

COMMITMENT STATEMENT ARTICLE 19 MOTIVATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF THE ACCESS TO CULTURE PLATFORM

Art, in any form, constitutes a key medium through which information and ideas are imparted and received.

Historically, artists have been the primary targets of the censor – novelists, playwrights, satirists, poets, painters and sculptors have seen their art banned, burned, desecrated, or destroyed while they themselves have been imprisoned, dismissed or killed.

Over the last two centuries, the media has become the key vehicle of communication and expression, and its ability to function independently, is vital to freedom of expression. But alongside journalists, artists continue to be the censor’s primary concern – be it a state institution mandated to protect state interests, the “good morals” of society, or a community incensed by the artist’s portrayal of its inner workings or beliefs.

The direct censorship instruments at the state’s disposal are blunt and wide-ranging: these include highly repressive laws, supported by an array of regulations and guidelines that delineate and restrict what can be expressed, and how it should be done, assisted by a multitude of censors – diverse institutions that will intervene at different stages of the artistic process by assenting to or denying the much needed authorisation.

The European institutions can and should do more to fulfil their obligations in protecting, promoting and fulfilling the right to freedom of artistic expression. We believe that through the ACP we can, together, best discuss, advise and promote policy that is in the best interests of artists and cultural workers both inside and beyond the EU – as part of EU foreign policy.