

Alliance of Academies Open Continent

BERLIN MANIFESTO

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In some European countries we are currently experiencing cultural policies that understand art and culture only nationally and are increasingly regulating them. As a result, the autonomy of many academies, museums and cultural institutions is being jeopardized.

We would like to do something against this development: So far 60 art academies and cultural institutions from countries of the European Union, Great Britain and Norway, are joining to form an “Alliance of Academies” on the initiative of the Academy of Arts, Berlin. Together we stand up for the right to freedom of art throughout Europe, which is stipulated in Article 13 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

What does the Alliance stand for?

- Art and Culture are essential for a functioning democracy and for social cohesion. We stand for the freedom of the arts as a prerequisite for our cultural, social and political way of life. The independence of artistic positions and institutions from political, national and religious prescriptions is the foundation of democracy.
- Being here in Berlin we are particularly aware – as a consequence of the disasters of the 20th century caused by Germany – of the responsibility to think of the EU as part of a transnational cultural (peace) project.
- We stand for cultural diversity in Europe and in our societies. We want to recall the “blind spots” that the European wars of conquest left in the world, of the colonial power structures that continue to have an impact in many countries today.
- We stand with the arts for a humanism that opposes all forms of racism, discrimination and violence. We also defend human rights for those who were not born in Europe but who seek a chance for survival and peaceful coexistence here.

European Alliance of Academies

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Our Demands & Measures

- We call for a unified solidarity between the art and cultural institutions in Europe. Only across all borders can art, culture and science develop in the spirit of the Enlightenment. Only together, we will succeed in maintaining and defending this free space for the future.
- We exchange information transnationally and directly on cultural policy developments in our countries and we disseminate the news through our own communication channels and in our own networks.
- We support the exchange of art and artists within our institutions, particularly those who may be experiencing socio-political restraints in the exercise of their artistic work or in their freedom of expression.
- We demand that art and culture become an integral part of European politics.
- We call on politicians throughout Europe to protect and defend the right to artistic freedom and the autonomy of the institutions in accordance with Article 13 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. And – wherever necessary – to support the art academies and the artists on the advice of our Alliance.

Berlin, 9 October 2020