



BUNDESKULTUR

**“STRENGTHEN
DEMOCRACY WITH A
DIVERSE CULTURAL AND
MEDIA LANDSCAPE.”**

“Culture is the elixir of our democracy. In times of crisis, it will be crucial to ensure that our culture is restored to its full potential. After all, cultural policy is also social policy.

It is more important than ever before for us to defend and reinforce our democratic model of free, independent media: here in Germany, in Europe and worldwide – particularly in light of the war in Ukraine.”





CLAUDIA ROTH

Minister of State for Culture and the Media

Claudia Roth is Minister of State to the Federal Chancellor and Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media. Her office is located at the Federal Chancellery and she is a member of the Federal Cabinet. At the same time, she heads one of the supreme federal authorities with around 400 members of staff in Berlin and Bonn and is responsible for a budget of around EUR 2.3 billion.

In Germany, federal tradition assigns cultural and media sovereignty to the federal states. However, the Federal Government does have extensive responsibility for policymaking in these two areas. One of the responsibilities of the Minister of State for Culture and the Media is to promote cultural establishments and projects of national significance. She also provides recommendations on the continuous development and optimisation of the framework for art and culture and represents Germany in the Council of the European Union in matters of culture and media policy.

INDEPENDENT AND FREE MEDIA

Diverse, free and independent media are fundamental to pluralistic societies and democracy. Yet, even in Germany, journalists are increasingly being exposed to hatred and persecution according to the most recent survey conducted by Reporters Without Borders. For this reason, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media is establishing robust structures for independent journalism, for journalists who have fled their home countries and for media in exile in Germany. She also supports Germany's international broadcaster, Deutsche Welle, with funds from her budget. At European level, Minister of State Claudia Roth is calling for a reliable framework, not only to maintain but also to continue building the diversity and independence of the media.





CULTURE PANEL

“We need dialogue, networks and collaboration, because democracy thrives on culture in all its diversity – from record shops and the opera, to comic stores and short film festivals,” emphasised Minister of State Claudia Roth. In other words, a strong alliance is needed between the Federal and state governments, as well as the municipal authorities. The Federal Government intends to establish a culture panel for this purpose. Members of the panel will include artists, creative minds, media professionals, producers of culture, cultural establishments, associations, local and state politicians and members of the general public who will discuss options to improve collaboration, to identify problems and to find the best answers and solutions with Minister of State Roth. By the government and civil society working together, the aim is to raise awareness on all levels of art- and culture-related issues, and to encourage dialogue about the future of art and culture – including issues that have been raised primarily by the pandemic.

DIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATION

Respecting diversity and raising awareness of it is an important democratic issue and should be further reinforced in cultural and media policy. To achieve this goal, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media is committed to ensuring that everyone has the chance to participate in culture – regardless of their origin, social background or gender. Other priorities include fair and reasonable pay for women in the area of culture and the media, and more diverse points of view on the juries and committees of the government's cultural institutions.





ADDRESSING THE COLONIAL PAST

“As the Federal Government and as a nation, we acknowledge the horrific outrages committed under colonial rule,” said Minister of State Claudia Roth when returning the first Benin Bronzes to Nigeria. “People all over the world have the right to access their own cultural heritage. They should have the power to decide how it is preserved and passed down to future generations.” Working closely with former colonies to address the legacy of colonial heritage is an important step towards collaborative dialogue and cultural cooperation as equal partners.

MODERN COMMEMORATIVE CULTURE

As Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Claudia Roth believes that remembrance makes a fundamental contribution to a vibrant democracy and a diverse society. “Only people with a knowledge and awareness of our past can make a conscious decision against antisemitism, antigypsyism, racism, discrimination and social exclusion, and can recognise the signs, speak out and take action,” said Minister of State Roth. To increase knowledge and awareness, she is supporting new, creative and more digital forms of commemorating the victims of the Nazi reign of terror. This is, also, important for the remembrance of the victims of the SED dictatorship. One particular aim is to engage with young people. Minister of State Claudia Roth is also keenly intent on filling in the blank spots in our collective memory, connecting them with the experiences of an immigration society and placing a stronger focus on European and international remembrance – particularly when it comes to addressing the legacy of Germany’s occupation of Europe during the Second World War and dealing with its colonial past. She believes that shared memories form the foundation of a common future.





SUSTAINABILITY IN CULTURE AND THE MEDIA

Climate change is currently one of the biggest challenges to our survival and it can only be overcome by collective action. Claudia Roth, Germany's first Minister of State for Culture and the Media to be a member of the Green Party, is making sustainability in culture and the media a focal aspect of her portfolio. The cultural sector and the media industry can – and must – make a contribution to ecologically sustainable development. From 2023 onwards, nationwide minimum ecological standards will be introduced for film and series productions, and similar standards will apply to other fields of culture in the future. Minister of State Roth is also planning to set up a Green Culture Desk to help the culture, creative and media industries to operate in a climate-friendly manner. However, not only is she concerned about ecological sustainability, but also about social sustainability, and is committed to improving diversity and gender equality in the arts, in culture and in the media.

ARTISTS AND JOURNALISTS IN EXILE

Supporting persecuted artists and journalists is a key issue on the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media's agenda. The urgency of their situation has been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine. To enable Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian journalists and artists to continue working in exile here in Germany, Minister of State Claudia Roth is currently making grants available to them, extending residency programmes and arranging work opportunities in cultural establishments and the media industry. She also supports the work of media in exile, for example, by providing funding to the JX Fund.





COVID-19 AID AND BETTER SOCIAL SECURITY FOR ARTISTS

The 2022 Berlinale was a sign of change in the cultural sector. After more than two years of the pandemic, the cultural scene is gaining momentum again. Yet the impacts of the pandemic are still clearly evident in the cultural sector, which is why the NEUSTART KULTUR aid programme and the Federal Government's special fund for cultural events continue to provide tailored support. The Federal Government also aims to introduce more effective social security for artists in order to improve their income situation and the financial stability of the artists' social insurance fund. The Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media has also published recommendations for German-wide air hygiene regulations at cultural events to make them more safe for members of the public to attend.



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