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## **EFA MEPs want culture to be at the heart of Ukraine's recovery**

EFA MEPs Diana Riba i Giner and Piernicola Pedicini intervened in plenary to highlight the importance of culture when aiding the Ukraine recovery.

Diana Riba, CULT Coordinator, focused on the human impact this war has in Ukraine and quoted the story of Yuriy Kerpatenko, the conductor of the Kherson Music and Drama Theatre, that was murdered by the Russian army.

*“Let me begin with a name: Yuriy Kerpatenko.*

*Kerpatenko was the conductor of the Kherson Philharmonic Orchestra and was murdered only a few days ago after refusing to give a concert in Russian-occupied territory.”*

MEP Riba explained the “trail of open wounds” and the cultural repercussions of the invasion of Ukraine.

*“From the starkest dangers faced by artists, journalists and academics, to the destruction of cultural heritage. The costs of this war are unbearable for humanity as a whole.”* she said.

Diana Riba i Giner, EFA MEP, emphasised that culture should be a foundation towards recovery and a peace-bringing solution.

*“In our roadmap for contributing to peace, reconstruction and recovery, arts and culture must be a cornerstone and a safe place - Because art and culture can be tools for peace because their voice will be essential for the post-conflict transition,”* she concluded.

Piernicola Pedicini MEP explained how culture could have a crucial role in the economic recovery of a territory and set his own region as an example.

*“In times of war and economic crisis, unfortunately, culture always pays first - I come from a territory, the South of Italy, rich in art and culture, so the possibilities for economic recovery linked to the artistic, historical and monumental heritage are endless.”*

Pedicini MEP asserted the need to move from the current geographical vision to broader it so the south can be included in this recovery plan.

*“We must therefore look at the cut of the East-West direction due to the war, as a need to strengthen the North-South one that looks to Africa, but definitively abandoning the idea of a colonial model”.*

Piernicola Pedicini, EFA MEP, concluded by offering his constituency as a hub territory for this recovery, also allowing the territorial gap to be shortened.

*“In addition, the South of Italy, thanks to its centrality between Europe, Africa and the Middle East, can offer the role of cultural and commercial hub for the entire European Union. The objective would also meet the priority of the recovery and resilience mechanism that aims to reduce the territorial gap.”*

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**Responsible MEPs**



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