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**OPEN LETTER TO
THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE EU MEMBER STATES
THE MINISTERS OF FINANCE
THE MINISTERS OF CULTURE**

Support the European Cultural Recovery

In these troubling times, the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) across Europe have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we are all witnessing, theatres, cinemas, festivals, concert halls, museums and heritage sites were among the first that were forced to close their doors due to the measures against COVID-19, and are about to be among the last to reopen. Moreover, the CCS are now faced with the economic impact of the severe second wave of the pandemic. In this context, large parts of the CCS will not be able to survive, given the lack of funding, delays in supporting measures, as well as the additional confinement measures, as highlighted by many European and international organizations.

Culture is an intangible asset, but it is not made out of thin air. Also, it delivers value to our European economy. The Cultural Creative Sector and Industries represent 8.7 million jobs in the EU and approximately 4% of the European GDP. The CCS have the highest numbers in youth employment, are highly gender balanced and represent a high percentage of our SMEs.

The European Parliament has been fighting very hard during these months for a positive change. With a large majority of 598 votes, our Resolution on the Cultural Recovery of Europe was adopted in September. In other words, the Members of the European Parliament, on behalf of their voters and standing as the voice of the European people, call on the Commission and the Member States to actively support the CCS with specific measures.

Let us mention a few of the measures demanded in the Resolution:

- Dedicate at least 2% of the Recovery and Resilience Facility to the Cultural and Creative Sectors and industries
- Reduce VAT rates for all cultural goods and services
- Improve valuation of intangible assets
- Introduce tax credits and tax motivation tools for cultural production
- Improve the social protection systems and the working conditions for the workers in the CCS
- Secure equal accessibility and inclusiveness for the distribution of cultural funding
- Protect the future of the cultural ecosystem under the pressures brought by the green and the digital transition
- Include the CCS in all financial supporting tools, such as the InvestEU and the NextGenerationEU

In this context, we urge you to embrace this Resolution regarding the cultural policy of your country at both the national and the European level.

Finally, as proven by the experience of millions of European citizens during the pandemic, culture is what makes us resilient. Culture is the key to our identity for today and to our heritage for tomorrow. There are countries that give more to cultural policies than others. It is important that all countries give tangible support for their cultural policies. Because all countries' cultural policies equally contribute to our European cultural identity and heritage.

Culture is not a luxury, but the right catalyst for prosperity, creative dialogue and democracy. Please accept the challenge and seize the opportunity. Support culture now so that Europe can truly be *United in Diversity*.

Yours sincerely,

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