



European
Humanities
Conference



FCT
Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

LISBON DECLARATION on HUMANITIES OPEN RESEARCH and INNOVATION

7 May 2021

Reaffirming the conclusion of the 2017 World Humanities Conference, convened jointly by UNESCO and CIPSH, that the humanities have an essential role to play in equipping societies to make sense of the contemporary challenges they face and enabling governments and other policy-makers and social actors to respond to them;

Stressing that the unique value of the humanities depends on the diversity of their concepts, methods, traditions and experiences and on their productive relationship with the social and natural sciences, including through innovative forms of transdisciplinarity;

Emphasizing, among the challenges on which the humanities can shed light, the priority importance of the Covid-19 pandemic and its multiple effects on inequalities, inclusion and well-being; radicalism and extremism; digital transformations and their ethical implications; and imagining and creating new ways of inhabiting the Earth and relating to one another;

Suggesting that such challenges cluster around the overarching importance of interpreting and reinterpreting what it means to be human in the face of a world in transformation;

Noting recent initiatives taken on these lines by UNESCO, including in particular the BRIDGES sustainability humanities action coalition within the Management of Social Transformations programme and the preparation of the Recommendation of Ethics of Artificial Intelligence; by the European Union, in particular the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training; by national governments and agencies, including the preparation of the European Humanities Conference by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology; and by CIPSH and Humanities research units, in particular the Global History of Humankind and the World Humanities Report;

Expressing concern that the humanities often lack, in higher education and research systems, the resources and recognition necessary for their full potential to be captured;

Underscoring that their contribution to policy making can be enhanced substantially, as they shed light on different human interactions and contexts and help improving decision making.

Welcoming the outcomes of the European Humanities Conference, which brought together in Lisbon, from 5 to 7 May, humanities stakeholders from Europe, and beyond, to explore shared intellectual and institutional challenges and propose practical responses to them;

The signatories hereunder

Invite humanities scholars to mobilize their institutions and relevant stakeholders to guarantee that every single youngster throughout Europe has open access to humanities research, education and innovation by 2025, contributing effectively to increase humanities literacy throughout all European regions.

Encourage humanities scholars to engage actively in research, education and innovation activities under “open science principles” and in close collaboration with activities throughout different disciplines, as well as policy-level discussion, contributing to new modes of knowledge production and diffusion, together with innovative concepts and understandings of evidence.

Request education leaders and higher education institutions to ensure that all levels of education, including doctorate levels, integrate, transversally, course units on humanities and sciences interaction, strengthening the value of universal knowledge for addressing societal challenges.

Request research and higher education institutions and employers to actively promote mobility of students and researchers in the humanities, across geographic borders and disciplinary fields.

Further request higher education and research institutions to reach out to a wide range of stakeholders, through education, research and innovation initiatives aimed at sustainable innovation, co-designed with local communities, building from the humanities and their interaction with sciences and techniques.

Undertake to strengthen support for the humanities autonomy through existing funding mechanisms as well as innovative forms of financing.

Invite UNESCO, together with the institutions of the European Union, to seek appropriate modalities to bring together governments at Ministerial level, both in Europe and beyond, to further promote humanities research, education and innovation and to help designing corresponding policy actions.