

Letter addressed by e-mail

Brussels, the 27th March 2020

Dear Culture Ministers,
Dear Commissioner Mariya Gabriel,

The Corona virus crisis sweeping through the EU and the Global community is unprecedented. We thank the Member States in their efforts to lessen the impact on public health systems and on the lives of the EU citizens.

Since the beginning of the crisis and the rapid spread of COVID-19, the cultural sector was the first to be severely impacted by the measures taken by EU governments. Starting with the decision to close the venues and to cancel the events gathering more than 1000 people, it quickly evolved into closing all cultural venues and limiting the circulation of cultural professionals preventing a significant number of creative workers from being able to continue work.

Those necessary measures will have consequences on the stability and survival of many cultural organisations: small and medium-sized concert houses, theatres and movie theatres, arts galleries, for producers, cultural workers, editors and music labels, and undoubtedly for their future projects.

Many cultural professionals and creators don't have welfare safety nets provided by national law and are ending up with no revenues for an undefined period of time.

The crisis will have a very adverse impact on EU cultural diversity, especially if Member States don't give strong and direct support for the sector during and after the crisis.

In the meantime, cultural and artistic expressions of all kinds have proven to be essential in EU citizens' life. They provide one of the only windows through which people can escape their confinement situation and the anxiety generated by the crisis. Cultural organisations and professionals are greatly contributing by bringing cultural diversity and joy into the homes of millions of citizens.

In a spirit of solidarity, the sector is also organising itself providing help, financially or legally, so that as many cultural enterprises and creators can emerge out of the crisis still being able to work.

The EU and the Member States need collectively to recognise the important role of the cultural sector in all our lives and economy and the urgency to protect EU cultural diversity.

We therefore join the call on governments of other organisations representative of the cultural sector and kindly recommend the following:

1. National governments must adopt emergency measures that specifically and adequately support the sustainability of all actors of the cultural ecosystems: from the larger actors to individual creators and creative workers.

It's crucial that no one is left abandoned.

2. Part of the € 37 billion from the “Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative” should be available to the cultural sector with the objective of protecting EU cultural diversity.

3. As the MFF negotiations continue, the EU institutions have to assess the importance of the cultural sector and the need for a strong and much better endowed support funds at EU level.

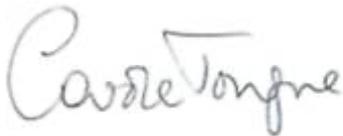
Thank you for your support and your kind consideration of our letter.

We look forward to hearing from you as to how you intend to proceed.

Yours sincerely,

Carole Tongue

Chair of the European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity



CC : Sabine Verheyen MEP, President of the Culture and education Committee of the European Parliament

The European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity is a network organisation regrouping 14 European national coalitions: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, UK and Turkey, which represent professional cultural organisations from several sectors such as the audiovisual, book, music, performing arts, visual arts and multimedia sectors.