

Press Release

27.3.2024

European Alliance of Academies: A Strong Voice for a Democratic Europe

From 25 to 26 March, 41 members of the European Alliance of Academies from 17 different countries met in the Akademie der Künste building on Pariser Platz in Berlin.

In view of the multiple crisis facing the continent, Academy president Jeanine Meerapfel evoked the origins of the European idea:

“Europe was and is a utopian project. Numerous European countries banded together, overcame previous enmities and relinquished part of their sovereignty in order to create the European Union as a project devoted to peace. To this day, many of us dream of Europe as an open continent. And this is more than just a dream: it is now three and a half years since we founded the European Alliance of Academies to campaign together for the freedom of art and the forging of a democratic Europe.”

In the run-up to the European elections, which take place in Germany on 9 June 2024, the members of the European Alliance of Academies agreed on an election appeal that would go out to all Europeans:

“Diversity, respect and solidarity are the core elements of lively democracies. The European Alliance of Academies appeals to the citizens of Europe to assume their responsibility in protecting these values by exercising their right to vote.” (The full text is available [here](#).)

The diverse programme gave school students, young artists, civil society actors, climate experts and members of the Akademie der Künste the chance to discuss their ideas about Europe and democracy. Existing connections with artists and creatives from Hungary and Poland were deepened. Alliance members will continue to focus on combating right-wing extremism and antisemitism and defending artistic freedom.

Support from the political sphere is essential, as it is up to politicians to create a framework in which art can develop freely.

Ferenc Czinki, president of Szépírók Társasága, the Society of Hungarian Authors, which has been denied any state funding since 2024, affirmed the positive influence the alliance had in providing solidarity: “You have supported us and given us ideas and courage. The sense of solidarity you impart has got us through difficult times.”

In his keynote speech on the opening evening “Between Forced Avowal and Boycott”, Meron Mendel summed it up perfectly:

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“Our only option is to believe in people. And believing in people also means believing in art. Art’s mission is humanistic in the most profound sense of the word. And this is why art is under threat.”

The video messages contributed by Claudia Roth, Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and Alexandra Xanthaki, UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, stressed the importance of European integration and pledged ongoing support to the European Alliance of Academies.

For more information, visit: www.allianceofacademies.eu

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