

## **The series of debates “Tomorrow's culture. About change”**

### **EUROPE DAY ONLINE DEBATE POST COVID-19 CULTURAL SECTOR**

-Summary and conclusions-

Because this year's Europe Day is celebrated under extremely special auspices, the National Institute for Cultural Research and Training has started a series of debates entitled: “Tomorrow's culture. About change.”

The first debate brought together personalities and cultural authorities with sharp and constructive attitudes about the role and purpose of culture in society. The debate focused on ideas related to:

- how post-COVID-19 culture will look, unevenly and differently affected from isolation measures;
- how to preserve the diversity of forms of artistic manifestation;
- what institutional or independent cultural decision-makers and operators should do to continue the path begun to assert the Cultural and Creative Sectors;
- how figures, statistics and operational data should be used to generate flexible rational regulatory frameworks in order to reduce resource disparities in all categories between the public and private cultural sectors.

The first debate had as participants many well-known names who work in the field of Romanian culture or who, despite having their residence abroad, are strongly connected to Romanian culture:

1. The Minister of Culture - Mr. Bogdan Gheorghiu
2. Presidential Adviser – Prof. Sergiu Nistor
3. The Ambassador of Romania to the French Republic - Mr. Luca Niculescu
4. The president of the National Institute of Statistics - Prof. Tudorel Andrei
5. Matei Vișniec - Writer and Journalist
6. President of the Honorary Jury of the Romanian Public Relations Association - Prof. Dumitru Boțun
7. Mr. Cătălin Ștefănescu - Writer and Journalist
8. Director of the National Museum of Contemporary Art Bucharest (MNAC) - Mr. Călin Dan
9. Director of the National Cultural Fund Administration (AFCN) - Mrs. Irina Cios
10. The director of ARTEXIM, the Director of the George Enescu Festival - Mr. Mihai Constantinescu

## 11. INCFC Research Director - Anda Becuț Marinescu

The moderation of the discussions was ensured by *the General Manager of INCFC and Vice-Rector of the National University of Theater and Cinematography, Assoc. Prof. Carmen Croitoru.*

Cultural adaptation policies that include the technological dimension are, in the opinion of the participants, the first measures that Europe will consonantly take to preserve common spiritual values, demonstrating solidarity and empathy in the face of universal calamity. The resilience of the European Union, consisting mainly in the symbiosis between culture, communication and technology, will certainly become one of the main features of the future of culture.

The participants also discussed the measures announced by countries with very high activity and cultural consumption, but also the details intended to protect the population. Consumption of certain cultural goods that require special condition will be also affected. It was also discussed what new horizons of aesthetic expectation will be activated in the context in which competition, within the virtual environment, goes from local to global and how important the selection based on value of contents displayed online will become.

Today it's about about the vulnerability of the independent sector, but that does not mean that the other categories of institutions are less vulnerable. There is a need for more balance in terms of funding and, thus, a reduction of the cleavages between major cultural events in Romania and all other activities of cultural institutions of national importance.

The Minister of Culture, Mr. Bogdan Gheorghiu, underlined the measures adopted as a matter of urgency and the importance of stopping a possible antagonism between the public and the private cultural sectors, through a structuring of the Cultural and Creative Sectors involving dedicated policies.

The Ambassador of Romania to the French Republic, Mr. Luca Niculescu, communicated the latest measures taken by the French government to support the performing arts and the short-term and medium-term importance of European collaborations and co-productions.

The writer Matei Vișniec remarked that the cultural sector was the first to be affected and that, unfortunately, will be the last that will emerge from the crisis, and in the context of this crisis, the role of the state is perceived completely differently: now all eyes are on the state as a "universal saviour".

All guests agreed that, paradoxically, the coronavirus crisis has brought culture, for the first time in recent history, as a major topic to central and public levels, and important steps have been taken to promote the concept of culture at the national level.



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The conclusions summarized by Professor Dumitru Borțun enhanced the idea that the field of culture is not just a playground for content creators, a field of consumption or a factor contributing to GDP. The educational dimension of the cultural field is an essential one, both in terms of the formation of knowledge, tastes and behaviours of the public. Consequently, cultural institutions must have the ability to design multiple alternative scenarios for the future, without taking over the patterns of the past, but only the teachings – the lessons that history has offered.

Culture plays the role of unveiler of European humanistic values and can be a compass that indicates the directions that should not be abandoned in trying to rethink a national and continental project.