



**2021
PORTUGAL.EU**

PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE

"CULTURE, COHESION AND SOCIAL IMPACT"

5-6 May, 2021

PORTO, PORTUGAL

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Register here: bit.ly/CultureSocialCohesion_PT

The Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union will hold a Conference on the topic of **“Culture, Cohesion and Social Impact”**, on 5 and 6 May to take place in Serralves Foundation, Porto, Portugal.

Culture’s potential and impact can be a powerful means to address complex social problems faced by contemporary societies. This Conference marks the important discussion towards a better understanding of the benefits of culture for social cohesion and aims to come up with solutions to maximize culture's social impact.

It is widely accepted that the cultural sphere constitutes a privileged interface for the production of meanings, expression of ideas, beliefs, identities, values, and experiences. Culture provides the social space for dialogue, community gathering, sharing and celebration, while allowing for negotiation, praise, and criticism.

This role of culture becomes even more important in a post-pandemic world shattered by social distancing and related mental health issues, worsening environmental challenges, rampant levels of inequality and intolerance, and asymmetrical territorial development patterns. However, it is not possible to fully mobilize culture's potential for the harmonious development of our societies and of our lives without matching cultural policies.

Cultural policies which are truly fit for the future shall empower individuals to be active creators of culture and living participants in a broad and open dialogue between citizens and communities, instead of focusing on the public as a mere audience or as a mass of cultural consumers. However, barriers to full and equal participation in the cultural sphere persist. Also, cultural agents themselves face significant difficulties now amplified by the pandemic crisis.

This event will bring together cultural players, thinkers, academics, and political and governmental officials from all over the European continent, with the aim of mobilizing Europe to unlock the potential of culture for social cohesion and current societal challenges.

9.30 Registration and welcome coffee

10.00 Welcoming session

Ana Pinho, Chairwoman of Board of Directors of the Serralves Foundation

10.05 Opening Session

Graça Fonseca, Portuguese Minister of Culture

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Ana Mendes Godinho, Minister of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security

10.30-11.45 Plenary session: The Social Impact of Culture

Culture and creativity are a powerful resource to re-imagine the world, to confront contemporary contradictions and to develop fair, sustainable, and democratic ways out of this multi-faceted complex crisis. This is only possible by overcoming barriers to active and meaningful participation in the cultural sphere. This session will present an opportunity to rethink and reconsider the place of culture in addressing social issues with a view to ensure a meaningful coexistence with each other and with the surrounding environment.

Clémentine Daubeuf, Associate Director at KEA

Hugo Cruz, Theatre director, Cultural programmer and Researcher

Jonathan Gross, Research Fellow, King's College London

Sara Barriga Brighenti, Deputy Commissioner, National Plan for the Arts

11.45-12.00 Coffee-break

12.00-13.30 Panel 1: Culture, Mental health and Well-being

The relationship between culture, health and well-being has been gaining growing scientific backing and acquires a renewed importance in the context of health challenges and social isolation. Culture activates key neural reward circuits and improves social cognition and connectedness, which are crucial for social cohesion and trust building. This panel shall explore ways for culture to re-emerge as a necessary element for a fuller, happier, and richer life that provides spaces for self-expression, for learning, for meaningful encounters with the other and for the discovery and practice of individual skills and abilities.

Pier Luigi Sacco, Professor of Cultural Economics at IULM University Milan; Senior Researcher at metaLAB (at) Harvard and visiting scholar at Harvard University

Sandro Resende, Visual Artist and Head of 'Manicómio' art project based in a psychiatric hospital in Lisbon

Isabel Loureiro, Senior Professor at Portuguese National School of Public Health and Vice-president of National Health Council

Mikael Odder Nielsen, Musicologist and project leader of Aalborg's Culture by Prescription

Ugnė Grigaitė, PhD Fellow at Lisbon Institute of Global Mental Health, also associated with the Lithuanian Human Rights Monitoring Institute and NGO Mental Health Perspectives

13.30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.00 Panel 2: Culture, Cohesion and Territory

Heritage, architecture, and expressions of creativity in all their diversity constitute themselves as drivers of economic and social development, guiding multiple regional strategies of smart specialization, adopted both in cities and in urban peripheries and low-density territories. This panel shall approach the link between territorial development and culture, by aiming at harnessing culture's power to foster community gathering, empowerment, and the sense of belonging, while valuing local heritages, memories, and traditions.

Aida Carvalho, President of the Board of Directors of Fundação Côa Parque

Stella Kyvelou-Chiotini, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences; Eastern-Mediterranean Sea-Basin MSP Focal Point, European MSP Platform (DG MARE / EASME)

Luís Costa, Binaural Nodar Coordinator; Re-tramontana III Project Coordinator

Victor Yankov, Plovdiv 2019 Foundation International Relations Director

Helena Roseta, "Heathy Neighbourhoods" Project Coordinator

16.00-16.15 Coffee-break

16.15-17.45 Panel 3: Culture and Environmental Sustainability

Culture provides tools to the understanding of the relationship of mankind with the environment and landscapes, which materializes in a set of knowledge, values and practices embedded in our social organization. Culture inspires more ecological and sustainable patterns of production and consumption, as well as local community development based and innovative architectural solutions. Thus, this panel shall analyse how culture can become a cornerstone for sustainable development and help to build a greener world.

Mafalda Dâmaso, Visiting Research Fellow, Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College London

Mariana Pestana, Architect and independent curator; Member of the Portuguese Working Group on the New European Bauhaus

Enric Girona, Mancomunidad Taula del Sénia

17.45 Cultural event

**10.00 Registration and welcome coffee****10.30-12.00 Panel 4: Culture and Gender Equality**

The arts and creative sectors have a particular ability to show us other possible worlds and to put us in each other's shoes. This is why greater representativeness and diversity of authors and visions are key to address the still pervasive asymmetries of our society. This panel will discuss paths for the enrichment of our cultural spheres where everybody is empowered to express and disseminate their creations in the public arena towards a world of improved solidarity and cooperation, of enhanced democratic resilience, thus breaking artificial barriers between communities and genders.

Anna Kedziorek, Policy officer at European Commission - Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Isabel Zuaá, Actress

Pauliana Pimentel, Photographer

Paul Vautrin-Grévisse, expert to the OMC Group on “Gender Equality on the Cultural and Creative Sectors” and Equality and Diversity Officer at the French Ministry of Culture

**12.00 Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals: Conclusions of the workshop**

Pedro Sobrado, Chairman of Board of Directors of the São João National Theatre

**12.30-12.45 Coffee-break****12.45 Concluding remarks****13.00 Closing Session**

Graça Fonseca, Portuguese Minister of Culture.

Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms.