

20.03.2018 - UNESCO Office in Brussels

## **High Level Event: ‘Culture and Education for All: Building the skills for more resilient societies’**



Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, Yassen Gyurov, Jens Nyman Christensen, Paolo Fontani, David Lopez, Lars Ebert

**On the 14th March, Mr Paolo Fontani, UNESCO Representative to the European Institutions, was invited to speak at the Centre for Fine Arts BOZAR in Brussels during the high level panel discussion organised by Culture Action Europe and the Lifelong Learning Platform.**

The event was organised within framework of the [European Year of Cultural Heritage](#) and the high-level discussion was moderated by Mr. Lars Ebert of Culture Action Europe and the European League of Institutes for the Arts (ELIA).

The relationship between Culture and Education was explored during the panel that gathered several actors from the two fields: Ms. Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, former Minister of Education, Culture and Research of Luxembourg; Mr. Yassen Gyurov, Chair of the Education Committee of the Permanent Representation of Bulgaria to the European Union; Mr. Jens Nyman Christensen, Deputy Director General of the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC); Mr. David Lopez, President of the Lifelong Learning Platform and Mr. Paolo Fontani, UNESCO Representative to the European Institutions.

The discussion was opened by Erna Hennicot-Schoepgesin who called for a strengthened common strategy for culture and education in the EU. Highlighting the role of culture and education in building resilient and tolerant societies, the former Minister spoke of the need to integrate sports, arts and life skills into EU Member States’ education systems and to further enhance lifelong learning, for example of digital skills for students and teachers alike.

Jens Nyman Christensen, of the European Commission stressed that we must take advantage of the European Year of Cultural Heritage to celebrate and embrace the richness and diversity of Europe in schools in order to build a greater understanding amongst youth of Europe’s shared identity.

In his intervention, Mr Fontani spoke on how greater synergies can be created between culture and education by including cultural heritage in the curriculum to strengthen intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between communities, as well as by promoting collaborations with creative industries to support entrepreneurial training programmes for youth. The Director of UNESCO Liaison Office Brussels went on to highlight the need to build bridges between formal, non-formal and informal education and increase “learning to

learn” skills in order to have a more effective and inclusive approach to education for all, regardless of socio-economic factors.

Following the panel discussion, participants were invited to take part in one of three break-out sessions. The first focussed on the role of learning mobility to raise cultural awareness and strengthen shared values. The second workshop centred on digital education and how digital skills can be incorporated into education to better preserve and increase access to culture. Finally, the third session explored importance of promoting the acquisition of key competences in lifelong learning and adapting learning environments to include intercultural, transversal and creative skills.

The event provided an opportunity to discuss the recently published UNESCO [2018 Global Report](#): ‘Re/Shaping Cultural policies: Advancing Creativity for Development’, designed to monitor the implementation of the [UNESCO 2005 Convention for the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#). The debate and discussions took place in the context of the recent communication from the European Commission, ‘[Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture](#)’ which contributed to the EU Leaders’ meeting in Gothenburg during the [Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth](#) in November 2017. Among its proposals, the communication called for an upgrade of the European Agenda for Culture to promote culture and cultural diversity in all EU policies, as well as an EU Action Plan to highlight the economical and societal role of Europe’s cultural heritage and to support its preservation and digitisation. The communication also led to the proposal of a European Council Recommendation on ‘[Promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching](#)’ in January 2018.

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