

# The Europe Challenge

## The Europe Challenge - How are public libraries and their communities solving big challenges in Europe?

Clubs, libraries and youth centres are vital to our lives as we move out of lockdown– too often we see them as ornamental extras rather than as the essential building blocks of an engaged society.

- [Kenan Malik](#), The Guardian.

### Live event: 9 May, 14.30-15.30 CEST

One year after the start of the global pandemic, the notion of an open, democratic and diverse Europe, in which people live together in harmony, remains a crucial cultural task.

How exactly do cultural and social public spaces help tackle economic recession, health systems being at a breakpoint, unemployment, social tensions, climate change, new divides and more?

In this event, we introduce the Europe Challenge, and discuss how this new initiative works towards big and small solutions to the most pressing issues of our times. Our key protagonists are the people working in the most accessible public spaces in Europe where millions of people of all kinds of backgrounds have access to curated knowledge, experience and participation every day; places



that provide home to both small stories and big history; places where the challenges of today can turn into the opportunities for tomorrow: the public libraries. Representatives of seven libraries will share their experience in community-led solution making so far and their plans for the future in the context of the Europe Challenge.

Our conversation will be joined by [Jan Rock](#), Assistant Professor at the University of Amsterdam, who will put the changing role of public libraries as key players in European public sphere in a historic perspective. The moderation will be held by [Anthony Zacharzewski](#), Director of Democratic Society.

The libraries joining us in this session are the [Amsterdam Public Libraries OBA](#) (NL), [DOKK1 Aarhus Public Library](#) (DK), [Central and Regional Library Berlin](#) (DE), [De Krook Ghent](#) (B), [Kranj City Library](#) (SLO) [Jordi Rubio i Balaguer Library](#) (Sant Boi, ES) and [Valmiera Public Library](#) (LV).

With thanks to our key partners [Amsterdam Public Libraries](#) (OBA); [Public Libraries 2030](#) and [Democratic Society](#).

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