

[ES] Cultural industries and COVID-19 in Spain

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Cultural industries in Spain, and specifically live entertainment (music, theatre, dance, cinemas, etc.), have been seriously damaged by the lockdown due to COVID-19. The Spanish Government has issued certain rules and benefits to minimise the impact of the pandemic among self-employed people in general.

The Minister of Culture was seriously criticised when he declared that there would be no public aid for the cultural sector. However, in a meeting on Friday, 17 April with all the Counsellors of Culture of the Autonomous Communities and Federation of Cities, he seemed to rectify this, but without specifying what was going to be done or whether a common consensus had been reached. It was reported that the Ministry was willing "to favour all initiatives, public and private, that come from both large companies, the sector or nearby sectors to help at this time of difficult resistance." This Friday's meeting only resulted in the agreement of a "package of urgent palliative measures to address situations of extreme need in the sector," but what these measures will consist of and when they will be applied has not yet been finalised.

In the meantime, Netflix - which is very actively involved with Spanish film and series production -; the Spanish Agency for Cultural Action (*Acción Cultural Española*, ACE), whose task is to promote culture in Spain and abroad; the Film Academy; and the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (ICAA) of the Ministry of Culture and Sports, will sign an agreement to promote a helpline for the most impacted audiovisual professionals due to the COVID-19 crisis in Spain.

The creation of this aid is part of a global initiative by Netflix (announced on 20 March) to allocate USD 100 million to support film and television workers. A large part of this amount is aimed at helping Netflix productions in Spain and around the world. The rest (USD 15 million) is earmarked for emergency funds dedicated to professionals in the audiovisual sector in different countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy or France.

