

<p>To the Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta victorponta2.0@gmail.com Romanian Government, General Secretariat sgg@gov.ro ; drp@gov.ro To the Romanian Senate infopub@senat.ro; presa@senat.ro</p>	<p>ACCESS TO CULTURE</p>  <p>A fundamental right of all citizens Secretariat Access to Culture Platform @ European House for Culture Place Flagey 18 1050 Bruxelles Belgium www.access-to-culture.eu</p>
<p>Our ref.: 2012/ACP 011/MADV/MAMR Brussels, 20 April 2012</p>	
<p>Subject: Support letter for the Romanian Cultural Institutes</p>	

Dear Prime Minister of Romania, Mr. Victor Ponta,
Dear Members of the Romanian Government,
Dear Members of the Romanian Senate,

The Access to Culture Platform, gathering 43 European non-governmental organisations from the cultural sector with a trans-national, European and international dimension representing structures in 32 countries participating in the Culture Programme and a further 23 countries outside this group, was set in place in the structured dialogue process launched by the European Commission (EC) in June 2008 which has been warmly welcomed by the sector as a means to increase participation and transparency in European cultural policy-making and is a pioneer initiative. It is an essential tool to ensure that cultural stakeholders, including at the regional and local level and Member States are involved in elaborating effective and comprehensive policies which have culture and creativity at their core. Indeed, the dialogue process is essential to reach the objectives of the European Agenda for Culture.

The Access to Culture Platform advocates for Culture as a fundamental right of all citizens; it positions Access to Culture in a human/cultural rights perspective, places Access to Culture upstream in cultural policy-making (with a strong call to also mainstream culture in other policy fields, including development policy) and formulates clear priority areas for action to develop the conditions of creation, education and participation across Europe. To advocate for these standpoints the Platform produced its Policy Guidelines Document and a comprehensive Tool KIT, all downloadable from the Access to Culture Platform's site).

We plead that you recognize the excellent, accountable, efficient and effective work that the ICRs have been doing and to leave their mission, independence and tutelage the way it is now - we see nothing wrong, but only right; it does not need to be 'fixed'!

We and our audiences have learned about the beauty of Romanian culture through these Institutes; we have learned of the richness of contemporary thought in Romania and we have had the good fortune to 'discover' and work with the finest of both young and accomplished Romanian artists... all thanks to the independent Romanian Cultural Institutes.

With far less resources than other state cultural institutes, ICR has accomplished a truly admirable task of putting Romanian art and artists onto a very competitive international cultural map in a relatively short period. This is in a very large part due to the innovative approaches of addressing international cultural markets.

Like the Goethe and French Institutes, the British Council and many more, the Romanian Cultural Institutes form a precious neutral space for international cultural exchange, supporting the



emergence and development of international cultural collaboration and exchange. Like the other cultural institutes, the ICR's correct stereotypes, support talent, internationalize careers, spread the understanding of the best of their cultures.

Romania is a signatory to many international treaties and declarations, some legally binding and some not, which oblige states to pro-actively support freedom of artistic and cultural expression. An "emergency" measure to radically change the ICR mission and submit it to obvious politicized control is against the spirit and the letter of these documents.

We would therefore wish to advocate for the means to facilitate access to culture not to be hindered and protest strongly against the current Romanian government's proposal to change the mission and tutelage of the Romanian Cultural Institutes.

With the expression of our highest respect and appreciation, we remain yours faithfully,



Miguel Ángel Martín Ramos
Spokesperson Access to Culture Platform



Eva Nunes
On behalf of the Secretariat Access to Culture Platform
@ European House for Culture