

Young Europe speaks

Europe Day 2021 saw the EU launch [The Conference on the Future of Europe](#), a European Commission initiative encouraging debates enabling citizens to tell Europe's leaders what future they want. Encouraged by EUYO's Creative Partner Europa Nostra, the EUYO jumped at this opportunity, inviting the orchestra's young musicians to present debates in cultural heritage sites, culminating in a final debate in the Unesco World Heritage site of Ferrara

A group of EUYO musicians sit in a circle, instrument cases by their side, papers strewn around, and cups of coffee arranged before them. Their eyes meet whilst talking, discussing, debating. Meanwhile some act as scribes, writing with a variety of pencils, pens and felt tips. This may seem a familiar setting for musicians talking about how to perform a certain passage or to share bowings – but this is different. This time, the EUYO musicians are talking about some of the highest political questions a young European citizen may face – how to shape the future of the EU?

The Conference on the Future of Europe has this aim in mind: encourage people to discuss, debate and confront each other, and come up with suggestions and proposals that the European Parliament and Commission will evaluate and – who knows, perhaps even transform into reality.

The musicians were confronted with a variety of questions, but decided to focus on something that they really know about first-hand – culture. Musical culture, to be more specific. It is not hard to understand why – those young musicians sitting around a table in Grafenegg, in Bolzano and in Ferrara, where the final round of debate was held, will be the professionals of the music industry of tomorrow. In ten, twenty, thirty years they may be pointed out as leading experts in the musical culture sector - with a long career as conductors, orchestral musicians, soloists, administrators and so on – the kind of people that may be called upon by a governing body to give an informed opinion on a policy matter of concern.

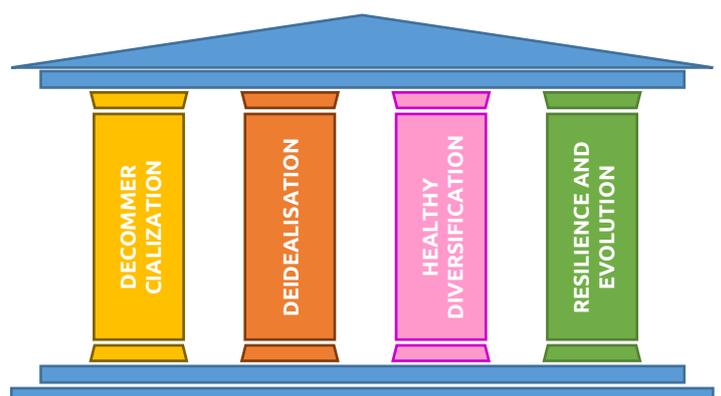
Their point of view is that of people who know what troubles the music industry in their respective country has, how little is done to promote a better musical understanding among

their generation, and how the lack of coordination of efforts among different EU Member States is affecting the entire music industry system. They know first-hand what troubles conservatories and music schools are facing, the lack in musical education, and how hard it may be to approach the world of music and the music industry.

It's obvious that their ideas are worth sharing, not only with the European Parliament and Commission, but in a wider circulation – one that will allow them to be more present and more vocal in the cultural sector. Therefore, below they present their point of view – a point of view coming from 19 young EUYO musicians, aged 18 to 27, from 12 different EU countries. One must admire the fact that they took up valuable touring and residency time to discuss together how the EU should shape its approach on culture and classical music.

The final result of their meetings is summed up in four ideas, four concepts, four pillars:

1. De-commercialisation;
2. De-idealisation;
3. Healthy Diversification;
4. Resilience and Evolution.





Alkistis Misouli

“The experience of debating on what would be the next steps of the EU regarding culture, was not only extremely exciting and stimulating, but also highly relevant. As young musicians but furthermore cultural ambassadors, we are responsible for the future and also able to shape it.

It was then beautiful to be part of such a fruitful and mind-expanding conversation, during which we tried to analyse as much as possible how culture manifests in the present through its constructive elements of the past, and which of those are problematic and in need of reformation.

Our concluding key points are: Decommmercialization, De-idealisation, Healthy Diversification and Resilience and Evolution.”

1. DE-COMMERCIALISATION

A simple yet powerful suggestion: a small GDP percentage from each EU Member State devoted to an Arts & Culture fund, similar to the 2% GDP for NATO membership.

Organisations benefiting from this fund should dedicate a minimum percentage of their funding to educational projects, not only for children, but also for young adults. All entities may access the fund, and private entities may be able to apply as well, all bound by funding conditions.

The goal that EUYO musicians have in mind is that, over time, the increased funding will benefit the wider European cultural scene regardless of how private entities choose to act.

They believe this type of support is necessary because arts and culture provide an intangible benefit, and are always vulnerable to commercialisation. This would be a huge step forward from the current Creative Europe funding scheme, whose budget is allocated by the European Commission.

Davide Dalpiaz

“The Conference on the Future of the European Union has been a unique, fascinating experience. The given chance to create a debate between young European citizens, which offered us the possibility to freely discuss and talk about such an incredibly broad variety of themes, spacing from national identities to consumerism, from inclusiveness and social rights to ecological sustainability and cultural heritage, has been deeply assimilated by each of us.

During the discussions, I truly had the feeling that each of us, regardless of nationality, had been actively working with its full commitment and passion towards a common purpose: try to find valid and effective proposals to improve the future of European citizens.”



2. DE-IDEALISATION

This proposal comes from looking at the current status of culture, and in particular music, primarily in education. The EUYO musicians think that children in middle and secondary schools are old enough to be exposed to the ideas of music history, and the associated cultural and political narratives. It is difficult and impractical to have an

EU-wide musical history curriculum, but the goal should be to stimulate the curiosity of the students and to give them the necessary tools to find the information for themselves. Funding should be made available to educational institutions on the condition that a minimum fixed percentage goes to classes with expanded cultural offer, and to provide resources for students to enable them to seek out information.



Jonathan Chapman

It was a fascinating experience. Tackling such monumental topics - and putting each of us well out of our comfort zone - both taught me more about what I think is really important in life, and brought me closer to my colleagues. In that way, I suppose this task was something of a microcosm for the European project, and the EUYO too! We quickly decided to focus our efforts on the subject of culture, which we believed would allow us to offer our most educated and considered opinions. There followed a bit of a rollercoaster, as we toiled to bring our initial big-picture ideas down into what we considered real-world achievable goals; putting rubber on the road, so to say. It was a privilege to work alongside my colleagues from the EUYO, who managed yet again to blow me away, only this time with their erudition. We are all very proud of not only the final product of our discussions, but the process of discussion, argumentation, and, ultimately, action.

3. HEALTHY DIVERSIFICATION

The EUYO musicians propose that the European Parliament and Commission should ask each Member State's artistic governing bodies to open a discussion about what they would consider to be the defining aspects of their country's cultural landscape, and have a progressive, forward-thinking, "EU" perspective aligned to the current zeitgeist of inclusivity and equality.

Conditional funding should be made available to ensure that each country's intrinsic culture is healthily supported and never feeling under threat of dilution – so that long-running festivals, traditions, and artistic institutions could benefit from exclusive funding streams.

Regarding healthy diversification and inclusion of other cultures, countries should make funding available for projects, artists and venues that have the specific goal of mixing demographic groups through the medium of art and culture, and eliminate the boundaries between demographics based divisive lines such as age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity and religion.

EUYO musicians point at examples of similar

projects such as the EUYO's exchange programme that allows visiting musicians to perform in the EUYO or EUYO musicians to mix with local players inside and outside the EU: challenging young people to open their minds and connect with a variety of unfamiliar perspectives, they say, has proven to be an extremely powerful tool for increasing their ability to empathise with and understand each other.

4. RESILIENCE AND EVOLUTION

Last but not least, EUYO musicians focused on how Culture could grow and be fostered in current and future EU citizens. They envisaged a threefold approach: greater *Cultural Mobility*, to allow people from every possible background to grow up and be able to form their own opinions and understanding of culture; a more empathetic and open-minded approach in the education of young children to allow them to see cooperative solutions to cultural changes; and lastly, a promotion of arts and culture as a means of connecting people, saving them from the negative impacts of over-commercialisation.

Want to hear more?
Stay in touch!



Honorary President David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament
 Co-Founders Lionel & Joy Bryer | Founding Music Director Claudio Abbado |
 Chief Conductor Vasily Petrenko | Conductor Laureate Bernard Haitink
 Co-Chair Sir John Tusa | Co-Chair Martijn Sanders
 Advisory Council Chair Sir Ian Stoutzker | Secretary General Marshall Marcus

Head of Honorary Patrons Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
 Honorary Patrons Josep Borrell Fontelles, HR and Vice-President of the European Commission
 Charles Michel President of the European Council

The heads of state and government, the ministers of foreign affairs and culture of the EU member states



EUROPEAN UNION YOUTH ORCHESTRA FOUNDATION

Postal address: Teatro Comunale Claudio Abbado, Corso della Giovecca, 38 - 44121 Ferrara (FE), Italy
 Legal seat: Via Asiago, 10 - 00195 Roma (RM), Italy | Registered Foundation Reg.1560724
 info@euyo.eu - Tel +44 20 7237 7671 P. IVA/VAT number 14993441006 – Codice Fiscale 97967700580

