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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture

Strasbourg, 1 April 2022

“Creating our future: Creativity and cultural heritage as strategic resources for a diverse and democratic Europe”

Final Declaration

We, Ministers responsible for Culture and Cultural Heritage of the Council of Europe's member States and of the Holy See, meeting in hybrid form in Strasbourg on 1 April 2022

- Reaffirming our commitment to the fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- Condemning in the strongest terms the armed attack on Ukraine by the Russian Federation and reaffirming our support to Ukraine and our solidarity with its people;
- Recalling Resolution CM/Res(2022)2 on the cessation of the membership of the Russian Federation to the Council of Europe (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 March 2022 at the 1428th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies);
- Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the ideals, principles and values which are our common heritage;
- Acknowledging the potential contribution of the digital transformation to achieving these ideals;
- Faced with unprecedented challenges, such as the pandemic crisis, conflicts, climate change, social and technological inequality, increasingly fast digital transformation, challenges for democracy and diversity in the digital age;
- Convinced that culture, creativity and cultural heritage have the potential to address these challenges, drive the societal and developmental changes needed to achieve sustainability and contribute to the quality of life in our constantly evolving societies;
- Recognising the crucial role of the Council of Europe's conventions in building a unique framework for action on culture and cultural heritage in Europe and beyond, and in pursuing sustainable development goals, addressing societal challenges and fostering participatory democracy;
- Aware that the Council of Europe programmes and initiatives, such as Strategy 21, the Faro Convention Action Plan, the European Heritage Days¹ and the Cultural Routes foster participation, cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, thus strengthening local communities and contributing to sustainable development;
- Acknowledging the outcome of Council of Europe initiatives in the field of culture and digitisation, such as the multi-stakeholder Exchange Platform on Culture and Digitisation, resulting so far in a series of Recommendations²;

¹ Joint Programme with the European Union.

² Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on culture's contribution to strengthening the internet as an emancipatory force; Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)8 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Big Data for culture, literacy and democracy; Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Internet of citizens.

- Aware that the digital transformation implies a cultural transformation, and that artificial intelligence developments greatly accelerate change;
- Convinced that culture, creativity and heritage need to be part of the dialogue on the digital transformation, as they provide essential insights and contribute to decisions about our common future, stimulate the active engagement of citizens and generate the necessary social intelligence needed to accompany life practices marked by increasing human-machine interaction;
- Convinced that the smart use of digital technology can play a key role in discovering, accessing, disseminating and engaging with cultural heritage, as well as mapping, researching, protecting and reusing it. Digital technology may also contribute to combating offences relating to cultural property;
- Concerned about the challenges posed to cultural diversity and pluralism by the broad use of business models based on algorithmic recommendations, with specific reference to the audio-visual sector;
- Noting the dominant position of non-European audio-visual media services and their impact on content production ecosystems and on European intellectual property ownership;
- Reaffirming the role of the Council of Europe in preserving cultural diversity and pluralism, including in the audio-visual sector;
- Aware of the urgent need to further develop policy and mobilise the cultural and creative sectors in order to promote and foster cultural diversity, cultural participation and creative production, notably in the digital environment.

We underline the unique capacity of culture, creativity and cultural heritage to nurture open, healthy, pluralistic, diverse, sustainable, successful societies and stable democracies.

We acknowledge the intrinsic value of culture and commit to promoting the further development and promulgation of a new understanding of culture, creativity and cultural heritage as strategic resources for a sustainable Europe successfully embracing the digital transformation.

We therefore emphasize the need to mobilise culture, creativity and cultural heritage as strategic resources for the development of a more diverse, democratic and sustainable Europe.

Towards these goals, we specifically invite:

- the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to support the work undertaken by the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) and adopt the *draft recommendation to member States on the role of culture, cultural heritage and landscape in helping to address global challenges* and their role as drivers for environmental, social and economic transformation;
- cultural and cultural heritage stakeholders, including policymakers and practitioners, to recognise the crucial role of the Council of Europe's conventions in building a unique framework for action on culture and cultural heritage in Europe and beyond, and in pursuing sustainable development and democratic stability;
- the Council of Europe to work – through its dedicated body, the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) and in cooperation with relevant professional associations and other partners, as required – on developing guidelines given the latest technological developments, such as Artificial Intelligence, complementing Council of Europe standards in the fields of culture, creativity and cultural heritage;
- the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to continue supporting the Budapest Drama Series Process and to develop – through CDCPP and Eurimages future work – a new pan-European legal instrument to codify the rules of European drama series co-productions and a public financial instrument for these co-productions.

We, Ministers responsible for Culture and Cultural Heritage, warmly thank Italy and the Council of Europe for having organised this conference.