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THE VENICE CALL TO ACTION: FOR A NEW EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE SEPTEMBER 2021

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The Venice Call to Action: “For a New European Renaissance”

We, the civil society actors of the worlds of culture and cultural heritage,

- Representing** hundreds of associations and foundations, as well as thousands of individuals, throughout Europe and beyond, whose action is relevant and beneficial for all branches of society;
- Gathered** in Venice from 21 to 24 September 2021 on the occasion of the first European Heritage Summit¹ since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Conscious** of the profound impact caused by this pandemic on our living and working conditions, and on the future of our societies; as well as of the vital positive contribution of culture and cultural heritage for improving mental and physical health of Europe’s citizens and their communities;
- Empowered** by the formidable momentum and major policy achievements generated by the European Year of Cultural Heritage held in 2018 and the need to ensure its long-lasting legacy;
- Encouraged** by the recent initiatives launched by the European Union to tackle the most pressing challenges facing our continent, with special reference to climate change, wellbeing, inclusion, the digital transformation as well as the increasing geopolitical tensions across the world;
- Prompted** in particular by the recent calls by the European Union for civil society input and participation aiming, on the one hand, to foster a more beautiful, more sustainable and more inclusive living environment in Europe, through the New European Bauhaus initiative, and, on the other, to define the next generation’s strategic goals and priorities, through the Conference on the Future of Europe;
- Convinced** that the successful implementation of these initiatives cannot be ensured without the underlying values - ethical, aesthetic and ecological - which represent the very foundation of the European project, and which give a soul to our common endeavour;
- Underlying** that our shared heritage and memory is not only reflected in the beauty of our historic cities, villages and cultural landscapes, but encompasses a wider spectrum of our tangible, intangible, natural and digital heritage, from the preservation of our coasts, rivers, forests and mountains, to the transmission of our skills and traditions, the digitalisation of our heritage assets or the protection and enhancement of our agricultural products;
- Recalling** that any reflection on the future of our continent must duly take into consideration the lessons and testimonies of the past, as much as the present-day reality of our living and working environments;
- Stressing**, in this crucial moment of our collective reflection and action, the holistic and humanistic nature of the European project, as well as the need to promote solidarity, to strengthen the sense of togetherness and to nurture an European sentiment;
- Inspired** by the symbol and uniqueness of the host city of our European Cultural Heritage Summit, Venice, which celebrates this year its 1600th anniversary while facing serious threats and complex challenges for the sustainable future of this World Heritage City and its Lagoon;
- Driven** by a strong sense of urgency to undertake adequate action due to the gravity and acuteness of the many issues at stake for the survival of our planet, for the well-being of humankind and for the safeguard of democracy and fundamental human rights;

¹ <https://www.europanostra.org/european-heritage-summit/>



As civil society actors of the worlds of culture and cultural heritage, coming from all parts of Europe and beyond, and from all age groups within our society,

Call on to European leaders active at all levels of governance - European, national, regional and local -, as well as to all heritage actors - public, private and civil society -, to duly integrate the transformative power of culture and cultural heritage among the strategic priorities for the reshaping of our societies.

We urge them, in particular to:

1. Put Europe's shared heritage at the heart of the **European Green Deal**, in line with the analysis and recommendations formulated in the "**European Cultural Heritage Green Paper**"² and further stress the relevance of culture-based climate action in the work leading up to the **COP26** and in any follow-up action thereafter.
2. Establish appropriate synergies between the **Davos Baukultur Quality Principles**³, the **New European Bauhaus**⁴ and the **European quality principles for EU-funded interventions with potential impact upon cultural heritage**⁵, and ensure these are duly incorporated in all European policy and funding programmes having a direct or indirect impact on cultural heritage.
3. Underline in all future actions, the close links between **culture, education, heritage and the dialogue between cultures**, based on the Council of Europe's principles on the value of cultural heritage for society, also known as the **Faro Convention**⁶, and stress the vital links between the right to cultural heritage and the wide range of cultural, social, economic and environmental rights.
4. Empower the **younger generation** - including Europe's students, volunteers and young heritage professionals - to actively participate in the shaping of a more sustainable future, deploying the multiple value of our shared cultural heritage and through meaningful inter-generational dialogue, in particular during the forthcoming **2022 Year of European Youth**.
5. Enable **Europe's cities and regions** to duly incorporate cultural heritage as a key transversal and intersectional resource for the implementation of the United Nations' **17 Sustainable Development Goals**.
6. Dedicate a **special inter-committee hearing** in the **European Parliament** on the future of historic cities, sites and related landscapes affected by the effects of climate change and mass tourism, with special reference to Venice and its Lagoon.
7. Help transform **Venice** into a **European creative and innovation hub** capable of putting forward concrete ideas and solutions for a better future, based on the notions of quality of life, wellbeing, sustainability, innovation, multiculturalism and social inclusion.
8. Include, systematically, the actors of **civil society** - with their vast knowledge, expertise and networks - in shaping adequate solutions and undertaking effective action for the world's societal, environmental and economic transformation challenges.
9. Recognise, more specifically, the significant role and impact of **private foundations** active in the wider field of culture and cultural heritage and provide more favourable conditions and adequate incentives for the development of **philanthropy with a European purpose**.

² European Cultural Heritage Green Paper "Putting Europe's shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal"
<https://www.europanostra.org/putting-europes-shared-heritage-at-the-heart-of-the-european-green-deal/>

³ <https://davosdeclaration2018.ch/quality-system/>

⁴ https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/index_en

⁵ (2019) European quality principles for EU-funded interventions with potential impact upon cultural heritage. Manual. ICOMOS International, Paris, 66p. ISBN 978-2-918086-25-3.

⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention>

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10. Foster **public-private partnerships and investments** in the wider field of culture and cultural heritage, and enable closer and stronger synergies between the business community and the wide cultural, heritage and creative ecosystem, among others through strengthening a strategic alliance between the European heritage movement and the **European Investment Bank and its Institute**.
 11. In the context of EU's **external relations**, mobilise the heritage ecosystem and stakeholders inside and outside the EU, to implement - through concrete and imaginative action - the principles and objectives of the **EU Council conclusions (adopted on 21 June 2021) to enhance the role of culture and heritage in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises**⁷.
 12. Pursue the ground-breaking initiative undertaken by the **Italian Presidency of the G20** to organise, for the first time ever, a ministerial meeting specifically devoted to culture, whose proceedings are reflected in the ambitious **Rome Declaration adopted under the motto "Culture Unites the World"**⁸.

Capitalising on the role and contribution of culture and heritage in improving social and democratic participation as well as civic awareness, we trust that European leaders will ensure their adequate inclusion in the debates of the **Conference on the Future of Europe**, including through proper representation in its Plenary and final Conclusions.

We stand ready to build on the strong messages formulated at the **European Cultural Heritage Summit** organised in Venice by **Europa Nostra** – with the patronage of and in close cooperation with European, Italian and Venetian partners-, and to establish appropriate follow-up actions and proposals to ensure a more humane, beautiful, sustainable and inclusive Europe, contributing thereby to a New European Renaissance.

⁷ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9837-2021-INIT/en/pdf>

⁸ https://media.beniculturali.it/mibac/files/boards/be78e33bc8ca0c99bff70aa174035096/PDF/DichiarazioneFinale_G20_ENG.pdf

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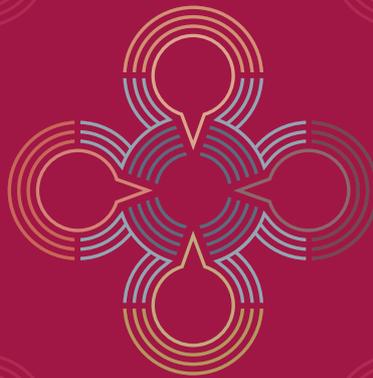
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The Venice Call to Action: For a New European Renaissance was presented at European Heritage Policy Agora “FROM THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS TO THE NEW EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE” held on 24 September 2021 at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, as the concluding event of the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2021 in Venice. The Summit was organised by Europa Nostra in collaboration with its Venice-based member organisation the Association of International Private Committees for the Safeguarding of Venice, and under the patronage of the European Parliament, the Italian Minister of Culture and the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

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