

European Sports Ministers discuss safe return of spectators to sport and other Covid challenges to sector

From [Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media](#)

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Minister Jack Chambers says spectators at matches and events “clearly missed”

Minister Catherine Martin T.D. today attended a meeting of the EU Ministers for Culture and Media, held via videoconference, to discuss measures to support the recovery of the culture and media sectors from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Addressing the meeting in Irish, Minister Martin called on her fellow Ministers to explore the possibility of an EU wide series of performances, when it is safe and appropriate to mark the exit from COVID restrictions, to show support and solidarity for the sector and for the public to once again experience the joy of live performance.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister Martin stated:

Colleagues, this has been a year like no other. The performing arts have and continue to be among the most negatively impacted sectors. In this debate we are future focussed on the recovery of the culture sector and in that context, may I suggest we consider how we can celebrate the return of live performance when it is safe for all Member States to do so. Perhaps a simultaneous concert from re-opened venues across Europe to bring us together, lift our spirits and showcase our wonderful artists and the diversity of our shared culture.

Minister Martin also welcomed the proposed significant increase in funding for the Creative Europe Programme 2021-2027, the EU’s main financial instrument to support the culture and media sector. However, she noted that at a time of unprecedented financial stimulus to boost the recovery of the EU Member States, the cultural, creative and media sectors can play a far greater role within wider EU programmes and as part of the EU Recovery Facility.

Minister Martin noted:

Culture not only has a deep intrinsic value, it is also a vital cog in the economy providing employment and contributing to productivity. Its value to health, wellbeing, lifelong learning, its place in addressing and raising awareness of the major issues of our time such as the pandemic, the climate crisis and the sustainable development agenda need to be appreciated and utilised.

Minister Martin concluded her point by calling for greater access by the culture, creative and media sectors to EU programmes and recovery instruments delivered at national level. The Minister emphasised the contribution the sectors can make to the achievement of EU priorities including a clean green recovery, enhanced connectivity, digitalisation, up-skilling and a Europe that is closer to its citizens.