear of losing national identity and mother tongue – in my case Slovenian – were one of the biggest concerns when my country was joining the European Union. Those concerns have proved unfounded, all the more as the EU merely supplements and harmonises Member State activities.

As a consequence of the above statements, there is nothing strange in the undefined status of culture. And although it may sound unusual, I believe that – given the nature of culture – it should continue to develop in the direction of this duality, of course within the framework of the instruments the EU can provide in order to encourage its cultures to grow and consolidate their positions.

Culture should continue to be a tool or an instrument for establishing mutual respect and understanding within the EU and in international relations, and this has to become (and remain) its primary goal.

To conclude, let me go back to Tanja Kos: in the present circumstances, challenged by the economic and social crises, we must not marginalise culture, but instead think of how we could use it to smooth and strengthen relations. That of course requires the political will of Member States. There may be inspiration in the words of Chinese Nobel Prize-winning writer Gao Xingjian (the European Commission also quotes in the Agenda for Culture) when he said: “Culture is not a luxury, but a necessity.”

Tanja Fajon

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Jo Leinen

Cultural policy through the crystal ball

On December 18, 2006, the European Union signed UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, thus committing itself to protecting cultural diversity in every piece of future legislation. Although the EU has limited competences in the cultural field, it can approve measures if they don't affect national rules.

The aim of a EU-level cultural policy is to create and strengthen a shared European cultural identity that will bring its 503 million citizens closer together. In a lecture he gave at the University of Zurich in 1946, Winston Churchill said, "If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, prosperity and glory which its three to four hundred million people would enjoy."

Three major achievements so far have shaped EU cultural policy.

First, the European Capitals of Culture. This is a project that promotes the cultural wealth of the EU and allows citizens from within the region and from elsewhere to share common experiences. It contributes to the long-term goal of creating a European cultural identity for each and every citizen, alongside his or her national identity.

This year's Capital of Culture, the City of Breslau, is an excellent example of the impact such an event can have. When Breslau was nominated, there was no discussion about the state of the rule of law or no banning of European flags from the press hall. On the contrary, the citizens of Breslau were delighted to be given the chance to show that Poland in many ways is an open society and not as nationalistic as its government's present policies might suggest. The Cultural Capital title will bring many visitors to the city, as well as major investments that will boost its economy.

The other 2016 Culture Capital is San Sebastian in the north of Spain, and its target is quite similar. The aim is to enhance dialogue and coexistence, and to strengthen peace. People from all over Europe will come together to attend plays and concerts that will demonstrate that Europeans have a common cultural identity. This is what makes Europe so fascinating to me: despite all the differences between people, what we have in common is stronger than what separates us. United in diversity is therefore an entirely appropriate, truly European slogan.

The EU's second instrument are the European Heritage Labels. The objective here is to strengthen a sense of belonging to Europe, especially among young people, based on values and elements of European history as well as cultural heritage, while also acknowledging national and regional diversity.

The visitor is able to retrace the whole of European history by going on a tour of European Cultural Heritage sites, which inevitably causes him or her to recognize their European cultural identity. The tool is a clever combination that on the one hand conveys our shared European history and on the other argues for the need to travel freely throughout Europe.

The third instrument is promotion of the arts. In order to support the cultural and historical heritage of Europe, the EU supports numerous projects in the arts and creative economy sectors when they provide an added value towards creating a common European identity, as is the case with the European film industry.

European cultural policies in a global perspective

In times of major global crises, the question arises whether Europe can find adequate answers. With regard to the threat of radicalisation and terrorism: it is obviously in the EU's interest to find ways to prevent young Europeans from contributing to terrorist and anti-democratic acts. Europe has to give adequate answers to anyone even close to being radicalised or attracted by extremist views. Cultural activities are the most effective means, from theatre workshops to music-making, as of course are sports. We must not allow our children to slide into hopelessness.

Culture may be able to prevent radicalisation but it can also build bridges within Europe and abroad. A strong External Action Service (EEAS) could use cultural policy as a way of shaping EU foreign policy. By supporting diverse cultural projects around the world, the EU could help to prevent conflicts before they arise.

One main reason for any dispute in private as in politics, is a lack of communication and mutual understanding. Projects should encourage dialogue. If two opposed parties in any part of the world realise that they may differ in many ways but that they share certain values, they might conclude that they can solve their problems without guns. This could be done via a cultural dialogue in which each participant realises that you always find shared values if you look for them. The EU was founded to create lasting peace on our continent. Europe should do whatever it can to help others to achieve peace.

But what does that mean in a wider perspective?

Nowadays we want to share things in our daily lives because we have figured out that this can make our lives easier. The European idea is also about sharing: common values, a common currency, our internal market and our identity. So sharing is part of the way we live – it is our culture.

If you want to share something, you need someone you can share it with, you need a partner or two or three or 28. Sharing is a core European value. This brings me back to Churchill's 1946 speech: "(...) in the sharing of its common inheritance (...)". So let us not only share cars, homes and businesses, but let us also share cultural values and institutions, and perhaps one day we will even share citizenship of something resembling a United States of Europe, without abandoning any of our national cultural heritage. That day, there would no longer be barriers to a common European cultural identity of more than 500 million people. This is the Europe I fight for, just as our founding fathers did.

Jo Leinen

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Arne Lietz

Martin Luther and the Reformation

I have worked on cultural issues throughout my political career, first as an assistant in the German Bundestag and more recently for the town hall of Lutherstadt Wittenberg where I live, and where Martin Luther's home has now been converted into a Reformation museum.

Ten years ago, Germany launched an ambitious decade-long programme about the Reformation that culminates and ends in 2017 with the jubilee event Luther 2017, 500 Years of Reformation, half a millennium after Luther so spectacularly nailed his 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg's church. The programme's focus on our Enlightenment years aims to show how the Reformation influenced our society and culture today, not just from a religious viewpoint but also in music, art, language and culture.

Right from the start, the programme involved a EU-wide network spanning Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Netherlands, Finland and Switzerland, where the Reformation produced such towering figures as Jean Calvin, Erasmus, Mikael Agricola and Huldrych Zwingli.

The national event Luther 2017 has been organised, among others, by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), the national and regional govern-

ments and a number of associations. Among these, the Reformation Jubilee association is organising a route that links European cities (Europäischer Stationenweg) to show the extent to which the Reformation connects us all, and to offer the occasion to think about its value today.

I also belong to a group of MEPS who are promoting a European Heritage Label to be awarded to especially symbolic sites – more than 100 so far – that embody our cultural and spiritual history. The reason these EU-wide projects are so important is because we Europeans need to build bridges between our national cultures so as to emphasise what we have in common.

The EP's Committee on Culture and Education, along with the intergroup on European Tourism Development and Cultural Heritage, and the non-profit "A Soul for Europe", aimed at bringing an ethical, spiritual dimension to the EU, are pushing for 2018 to be designated as the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

I myself used to work in education before moving into politics in 2007, so I know how much has to be explained and taught if we are going to build a European identity. Travel and school exchanges are crucial to the discovery of other places and mindsets.

It comes as a relief that culture is not affected by the TTIP negotiations: there are so many worthwhile ways of spending public money on culture.

In Germany, the Länder (regions) and cities dispense their cultural budgets on a voluntary basis, but I believe that spending on culture should be compulsory and that investing in culture should be an EU responsibility, comparable to investment in the overall European project. If we want to build a European identity, a “Soul for Europe”, then we must better understand all the complexities of our diversity. A good example is the UK’s project called Fred@ School that is doing a good job of educating young film-goers by screening the European Parliament’s LUX film prize in schools and then encouraging online discussions among students.

We must of course always defend art and freedom of expression, so I am deeply concerned by recent developments in Poland. Public funding of the arts and culture must come with some responsibilities because we also have a duty to reach new audiences, and to build up the cultural experience and expertise of future generations. We in Germany now routinely introduce opera and classical plays with the back story to help new audiences and young people develop their own knowledge and appreciation. We also promote accessibility by bringing performances to city centres, staging events outdoors and supporting innovative cultural projects.

We need to learn from other countries to see how they approach the challenge of bringing people to culture, and culture to people. It’s a long-term

goal that's not easy to achieve quickly. Comparative studies examine things like chewing gum and washing machines, so why not do the same for culture to determine the best ways to make it easily accessible and inexpensive? In Germany, major exhibitions are subsidised by both private and public funding, but for the funding to be made available, a proportion of that has to be devoted to developing educational tools. We all need to share best practices like these, while keeping in mind that one size doesn't fit all.

I have an older sister who has set up an interesting network for artists in Germany as part of a project called *art-to-live-from-the-art*. Basically, it is all about creating a community for artists to help them make a living, and it's particularly useful for artists who work in isolation, including the countryside. Ideas like helping artists to network and promoting exchanges for artists just as Erasmus does for students, are all steps in the right direction.

In EU terms, culture is a national competence where decisions are at Member State and local levels. How best then could we create a dialogue that would commit countries to devoting a minimal proportion of their national budgets to culture? Conditional co-financing by the European Commission might be one way of encouraging this, and if the Commission does not want to spend the money, an alternative would be to see what different EU countries are doing. In Scandinavia, for example,

what proportion of the national budget is spent on culture, and why?

If the European Year of Cultural Heritage becomes reality in 2018, it would be the perfect framework for carrying out a comparative study of national cultural investments, and the European Parliament's research services could be asked to do the work. We would then have the material we need to push matters forward on the cultural front. The future of European society will largely depend also on making culture one of our prime concerns.

Arne Lietz

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Martina Michels

A short and incomplete history of the lack of a cultural-political debate in Europe

In 2004 in my hometown of Berlin, politicians, cultural workers, a handful of foreign ministers and the then European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, attended a groundbreaking conference on European cultural policy called *Europe Needs a Soul*. It was about ways to give greater prominence to culture in European politics.

Among the participants was the German writer and orientalist Navid Kermani who made the point that European integration lacks the pressure of despair. “If Europe doesn’t work out,” he said, “that won’t stop you from being a Dutch, English or French citizens.” Immigrants like himself, he said, were on much shakier ground because he would always be a German-Iranian in European eyes, and he would always be on the outside.

The EU has a long way still to go before it accepts a broader idea of Europe. Kermani argued back then that the EU needs university exchanges between Islamic, Jewish and Christian Oriental studies. We shouldn’t forget, he argued, that the history of the Orient showed how Islam, Judaism and Christianity were closely intermingled at all levels, and not merely in street.¹

Last January's attack on Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket in Paris, followed by November's suicide bombers with their 130 victims, brought to light the vulnerability of our open societies. The attacks were followed by President François Hollande's declaration of war on IS and French Air Force strikes on Syria. The Paris attacks coincided with the unresolved tragedy in Syria but weren't decades of poor integration more to blame?²

Europe can be held partly responsible for some of our global inequalities. And relocating the social and cultural tensions in its midst to somewhere outside the EU will not resolve them, nor will re-building borders or giving secret services the power to scrutinise everyone's lives. Since the Eurozone crisis, the democratic dialogue about integration policy has yet again given way to economic concerns, the securing of resources and market positions. Even left-wing governments like that of Greece have persevered with clearly unsatisfactory austerity measures that will not be able to resolve the social and migrant problems designed by the un-elected Euro-group.

What has this all to do with cultural policy?

The first answer is simple, although hardly new. We need a European cultural policy just as much as we need democratic dialogue. Many people think that cultural policy concerns only art and education, but in fact it goes way beyond that, reaching out further than the confines of universities and

academic institutions. Among other things it will be essential to addressing the issues raised by digitisation, including that the new cultural techniques should be open to everyone, not only people with a higher education or larger incomes. There is also the issue of how poorly considered are jobs in the cultural field, with everyone from event managers to musicians and artists making do on risible pay and with minimal social protection. It is time for people working in this growing sector to be protected by minimum wages and fees, and unemployment benefits. The discussion unfortunately often goes the opposite way: the argument is that cultural workers should be seen as role models for other industries because they put up with hardship and enjoy their work for its creative and innovative dimensions.

The working world of tomorrow is likely to shrink as a result of digitisation, which may mean more free time and different attitudes to the distribution of income and time, and the gender dialogue. We all need more space for education and art experiences, recreation, friends and families, and for social and political commitments. For this, too, we need a democratic dialogue.

And this brings us to the central problem.

Local, national and EU-level politicians underestimate the need for a European cultural policy. The distinction is usually made between hard and soft politics, but that doesn't make sense. We need more

people like Romanian essayist Andrei Plesu³, who was his country's foreign minister and has contributed some wise thinking, instead of the heated language of the "war on terror". We need to think in terms of a second Enlightenment embracing human rights rather than the "clash of civilisations" that is often the mindset of foreign policy, with its subtext of culturalist stereotypes.

In many EU countries, right-wing populists claim to see a threat to an ethnically homogeneous West, when in fact there never was such a thing. Their concept of the West is sometimes close to that of radical Islam with its hatred of Jews and moderate Muslims. We all have a responsibility for creating a framework for a democratic dialogue on issues of global fundamental rights and freedoms. This work needs to involve schools, the media, cultural exchanges, urban policy, economics and cohesion politics, as well as culture. As the German actor and theatre director Sewan Latchinian once said: "Culture may be expensive, but barbarism is more expensive still."

The European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) includes foreign cultural policy on its agenda, and recently discussed at length the report by British Social Democrat Julie Ward⁴ on the role of intercultural dialogue for promoting EU fundamental rights. It is a critical situation; a 2015 hearing revealed that fewer and fewer people now know about the Holocaust and modern

European history. According to one study, languages and inter-cultural skills are no longer considered essential training for teachers and educators.⁵ Yet what we need to fight radicalisation in our countries is in-depth political discussion of what intercultural dialogue really means, and the extent that it concerns domestic and foreign policies.

Another debate that will occupy us increasingly over the coming years concerns the digital single market (DSM). It is of great interest to the members of the Committee on Culture and Education as it concerns the development of society. The European Commission's approach to a digital Europe – like its overall approach to the EU in general – is mainly focused on protecting cross-border online consumers, and less on such other issues as film lending, producing in digital formats, and access to culture and knowledge. And yet the digital revolution will affect education, production and communication as a whole, and not only the world's libraries and universities. But EU policy instead sees digitisation principally as a commercial issue, with some new technology ramifications.

The report on the Digital Single Market Act is almost entirely in the hands of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) and the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO). The only other perspective is provided by the Committee on Culture and Education

(CULT), which has the leading role in the debate on audio-visual media. But surely the concerns raised by the digital agenda affect society as a whole, and not just technology and the single market, and might it not be conceivable in the future to work jointly on such reports? Surely such issues as preserving net neutrality, modernising copyright law and handling the EU's linguistic diversity in the digital world are all political issues that must be answered through political decisions, as well as through cultural policy.

The digital revolution has changed the worlds of business and work, and it has also produced new audiences, new means of transmitting ideas and information, and new ways of archiving and communicating, of exchanging, and new ways of thinking about culture, politics and ethics. The Commission's Digital Single Market strategy should also look at how we acquire knowledge, how we manage municipal tasks, handle integration and cultural exchanges, and protect anti-discrimination principles. In short, it should be clear by now that we need our political debates to have a strong cultural dimension, for cultural policy is increasingly central to all European policymaking. After all, we are citizens before being consumers.

Martina Michels
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- 1 All original quotes are in German, the conclusion: *“Ausgleich mit dem Orient und Islam wie auch mit dem Judentum braucht Räume – keine Hinterhöfe”*, In: Falsafi, Simin: *“Europa eine Seele geben” – auf der Suche nach kultureller Identität. Bericht von einer “Berliner Konferenz” zur Europäischen Kulturpolitik*, In: *Kulturation* 1/2005, http://www.kulturation.de/ki_1_report.php?id=72, last access: 17/02/2016
- 2 Radicalisation and recruitment to all IS structures take place in Europe, too. IS bases its ideas on Islamist theocracy, meaning strict patriarchy and the notion of enemies, who also include other Muslims
- 3 Now rector of the New Europe College, Andrei Plesu was also a speaker and participant at the conference on European cultural Policy 2004, as was the Latvian then Minister of Culture Helena Demakova
- 4 Barry van Driel, representative of the International Association of Intercultural Education, was one of the experts in the Hearing on cultural dialogue, session of CULT-committee, European Parliament, 15/09/2015; Van Driel, Barry: [thehttps://polcms.secure.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/upload/50c3478a-1f4d-4c85-8bf8-c2464742aadd/VanDrielPresentation15092015.pdf](https://polcms.secure.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/upload/50c3478a-1f4d-4c85-8bf8-c2464742aadd/VanDrielPresentation15092015.pdf)
- 5 Ward, Julie: Draft report on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values, 25/09/2015; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-565.021+01+DOC+PDF+Vo//EN&language=EN>

Marietje Schaake

The role of politics in open societies is merely to facilitate cultural expression

The role of politics in open societies is merely to facilitate cultural expression. Orange life vests, draped around pillars at the concert hall in central Berlin. Ai Wei Wei picked them up in Lesbos where he spent time with refugees risking their lives for a better, safer future in Europe. His work makes some people think about their own powerlessness, the refugees in their midst and the many who drowned. Others simply see an artist exploiting the refugees for his own benefit.

Art always leads to discussions, confrontations, questions, different views and diverging perspectives. At least it should. In too many places around the world, questioning the status quo through cultural expression is seen as a threat to the establishment.

Ai Wei Wei left his native China because he could not live and work there in freedom.

Artists are often the first to be targeted when freedoms are restricted, and they often stand in the frontlines of defending liberties. They may upset, insult, challenge or call the bluff of the official narrative. They challenge the status quo and expose the rust beneath the polish. They show beauty in contrast to an ugly reality.

When I visited Bosnia, I was struck by this text on a wall:

'If you are looking for hell, ask the artist where it is. If you don't find the artist, you are already in hell.' – Avigdoor Pawsner

Having worked in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, these words hit home. Europe has seen hell. Artists in Europe have seen hell. And some of it has been turned into beauty.

An Auschwitz survivor said that she never gave up on life, and was never able to completely hate Germans (despite Nazism and the murder of millions of Jews, among them her father) because Freud, Nietzsche and Bach had created beauty. The notion of beauty in people's darkest hours shows how essential art can be. It is not a coincidence that the orchestra in Sarajevo kept playing music while the city was under bombardment.

As new borders are being drawn in Europe, not only are countries raising walls, but perspectives are being narrowed and minds closed. In the Netherlands we have a saying that involves retreating behind our dykes. In a year in which perceived self-interest prevails, the best and most realistic policy space for culture will be a shared European one.

Realistically however, there will not be much room on the agenda in 2016 for new European cultural policies or initiatives. Politicians will have their

hands full seeking solutions to the main challenges in our societies and on the global stage. Whether or not citizens will regain some of the lost trust in politicians' abilities to solve problems together will in turn impact the direction the European Union will take. Will the winners by those parties seeking to return to national territories and contexts, or can openness survive?

Members of the European Parliament will have many other pressing issues to deal with, and not directly relating to cultural policy. The question is whether that is a bad thing. Beyond creating a space for arts and culture to flourish, politics is best when it is far removed from creators. But although politicians should not interfere, that does not mean that they shouldn't do anything at all.

Maintaining a space for free expression and for exchanges between people, creating room and resources to foster the intrinsic value of art, without considering its marketability, and promoting the value of culture in education must remain key priorities for all politicians; not just those serving in the European Parliament. It will remain a challenge to ensure that budgets for culture are not further cut, especially in these times of slow economic growth. New technologies offer great opportunities for connecting audiences and artistic creation. Art, culture and technological innovation go hand in hand. Artists and creative people have a responsibility to embrace

these new technologies, to look for new business models and thereby ensure they can share their work with broader audiences across the globe.

By sharing literature, film, music and cultural heritage, minds can be opened and bridges built. We need a global perspective to foster exchanges, and connections to new ideas, expressions and audiences. But this global perspective should also remind us Europeans of the many places where people face far greater problems than we do.

With an unprecedented eruption of violence in countries close to Europe, the impact of war and repression on freedoms and cultural expression should not be underestimated. The frontier of the struggle for human rights is moving online. Bloggers, writers, cartoonists and other artists are imprisoned, intimidated, even killed, all because of what they do online.

Yet the open internet and new technologies also provide tremendous opportunities for civic participation, freedom of expression and access to information. People rely on the internet for access to information, and can only express themselves freely when this information and their communications are uncensored. The right to cultural development and other fundamental rights is increasingly facilitated by new technologies.

The opportunities for global connectivity around cultural content should be celebrated and facilitated, for example, through Europeana, or museum and

festival websites, and the online music and entertainment industries. Policy proposals aimed at building a European Digital Single Market should be embraced as wonderful opportunities to ensure easier connection between creators and audiences. Copyright reform and open access should be embraced by those seeking to maintain cultural diversity.

Looking at the year ahead, creating new cultural policies will be difficult. Opportunities lie in considering culture as an integral part of other policy areas. But politics should only be there to facilitate, and the artists and makers left to do what they do best: create beautiful, shocking, strange or thought-provoking works.

Marietje Schaake

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*Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe,
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Helga Trüpel

The EU has much to gain from having a cultural policy

When I worked in Bremen in the mid-1990s as Minister for Culture and the Integration of Immigrants, I learnt two main lessons: that it is crucial to invest in culture and self-expression, and that we have to reach out to migrants. At that time, immigrants in Bremen were generally first and second generation Turks who lived most of them in parallel worlds. Among other things, we opened up the educational system to Turkish culture, ensured that libraries had books in Turkish and Arabic, and that cultural initiatives were also aimed at migrant audiences. Things in Bremen today are still far from perfect, but our thrust intended to encourage people from different backgrounds to collaborate on common projects. I remember a Turkish artist telling me at an exhibition, “I’d like the critics to say something about my pictures, and not just about where I come from.”

Now that I sit on the European Parliament’s Committee on Culture and Education, which deals with cross-cultural programmes like Creative Europe, I am involved in promoting cultural diversity across the European Union. One of the Committee’s political messages is that the EU is not about standardising cultures, quite the opposite. It’s

about encouraging greater cultural diversity, more possibilities, more openness, more offers. Within the next few years I'd like to see a shift in EU budgets with increased investment in cultural policies and the creative industries, alongside a continued adherence to a democratic concept of culture. Beyond the arts, culture is also very much about our common understanding of how we live together, and how we handle conflict and social tensions.

Europe definitely needs a cultural policy, which doesn't mean removing competences from Member States, but encouraging more cross-border budgets and initiatives. The cultural sector, its artists and thinkers, could contribute to this new policy by speaking publicly about why their contribution is urgently needed, why people should care about artistic production. The fact is that cultural activities contribute to each and every person's development, and makes them better able to enjoy life and participate in the general social well-being. For this reason it is a fundamental right.

I would always defend free expression, but also that public funding comes with some responsibility, such as that of reaching out to audiences that wouldn't normally be concerned, more marginalised people, whether young, hard-up or migrant. EU cultural policy has the potential of actively contributing to European citizenship by increasing people's ability to think for themselves, and to come up with

their own ideas about what they want to achieve. People with a wider culture are better equipped to have a voice in society, to express ideas perhaps linked to their cultural experiences that could contribute to solving some of society's problems.

We are defending a key number of principles in the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreement. One of these is to link these agreement with the Unesco Convention on Cultural Diversity, the legally-binding international agreement the EU signed ten years ago that ensures a broad range of cultural coverage by cultural actors. This would include a clause stating that offline and online audiovisual media services be excluded from the scope of the TTIP agreement, so that we can hold on to the so-called cultural exception. We at the European Parliament want to be able to subsidise our cultural sectors, and to regulate audiovisual media services, among other things concerning the protection of minors and the clear distinction in ads between content and advertising. Europe has a clear common approach towards cultural policy that must be defended.

Another key issue of cultural policy is intercultural dialogue, now that most EU countries have become migration societies. Without it, we will not be able to prevent marginalisation, intolerance, racism and radicalisation. Right-wing populists are naturally opposed to this idea, but based on the

rule of law, respect for human rights and freedom of expression, we have a huge need for intercultural dialogue and contact with people from different cultures. The cultural richness of our societies can only ever be based on the rule of law, but once that basic premise has been agreed, then we want to interact with people from different backgrounds at every level – in kindergarten, at school, in youth politics, at work.

In Germany, civil society and parts of the political world are extremely keen on promoting intercultural dialogue, which is seen as a way of enriching our perspective on people from other cultures and religions, while also offering an opportunity to experience other people's viewpoints and learn from them. We need to understand different religions and backgrounds in order to confront radicalisation. There is a huge interest in Germany for the issue of where imams receive their education. By using the full potential of freedom of religion and dialogue, we can start to combat the radicalisation of people behind closed doors. That means, of course, that we need to spend money in this area.

We know that integration has failed in many EU countries, particularly among second and third generation immigrants. More needs to be done to ensure that all people who respect the rule of law are integral, respected members of society. I remember talking to the German publisher and Islam scholar

Lamya Kaddor who said that in her experience it is still not considered normal to be a Muslim German. It is still very much the case that people from migrant backgrounds don't feel part of society, and so we must push for inclusive, anti-discriminatory policies in the educational system, in jobs, within the police and health system. These people are urgently needed, as they can reach out to members of their own communities in a manner that may be sensitive and completely appropriate.

It is in our European interest to make it clear that no national culture prevails over another, so long as it is based on the rule of law and respect of human rights. We have to fight against nationalism in culture, like that defended by the right-wing in France who claim that French culture is superior to African culture, for instance. The European Parliament has a resolution on intercultural dialogue that is strongly opposed by the Front National and other right-wing parties, but our democratic concept is to eschew this sense of superiority.

It is also important that institutions reach out to young people because they are the adults of tomorrow, and art has to be made interesting for them. In France, the film world has been doing good work with special ticket prices for young people, and many film clubs that invite film-makers and actors for discussions with young audiences. In the same way, we need to reach out to migrants, and also

learn about their own cultures, literatures and theatrical traditions.

It isn't possible to achieve any of these goals without adequate budgets. The Committee on Culture and Education is actively campaigning for an increase in culture budgets, both at EU and national levels, as are cultural organisations all over Europe. Europe for Citizens is one programme that involves twinning with other cities, remembrance projects, and initiatives that boost democratic participation at EU level. The campaign for encouraging countries to devote a percentage of their budgets to culture based on GDP is an excellent initiative we can work towards achieving by talking to our national colleagues. The Commission can encourage this through open methods of coordination where Member State representatives and the Commission engage in discussions on this issue. We must never forget that culture is an essential part of society because it allows people to have uplifting experiences they cannot have anywhere else.

Helga Trüpel

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Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Germany

Julie Ward

Culture is the battlefield of European politics

Culture is a much disputed and controversial concept, as well as a highly political issue, in Member States and at a European level too. But, contrary to notions promulgated by conservative and retrograde forces, it is not a fixed state or a static object.

Since time immemorial, culture has been subject to outside influences, constantly evolving, changing with societies as they face new challenges, claiming some things and losing others, absorbing the old and the new, the familiar and the foreign, creating hybrid models. We can witness this in the language we speak, the customs and traditions we observe, the food we eat and the art and artefacts we create.

In response to recent dramatic events in Europe, I want to celebrate cultural diversity, empower marginalised communities through the arts and culture and, ultimately, share a positive narrative on cultures and co-existence. This should be the ultimate aim of European cultural policy, and it is the only way to break down the barriers that lead to discrimination, racism and extremism.

Today more than ever, it is important to reclaim culture as a common good that can offer communal space (real and online) for exploring common concerns as we strive towards a more open, more

inclusive, more participatory, and more cooperative model of democracy for the 21st century.

For me culture is part of what we understand when we talk about ‘the commons’, an archaic concept that preserved open land as a free resource for the community. Culture must be a shared resource and a public good, not a separate ‘policy’ subject. This is the stance I want to take as a member of the committee on Culture and Education in the European Parliament.

- 1 Intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and cultural diplomacy as tools to face current challenges

Years of economic crisis and austerity have resulted in a sense of alienation and distrust. The European Parliament itself gives shelter to a far-right group that brings together fascist, anti-democratic and xenophobic parties that want to tear Europe apart. The migratory and refugee crisis the EU will continue to face over the coming years will push our societies to change and adapt very quickly.

Too often in a crisis, the dominant narrative is that somebody else is to blame for the world’s problems. This gives rise to a culture of fear. Divisive language and discrimination (as well as cultural, social and economic factors) can cause segregation and alienation. This, I would argue, is the genesis of violent extremism, which is not the sole preserve

of jihadists associated with Da'esh but also of white supremacist racist groups like the English Defence League. However, when people come together and talk honestly, sharing each other's culture, they learn that we're all humans with common aspirations and concerns.

By addressing stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, intercultural dialogue offers a counter narrative to hate speech, scapegoating and political strategies that exploit fear and mistrust.

These are turbulent times for democracy and they remind us of the pressing need to reinvigorate and reinforce healthy dialogue between all kinds of communities, leading to a better understanding and acceptance of common fundamental values, thereby laying the foundations for more inclusive and pluralistic societies.

Increasing cultural pluralism requires active participation in democratic processes at all levels, not only concerning citizens' participation in institutional structures, but also through the development of dialogue and consensus between groups with different interests, origins and backgrounds. This, incidentally, is how the European Parliament works.

The next generation need to be open, inclusive and responsible. To this end, we need to prepare young people with the motivation, commitment and skills, such as entrepreneurship, leadership, volunteering and capacity building, to be audacious

problem-solvers. They need to develop their critical and creative thinking so as to deal with different opinions, acquire media literacy and develop intercultural skills, as well as social and civic competences, including learning about cultural heritage.

Culture is a transformative tool within European societies and beyond the borders of the EU. Culture plays a key role in fostering democratisation, peace-building, sustainable development and respect of human rights. The development of a dynamic role for culture on the international stage as a “soft power” can benefit the EU and its Member States in their relations with the wider world.

The digital revolution should not be overlooked. New democratic participation is on the move. New technologies, the web and social media, have allowed for new connections, new mobilisation, and a new common digital sphere. Culture and creativity is at the heart of this revolution. Stakeholders, users and policy makers must collaborate to ensure that the digitalisation of societies represents opportunities for accessing and sharing the arts and culture, and not a threat to its diversity.

2 Implication in terms of cultural policy

As a socialist I want to promote the role of culture in the development and wellbeing of individuals and communities. I want to make sure that the social

value of culture is not forgotten in the debate when the “economic” argument often prevails.

The first target of EU cultural policy should be people who are disengaged with Europe and politics. It should aim at ensuring collective and individual development. A bold cultural policy must reach out to citizens, support smaller organisations and not only the big players, develop individual creativity, encourage active participation by all, but particularly young people, marginalised and disadvantaged people. It must encourage intercultural exchange and dialogue and thus contribute to social cohesion and more caring and compassionate societies.

Adopting a rights-based approach to culture, not only in terms of access and participation in cultural activities, but also in relation to freedom of creation and protection and promotion of cultural diversity, would allow a coherent, integrated, evidence-based and goals-driven cultural policy. This would cover the contribution of culture to societies as already outlined, whilst including useful mechanisms for monitoring.

Addressing the challenges of today and tomorrow requires that culture be integrated in a transversal way into all policy areas such as children and youth policy, education, mobility, employment and social affairs, foreign affairs, security and internal affairs as well as women’s rights and gender equality, and regional development. A greater and more coherent

cooperation between different policy structures and subject areas is needed, not just at EU level but also at national and local level.

Enhancing the use of culture in EU external relations cannot be done on an ad-hoc basis anymore. It is time for the EU to adopt a bold and comprehensive strategy for cultural diplomacy that promotes exchanges and collaboration with local and grassroots organisations and civil society, from both EU Member States and third countries, in order to promote EU fundamental values.

To this end, policy and decision makers, together with all relevant staff, must themselves be equipped with intercultural competences, and therefore be provided with proper training and support if necessary. It also requires greater cooperation between international institutions, notably the EU, its Member States and international organisations like the United Nations and its related agencies, in particular UNESCO, UNICEF and UNHCR, towards a better implementation of existing instruments and the design of new tools to tackle common challenges in a globalised world.

Finally, I deeply believe that, beyond the action of policy and law makers, more consideration must be given to the power of civil society to pursue intercultural exchange, people-to-people dialogue, peace-building initiatives and citizenship engagement, in order to put empowerment of communities at the

core of strengthening social cohesion. To this end, structural and sustainable support must be provided to NGOs, networks and training institutions, as well as all relevant organisations and small scale initiatives working at the grassroots level. In my experience it is always these organisations who take the boldest steps, reaching out and communicating, building bridges for others to cross.

Julie Ward

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European House for Culture members on the future of cultural policy in Europe

As the final touches were being put on this publication, the European House for Culture and deBuren co-hosted the Brussels Conversations on March 14, 2016. This annual event brings together European House for Culture members and their supporters, all dynamic professionals deeply committed to culture and the concept of Europe as a cultural project, to discuss ongoing advocacy work and to formulate a strategy to achieve their goals. The European House for Culture connects citizens and political leaders for them to build a common European public space and a culture of proactive citizenship. It develops projects and policies ensuring that Europe is using its dynamic cultural assets and creativity to their full potential.

This year's Brussels Conversations brought together more than 20 influential personalities for a roundtable discussion about the policy campaign discussed here, *The Decisive Deal: A European Resolution on Culture, For Values, Democracy and Citizenship*. A participatory project, it has over the last years gathered input from citizens across Europe on their vision of the future of culture in Europe and how policy makers can help achieve

some of these goals. The discussion looked into the policy aims of the sector, the aims of the leading policy makers and institutions, and where they overlapped and differed. The European House for Culture and its members hope these discussions will form the foundation on which we can develop meaningful policies with a real impact on the sector and Europe's citizens at large. We also hope that others, and foremost the European Institutions, will join us in this mission.

The essays presented here served as the content discussed at the latest edition of the Brussels Conversations. They consider the role culture plays in citizenship across Europe and envision the mutual responsibility that culture and Europe bear towards one another. They represent the individual visions of nine Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), from the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, Greens/European Free Alliance, and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. And, notably, the view of the commissioner for culture, Tibor Navracsics. The participation of a Commissioner and nine MEPs demonstrates the European institutions strong commitment to culture. These were among the questions we asked them to consider:

- Should European cultural policy shift from fragmented national solutions to European

ones? How can the cultural sector participate the shift?

- How can policy makers at the European level ensure that participation in cultural activities is recognised as a fundamental right and a stepping stone towards political and social objectives?
- How can we reframe the way the cultural sector lobbies?
- How could the European Parliament drive a dialogue to reach an agreement on the minimum percentage of budgets as a percentage of GDP that Member States should allocate to cultural programmes, demonstrating their equal responsibility towards culture?
- What legislative action can the European Parliament take to give culture a stronger role in the European Institutions' legislative agenda?

Several themes emerged from the essays that were pivotal elements in the discussions. One theme of tantamount importance was the need to feature artists at the centre of all actions, putting them in direct contact with those making policy decisions that affect their day-to-day lives. Participants thought that discussions with policy makers are too often in the hands of managers and networks, and rarely feature the artists themselves. This was a growing trend, as MEP Martina Michels reminds us in her

essay that “lousy payment is typical” in these sectors, and detects a pattern of self-exploitation. Bringing artists and audiences back to the fore in this process will help make sure their needs can be met.

Another key topic in the European Resolution on Culture and the essays in this book pertain to public spending on culture. MEP Arne Lietz states, “Spending on culture should be compulsory and investing in culture should be an EU responsibility, comparable to investment in the overall European project.” Participants discussed the need for direct action with the European Parliament, but also a concerted effort in local and national contexts to raise awareness of the need for this resolution. One key suggestion was to focus on governments that already devote notable national budget percentages to culture. These could serve as examples of good practice, and also as allies for inspiring action in Member States where budgetary allocation to culture is insufficient for it to thrive and benefit as many citizens as possible.

Linked to the issue of funding is that of subsidiarity. Culture is the competence of Member States, and the goals set out in the resolution can only be implemented if approved in each country. The goal of the dialogues is to establish a European model for a cultural policy that streamlines all levels of

governance. Each level of governance has an important role to play, but considering the increasing mobility of cultural operators and creative works within the EU and beyond, one can't react to new needs and trends if there are 28 approaches dividing responsibility between local, regional, national and European actors. This issue needs to be discussed between Ministries of Culture and Ministers of Culture. The European House for Culture hopes that the European Institutions will support this dialogue and will push its members and partners to support the process in their own member states.

As the European House for Culture and partner organisations have pointed out, Europe's cultural diversity, power and influence are invaluable resources; they should therefore be a driving force in engaging Europe's citizens in an EU-level project. Only by developing a practical framework capitalises on culture as a driver of strong mechanisms for greater civic values can we ensure that culture contributes fully to European society. As MEP Julia Ward writes here, "Today more than ever, it is important to reclaim culture as a common good that can offer communal space (real and online) for exploring common concerns as we strive towards a more open, more inclusive, more participatory, and more cooperative model of democracy for the 21st century."

The goals suggested by those political leaders who have contributed to this publication and the participants at the Brussels Conversations 2016 will serve as the topics for the work we are undertaking in 2016. Participants agreed how important it is to embed these discussions in existing cultural frameworks, from festivals to operas to rock concerts. The European House for Culture and its members envision that *The Decisive Deal: A European Resolution on Culture, For Values, Democracy and Citizenship* and this publication will inspire action with the European institutions, and nationally around Europe. Our members have clear ideas on how to achieve these goals and invite you to join invite you to join them in a collaborative work process.

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The European House for Culture aims to be a House of welcome and encounters for all who believe that Culture and Art have a fundamental role to play in society – a place where the voice of the cultural sector is given a physical manifestation. It is an initiative of EFA. The European Festivals Association (EFA) has been uniting distinguished music, dance, theatre and multidisciplinary arts festivals from Europe and beyond for more than 60 years.

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The sixth publication in the EFA book series, published by the European Festival Association's (EFA) and the European House for Culture, features essays from leading lawmakers from the European Institutions on the future of cultural policy in Europe. A number of Members of the European Parliament and the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport were invited to contribute to this volume, sharing their personal visions for the role culture can play in European policy development and decision making.

The essays are part of an ongoing campaign the European House for Culture has been working on called The Decisive Deal: A European Resolution on Culture, For Values, Democracy and Citizenship. The participatory process has gathered citizens' ideas on cultural policy from across Europe and advanced them during various events and online over the last several years. We envision that the Resolution and this publication will inspire action in the European Institutions, in the Member States at large, as well as the local level. We invite you to join us in this collaborative work process.

These may only be a few voices, of course, but they are strong voices that help the cultural sector reach out to other politicians and state, loud and clear, that Europe needs a fresh outlook on its future, and that future is only possible with culture at the centre of political agendas.

Beyond Visions is the 6th publication of the EFA BOOKS series launched in 2006.

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