

CAE's Appeal for the European Parliament Elections 2019

26 November 2018

The May 2019 European elections will take place at a pivotal time for the European Union. After a harsh recession and fiscal consolidation, increasing social and economic disparities have led to a growing political disenchantment and eurosceptic attitudes. In this context, culture must not be used to polarise, but should be seen as a source of unity and a force for cooperation and mutual understanding.

Now is the time to move forward and assert that European diversity makes us stronger. **Culture Action Europe appeals to all political forces to approach cultural issues constructively and respectfully within the European elections** because without the explicit recognition of its cultural dimension, the future of the European Union as a common endeavour is difficult to imagine.

Culture Action Europe sees the 2019 European elections as a revindication of Europe's core values and democracy in times when both are under threat. We observe increasing pressures on freedom of artistic and cultural expression alongside new global challenges, including the digital transition and climate change. All of this requires ambitious and purposeful cultural policies at the European level as a fundamental part of a strong Europe, one that the cultural sector will support and defend.

Now is the critical moment for European political parties to confront those challenging its foundations. In this shared endeavour, Culture Action Europe **defies eurosceptic voices, and stands side by side with political initiatives that recognise culture's contribution to Europe as a necessary force for unity, equality and inclusive cooperation.**

Therefore, Culture Action Europe appeals to all participants in the European elections:

1. To **recognise the fundamental role of culture for the progress of the European Union in their programmes**, including a clear definition of their strategic guidelines for EU cultural policy;
2. To **commit to defend European values**, in particular freedom of artistic and cultural expression and cultural rights, defend dialogue against hate, and proudly support cultural diversity as a fundamental component of European societies;
3. To **propose candidates with cultural awareness**. Candidates must be able to assess policies from a multifaceted perspective, including social, economic and cultural considerations;
4. To **devote at least 1% of the EU budget to culture and to double the financial allocation for culture in the Creative Europe programme** to guarantee impact and accessibility;
5. To **recognise creation and cultural practices as the origin of cultural value**, which goes on to inspire social and economic impact, and accordingly merits initial public investment;
6. To **recognise artistic research and experimentation** as key for generating new knowledge and critical thinking, developing new approaches towards emerging technological, environmental and social challenges and in the production of contemporary culture, including digital cultures;
7. To **enable multi-level coordination** between the cultural sector and relevant actors in other fields, the European institutions, Member States, as well as local and regional authorities, and international organisations;
8. To **encourage the development of welfare systems and fair employment practices** supportive of discontinuous workers, common in the cultural sector and increasingly in the wider economy;
9. To **devote sufficient resources to the mobility of cultural workers and the circulation of cultural works** for all sectors within Europe and beyond, given their indisputable EU added value and its contribution to shared cultural understanding, market development, innovation and sustainable cultural practices;
10. To **facilitate a fair and ethical digitisation of culture and cultural heritage**, taking into account diversity and inclusiveness and promoting a digital landscape where for-profit, not-for-profit, public and community-based initiatives can coexist.