



Network of European
Museum Organisations

NEMO Statement on the Public Consultation on the EU 2020 Strategy

The Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) was founded in 1992 as an independent network of national museum organisations representing the museum community of the member states of the Council of Europe. Together, NEMO's members speak for over 30.000 museums across Europe.

As representative of the museum sector in Europe, NEMO would like to see the role of museums and heritage institutions more openly and concretely acknowledged in the EU 2020 Strategy.

The EU 2020 Strategy was launched with the main objective of countering a very harsh economic crisis and was driven by the promotion of growth and jobs. Therefore it set out a number of initiatives aimed at combating poverty and social exclusion, raising the employment rate, improving education levels, etc.

However it failed to recognise that in addition to the economic crisis, Europe was undergoing a cultural crisis and, as shown more recently, European citizens were increasingly questioning the value and reasons for existing of the European institutions themselves.

The "post crisis" scenario the EU growth strategy is now trying to address - and which originates the Public Consultation - can't ignore that achieving a "smart, sustainable and inclusive" Europe depends on cultural factors in a broad sense and relates to issues of identity, reconciliation, democracy, equal rights and opportunities, well-being, etc., all of which ultimately refer to intangible cultural assets and to a negotiated and shared set of values.

In this sense, and because it is convinced that exiting the crisis requires a cultural shift and a new vision and narrative for the future of Europe, NEMO insists on bringing museums and cultural heritage institutions to the fore of an updated and reviewed EU 2020 strategy.

In its policy paper, NEMO acknowledges these core values of museums:

Social Value, as museums contributes to agendas on health, social justice, poverty, education, tolerance and understanding, integration and social cohesion.

Collection Value, as museum collections provide knowledge and inspiration to European citizens and foster creativity and innovation.

Educational Value, as museums are first and foremost learning environments in a lifelong learning perspective and can engage hard to reach audiences with their informal learning potential.

Economic Value, as museums support urban regeneration, enhance the quality of life and contribute significantly to the economy through cultural tourism.

The reviewed and updated EU 2020 Strategy should recognize that Europe is first of all a cultural and political project, which implies a different approach, not only based on economic resources, but rather on the creation of social and cultural capital. This should be reflected through the mainstreaming of culture to all policy sectors and the adequate allocation of resources to support the European project.

In this sense museums, as bearers of the above mentioned values, can play an important role in addressing the challenges European countries are now facing and contribute to achieve a competitive and knowledge based society and found a new vision for Europe.