

The Hague 1 July 2020

H.E. Dr. Angela Merkel  
The Federal Chancellor  
Bundeskanzleramt  
Willy-Brandt-Straße 1  
DE-10557 Berlin  
GERMANY

**Re: The impact of Cultural Heritage for Europe's recovery**

Dear Madam Prime Minister,

I write to you, and to all other EU Heads of State or Government, in my capacity as the Executive President of Europa Nostra, the European Voice of Civil Society committed to Cultural Heritage. We take the liberty of addressing you ahead of the next European Council to be held on 17-18 July 2020 under the German Presidency of the EU, to urge you to seize the challenge of Europe's recovery to unleash the transformative power of cultural heritage for the future of our continent.

As you know, the cultural and creative sectors and industries have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the heritage sector alone, tens of thousands of heritage sites and museums had to close their doors, putting millions of jobs - direct and indirect - at risk. However, while the culture and cultural heritage world faces a prolonged period of difficulty, it also has an enormous untapped potential to support Europe's recovery after the crisis.

We wish to draw your particular attention to cultural heritage as an essential component of the European way of life and as a shared richness that brings Europe's citizens and communities closer together. With its multiple values for our society, economy and environment, cultural heritage contributes directly to all of the EU's key priorities: from the European Green Deal with related climate action, to Europe's digital transformation; from the New Skills Agenda and the much-needed creation of quality jobs; to social cohesion and just transition in Europe's villages, cities and regions; as well as from the urgent need to design a more sustainable tourism industry to the investment in health and in the resilience of our democracy and society.

In order to fully unleash this huge potential, we urge you, and other EU Leaders:

- to deploy adequate resources and support measures for culture and cultural heritage in the **Next Generation EU Recovery Plan**, in particular the **REACT-EU** programme; and
- to double the budget of the **Creative Europe programme**, enabling thereby to boost to European cross-border collaboration related to culture and cultural heritage.



The Voice of  
Cultural Heritage  
in Europe

La Voix du  
patrimoine culturel  
en Europe

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This double appeal is in line with key objectives of the **New Strategic Agenda 2019-2024**, which was adopted by the European Council just one year ago, where the EU leaders made the commitment to *“invest in our culture and our cultural heritage, which are at the heart of our cultural identity”*. Today, this commitment has an even stronger relevance and resonance for Europe’s citizens and their well-being.

In support of our appeal, I am pleased to transmit to you the text of a **Manifesto** entitled **“Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the Future of Europe”** that was launched on **Europe Day 2020 (9 May)** by 49 European and international networks which form part of the **European Heritage Alliance** and represent thousands of heritage associations, professionals and volunteers. Our Manifesto highlights seven interconnected ways in which cultural heritage can act as a catalyst for positive change in Europe.

Please note that we have conveyed this important Manifesto individually to the Presidents of all EU Institutions.

You can count on Europa Nostra and all the member organisations of the European Heritage Alliance, to work together with you and other EU leaders to develop pertinent strategies and programmes to ensure the best possible use of cultural heritage as a vital resource for building a creative, prosperous, green and sustainable future for Our Europe. We stay at the disposal of your Cabinet and of your Ministry of Culture for any further exchanges on this important matter.

Thanking you in advance for putting culture and cultural heritage where they belong: at the very heart of Europe’s recovery and revival,

On behalf of our Members and those of the European Heritage Alliance,  
Respectfully yours,



Hermann Parzinger  
Executive President

<p><i>Annex</i> <i>European Heritage Alliance Manifesto</i> <i>“Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe”</i></p>
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