

[RESOURCES](#) > 'Freedom and Creativity: defending art, defending diversity' - UNESCO report

POSTED ON  
21 MAY 2020

WEBSITE

[HTTPS://EN.UNESCO.ORG/CREAT...](https://en.unesco.org/creat...)

COUNTRY

[INTERNATIONAL](#)

THEMES

[CULTURAL POLICY](#)

[CULTURAL RIGHTS](#)

## 'Freedom and Creativity: defending art, defending diversity' - UNESCO report



'Freedom and Creativity: defending art, defending diversity' is a new report from UNESCO, a special edition of the Global Report series, by Laurence Cuny.

UNESCO sheds light on the current advances and challenges in the legal protection of artistic freedom, the protection of the social and economic rights of artists and cultural professionals, and the monitoring of artistic freedom. Released on the occasion of [World Press Freedom Day 2020](#), this [special edition](#) of the Global Report series builds on the recommendations put forth in the chapter "[Promoting the freedom to imagine and create](#)" in UNESCO's 2018 Global Report to assess whether progress has been made, to determine what efforts are still required and what new challenges have emerged.

At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting the entire cultural value chain – creation, production, distribution and access – and considerably weakening the status of artists and culture professionals, who most often lack access to conventional social protection mechanisms, this report provides an overview of the challenges encountered and the efforts that governments and civil society are making to maintain sustainable, free and diverse environments for creation, dissemination and access to cultural life.

**Freedom & Creativity**, produced with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is the result of research carried out before the current health crisis. Nevertheless, it reveals flaws in artistic freedom that this crisis will only exacerbate, and progress that may be built upon. While legislative efforts are still needed for better protection of artistic freedom, recent years have seen the emergence of a body of case law from which States can draw, as well as a diversification of mechanisms for the protection of artists at risk. Despite the increased awareness of the specificities of artistic work in terms of social

Despite the increased awareness of the specificities of artists' work in terms of social

protection, equitable remuneration and taxation observed throughout the world, it is clear that the calls for an integrated approach to legislation on the status of the artist have not yet been heard by a majority of States. In the governments' responses to the profound repercussions of the global pandemic on employment, the rights of artists to be seen as workers with their own specificities must not be overlooked.

Artistic freedom also includes the right of citizens to participate in cultural life. This is a key component of the well-being of our societies. The current crisis highlights once again, the power of art and culture to build and maintain social ties under unprecedented constraints. From spontaneous creations shared on the Internet to the many initiatives to provide free access to creations by world-renowned artists, art and culture offer an endless source of generosity and resilience.

However, artists are also undoubtedly the most likely to suffer violations of their fundamental freedoms because their work requires them to connect with their audience. In the current health crisis, artists are not only enduring a financial collapse, but like billions of people around the world, they are giving up some of their fundamental freedoms in order to preserve our health. More than ever, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is undermining the economic and social ecosystem of the creative world, their role, which is both creative and critical, is salutary.

Through this report, UNESCO continues its awareness-raising efforts to highlight freedom of artistic expression as a pillar of freedom of expression, and places artists and culture professionals at the heart of cultural policies and the development of cultural and creative industries. Another special edition of the Global Report Series dedicated to gender issues in the cultural and creative industries will be published in the coming months. These are essential steps in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly in its ambition to promote decent work and build peaceful and inclusive societies where the fundamental freedoms of all citizens are protected.

Download links for publication in English, French and

Spanish: <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/publications/freedom-creativity-defending-art-defending>

## Similar content

POSTED ON  
07 AUG 2018

UNESCO launches  
global survey on status  
of the artist



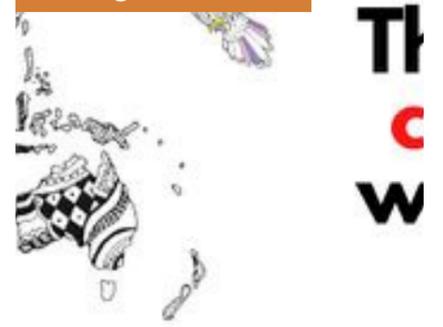
POSTED ON  
22 MAY 2020

UNESCO and ICOM -  
new research on impact  
of COVID-19 shutdown  
on museums  
worldwide



POSTED ON  
29 APR 2020

UNESCO Asia-Pacific -  
cultural resources  
during COVID-19



POSTED ON  
01 APR 2020

Agenda 21 for Culture  
- resources on the  
cultural mobilisation of  
cities and local  
governments



POSTED ON  
07 APR 2020

European Culture of  
Solidarity Fund  
culture  
solidar  
fund



POSTED ON  
12 JUL 2018

Open call for  
researchers for 3  
studies on Arts - Rights  
- Justice



## **ABOUT ASEF** **CULTURE360**

[culture360.asef.org](http://culture360.asef.org) brings Asia and Europe closer by providing information, facilitating dialogue and stimulating reflection on the arts and culture of the two regions.

[MORE ABOUT ASEF CULTURE360](#) |  
[FAQ](#)

