



INVITATION

HIGH LEVEL BACK-TO-BACK EVENT

EUROPEAN UNION OF CULTURE

Paving the way for new cultural diplomacy approaches and improved economic growth of creative and cultural sectors

Thursday 30 March, from 10:30 to 12:30

Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Sala Luca Giordano, Via Cavour 1, Florence

10:30 **OPENING**

WELCOME SPEECH

Dario NARDELLA
Mayor of Florence

OPENING REMARKS

Beatrice COVASSI
Head of Representation of the European Commission in Italy

10:50 **DEBATE**

"The role of innovative public-private partnerships to promote economic growth and cultural dialogue"

Paolo BARATTA
President, La Biennale di Venezia

Marco CAMMELLI
President of Cultural Activities and Heritage Commission, Acri

Silvia COSTA
MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Culture and Education Committee

Matteo DEL FANTE
President, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi

Eike SCHMIDT
Director, Uffizi Gallery

Corrado SFORZA FOGLIANI
Vice President, ABI

Andrea ZAPPIA
Chief Executive Officer, Sky Italia

12:00 **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Dario FRANCESCHINI
Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism

Tibor NAVRACSICS
European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

MODERATOR
Paolo ERMINI
Director, Corriere Fiorentino

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BACKGROUND NOTES

On June 2016 the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy presented the Communication “Strategy for International Cultural Relations” aimed at fostering cultural cooperation between the EU and its partners Countries and to promote a global order based on peace, rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental values.

This act falls within the framework of the 2030 Agenda recently adopted by the EU that recognises global citizenship, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as horizontal principles for the sustainable development of the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

Culture has increasingly become an **element of economic growth, not only in its traditional forms, but also especially due to the development of the cultural and creative industries - particularly SMEs - and tourism.**

The EU creative and cultural sector alone involves 3 million companies, employs 12 million people - about 7,5% of the EU workforce - and produces 509 billion euros, about 5,3% of the EU GDP and 13% of its total exports (2014). If we add the high-end range companies to the creative and cultural enterprises the figures increase by 1,7 million for employees and a further 4% for GDP.

This strengthens the opinion that **the synergies with other sectors are essential and that the public sector, the private sector and the civil society should be more involved.** Moreover, support tools offered to the sector are playing an increasingly important role. The Commission has negotiated with the European

Investment Bank that the European Investment Fund, fittingly and co-guaranteed by EU funds, create a “family” of ad hoc tools aimed at supporting programmes such as COSME (SMEs), Erasmus+ (Education and training), Horizon 2020 (research), LIFE (social), EASI and Creative Europe (culture, creativity, audio-visual), that is now entering its operative phase.

The COSME and Horizon 2020 funds have already demonstrated that the demand is higher than the annual forecasted availability and, through the EFSI fund (The European Fund for Strategic Investments), they have been able to obtain that the total amount established for the seven-year period would be made available from 2017/2018. The same could happen with Creative Europe - in this regard, there have already been some steps taken by the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council.

This strategy compliments the agreement reached last February by the Council and by the European Parliament on the decision taken by the Commission that has instituted the **European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018.** This is an historic occasion to raise awareness of the importance of history and European values and strengthen the sense of European identity focusing on the promotion of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion.

Among the main objectives there are also those to **highlight the economic contribution offered by our European cultural heritage for small and medium enterprises active in the cultural and creative sectors** and for local and regional development. Cultural heritage also plays a role in the EU external relations, including post-war reconciliation and the reconstruction of cultural heritage destroyed during the war.

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KEY ISSUES AND POSSIBLE THOUGHTS FOR DEBATE

- What role do culture and cultural cooperation play in the EU foreign policy as a tool for integration, growth and sustainable development in the current international scenario?
- What is the importance of the intercultural dialogue in countering stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue, freedom of creative expression, dignity and mutual respect?
- Can these tools contribute to avoiding conflicts and promoting reconciliation within and among Countries? Can they meet the global challenges such as refugees integration, the fight against violent radicalization and the safeguarding our global cultural heritage?
- What is the social and economic impact generated by the cultural heritage within and outside the European Union?
- Communication plays a significant role in deepening and making international cultural relations more effective by creating opportunities, synergies and optimizing the socio-economic advantages. What is the role of public and private operators, as well as national cultural institutes?
- What changes in public policies are needed to improve private investments and a greater solidity of the creative and cultural industry?
- What support tools and incentive mechanisms need to be adopted in order to enhance the potential growth of the creative and cultural enterprises and to safeguard the intellectual property?
- What priorities at European and national levels are necessary to develop a more supportive environment? What tools could be adopted to provide companies with a more efficient framework to strengthen the investments in innovation and, in doing so, increase cultural supply? How can the demand for innovative cultural services/products be stimulated and qualified?
- What are, today, the barriers to be removed in order to facilitate dialogue between the financial sector and the cultural and creative enterprises?
- What are the main challenges and goals in terms of strengthening the European identity looking ahead to 2018 as the European Year of Cultural Heritage?