



Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the cultural sector in Bologna, Italy

Bologna is a medium-size city, UNESCO Creative City of Music, home to the oldest University in Western World, with an ever-increasing number of tourists until 2020. A wealthy, lively city, Capital city of Emilia-Romagna, one of the most affected Italian regions in the COVID-19 crisis.

The lockdown for cultural activities started in February 24th, and from the very first moment the Culture and City Promotion Department set up an internal 'task force' to collect data, measures at the local, regional, national and European level and keep constantly in touch with cultural operators with interviews.

FACTS AND FIGURES

To give an idea of the dimension of the sector, the number of CCI workers in 2018 in Bologna Metropolitan Area was 26.117, and the companies active in the core cultural sectors in March 2020 are 625. In March 2020 the city had no theatre shows, nor live concerts, compared to 108 theatre shows in 2018 and 138 in 2019 and 78 concerts in 2018 and 106 in 2019, in only one month.

Most of the better structured cultural operators in town are now using national measures for recovery such layoffs but, as we all know, the cultural sector has a much higher rate of informal or intermittent work, in spite of the higher level of skills of the workers.

Most of the cultural organizations reacted positively to the crisis, developing online programs and alternative ways of involving their public during the lockdown.

REPORT

These data and many others are collected into [a periodic report which is weekly updated, available online](#) and sent to the Culture Commission of the Municipality, that has the aim to:

- assess the impact of the total physical lockdown;
- identify good practices of alternative cultural offer during the lockdown;
- provide information and coaching to the cultural operators in town;
- monitor medium and long-term effects of the crisis in the cultural sector;
- propose measures and initiatives to support the cultural sector;
- define the conditions for re-starting cultural activities in Bologna.

PHASE TWO

The work of the 'task force' is even more relevant in the period of re-openings after the total lockdown, that requires to re-shape the cultural landscape together with the cultural operators, in a constant dialogue. The new city is a big challenge.

OVERALL INFORMATION

Please note the City has created this [specific webpage](#) from which all information relating to the coronavirus emergency can be accessed: www.comune.bologna.it/coronavirus (in Italian)

During the lockdown many measures were taken, similar to the ones taken in many other cities around the world.

CONTACTS: giorgia.boldrini@comune.bologna.it, Giorgia Boldrini, Head of Cultural System Promotion and Creative Industries Unit, City of Bologna