



**Statement on Culture in regions and cities
On the occasion of the closure of the European week of Regions and Cities**

Brussels, 12 October 2017

Under the headline 'Regions and cities for a better future', 130 workshops debates, project visits and networking events are held in Brussels between 9 and 12 October on the occasion of the European Week of Regions and Cities. The vast programme is organised under three cross-cutting themes: Building resilient Regions and Cities, Sharing knowledge to deliver results and Regions and Cities as change agents.

The European Alliance for Culture and Arts welcomes the opportunity to discuss the central role regions and cities play to address key challenges in future European policy making and cooperation between EU Member States.

Referring to the programme of the Week of Regions and Cities, we would like to draw attention to the discussion on the European Capitals of Culture organised by the Central Denmark EU Office, the Friesland Region, Galway and the Plovdiv cities and the workshop on Culture and Creative Industries, organised by the Regional Initiative for Culture and Creativity consortium.

We believe that culture and the arts are the basis and a powerful tool for urban regeneration, development and social cohesion. The presence of cultural activities is a major factor in the attractiveness of regions and cities; investments in culture have a transversal effect and help to stimulate the economic and social development as well as the innovative spirit at regional and local level, such as in the field of infrastructure or environment.

In this context, we regret that the 7th cohesion report of the European Commission, which was presented at the opening of the European Week of Regions and Cities, does not take into account culture and the arts in its findings related to the measuring of social progress, education, well-being, health and urban infrastructures and in general in the future shape of cohesion policy.

The Committee of the Regions has already recognised the essential role of culture and the arts in its opinion on Next steps for a sustainable European future – European action for sustainability as well as in the recently adopted opinion on The European Pillar of Social Rights and Reflection paper on the social dimension of Europe.

We therefore call on European, regional and local policy makers to follow this approach and support culture and the arts in the framework of the EU economic, social and territorial cohesion policy to unlock their untapped potential in regions and cities.

A sustainable development of European regions and cities will only be possible to achieve when integrating culture and the arts in the post 2020 objectives and future evaluation criteria of the social cohesion strategy.

Culture and the arts are a vital lever for economic growth in European regions and cities and must therefore be recognised as key contributors to the Union's future cohesion policy.

Editor's note:

The Alliance conveys the voice of 35 European associations and networks and over 400 national organizations and individuals. We stand for recognising the intrinsic value of culture and the arts for the European society, as well as their role in strengthening the European project, which is facing major political challenges and needs to redefine its global positioning. We believe culture and the arts play an important role in the response to the social, economic and religious tensions existing inside societies, within the EU and outside the European borders. Therefore, we call on the European institutions and Member States to include culture and the arts in the strategic goals of the Union.

Why does culture matter? Find the response in concrete examples on our websites:

<https://allianceforculture.com/>



