

Shaping Culture for Tomorrow's Europe

Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović, Europa Nostra General Secretary and EUYO Advisory Council member, reflects on what the new Cultural deal for Europe initiative means for Europe's future.

"Culture is what brings us together". This is the bold opening of the joint statement of a [Cultural deal for Europe](#), a call to EU and national policymakers to commit to an ambitious strategy for reviving and reimagining Europe through culture. Such a call comes from three important pan-European associations: [Culture Action Europe](#), the [European Cultural Foundation](#) and [Europa Nostra](#). We asked Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović to help us better understand the goals and progress of this important initiative.

*Dear Sneška, on 18 November 2020, the **Cultural deal for Europe** launched with an online event involving an impressive group of speakers, including the European Commissioner for innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth Mariya Gabriel, the Chair of the EU Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education Sabine Verheyen, and the President of the European Committee of the Regions*

Apostolos Tzitzikostas. Video messages also came from EU Parliament President and EUYO Honorary President David Sassoli and the French Secretary of State for European Affairs Clément Beaune. Over 450 participants from the European cultural community gathered online. What were the aims and the proposals presented by, and to, this astonishing array of Europe's cultural policymakers?

Our shared culture and cultural heritage provides meaning to the European project and touches the heart of millions of citizens. Faced with an unprecedented crisis, the European cultural community has joined forces to promote unprecedented solutions.

We propose a transversal and overarching *Cultural Deal for Europe*, which should demonstrate the EU's political commitment and ambition to **place culture at the heart of the European project** with its numerous interconnected policies and actions.

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

More specifically, we call on the European Union and the Member States to launch a comprehensive and ambitious *Cultural Deal for Europe*, which would entail the following:

- The earmarking of at least 2% of the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility for culture;
- National recovery and resilience plans with a cultural and European dimension;
- The inclusion of culture in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the European Green Deal;
- The mainstreaming of funding for culture is into all relevant EU programmes and actions;
- The relevant and timely support to cultural workers;



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Europa Nostra General Secretary and EUYO Advisory Council member.

- The creation of public-philanthropy partnerships to be associated strategically in the recovery of Europe;
- The upholding of democracy and rights, for a values-based Europe;
- The inclusion of culture as a key element of the EU's external relations;
- The integration of a cultural dimension into the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe.

All in all, we call for the rightful recognition of culture, not only as a vital sector but as an indispensable vector for achieving Europe's recover and revival.

In the online meeting, you personally mentioned that the challenges that the global pandemic unexpectedly posed for us could also reveal unprecedented opportunities for culture. What could those be for the young musicians of the EUYO, for instance?

Despite the heavily damaging effects of the pandemic, particularly for the cultural sector, it also provides us with the opportunity to reset and rebuild our societies and economies, to change our way of life.

There is an urgent need to develop value-based policies, actions, funding, and thus to give a deeper meaning to the entire European project. We firmly believe that our shared culture, heritage and values provide this missing link with citizens and

are powerful assets to achieve the EU's key policy priorities, such as the green and digital transformation as well as stronger social cohesion and inclusion.

In today's times of ongoing confinement, it became even more obvious that **culture has a positive impact on people's wellbeing**, thanks to the wide cultural offer available digitally.

This surge was a most-needed development to bring culture closer to homes and schools. At the same time, digital tools helped artists continue or even expand their activities across borders.

This is an incredible opportunity for the young

musicians of the EUYO to reach an even wider audience, to connect with fellow young musicians across Europe or the world, and to raise awareness of the power of music to bring people closer together.

The Cultural Deal for Europe does not just request an increase of public funding on the cultural sector, but proposes to make culture part of an all-encompassing strategy for sustainable development and environmental policies. What could be the role of organizations such as the EUYO in achieving these ambitious goals?

The world of culture and cultural heritage is severely impacted by climate change, but at the same time provides solutions to achieve the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

For a real green, inclusive, fair and sustainable recovery, there is a need to adopt a holistic strategy with a strong cultural dimension. This is key for addressing societal, environmental and economic challenges that need the most transversal and multidisciplinary responses.

Many components of the European Green Deal, such as building renovation, circular economy or the 'Farm to Fork' and biodiversity strategies, are inseparable from cultural values and resources, as demonstrated by our **European Cultural Heritage Green Paper** which

was presented on 22 March 2021.

This is why civil society organisations such as Europa Nostra, Culture Action Europe, the European Cultural Foundation, the members of the European Heritage Alliance, and the EUYO, have to join voices and forces.

By mobilising our efforts, we shall create an even wider movement reflecting the diversity of cultural disciplines, raise awareness of new audiences and the general public, and effectively reach out to a larger number of policy-makers.

We are, indeed, much stronger and better together!

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Want to hear more?
 Stay in touch!



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The heads of state and government, the ministers of foreign affairs and culture of the EU member states



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