

Statement

Independence needs to stay independent

Resetting European Culture - roadmap to 2024

Reset!, the European network initiated by Arty Farty in Lyon in 2022, federates independent cultural and media structures representing diversity and pluralism in Europe, and amplifies their visibility and networking through a series of actions.

The network's aim is to highlight the stressful situation and specific needs of today's cultural independence, which is neither under the control of any public authorities nor affiliated with large private groups.

Working together to redesign (reset) the cultural and media landscape in Europe is Reset!'s main purpose. In its second year, Reset! and its members wish to declare their need to advocate and support their shared values of pluralism, diversity, equality and sustainability on the road to the European Elections 2024.

Europe is at a turning point. At a time when war is resurfacing on the continent, obscurantist, reactionary, and authoritarian forces are rising to power in several countries, exerting an unusual pressure of censorship towards the freedom of expression and cultural exchange. Independent media and cultural players are currently, and more than ever, under many different threats, from disappearance to repression to takeover, along with the ongoing economic concentration of their sector.

Despite being weakened, these structures are nevertheless well equipped to respond to the tensions that Europe is currently facing, persistently developing new approaches and narratives to navigate in the current complex climate of economic and political interests as well as their threatening power dynamics.

With one year to go before the European elections, we, independent cultural structures and media members of Reset!, intend to warn on the dangers our sector faces and offer our contribution to the rewriting of a new cultural, social, and democratic manifesto.

Reset! welcomes all players who share our vision for a fair European cultural and media landscape to join us and contribute to shape those claims into action.

We need to be able to take advantage of the exploratory and forward-thinking mindset of independent cultural structures, adapted to the practices of the next generations, to face the great challenges of our time; from ecological questions to equality, inclusion, technological decentralisation, labour rights, territorial reconnection and more, and close the generational gap of public cultural policies.

It is also crucial to resist the ongoing concentration trend at work in Europe in the cultural, music, publishing and media landscape, which, along with the growing commodification of creativity and arts, poses serious risks to the existence and survival of independent culture as well as to creative freedom, artistic diversity,

pluralism of opinion and, more generally, the rise of alternative narratives and voices, both nationally and internationally, inside and outside each border.

Freedom can only be experienced and exercised when there is equal access to resources and opportunities, independent of external control, influence and coercion by both autocratic public powers and tentacular monopolistic private groups.

We, the independents, form an ecosystem whose work is essential for the growth of any creative initiatives in the territories we represent across the European continent and beyond.

We embody a cultural and media landscape that is rooted in engaged communities, youth-oriented, and socially aware. We stand for a vision and know-how that is crucial for the very future of our culture.

We stand for European and worldwide cooperation, in weaving relationships in networks and in being open to the new, the unknown, the different, the other. For us, cross-sectoral co-construction is the key to the future of our work.

In the next 12 months, and ahead of the European parliamentary elections, we will engage in influencing how public policies are conceived at the European Union level together. In particular, to encourage the reallocation of financial resources in favour of more balanced distribution towards social, political and environmental emergency.

Beyond raising the alarm, the objective of this statement is to bring together all those who share the ambition to redefine the core meaning of cultural independence, the way sectors interact, and the way they relate to public authorities and the private sector.

We have a special part to play in federating citizens around an alternative vision of culture with independence at its centre; in creating a sense of community across creative initiatives; and influencing public policies in the sense of greater social consciousness.

We believe that by raising our voices as one and starting to advocate for these elections now we can build a new founding act of a new European paradigm for culture, media and arts that is fair and inclusive for all, both within and beyond Europe's borders as well as for the future generations.

