

# CONFERENCE „TOGETHER FOR EUROPE'S RECOVERY“

## Third PANEL „Sovereignty, Sustainability and Resilience – a cultural perspective“

Presidency of the Republic of Lithuania, Vilnius, and via Zoom  
9. September 2020, 15:15–16:30

The conference “Together for Europe's recovery”, initiated and organized by the German Embassy in Lithuania in order to commemorate the German Presidency of the EU Council, combines economic and cultural topics alongside politics. The third section of the conference **“Sovereignty, Sustainability and Resilience - a cultural perspective”** is organized in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut in Vilnius. The aim of this panel discussion is to discuss the contribution of culture to the processes of shaping the European civil society and the strengthening of the European solidarity.

The main focus is placed on three blocks of questions:

**[1.]**

Based on Lithuania's successful presentation at the last Venice Biennale (2019) as a starting point, the **relations between culture and politics** will be discussed. Based on the feedback received, the recognition of “Sun & Sea (Marina)” brought great times for Lithuanian art. But: was that also a good period for cultural policy? Do such events as Lithuania's presentation at the Biennale really have a lasting effect?

**[2.]**

Do we still need a state-initiated and funded cultural policy in **Europe** where everything is easily accessible everywhere and where various cultural and artistic scenes are already interconnected?

How is culture of the “small” EU countries perceived in Europe? Are they recognized, what is the main focus? What **cultural supply** do we think of when talking about state sponsored cultural policy abroad? Do we present the same culture abroad that we address in our own countries?

The discussion will also touch upon the topic of resilience - the role of the European culture in the neighboring countries outside the European Union's **external borders** (EU Europe vs. non-EU Europe).

**[3.]**

The coronavirus pandemic has activated **entirely new forms of providing culture** that we had no idea about before. In the beginning, these forms were dictated by necessity and later they had their status legitimized. What challenges and opportunities did we face during the pandemic?

Do **digital opportunities** open up new ways for expanding cultural exchange geographically and for making them more efficient?

### **Moderator:**

Michael Müller-Verweyen, Director of the Vilnius Goethe-Institut

### **Participating experts:**

- **Rasa Antanavičiūtė**, Director of Vilnius City Museum, commissioner of the Lithuanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2019
- **Irmgard Maria Fellner**, Director for Cultural Relations Policy and Deputy Director-General Culture and Communication, Foreign Office, Berlin (via Zoom)
- **Mindaugas Kvietkauskas**, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania
- **Assoc. Prof. Aurimas Švedas**, Vilnius University, Deputy Director of the Lithuanian Institute of History
- **Rita Valiukonytė**, Cultural Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania in Berlin, until 2020.08 (via Zoom)

Languages: Lithuanian, German, English (with simultaneous translation)

The conference will be live streamed:

[Live stream](#)

## RASA ANTANAVIČIŪTĖ

Director of Vilnius City Museum, commissioner of the Lithuanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2019



Photo: Gintautas Beržinskas

Cultural manager and art historian's main research interests lie in the relation between politics, history, art in public spaces, and the construction of identity. She has been researching how the identities of the city and its inhabitants are (re)formed by (re)shaping their memories through artistic means while in pursuit of political goals. R. Antanavičiūtė initiated the founding of the VAA Nida Art Colony and acted as its executive director until 2019. In 2019, she was the commissioner of the Lithuanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. The work "Sun and Sea (Marina)" presented in the pavilion won the Golden Lion for Lithuania. In summer of 2020, she won the competition for the position of the director at Vilnius City Museum.

## IRMGARD MARIA FELLNER

Director for Cultural Relations Policy and Deputy Director-General Culture and Communication, Foreign Office



Photo: NN

Humanities and political science graduate Irmgard Maria Fellner entered the German Foreign Service in 1993 after working for the chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly. Following postings in Bonn, London, São Paulo and Washington, she headed the office of Karsten D. Voigt, Coordinator of German-American Cooperation, from 2003 to 2007. Thereafter, she transferred to the office of French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner. From 2010 to 2015 she held posts at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin, where one of the areas she oversaw was relations with Afghanistan. She was then appointed Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in Rome, before taking up her present position.

## MINDAUGAS KVIETKAUSKAS

Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania



Photo: Martynas Alekša

Graduated from Vilnius University with a degree in Lithuanian Language and Literature, in 2003 received a diploma in Judaic studies from the University of Oxford (United Kingdom). 2006–2018 Lecturer at Vilnius University, Faculty of Philology. Started working at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore in 2007, was the Director of this institute during the period of 2008–2018. Was appointed the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania in 2019. In 2018 was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas, in 2019 - the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

## AURIMAS ŠVEDAS

Cultural historian, associate professor at the Faculty of History, Vilnius University, and deputy director for foreign relations and communication at the Lithuanian Institute of History



Photo: Edgaras Kurauskas

His research interests lie in history theory, history of ideas, communicative and cultural memory, and relations between history, cinema, and fiction. A. Švedas published books about prominent Lithuanian figures: Edvardas Gudavičius, Petras Repšys, and Almantas Grikevičius. His most recent book is "Life should be Transparent: Irena Veisaitė" (2019, transl. into German 2019, into English 2020). Švedas has been working as a columnist of the culture magazine "Literature and Art" and host and producer of LRT shows. In 2016, Švedas received the prize of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania for journalism.

## RITA VALIUKONYTĖ

Cultural Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania in Berlin (2016-2020)



Photo: Dovilė Šermokas

German philologist and master of European sciences, as a holder of the Robert Bosch Foundation scholarship of 2004-2005 worked at the Hamburg House of Literature and organized an interdisciplinary festival presenting Lithuanian and German artists. In 2006-2007 worked as a study coordinator at Gateway College (Norway) in Cienfuegos, Cuba. In 2008 was appointed the cultural attaché of the Republic of Lithuania in Austria, from 2012 - in London, United Kingdom, and from 2016 until mid-2020 held this position in Germany.

## MICHAEL MÜLLER-VERWEYEN

Director of the Goethe-Institut Vilnius



Photo: Erdős Dénes

Studied philosophy and german linguistics, 1986 to 1991 teaching position for linguistics at the University of Cologne. At the Goethe-Institut since 1991. Director of the Goethe-Institut in Vilnius since 2019, before that he worked for the Goethe-Institut in Kyoto, Lagos, Hong Kong, and Budapest and in the headquarters in Munich as head of the Board office for special tasks. He published on linguistics and cultural policy, the most recent of them being 'Kultatkampf als Machtkampf. Kultur und Kulturpolitik in Ungarn', published in: *Politik und Kultur*, 2019, Issue 1.