



Berlin Conference 2022 – “Co-Creating Europe from the Bottom-Up!”

Stiftung Zukunft Berlin and its civil society initiatives *A Soul for Europe*, *Wir sind Europa* and *Cities for Europe* host the Berlin Conference 2022 titled “Co-Creating Europe from the Bottom-Up!” at Allianz Forum next to the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. Over the course of two days, we will host concentrated debates with cultural practitioners, artists and intellectuals, committed mayors and local civic initiatives, as well as citizens and especially the European youth, to bring about new narratives and innovative approaches to co-create the Europe of tomorrow.

Tuesday, 8 November

Allianz Forum, Pariser Platz 6, 10117 Berlin

The discussions at this year’s Berlin Conference will centre around the responsibility of Europeans themselves to help shape the future of Europe. To kick off the conference, we will address the role of cities and regions as key bottom-up participants in this endeavour. For it is the lives and achievements of cities and regions as well as their citizens that determine the success or failure of Europe’s social as well as economic, cultural and societal reality. The commitment of the cities and regions in their responsibility to contribute to the success of the common European project is therefore the focus of our panel discussions.

4 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Opening and welcome:

Markus Dröge, Spokesperson of the Board, Stiftung Zukunft Berlin

Michelle Schmitz, Head of Berlin Office, Allianz SE

4:15 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.

Welcome Keynotes:

Vasco Alves Cordeiro, President of the European Committee of the Regions

Anna Lührmann, Minister of State for Europe and Climate at the Federal Foreign Office

Gerry Woop, State Secretary for Europe (State of Berlin)

4:40 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Discussion Round 1: Impetus from the Middle (and South) of Europe

Moderation: **Volker Hassemer**, former Senator in Berlin and **Michael Müller**, Member of Parliament, former Governing Mayor of Berlin

The first discussion is dedicated to the potential and difficulties of the simultaneity of national peripheries and European centrality. It is about the experiences and future perspectives which Europe can learn from.

Our example: with their unique location in the centre of Europe, cities like Frankfurt (Oder), Zittau and Timișoara can be centres of competence for a central task of the European Union – cooperation and togetherness across national borders. Nevertheless, such regions receive little European attention. We want to use these examples to speak concretely about their possible impulses and experiences for Europe.



The strategy of René Wilke, Mayor of Frankfurt (Oder)

The strategy of Thomas Zenker, Mayor of Zittau

The strategy of Dominic Fritz, Mayor of Timișoara

Comments by:

Rosa Balas Torres, Director-General for External Action of the Regional Government of Extremadura, and Alternate Member of the Committee of the Regions of Europe

Anna Cavazzini, MEP

Martín Guillermo Ramírez, Secretary General Association of European Border

Yuriy Vulkovsky, former Deputy Minister of Culture of Bulgaria

6 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Discussion Round 2: The Unique Responsibility of European Capitals of Culture

Moderation: **Anke Plättner**, International Journalists' Programmes

Cities that have had or will have the honour of being European Capital of Culture should -- beyond their primary task of organising the year to be as impressive as possible -- permanently play a pioneering role as "Cities for Europe". They should combine the privilege of being a European Capital of Culture with a special responsibility for the development of Europe.

In this session, we therefore invite Capitals of Culture and ask them about their stance on the fundamental challenge of being Cities for Europe and how they intend to live up to this. We will discuss the potential of the title, the sustainability of the project and the associated obligation of the cities to contribute to Europe beyond the period of their Capital Year.

Marko Filipović, Mayor of the City of Rijeka, ECoC 2020

Robert Piaskowski, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of Krakow for Culture, ECoC 2000

José Ribau Esteves, Mayor of Aveiro, ECoC applicant 2027

Dagmar Ruscheinsky, Mayor for Social Affairs, Youth, Health, Culture and Sport of Chemnitz, ECoC 2025

Neda Rusjan Bric, Artistic adviser Nova Gorica ECoC 2025

Comments by:

Ulrich Fuchs, Programme Director Marseille-Provence, ECoC 2013

Hannes Heide, MEP

**Wednesday, November 9th**

Allianz Forum, Pariser Platz 6, 10117 Berlin

09:30 a.m. – 09:35 a.m. Welcome Day 2: **Markus Dröge**, Spokesperson of the Board, Stiftung Zukunft Berlin

09:35 a.m. – 09:50 a.m. Welcome: A Soul for Europe Strategy Group: **Nicolas Bertrand, Kathrin Deventer, Zane Estere Gruntmane, Nele Hertling**

09:50 a.m. – 1 p.m. **RETHINKING EUROPE, A Soul for Europe**

Moderation: **Farid Tabarki**, researcher and writer, A Soul for Europe and **Andreas Bock**, European Council on Foreign Relations, A Soul for Europe

We are living in a drastically changing world: a threatening time, a wake-up call for Europe, its citizens, and institutions. The actual situation is demanding for rethinking duties and responsibilities. As this goes for the societies as a whole, it surely is challenging the cultural sector. It becomes even more important than before to foster artistic activities and cultural work across borders as a strong tool against antidemocratic tendencies, against desperation and destruction.

A Soul for Europe calls on artists, cultural and political practitioners as well as intellectuals to reflect on our common responsibility and to take an active role in the creation of a prosperous and human Europe, a citizens' Europe.

The invited speakers will be asked to share their experiences, proposals and visions, starting with three basic topics: „East/West“, „Youth/Citizenship“, "Periphery/Cross-Border". The different political, social and cultural developments in eastern and western Europe, the missing interest from the West for the East have become more visible with the war in Ukraine. Was there, or is there really a European identity? What is the view from 'outside' Europe?

Although we see strong initiatives in a young generation as for climate change or other threatening developments, we also realize a growing percentage of young people turning to more conservative issues, or of not caring for social/political developments at all. How can this generation and citizens in general be encouraged to take responsibility to get active for the development of their cities, regions countries, Europe? The war in our neighbourhood has also changed the notion of periphery. Regions as the Baltic States or at the Polish - Czech - German border are now in the centre of European awareness. How can cross-border activities react?

Rethinking Europe 1: East-West (Introduction **Rarita Zbranca**, Programme Director Cluj Cultural Centre)

Alicja Gescinska, philosopher
Haris Pasovic, theatre director



Yuriy Vulkovsky, former Deputy Minister of Culture of Bulgaria

Rethinking Europe 2: Youth, Citizenship (introduced by **Mahir Namur**, cultural manager, Dozent, psyc. Counselor)

Robert Piaskowski, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of Krakow for culture

Ada Mukhina, artist and theatre-maker

Rusudan Petviashvili, artist

Rethinking Europe 3: Periphery, Cross-border (introduced by **Miguel Angel Martin Ramos**, Head of European Affairs and Brussels Delegation, European Academy of Yuste Foundation)

Aiva Rozenberga, Public Relations Adviser to the President of Latvia

Arkadi Zaides, choreographer and visual artist

Matilde Seabra, Head of education and public programmes at the Department for Contemporary Art – Porto City Hall

1 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

The Power of Europe Bottom-Up

Keynote: **Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner Democracy and Demography (invited)

Discussion:

Moderation: **Marion Döring**, Board member Wim Wenders Foundation and **Kathrin Deventer**, Secretary-General European Festivals Association, A Soul for Europe

Keynote: The importance of Europe Bottom-Up, **Volker Hassemer**, former Senator in Berlin

Europe needs and deserves the participation and joint responsibility of Europeans themselves, their cities and regions: Europe Bottom-Up. This effort for the future of Europe must be made visible, cooperation, networks and mutual exchange must be facilitated.

This is the motive for and the goal of the “Europe Bottom-Up” Platform, funded by the Federal Foreign Office and launched by Stiftung Zukunft Berlin. The platform is a digital instrument that brings together different initiatives, project groups, cities and regions that see themselves as actors “from below” for a common Europe. It gives them the opportunity to come together digitally, to present their projects, to learn from each other and to make better use of their potential together. In this way, a digital instrument can also give rise to an analogue community at the foundation of Europe, which not only commits itself to the



European project, but also strengthens and develops it with its own diverse activities.

In the session, we will discuss the relevance of Europe Bottom-Up and the role of the platform as well as its state of development. We also speak about the expectations of initiatives and associations that wish to use this platform for their purposes. What unites the different actors and their activities? How important are such formats for the common European project?

Ansgar Klein, Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement (National Network for Civil Society)

Volker Schlöndorff, film director

Hannes Swoboda, former MEP, Member of the Europe Bottom-Up Board

Europe Bottom-up! platform

Beate Stoffers, former State Secretary for Education (State of Berlin), Managing Director Stiftung Zukunft Berlin

Claudius Brodmann, Xailabs

Christian Johann, Director Europäische Akademie Berlin

Barbara Gessler, division chief Creative Europe/European Commission

Niklas Nienaß, MEP, Member of the Europe Bottom-Up Board

Community on the platform

Wolfram Korr, Brandenburgische Sommerkonzerte

Annigje Kruytbosch, President Douzelage Europe

Christiane Lötsch, Akademie der Künste

Daryna Sterina, moveGLOBAL e.V., Empowering Migrant Voices on Integration and Inclusion Policies (EMVI)

3:45 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Consequences for the Future

Markus Dröge, Spokesperson of the Board, Stiftung Zukunft Berlin

7:00 p.m.

The State of Europe Speech by **Werner Hoyer**, President of the European Investment Bank (*separate invitation needed*)

Conference languages are German and English; simultaneous translation will be provided.

Project and conference partners:



Cities for Europe



We thank the following partners for their support:



Media partners:



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Executive organisation:



Contact

Afrodita Bojadjieva

STIFTUNG
ZUKUNFTBERLIN

Fon +49 30 26 39 229 27

bojadjieva@stiftungzukunftberlin.eu

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