



Council of the
European Union

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CULT 126

INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Council

Subject: Strengthening the role of culture for the future of Europe requires the word
“culture” spelled out in Commissioner designate Gabriel’s portfolio
- Information of the Italian delegation

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Italian delegation on the above subject, which has been put on the agenda under ‘Any other business’ for the next Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting on 21-22 November 2019.

**Strengthening the role of culture for the future of Europe requires the word “culture”
spelled out in Commissioner designate Gabriel’s portfolio**

Europe has always been a space of cultural exchange. Culture is what helps us value what we have in common, understand our differences and develop dialogue: therefore, culture provides the basis for European identity, an identity layer that complements and enriches our national, regional and local ones.

Culture is at the heart of our European project, promotes our shared identity and diversity in our societies, upholds our common values and strengthens democracy.

Our societies are currently facing significant challenges and threats affect our core values: in this very moment in history we have a vital need to turn to culture as a key in the debate on our common future. Culture has an enormous potential for connecting people from different backgrounds, becoming a unifying and mobilising force and bringing the peoples of Europe together, and should therefore be visibly kept at the heart of our common project. The future of Europe will depend on a cultural and creative vision backed up by a renewed consciousness of our shared values. Culture, heritage and creativity play an enormous role as driver and enabler in very different areas of sustainable development and should remain centre stage while we engage in imagining and building a sustainable future for Europe.

We fear that, if the term “culture” right now disappears from the official title of the Commissioner, the political momentum achieved by culture might diminish and the mainstreaming of culture across other EU policy areas might lose effectivity, thus failing in unleashing its potential for wellbeing and innovation and ultimately for building a strong, resilient European community of communities.

During the last European legislatures, cultural cooperation and policies achieved remarkable progress through the commitment of Member States across subsequent Workplans for Culture and the engagement of the European Parliament, and thanks to the far-sighted leadership of the European Commission. This culminated with the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and the New European Agenda for Culture, issued by the Commission in 2018 building on a strong mandate from EU leaders. The New Agenda recognises culture as a powerful driver of economic and social value and a fundamental resource for positioning EU in the global scenario, and sets ambitious objectives and related actions.

For these reasons, we are of the view that the title of the portfolio of Commissioner designate Gabriel should include an explicit mention of the term “Culture”, as this would restore the sense of the driving role of culture for the future of Europe.
