Les III Sille Sill

Report on the survey on the war in Ukraine

April - May 2022





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1. Introduction

More than three months after the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army on 24 February, the survey "Festivals programming in time of conflict" unfortunately remains relevant and may identify some important needs.

As festivals in Europe grapple with the task of planning against the backdrop of war in Ukraine and looking at how they can be of help efficiently, the European Festivals Association (EFA) invited festivals to share their feelings and thoughts about the role of festivals in time of war and other violent conflicts in the world.

EFA would like to thank all EFA members and festivals that answered the survey, as well as the EFFE Hubs who disseminated the survey in their respective country, and the colleagues who have shared it around. EFA also give special thanks to the Budapest Observatory of Summa Artium, especially to Péter Inkei, who helped in processing, analysing and interpreting the data collected, and to Simon Mundy for his precious contribution to the editing of this report.

2. Aim

EFA, and the 142 festivals that responded to this survey want to show through this inquiry solidarity with Ukrainians and other victims and address the issue of programming in difficult times through peer learning.

The specific question on how festivals have tackled other wars or conflicts in the world is interesting in terms of seeing the level of engagement of festivals. This topic deserves further development, but the current survey concentrates on the war in Ukraine.

The data collected helped EFA identify festivals' attitudes and proposals during this war, the actions they have adopted and what efforts have been made in recent weeks and months.

Finally, the answers will also be used to try to develop new initiatives to support Ukrainian artists and festivals; for example, building a database of festivals and artists that festivals in Europe and beyond could support.

3. Festivals

The survey was launched on 14 April and closed on 11 May 2022.

The 142 responses came from 38 countries, covering a balanced and broad geographic spread. (For the distribution of participating festivals by country go to Annex 1).

The countries represented with the greatest number of festivals are Poland (19), Italy (10), UK (8), Belgium and Ukraine (7-7), as well as Greece (6).

63 festivals in post-communist countries and 70 from elsewhere in Europe (including 3 in Turkey) shared their opinions with us; 4 festivals responded from other continents.

51 responses arrived from festivals in countries that are directly connected to Russia: from Norway and Finland down to Georgia and Armenia, including the 7 Ukrainians.

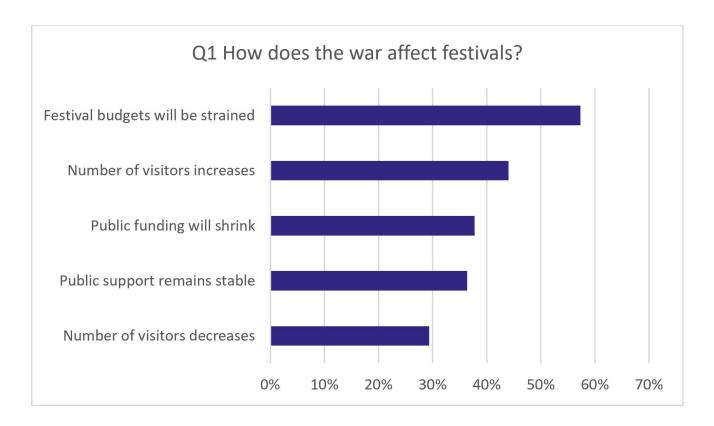
The artistic profiles of the 142 festivals represent a great variety, which appears to reflect the overall character of the current European arts festival scene. Their programmes include 18 artistic disciplines, music being the most frequent, in 62% of the responding festivals. Theatre and contemporary dance are second most frequent genres in 30-30% of cases. It is then followed by film (27%), heritage (23%), photo (17%), and street arts (17%). On average, festivals claimed between 3 and 4 kinds of cultural genre. (For the distribution of participating festivals by art disciplines see Annex 2).

The geographic spread of the 142 festivals does not translate into significant differences in genre. Festivals in the proximity of the war nevertheless feature theatre, contemporary dance, and heritage in smaller numbers, while literature is part of their programmes more often than the average, while few Western festivals feature folklore.

The interrelationship between art disciplines and nationality reveals some notable coincidences. No fewer than 7 Italian festivals feature interdisciplinary art programmes, while 6 Polish festivals include film. Contemporary dance in Croatia and Italy, theatre in the Czech Republic, and film in Italy constitute specific thematic clusters among the participants, with 5 festivals in each of the four types. 22 respondents have literature in their programmes, with 4 Polish festivals as the largest national sub-set.

4. Effects of the war in Ukraine

The first question inquired about the effect of the war in Ukraine. The diagram shows the percentages of the responses. (For the original wording of the questions and the answers go to Annex 3.)



The respondents are festival organisers who, like everyone else, are conscious of the inflation that is to a considerable extent due to the war. No wonder worries about budgets appear most often – in fact, even more than 57% would not be a surprise.

The remaining answers divide between positive and negative expectations. The overall balance tilts towards optimism. In one of the binary questions the optimistic variant received clear priority. Against 30% that fear a drop in visitors numbers, 44% believe in growth while in the other couple the negative forecast of decreasing public funding got only slightly more votes: 54% vs. 52%.

31 festival organisers expressed optimism in answer to both related questions (hopeful about more visitors and sustainable public funding). Their share was somewhat higher in Western than Eastern (post-communist) countries: 24% vs 20%.

There were 16 respondents that ticked all three negative options: budgets in danger, shrinking audience and decreasing funding. This instance has revealed the greatest gap between East and West. While the 16 cases are 11% of the total, 19% of post-communist country festivals belong here and 3% only from the rest of Europe. Almost half of them, 7 festivals are in Poland, the country that bears the greatest burden outside of Ukraine.

Open responses

The high engagement of the participating festivals was demonstrated by the number of open responses submitted as 'Other' on the questionnaire. The answers formulated on the first question show that the COVID-19 crisis created a lot of uncertainty and the current war in Ukraine adds even more uncertainty on top. The war will affect festivals mainly in the field of economic issues (rise of fees, travel costs, running costs, gas prices).

Festivals located in Poland complain that the war reduces interest in culture and lament the decrease of funds. Funding primarily allocated to culture (governmental, sponsors, etc.) is now used to support the millions of Ukrainian refugees that left the country and found shelter in Poland. Budget reduction has also been highlighted by a festival in the Czech Republic and Armenia.

Many festivals in the UK complain that fundraising will be more difficult to achieve.

The next selection of quotes shared in 'Other' echoes the predominant optimism of the survey's participants. (Minor corrections were sometimes made in the spelling of the original.)

- Violence (it doesn't matter what you say: war or special action) will affect festivals mainly in the field of economic issues (fees, travel costs, running costs), but it will increase people's need for art and culture because they will be more in favour of its positive role in society. (Slovenia)
- The pandemic has influenced the attendance at festivals but it's difficult to know if it's positive or negative. There are a lot of new festivals in Belgium, on top of many postponed concerts and we fear people will be obliged to make choices. (Belgium)

- Hopefully the public will attend the festival events, as they are also affected by inflation and rising costs, so soon they may have less money to spend on art and culture. (Hungary)
- We want to hope that in this situation of war in Europe EFA could find help to our sector
 of culture by persuading EU politicians to increase financial support to performing art
 festivals and to create a special fund to help Ukrainian artists. (Lithuania)

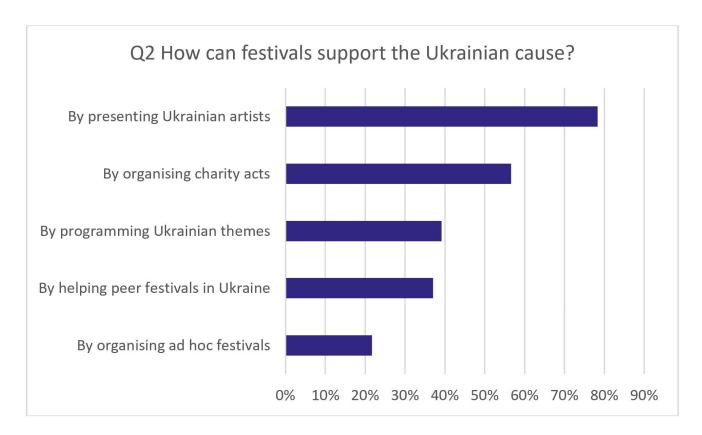
An example of the expression of concern:

• Private sector companies that were financially supporting culture, spend their budgets on Ukrainian crisis. (Czech Republic)

Islands of careful uncertainty:

- Not clear yet. Cyprus is a place with both a Russian and Ukrainian community, so it's to be determined. (Cyprus)
- One will have to see how the situation will develop in the next few weeks/months. It is too volatile to project repercussions. Besides, of course, it might have different effects in the different European regions. (Malta)

5. Supporting Ukraine



Even if we know that responding to our questionnaire is by itself a signal of solidarity with the Ukrainian cause, the intention on behalf of 78% to include Ukrainians in their programme is impressive. (The share is practically the same if we exclude Ukrainian respondents for whom presenting fellow nationals goes by definition.)

Even more inspiring is that more than half of those answering our questions are willing to arrange charity acts linked to their events.

Open responses

When going to 'Other', it is interesting to see that most of the answers mention that it is important to promote peace, tolerance and inter-cultural understanding. Arts and culture stimulate collective reflection and play a significant role in encounters during which participants can exchange, which contributes to better understanding between people.

Some festivals (in Poland and in Greece) pointed out that it is important to initiate and animate co-operation between Ukrainian artists/curators and European institutions.

On a larger scale, festivals have indicated that European cultural institutions, festivals among them, have a responsibility to co-produce art works with Ukrainian artists and collaborate with arts professionals to support them; also to raise attention more broadly about the situation of the country. Inviting refugees and programming specific activities in the Ukrainian language is another area of concern for festivals, the latter especially in the neighbouring countries where the number of refugees is much higher.

Many festivals have also underlined that it is necessary to include artists who fled from Belarus and Russia in these programmes too.

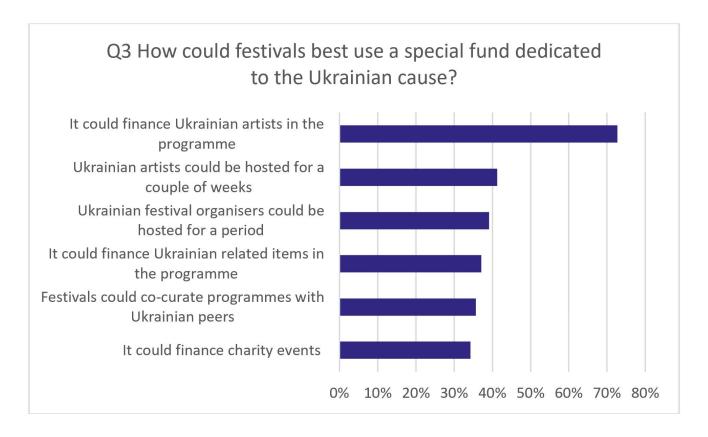
There is an exceptionally rich collection of takeaways from this part of the survey:

- Exploiting festivals' internationality, i.e. asking all their artists to stand in solidarity with Ukraine and asking their followers to do the same. The official support of the international cultural and artistic community is very important for Ukraine. (Lithuania)
- Offering some shows in the Ukrainian language for the large number of refugees in the country. (Czech Republic)
- Introducing facilities for Ukrainian filmmakers to present their films (no submission fees, help with distribution, organisation of meetings with the audience). (Poland)
- Raising awareness around the concerns re Ukraine and in general against war, aggression seeking greater tolerance, programming works with empathy. (Croatia)
- It's chiefly a political and immigration issue instead of cultural. While supporting refugees for a limited time from Ukraine specifically, festivals will choose artists based on their nationality, despite the refugees from other countries seeking artistic support as well. Do festivals look for specific collective support based on nationality despite the other ongoing wars? (Cyprus)

One response points at a peculiar aspect:

• By checking money ties between sponsors and Russian oligarchs. (Netherlands)

6. Hopes for a special solidarity fund



The dominant choice mirrors the one on the preceding question. The majority expects a special fund eventually to finance the performance of Ukrainian artists. Otherwise, the remaining options for supporting acts of solidarity were acknowledged at similar rates.

While over a third of all festivals are willing to add Ukraine related items to the programme, more than half of festivals that feature literature offer the same.

Hosting colleagues in festival management combined with helping peer festivals (Q2) and with openness to co-curatorial acts go together in 19 cases, that is 13% of the 143 events. In greatest number festivals with theatre and street art content are disposed to extend all three ways of solidarity to Ukrainian festival organisers – 23% and 21% respectively, especially in countries in direct proximity.

Open responses

Some survey participants mentioned in 'Other' the necessity of a fund to support their activities towards Ukraine which are financed at the moment from their own funds that remain limited, compared to what they would like to achieve.

• We try to do all above but there is little general public support to facilitate any of these activities. All the activities are privately funded. (Poland)

Festivals have also pointed out some specific actions that could be supported by this fund: for example, offering jobs to Ukrainian people or special programming for refugees, especially those in temporary housing with children.

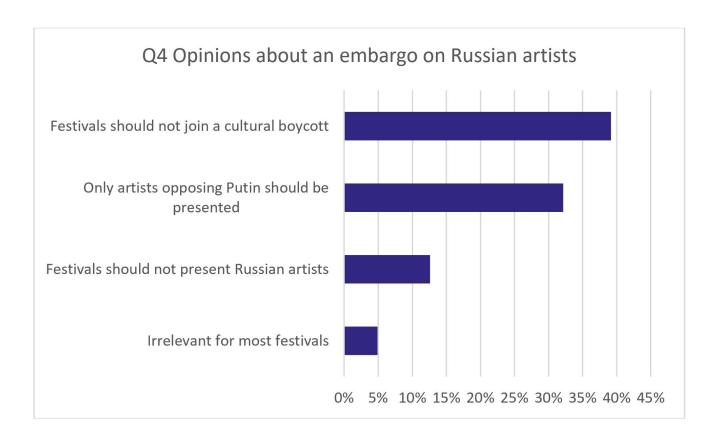
- I am a Ukrainian festival manager. The best European festivals can do is to offer jobs to Ukrainian colleagues-refugees. (Ukraine)
- We could translate Ukrainian work into different languages. (Malta)

A few festivals have also voiced the need for a broader compass:

- It would be great if the programme would incorporate artists from Ukraine and other war-torn zones or countries too. We are supporting young emerging artists from Syria through our Medinea work. However we are in touch with the situation of Afghan artists at risk for example, and it is extremely difficult to support them for different reasons. We must not forget the non-European artists and situations. (Malta)
- Do not forget to include artists and festival organisers, who have fled from suppression in Belarus and Russia! (Netherlands)
- We must not overlook the fact that Putin is also destroying Russia, its artists, athletes, journalists, teachers and others. Europe should set up mechanisms for the possibility of emigration (this is not only a question of the possibility of crossing the border, but also an economic issue). Russian artists have given a lot to Europe and the world in the past and we should feel a responsibility to them as well. If you are setting up a fund, there should be opportunities for Russian emigrants as well. (Slovenia)

 Art has no nationality and from this violence all artist and art organisations are suffering, so such dedicated funds would only help to develop separation. These funds should be open for "any" artists who have suffered. (Turkey)

7. Ban on Russian artists



The issue of sanctioning the aggressor is a sensitive and controversial area. The three options in the question do not cover the full scale of dilemmas that festival organisers can be faced with. The largest group of 38% who bluntly disagree with an anti-Russian boycott would surely align with alternative ways that express their contempt for the aggressor. They find the notion of a general boycott alien from culture, although most of them would surely be willing to sacrifice parts that would otherwise add to the attraction of the programme. The 10 Italian and 4 Cypriot festivals vote for dialogue against boycott without exception, as do 5 out of 6 Greek participants.

The harsh stance of refraining from booking Russians was adopted by 13% of participants: 23% of the post-communist area and 3% of festivals elsewhere. 6 Polish, 6 Ukrainian, as well as 6 festivals from 6 different countries chose this option.

Open responses

Different is the case with mobility, stressed also in the survey, which is already high on the EU agenda.

The open responses revealed that there are two, partly opposing, motives behind the refusal to boycott: the rejection of political incursion on the one hand, and the pronouncement of (political) dialogue on the other.

- Art itself should but festivals should not take specific position in political conflicts and should not be instruments of punishment/correction. (Turkey)
- The theatres and artists who are supporting any war are not cultural people to me. Of course we will not have any contacts with them. (Armenia)
- Festivals should not only review their programme, but also carefully check their sources of funding. Despite their efforts and efforts to reflect today's issues through certain art forms, to engage in dialogue with different groups and cultures, festivals can become a very successful tool of soft power in the hands of certain interest groups. (Lithuania)
- Festivals should refrain from presenting any artists, justifying contemporary war and conflicts. (Georgia)

Voicing uncertainty, understanding and mutuality:

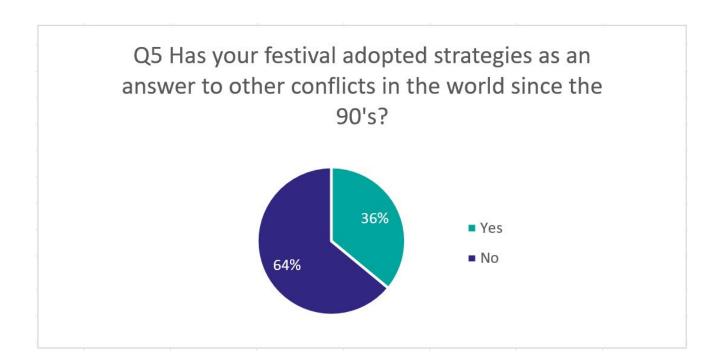
- This is a very thorny issue. But in principle "Festivals should not participate in a cultural boycott, because culture has a critical role in maintaining dialogue at all times" as long as the artists have not expressed themselves publicly as being pro-war. (Malta)
- Helping the meeting between Ukrainian and Russian artists who are against the war, in order not to set apart people who are supporting dialogue and peace. (Italy)

- Festivals should avoid programming Russian artists that are known for supporting Putin's regime, if there's a doubt regarding that the festival should ask for official statement, the festivals should also avoid the cooperation with Russian festivals, institutions and companies etc. (Poland)
- Collaboration with Russian artists should continue but must be reframed. (Finland)
- Don't know what's the best way to act... Not sure if we boycott Putin by not working with Russian underground bands. (Belgium)
- It is a difficult question, festivals should not boycott Russian art, but I think openly pro-Putin artists should be neglected now and forever. (Hungary)
- Festivals should not present state-supported artists/organisations but be open for independent Russian artists. (Czech Republic)
- Festivals try to show Ukrainian artists, but it seems to be difficult. And Ukrainian artists
 would not be presented with Russian artists, because they do not protest against Putin's
 actions. We try to understand and listen a lot. (France)

8. Festivals and other conflicts in the world

The survey included a question about whether festivals have adopted strategies (postponement, boycott, programming oppressed artists, dialogue platforms...) in the past as an answer to other conflicts in the world since the 90's. In our list we mentioned the Afghanistan war; Armenia-Azerbaijan war; Belarusian protests; Darfur conflict; Internal conflict in Myanmar; Iraq War; Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Kivu conflict in Congo; Russo–Georgian war; Rwanda genocide; Syrian Civil War; Tigray War in Ethiopia; Yemeni Civil War; Yugoslav Wars; etc.

36% of the responding festivals have tackled some issues related to wars and conflicts that took place or are still going on in the world. They mainly mentioned the important role that culture can play, especially raising awareness. Some have been involved in the Syrian conflict, the Belarusian protests, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or the Yugoslav wars.



In an open question, we asked for lessons from and legacies of those solidarity acts:

- Audiences reacted in a positive way. It is important to create a clear context for this throughout the festival. (Belgium)
- Art has a fantastic potential for communication, exchange; it open minds, it plays an important role in freedom processes, through art we can make people sensitive about extremely important issues. (Switzerland)
- Cultural activities have to keep an open door for dialogue between people who really want the peace, to avoid a total, mass and mutual isolation. (Italy)
- Festivals (and other cultural events) should actualise the "against the war" theme in programming and discussions. (Georgia)

In terms of activities, festivals are inviting artists from the attacked countries to either present their work or to collaborate. Festivals are also providing residencies for these artists.

Two participants from Turkey don't want to consider refugees as victims. They want them to be normal human beings:

- With regard to conflict zones, we especially try to present films that depict conflict-zone
 residents/refugees as human beings like anyone else, rather than focusing on them as
 just victims or perpetrators of violence (there's enough of that in the news). We believe
 audiences have responded positively to this. (Turkey)
- Programming specifically for such groups feeds the misery of these people. Why would
 we show these unlucky people as even more pathetic? The only strategy is to embrace
 them and make them feel normal. (Turkey)

9. Closing messages

Finally, responding festivals were invited to share related thoughts, which they did in impressive numbers. The 60 remarks collected are proof of the desire to communicate about common concerns and ideas. The European Festivals Association is glad that, together with other acts, this survey has offered an opportunity to meet this demand.

Here is a small selection of the rich variety of the respondents' concluding comments:

- Including and promoting Russian dissident writers has been our main policy for years

 to inform local Russian-speaking audiences and to create closer ties with Europe and
 the Western world. (Estonia)
- Reconciliation through playing music together, through creating and developing common programmes with a special focus on youth and young artists. Growing talents together, building careers together, promoting dialogue and understanding through arts and culture. (Serbia)
- Any personal ideologies and emotional matters are not welcome in order to build a dialogue and bring humans (youth, artists, professionals) closer. Really looking forward for peace building strategies and hearing both sides on the collective narrative. (Cyprus)

- We organise many co-operation projects between cultural operators who aim to strengthen the professionalisation, production and mobility of Syrian and Arab artists based in Europe. We produce high quality theatre pieces, foster dialogue and experience sharing between artists and programmers, reach out to new audiences, facilitate networking between partners and provide their staff with opportunities for strengthening their capacities. We envision a new narrative of Europe based on intercultural dialogue, mutual acceptance, curiosity, and open-mindedness. (Italy)
- Different ways of supporting artists at risk or artists that are displaced is becoming a natural part of our work. Our diverse networks and colleagues together are instrumental in supporting what is needed and what are priorities for these people. War and tragic times have not gone away despite the many attempts at overcoming this. At our level of festival making and cultural co-operation there is a very important role to play. (Malta)
- We have always tried to demonstrate that culture should be "over" politics trying to help the understanding among people. (Spain)
- Unfortunately, the main lesson is the following: whoever has more resources, financial, military and human, wins. Whoever has better established work with the media and more successful PR wins. We, for our part, just as human beings, must do everything possible so that there are no wars. (Armenia)
- For over thirty years, we have been involved in efforts bridging cultures between former Soviet states (especially Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova) and the Netherlands. Our counterparts in all these countries (including the Russian Federation) are all really without exception against Putin's invasion in Ukraine, against Putin's support for Lukashenko, against Putin's acquisition of Crimea, against Putin's policy of baffling freedom of the press in Russia. We should continue to support those who are still in Russia, Belarus and occupied areas of Ukraine and bravely dare to speak out directly or in indirect ways against Putin's aggression and Russkiy Mir policies. (Netherlands)
- We try to represent cultures and people that are underrepresented and especially people that are currently struggling for democratic values and their right for self-determination such as Belorussians, Ukrainians, but also indigenous cultures Sami, Ainu, Livonians. (Latvia)

- During war in Syria, we organised activity to include refugees and invite them to specialised workshops for women and children, with difficulty as most men were against having their women and children participate in these; we presented Israeli artists that are openly against Israel-Palestinian conflict, however this has jeopardised our funding. We present work from Congo to shine light on conflicts in Africa... (Croatia)
- Unfortunately our audience, except in some situations, was not very supportive and our funders were not supportive at all. Only a small portion of audience actively encouraged us to sustain at least some focus on the issues. (Hungary)
- We will happily share after this summer's festival is completed. We are working with Afghan composers in hiding or who are now refugees. (UK)

10. Conclusion

The survey clearly shows that the world is not black and white and highlights the grey zones. It above all shows the diversity of opinions, of ideas, of <u>initiatives</u> undertaken by the festival world.

The most important conclusion is that there is a great wave of solidarity towards Ukraine: the citizens, the artists, the festivals, the arts professionals. Festivals want to raise awareness of this terrible war and support the Ukrainian arts and culture sector.

On the other hand, festivals also pointed out that there are many people who are in need and require protection from authoritarian regimes that rule in their country, who have fled other wars and conflicts, or for various other reasons.

The great attention paid to Ukraine must continue in the upcoming weeks, months, years - who knows when this war will end - but we must not forget that we are all humans and that there are no second-class citizens except those who declare wars and those who support them.

11. Annexes

TOTAL

142

Annex 1: Distribution of participating festivals by country

Poland	19	Albania 1	
Italy	10	Brazil 1	
UK	8	Denmark 1	
Belgium	7	Estonia 1	
Ukraine	7	Georgia 1	
Greece	6	Iceland 1	
Czech Republic	: 5	Ireland 1	
Netherlands	5	Israel 1	
Romania	5	Norway 1	
Switzerland	5	Slovenia 1	
Croatia	4		
Cyprus	4		
Finland	4		
Germany	4		
Hungary	4		
Kosovo	4		
Portugal	4		
Spain	4		
Lithuania	3		
Malta	3		
Turkey	3		
Armenia	2		
Bulgaria	2		
France	2		
Latvia	2		
Nigeria	2		
Serbia	2		
Sweden	2		

Annex 2: Distribution of participating festivals by art disciplines

Music	88	62%
Theatre	43	30%
Contemporary dance	42	30%
Interdisciplinary	40	28%
Film	38	27%
Heritage	33	23%
Photography/Video	25	17%
Street arts	24	17%
Literature	22	15%
Digital arts	21	15%
Opera	20	14%
Painting	17	12%
Folklore and folk arts	16	11%
Design	15	10%
Ballet	10	7%
Circus	10	7%
Sculpture	10	7%
Architecture	7	5%

NB: On average, festivals claimed between 3 and 4 art disciplines.

Annex 3: Questionnaire

Q1 The performing arts community has been looking forward to full reopening after the pandemic. These hopes are now overshadowed by the war in Ukraine. How do you see the war affecting festivals? It is possible to select multiple answers.

- Festival budgets will be critically overturned by rising inflation and plummeting prices.
- The public will attend festivals in great numbers because the desire for live events after the pandemic years will counterbalance fears and higher costs.
- Public subsidies will be reduced or cancelled, owing to budgetary restrictions.
- Public authorities will keep supporting festivals, because in hard times this is an effective means to combat depression.
- Visitors' number will drop seriously, due to insecurity and increasing travel expenses.
- Other hopes and concerns

Q2 In your opinion, how can festivals support the Ukrainian cause best? It is possible to select multiple answers.

- By presenting Ukrainian artists, especially refugees.
- Initiating and programme charity acts to benefit victims of the war.
- Including Ukraine and the war in the programme.
- Seeking ways of helping peer festivals in Ukraine.
- Initiating and organising ad hoc editions in protest against Russian aggression.
- Other

Q3 In what way would your festival be interested in benefiting from a fund that is set up to help Ukraine? It is possible to select multiple answers.

- The fund could cover the expenses of Ukrainian artists that fit into the programme.
- We could host Ukrainian artists for a couple of weeks, regardless of whether they are part of the programme or not.
- We could host Ukrainian festival organisers for a couple of weeks, offering exchange of practices and training.
- We could produce Ukraine related items for the programme (narratives, films, music, etc.).

- We could co-curate our artistic programming with a Ukrainian festival.
- The resources of the fund could facilitate the programming of events that benefit Ukraine in the festival.
- Other

Q4 What is your feeling about festivals' stance with regard to boycotting Russia? Only one answer possible.

- Festivals should not participate in a cultural boycott, because culture has a critical role in maintaining dialogue at all times.
- Festivals should support Russian artists who are publicly against Putin's regime.
- Festivals should refrain from presenting Russian artists.
- The question has little relevance, not many festivals have programmed Russian artists or were planning to.
- Festivals should avoid new contacts with Russian artists but should keep previously announced presentations.
- Other

Q5 Has your festival adopted strategies (postponement, boycott, programming oppressed artists, dialogue platforms...) as an answer to other conflicts in the world since the 90's? (Afghanistan war; Armenia-Azerbaijan war; Belarusian protests; Darfur conflict; Internal conflict in Myanmar; Iraq War; Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Kivu conflict in Congo; Russo-Georgian war; Rwanda genocide; Syrian Civil War; Tigray War in Ethiopia; Yemeni Civil War; Yugoslav Wars etc.)

- Yes
- No

Q6 If yes, what were the main lessons?

Q7 Do you want to share something specific that your festival has done in relation to this topic? Send us the information and/or links to an activity, a performance, name and contacts of artists, etc.



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