

# Launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 in Belgium, in the presence of President Juncker and the College of Commissioners

## The news

On 31 January 2018, the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude **Juncker and the College of the Commissioners** will participate in the launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in Belgium, at the invitation of Philippe Close, Mayor of the City of Brussels.

The launch day will be marked by a three-dimensional show entitled “Thousand Reflections of Europe” attended by President Jean-Claude **Juncker**, Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, and the other Commissioners.

This unprecedented visit by the President and the College of Commissioners reflects the excellent relations between the Commission and the City of Brussels.

## The context

The purpose of the European Year of Cultural Heritage is to **raise awareness** of the social and economic importance of cultural heritage. Thousands of initiatives and events across Europe will provide the possibility to involve citizens from all backgrounds. The aim is to reach out to the widest possible audience, **in particular children and young people, local communities and people who are rarely in touch with culture**, to promote a common sense of ownership.

According to a [new Eurobarometer survey](#) released today, **8 out of 10 Europeans** think cultural heritage is not only important to them personally, but also to their community, region, country and the European Union as a whole. **A large majority** take pride in cultural heritage, whether it is located in their own region or country, or in another European country.

## The event

**15.00-15.45:** Press conference: “The European Year of Cultural Heritage in Belgium” [Brussels City Hall, Gothic Hall]

- **Jimmy Jamar**, Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Belgium and Catherine Magnant – Coordinator of the European Year of Cultural Heritage at the European Commission;
- Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region in charge of Local Authorities, Territorial Development, City Policy,

Monuments and Sites, Student Affairs, Tourism and the Civil Service;

- **Sven Gatz**, Flemish Minister for Culture, Media, Youth and Brussels Affairs;
- **Alda Greoli**, Vice-President of the Government of Wallonia in charge of Social Action, Public Health, Equal Opportunities, Vice-President and Minister of Culture, Childhood and Continuing Education Federation Wallonia-Brussels;
- **René Collin**, Walloon Minister of Agriculture, Nature, Forestry, Rurality, Tourism, Heritage and delegate to the Greater Region.

**16.00-18.00:** Citizen Dialogue: “Our heritage: when the past meets the future” [Brussels City Hall, Gothic Hall]

- **Paolo Fontani**, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels and UNESCO Representative to the European Institutions;
- **Michel Magnier**, European Commission, Director of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture;
- **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, General Secretary, Europa Nostra Foundation;
- **Jean-Louis Delaet**, Director of the Bois du Cazier site, a UNESCO World Heritage site and most recently labeled “European Heritage”;
- **Guy Tilkin**, Director of Landcommanderij Alden Biesen. Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport will close the dialogue.

**19:00:** 3D show “A Thousand Reflections of Europe”, produced by the Tour des Sites [Grand Place de Bruxelles], in the presence of President Jean-Claude Juncker and the College of Commissioners.

**Press contact to participate in the event:** [Anne.COMPERE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Anne.COMPERE@ec.europa.eu)

**To attend the Citizens Dialogue:** free entry, registration required via this [link](#)

**For more information**

[Q&A on the European Year of Cultural Heritage](#)

[Website of the EYCH2018 campaign](#) (including a list of events at EU and national levels)

[Special Eurobarometer report on Cultural Heritage](#) and country fiches

[Spotlight publication](#)

[Factsheet “culture as a driver for EU unity” – The Commission’s Contribution to the Leaders’ Working Lunch Gothenburg, 17 November 2017](#)

[Decision \(EU\) 2017/864 on a European Year of Cultural Heritage](#)