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15 Basque cultural stakeholders travel to Flanders to foster new professional relationships

- Professionals from the areas of performing arts, film and audiovisual industry, literature, music, art and language meet in Brussels, Ghent and Leuven
- Irene Larraza, director of the Etxepare Basque Institute, invited to Brussels by the European Union network of National Institutes of Culture to present initiatives to promote Basque language learning among the Basque diaspora in Latin America

The cultural exchange programme between the Basque Country and Flanders continues. After the first meetings of cultural industry professionals from both regions last November in Bilbao, San Sebastian and Vitoria-Gasteiz, fifteen Basque cultural players and representatives of the Etxepare Basque Institute and the Basque delegation in Brussels are now in Flanders to hold meetings and take part in several cultural activities from 1 to 3 June. The Etxepare Basque Institute has put together the activities in cooperation with the [Flanders Arts Institut](#).

The aim of these meetings between Basque creators and cultural players in Flanders is to increase mutual knowledge, promote cultural exchange between the two regions, foster creation and promotion, and share experiences. It is now the turn of Flanders after the experiences in Quebec and Scotland.

These fifteen Basque players from the fields of performing arts, film and audiovisual, literature, music, art and language, will take part in activities in Brussels, Ghent and Leuven.



From Wednesday to Friday, participants will visit the following venues: Rosas, P.A.R.T.S., ICTUS, WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Q-O2 workshop, Beursschouwburg, De Bijloke, les ballets C de la B, LOD, Ontroerend Goed, KIOSK, De Centrale, Logos, Danspunt, Circus Centre, De Expeditie, Compagnie, Cecilia, aifoon, Campo Nieuwpoort, M Leuven, Cas-co and STUK, among others.

The Basque cultural stakeholders who travelled to Flanders include: Dantzaz Kultur Elkartea, Kukai Kultur Elkartea, ADDE (Association of dance professionals of the Basque Country), Azkuna Zentroa Alhondengia, Amaia Molinet artista ikertzaile eta kuradorea, María Ibarretxe del Val artista, Ion Munduate artista, Faktoria Kooperatiba Elkartea, Zirkozaurre, Artekale, Euskal Herriko Musika Bulego Elkartea, Zukan Kultur Elkartea, Iñigo Setuain musikaria, Korrontzi and Txalap Art.

At the heart of this cultural exchange is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed last November by the Minister-President of Flanders Jan Jambon and the Basque Presidente Iñigo Urkullu with the intention of deepening cooperation between the two regions.

The document sets out the fifteen initial areas of collaboration between the two governments. These include: digitalisation; the environment (particularly regarding circular economy, climate change and marine research); transport (ports, logistics development, mobility and public works); social policies; gender equality; tourism; cultural and creative industries; health; and employment and public employment services.

#EULAT4Culture

Coinciding with these professional meetings, 'Agora' will be launched in Brussels on Wednesday, 1 June. Agora, is a meeting organised by [#EULAT4Culture](#) titled ['Cooperative culture and creativity to meet global challenges'](#). The meeting was attended by political representatives, cultural management professionals, creators and artists from all over the world. Invited by the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC), Irene Larraza, director of the Etxepare Basque Institute, spoke,

together with other international organisations and agents, about the contributions of migrants to culture and their ties to their roots. She also presented Euskara Munduan, the Etxepare Basque Institute's project on adult literacy in the Latin American diaspora. Larraza spoke about the Argentinian model, where the Institute is also responsible for training local Basque teachers.

One of the functions of the Etxepare Basque Institute is to raise awareness of the Basque language among Basque communities around the world; this is precisely what the Euskara Munduan programme (Basque in the World) is dedicated to. Currently, more than 70 Basque schools worldwide offer Basque classes in collaboration with the Institute.

Agora marks the launch of #EULAT4Culture, a [cultural diplomacy initiative](#) that brings together 20 EUNIC clusters. This event also marks the launch of the first cluster, EULAT4Culture BELGIUM, a cultural festival with 23 events that aims to strengthen EU-Latin America relations and shared values through culture and creativity.

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