Local Cultural Ecosystem in Türkiye

APRIL 2024

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CONTENTS

Foreword

On the 100th anniversary of the Republic, we launched our Ortaklaşa project that promotes dialogue and collaboration in the field of arts and culture by building on the over half a century's experience of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) with the support of the European Union. Today, we are thrilled to share with the public this report which marks the culmination of a year-long fieldwork of Ortaklaşa.

The Türkiye 2022 report of the European Commission was underlining the problems encountered by the cultural sector in the aftermath of the global epidemic. The report was pointing out that the sector continued to suffer from problems including inadequate funding, insufficient cultural infrastructure, and limited management capacities[1], noting that the support of public institutions fell short of generating a sufficient and sustainable result. Meanwhile, the 2020 Rome Charter published in the middle of the global crisis, where many a cultural institution and centre had to be permanently shut down, recalled the legal duties of national and local governments in respect of participation in culture and emphasised that the roles and responsibilities of local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) are of critical importance in shaping cultural policies.[2]

Meanwhile, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommendation published in 2022 also underlined the power of culture to encourage freedom of expression, raise awareness, stimulate public debate, and hence contribute to addressing global challenges and co-operation.[3] The recommendation stated that cultural participation can foster democratisation and help overcome manifold crises.

In Türkiye as well, along with the contribution of arts and culture to democracy and social cohesion, the need for civil participation in the generation of cultural policies has become more evident over the recent years. In line with the EU accession negotiations during the early 2000s, public policy reforms were made promoting participatory approaches for sustainable and democratic governance. Today, however, cultural policy making processes

continue to be centralised to a considerable extent while the civil-public dialogue objectives have yet to be fully met. The implementation of participatory approaches and enhanced dialogue and collaboration among different actors are essential for the effective operation of an inclusive policy making mechanism in the field of culture.

In such a period, critical duties fall upon the civil arts and culture organizations and the municipalities. To this end, however, the role of the municipalities in the cultural life of the cities must be defined as regulating and infrastructural and an approach should be adopted encouraging the participation of all cultural actors in the city to the process.

On the other hand, arts and culture CSOs need safe spaces. In its "Protecting Civil Society Update 2023" report, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights expounds on the legal and administrative restrictions, threats and attacks faced by the CSOs, their insufficient access to information and the multidimensional problems they encounter in accessing resources, as well as their limited administrative capacities to participate in policy and decision-making processes mostly due to restrictions in funding.[4]

Implemented by İKSV and supported by the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), the "Ortaklaşa: Culture, Dialogue and Support Programme" has enabled the CSOs, which have critical roles in protecting human rights and democracy, to join forces with the municipalities, which are in direct contact with city residents and have command of the sociocultural characteristics of the geography under their administration. The programme aims to develop dialogue and collaborations between

1 European Commission, "2022 Türkiye Report," SWD(2022) 333. Brussels, 12.10.2022.

2 Roma Capitale and UCLG Committee on Culture, "The 2020 Rome Charter," 2020.

3 The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, "Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)15 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the role of culture, cultural heritage and landscape in helping to address global challenges", 20 May 2022.

4 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Protecting Civil Society Update 2023*, fra.europa. eu/en/publication/2023/civic-space-2023-update.

CSOs and municipalities through joint projects embracing a people-oriented, equitable, and sustainable development approach. Ortaklaşa has taken a historical step towards social participation in the field of arts and culture, democratisation, realisation of cultural rights, and the improvement of cultural policies and the cultural ecosystem in Türkiye.

This report was written by Assoc. Prof. Ulaş Bayraktar as part of the Ortaklaşa project carried out within the scope of the Cultural Policy Studies of İKSV. The report draws on the in-depth interviews and focus group meetings conducted throughout 2023, which was the first year of Ortaklaşa, as well as the findings of the survey carried out with the support of Frekans Research and the participation of different actors across the country. The municipalities, CSOs active in the field of arts and culture, and city residents were addressed as the actors of the study that focused on the current situations, expectations, and needs of these actors as well as the relationships between them. Consequently, it produced a comprehensive snapshot of the local cultural ecosystem of Türkiye.

The nationwide search conferences to be held between April–June 2024 will provide a platform for more thorough discussions on these subjects and the emerging suggestions will constitute the basis for a series of policy recommendations to be published in 2025, which will mark the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the 3rd year of the Ortaklaşa programme. However, in order for these recommendations to be put into practice, firstly a strong basis of collaboration and dialogue needs to be established between local governments, arts and culture CSOs, cultural professionals, and city residents. This report constitutes a concrete source of data, analyses, and solutions to create this basis and invites you the esteemed readers to be involved and defend the field of arts and culture that we aspire to.

ÖZLEM ECE
İKSV CULTURAL POLICY STUDIES DIRECTOR

Executive Summary

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In Türkiye, we are faced with the need for cultural policies to be shaped by the local actors in line with the requirements of the cities and the regions. In terms of the distribution of resources and delegation of authority, the Public Administration Reform grants the potential of localisation and decentralisation to the municipalities which, however, still seem far from attaining the financial and structural means for the grounds of dialogue and collaboration we aspire to. Even though the CSOs active in the field of arts and culture have a considerably high interest in developing and promoting cultural policies, their participation and involvement in these processes are as considerably low. The foremost reason is the lack of dialogue among stakeholders who do not demonstrate the intent of collaboration.

This research aims to take a snapshot of the cultural ecosystem in Türkiye which contains a multitude of different actors and profiles. It seeks to answer the questions of "What sorts of actions, mechanisms, and initiatives are required to collaboratively establish a participatory, inclusive, egalitarian, and rights-based cultural ecosystem? Who are the actors that play role in the development of cultural polices? What are the restrictions, opportunities, and challenges in this process? What are the needs of the cultural professionals active in localities?".

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Aiming to diagnose the relationships between municipalities and CSOs active in the field of arts and culture in various cities of Türkiye, the research was carried out between March-October 2023 with different constituents of the cultural sector by using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Within this framework, semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with 139 communicants in 12 cities; focus group meetings were organised with 157 participants from 30 different cities; and 406 online surveys and face-to-face questionnaires were conducted with 1,245 participants across the country.

In the research design and the analysis of the findings, the cultural sphere was addressed as an ecosystem by utilising the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) framework. In line with the objective of the research, CSOs active in the field of arts and culture, municipalities, and city residents were identified as the actors of this ecosystem. These three constituents were analysed with respect to different dimensions such as mutual cognisance and being informed of one another, collaboration, and participation in activities and decision-making processes. Different determining elements such as demographic and geographic attributes and resources on hand were taken into account in the analysis.

The prominent findings of the research can be summarised as follows:

According to the results of the public opinion surveys carried out with the participation of city residents across the country, 59% of the residents and 60% of the municipality representatives who responded to the survey say that their expectations of municipal services in the field of arts and culture are sufficiently or partially met. However, this rate drops to 18% among CSO representatives. It is possible to say that cities offer quite comprehensive and rich cultural lives. The differences nevertheless observed regarding the meeting of expectations is consistent with the differentiation in both the meaning attributed to culture and the description of cultural activities: In the public opinion survey, when asked for the meaning they ascribe to culture, a considerable number of city residents say "tradition" and "customs".

The scope of culture is quite ambiguous; the perception of cultural services is fused with leisure, sports, and religious services. When cleared of this ambiguity, the amounts that municipalities allocate for culture hardly reach 1% of their budgets. In the central government's annual budget of approximately €173.2 billion[5] approved for 2023, the amount allocated to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was €635.2 million, which corresponds to less than 0.004 of the total budget. According to the Local Administrations Consolidated Budget expenses data published by the Ministry of

5 All calculations were made based on the average Euro exchange rate of 2023.

Treasury and Finance, local governments allocated 1.7% of their budgets to cultural services for the year 2022.

The municipality representatives who responded to the online survey state that the biggest problem (61%) they encounter in organising arts and cultural activities is finding funding. When we ask the same question to CSO representatives in the online survey conducted with the participation of CSOs active in the field of arts and culture, this rate further rises to 83%. The quantitative, physical, and technical shortcomings of the cultural venues stand out as another problem area, which elucidates the fundamental challenge posed by financial difficulties.

Despite the severity of their financial difficulties, the CSOs' main motivation for seeking to collaborate with municipalities is not financial support. Only 20% of the CSOs participating in the online survey indicate funding as their biggest expectation from the municipalities, while 40% prioritise the need to have a say in cultural policies. This demand for having a say also underlines the importance of the demand for democratisation.

In the local governments, the most influential actor in the planning of cultural activities is the mayors. Municipality representatives who participated in the online survey state that the mayors are the most influential actors both in cultural activity planning and cultural policy making at the rate of 89% and 91%, respectively.

73% of CSO representatives state that personal connections are determinant in the collaborations established with the municipalities. In the local cultural management pivoting around the mayor, the lack of objective criteria for the selection of activities to be supported by municipal resources creates an inevitable inequality between persons and institutions. Cultural activities devised through subjective preferences and decisions independent of certain principles, priorities and objectives hinder the development of a cultural policy. As the person in office and/or the political approach in power changes, the cultural life also undergoes a complete change.

In the activities they carry out in collaboration with CSOs, the municipalities become the determinants of the content as well. In these activities, the entire visibility is centred upon the municipality, ranging from the size of the municipality logo to the press bulletins. Regardless of whose idea or labour is used, the activity in question turns into an institutional event that will be reduced to a number and perhaps an image in the municipality's annual report. This, in turn, creates an inescapable asymmetry for most of the organisations that collaborate with or are supported by the municipality. Occupying a much more subordinate and powerless position in comparison to the resources and means of the municipality, the CSOs are usually unable to leave this asymmetrical relationship.

According to the findings of the nationwide public opinion survey, 81% of the city residents participate in cultural activities less than they would like to. The previous year, 56% of the survey respondents visited historical sites at least once and 53% went to the cinema. Barring these two examples, more than half of the sample group participated in no other cultural activity. Lack of time and interest emerge as the biggest reasons for these low rates of participation.

Only 9% of the city residents can participate in the cultural activities organised by the municipality as much as they would like to. The biggest reason for the low rates of participation seems to be lack of time and tardy announcement of the activities. In response to the question "Are you sufficiently informed of the cultural activities carried out by the municipalities in your vicinity?" asked of the city residents in the nationwide public opinion survey, 21% of the respondents said they are mostly informed, while 31% said they are never informed. Despite these low rates, 90% of the municipality representatives and 69% of the CSO representatives who participated in the surveys think that the activities are able to reach their target audiences.

The priority placed on quantitative performance can cause the processes of democratic participation and negotiation to be overlooked. Aspects such as the quality, consistency, and sustainability of the activities are not given sufficient importance. Therefore, there is no intent of collaboration with the experts of the

field, namely, the arts and culture CSOs and cultural professionals, which makes it difficult to develop effective, participatory, and sustainable cultural policies.

Ethnic identities, cultural values most notably language, religious sensitivities, and sexual orientations emerge as the redlines and political boundaries of the field of freedom accorded to artists in Türkiye. The rise of political tension and the sharpening of social polarisation also politicise the opportunities of collaboration that could flourish within the local cultural ecosystem. The freedoms of artists and cultural professionals are not safeguarded.

CONCLUSION

With a view to ensure a more consistent and democratic utilisation of public resources and to unveil the potential of the cultural field, the "Recommendations and Conclusion" section of the report presents a number of suggestions to pave the way for CSOs to play a more active role in the decision-making and management processes pertaining to culture. Foremost among these suggestions is the recognition of the local governments' regulating and infrastructural role in the cultural life of cities, which is crucial to attaining a cultural management model in international standards that encourages the participation of all local cultural actors in the process and is shaped according to the needs. To this end, it is of great importance to design the decision-making processes with the participation of civil society and experts active in the field; to pursue policies that unify the relevant actors; and the arts and culture CSOs to put engage in advocacy efforts to be able to propound consistent local cultural policies.

Ultimately, it seems not only possible but also essential for such a large number of different actors to join forces and collectively devise the required action, mechanism, or initiative to establish a participatory, inclusive, egalitarian, and rights-based cultural ecosystem. In doing so, the cultural diversity of Türkiye should be taken into consideration and the importance of the local and the pertinence of starting from the grassroots should be emphasised.

INTRODUCTION

Talking about cultural policies in Türkiye is a rather intricate endeavour. While the ontological ambiguity of the word "culture" confounds the conceptual discussion, our task is further complicated in a geography like Anatolia which has been the cradle and host of a myriad of different cultures. When we attempt to look at such a challenging concept through the lens of public policies, it is impossible not to be daunted in the face of the chronic bottlenecks and crises, administrative ambiguities, democratic weaknesses, and social tensions of politics in Türkiye. Probably due to these challenges, the literature on cultural policies in Türkiye is still in its infancy both academically and empirically. We do not come across many publications on cultural policies apart from İKSV's Cultural Initiative meetings and documents, the reports of its Cultural Policy Studies department, the Cultural Studies series published by the Istanbul Bilgi University Press, and the research and analyses that can be counted on the fingers of one hand. And within this existing literature, studies that focus on local differences through a comparative perspective are even fewer and farther between. In the studies that usually focus on Istanbul, the cultural life and politics in other cities of Anatolia are rarely addressed.

The report in your hand was penned with a conception that differs from the existing literature on cultural policies in several aspects. This study prepared within the scope of the "Ortaklaşa: Culture, Dialogue and Support Programme", which is a European Union project carried out by İKSV in collaboration with the Marmara Municipalities Union, is based on a very comprehensive field research. The report includes the authentic findings of in-depth interviews held in twelve cities, focus group studies carried out in seven cities, and three meticulously conducted surveys. Moreover, using a large number of secondary sources, it presents a contemporary and comprehensive panorama of the cultural policy landscape of Türkiye. Thus, employing a perspective that goes beyond Istanbul, it tries to diagnose the situation, problems, and potentials of cultural policies in different cities.

We also offer an authentic analytical framework for the discussion of the findings that have been compiled in a very wide scope. Rather than suffice with a description of cultural policies and management in different cities, we are trying to contemplate the field as an ecosystem and interpret the relationships between public institutions, private companies, independent cultural initiatives, and other participants based on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) model.[6] We endeavour to identify how and which provisioning and supporting services are delivered within the field of culture that we describe as an "ecosystem" and the resulting or potential social and individual transformations.

To this end, we will first define cultural policies by addressing them within the scope of culture and politics which are the building blocks of the phenomenon. The evolution of cultural policies throughout the economic, social, and political history will constitute the second phase of our study. After explaining our method of compiling the findings, which comprise the empirical basis of the subsequent discussion, we will analyse the cultural policies as an ecosystem. As part of the provisioning services, which is also the first category of MA, we will discuss the representative, economic, and administrative dimensions of cultural services provided by municipalities in the cities. In the second section, which also addresses the supporting services, we will examine the cultural practices through the principles of freedom, equality, and justice. The civilising influence of cultural policies geared towards social transformation will constitute the third category of our ecosystem approach. Finally, we will discuss how cultural policies transform individuals, cities, and nature and the role they can play in emergency situations. In the conclusion section, we will feature the policy recommendations we have gathered from all the findings.

6 World Resources Institute, *Ecosystem and Human Well-Being – Synthesis*, 2005, wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/8701.

Research Methodology

With the objective of developing recommendations that support diversity, equality, and inclusivity in the creation of local cultural policies, the research aims to first identify the obstacles to creating such cultural policies at the local level and determine the necessary fields of action. Accordingly, to develop an understanding of the relationships between the local governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) active in the field of arts and culture in various cities of Türkiye, a research was conducted between March–October 2023 with different constituents of the cultural sector, which we treat as an ecosystem, utilising qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Within the scope of this research, semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with 139 respondents in 12 cities, focus group meetings were organised with 157 participants from 30 different cities, and 406 nationwide online surveys and face-to-face questionnaires were conducted with 1,245 participants.

Detailed information on the semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus group meetings, online surveys, and the public opinion research is presented below.

i. **Semi-structured in-depth interviews** were carried out to understand the needs of cultural professionals, foremost the culture and arts CSOs and municipality employees, and to discover the grounds for collaboration. It was planned to conduct the interviews in the 7 focus cities identified within the scope of the Ortaklaşa project, namely, Mersin in the Mediterranean region, Tunceli in the Eastern Anatolia region, İzmir in the Aegean region, Diyarbakır in the Southeastern Anatolia region, Konya in the Central Anatolia region, Bursa in the Marmara region, and Ordu in the Black Sea region. Following the earthquakes of 6 February 2023, the cultural professionals in Malatya, Adıyaman, Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, and Hatay were also included in these interviews to encompass the cities affected by the earthquake.

The cities, where the qualitative data collection process was carried out, were not chosen with the assumption that they represent their geographical region. Care was expended to respect cultural diversity and create a sample that contains different representations of geography, population, economy, and culture with a view to acquire an understanding of the varying needs and potentials of the cultural field in the different cities that possess this diversity. In the selection process, the cities' economic structures, infrastructural means such as transportation and housing, and cultural connections on the local, national, and international levels were taken into consideration. The cultural ecosystems of the cities were evaluated in terms of the presence of a cultural industry and different cultural sectors in the city, the venues, and the cultural assets. The informants, who were brought together in the process of data collection conducted in these cities, were the cultural professionals producing in different forms and fields of arts and culture and representatives of local governments. Representatives of rights-based organizations working in the field of human rights in the cities affected by the earthquake, and the local governments of these cities were also included.

The participants of the semi-structured in-depth interviews were culture and arts CSOs, independent cultural professionals, and local government representatives responsible for cultural policies or arts and cultural affairs. The informants were contacted through the İKSV Cultural Policy Studies department database by ensuring equal distribution among sectors and other actors indicated by the contacted participants were also followed. These interviews were conducted between 10 March-28 April 2023 with 139 cultural professionals in 12 cities.[7] The points of discussion in the interviews that lasted 60 minutes on average were the organisations' founding stories and aims; their past, present and planned activities; the challenges they encounter and their needs; the relationships they develop while running their activities; inhouse management practices; the connections they build with volunteers and members; their relationships with cultural professionals and participants of cultural events; and the partnerships they enter with local, national and international actors. Also probed during the interviews were

the methods local governments follow to ensure participation and inclusivity in determining their cultural policies, and the experiences and pursuits of collaboration. Another point of focus was the extent to which civil actors participate in the process of designing the cultural policies and the method and level of distribution of the public resources to the civil society.

ii.   **Focus group meetings** were carried out to hold a regional scale discussion on the findings of the semi-structured in-depth interviews. 34 focus group meetings were conducted with 157 participants from 30 different cities through 1–23 June 2023 in Mersin, Tunceli, İzmir, Diyarbakır, Konya, Bursa, and Ordu.[8]

As in the semi-structured in-depth interviews, the participants of the focus group meetings were culture and arts CSOs, independent cultural professionals, and local government representatives responsible for cultural policies or arts and cultural affairs. In these meetings held by invitation from İKSV, the participation of actors who shape the sphere of arts and culture in their respective cities were prioritised and care was expended to ensure interdisciplinary distribution. Moderated by the researcher, the focus group meetings were held with the facilitation of the İKSV Cultural Policy Studies team. During these meetings that lasted 90 minutes on average, participants talked about what is provided by which actors in the field of culture in their cities; which services and mechanisms enable the existing cultural production; who benefits from these services and how; and the effects of arts and culture on the social and individual levels.

In accordance with research ethics, the names of the participants and their narratives voiced within the scope of this research were not directly included in the text to prevent any damage to participants and avoid the risk of causing unintended consequences. When the occasion arose, the mentioned testimonies were shared anonymously to ensure the confidentiality and safety of the respondents.

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7 For the list of interviewees, see Annex-1.

8 For the list of participants, see Annex-2.

Besides the semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group meetings, three different survey forms were prepared geared towards the participation of cultural professionals working in arts and culture CSOs and municipalities across the country as well as the general public.

iii. **Online surveys:** A quantitative research was carried out with the participation of representatives from arts and culture CSOs and local government representatives responsible for cultural policies or arts and cultural affairs with the objective of broadening the findings of the semi-structured in-depth interviews. This research was done through online surveys conducted between 11 September and 5 October 2023.

For purposes of the quantitative research, two different target audiences were identified consisting of CSOs and local governments, and two parallel but separate questionnaires were designed. For the local governments, a realm encompassing all the municipalities in Türkiye was identified. In terms of the CSOs, primarily the arts and culture CSOs across the country were included in the target audience. To reach the local governments, contact was established with around 500 municipalities. These municipalities were asked whether they have a unit directly responsible for arts and cultural affairs; if yes, the highest official in this unit who could provide information regarding the subject was contacted. If there was no direct unit then the relevant department responsible for arts and cultural affairs was identified and the highest official in this unit was contacted. As a result, 244 institutions filled out the online survey. The incomplete surveys were not taken into consideration, therefore a total of 204 surveys were included in the assessment. As for the CSOs, initially a realm of 1,500 CSOs was identified, however, only 500 CSOs could be included within the scope of the research. Each organisation was called and asked whether they are actively involved in the field of arts and culture. The aim of the study was explained to the organisations that gave affirmative response and the highest official who could provide information regarding the subject was contacted. 265 organisations filled out the online surveys. Again, the incomplete surveys were excluded and a total of 202 surveys were included in the assessment.

iv.   **Public opinion research:** This survey was conducted to establish the meaning that the public attributes to culture in Türkiye; the participation in culture; how the provided cultural activities are received by the public; the needs and demands; and the obstacles to participation in cultural activities. Face-to-face interviews were held between 16 August and 5 September 2023 with 1,245 people representing the urban population in Türkiye. Stratified random sampling method was used in the selection of the sample group for the research. In line with the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) set up by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) standards, the geographical regions were stratified according to NUTS1 and one city from every region was selected composing the sample group of these 12 cities.

The questionnaires used in the quantitative research were prepared by taking international research as reference and in line with the findings of the semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group meetings. With a view to establish grounds for dialogue and collaboration, this research aimed to assess the perception and attitudes of the arts and culture CSOs and municipalities across the country both towards one another and among themselves along with the evaluation of the public opinion. It has not been possible to include in this report all the findings of this research, which was carried out in a very comprehensive and quite rich methodological range. In line with the objective of the research and the analytical framework, the prominent findings were presented in the text, while its entirety was shared on the website as open source.[9]

All the findings obtained during the data analysis process of this research, which employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, were evaluated together and comparatively to preserve the credibility and consistency of the emerging results. By referencing relevant secondary sources along with the findings of the field research, the discussion was carried to different cities and across the country.

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9 The research findings are available at ortaklasa.iksv.org/turkiyede-yerel-kultur-ekosistemi-arastirmasi/.

1 Cultural Policies: Culture, Cultures, Democracy and Rights

Almost all literature pertaining to cultural policies begin with an effort to define the concept of culture. In their study dated 1952, Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn put forth 164 separate definitions of culture, which alone illustrates the magnitude of the challenge.[10] Meanwhile, the number of definitions pertaining to policy is no less. Without entering these intense discussions on the two concepts, we opt to express how we understand cultural policies within the scope of this report.

Let us first see culture as the context that influences the social dynamics of a community as defined by the anthropologist Franz Boas. In any given geography, there may be multiple communities with different characteristics, therefore, the contexts under their influence also differ. Thus, Boas defines culture as "a plurality of cultures".[11] The plural and variable characteristic of culture renders it subject to the social relationships the context of which is shaped again by culture: Culture influences the community, and the community influences culture. Power relationships pertaining to the disposition and direction of this interaction determine the political nature of culture. As in other public policies, in the field of culture as well, the presence of *ultimate purposes, means and objectives demanded by a group and delivered by an authority* points at cultural policies.[12]

Thus, we can refer to cultural policies as *the process wherein public authorities shape the context which influences the social dynamics of a community*. This definition connotes how young cultural policies are in contrast to culture, because the history of culture, which is as old as humanity, significantly predates any political interventions. However, the public authority's intervention to the field of culture with certain objectives, terms and means shall emerge only in the 1950s.

The scope of the public services which expands with the establishment of the welfare state regime following the Second World War also includes cultural services. The presence of the state in the field of culture, which expands through legislative regulations,

new mechanisms, and the transfer of resources, is conceptualised as the "democratisation of culture".[13] Everyone's "right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits" safeguarded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 27 constitutes the foundation of the democratisation of culture.[14] And cultural policies signify the entirety of the means and possibilities offered to practice this right.[15]

"The right to culture advocates everyone's access to culture and in this respect it is egalitarian, however, it does not question the position of the culture ('high culture') to be attained. Thus, even though the universality it entails is egalitarian on one hand (everyone should access culture), it is homogenising on the other (culture is the 'high culture' defined as the one and universal culture dissociated from its historical, social and political context). "(…) Among cultural rights are the rights to participate in cultural life; access to instruments that will enable the development

10 Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, "Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions", in *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, vol. 17, no. 1.

11 Franz Boas, *L'uomo primitivo* (The Mind of Primitive Man), ed. Melville J. Herskovits (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1995); quoted in Giuliana Ciancio, "Between cultural participation, trust and policy perspectives: the case of the Creative Europe programme", in *Cultural Policies in Europe: A Participatory Turn?*, eds. Emmanuel Négrier and Felix Dupin-Meynard (Toulouse: Editions de L'attribut, 2020), p. 57.

12 Augustin Girard, quoted in Füsun Üstel "Cultural Policies in Europe: Debate and Dilemmas," in *Introduction to Cultural Policy in Turkey*, eds. Serhan Ada and Ayça İnce (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2009).

13 Füsun Üstel, *Kültür Politikasına Giriş: Kavramlar, Modeller, Tartışmalar* [Introduction to Cultural Policy: Concepts, Models, Discussions] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2021), p. 70.

14 United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

15 Hıfzı Topuz, "Stockholm Kültür Politikaları Konferansının Değerlendirilmesi," [An Evaluation of the Stockholm Conference on Cultural Policies] in *Türkiye'de Kültür Politikaları* [Cultural Policies in Türkiye], ed. Evren Barın Egrik (Istanbul: İKSV, November 2006), p. 29–34.

All cultural policy studies reports of İKSV published since 2011 to date are available at iksv.org.

of artistic products and activities; participate in discussions and decision-making mechanisms pertaining to cultural life; freedom of movement of cultural goods and services; cultural collaboration; cultural memory; cultural identity of minority groups or disadvantaged communities."[16]

After 1945, it was aimed to enable a larger group to access cultural practices with the objective of "democratising culture". For every segment of society to access cultural practices, which were selected in a centralised and elitist manner, the resources allocated to cultural policies were increased and the scope of these policies were broadened. However, these allocated resources failed to create the desired increase in cultural participation because appreciating the provided works of "high culture" required a minimum cultural capital and therefore did not overlap with the demands and tastes of the society. The contradiction and hierarchy of perfection and popularity limited the democratisation of culture which was determined single-handedly.

As of the 1970s, with the rising demands for recognition across the globe and the new social movements based on cultural identities, the plurality of cultures began to gain acceptance. Along with the recognition of "cultural rights" instead of "high culture", a transition took place from the "democratisation of culture" to "cultural democracy".[17] Now, the demand for each community's unique cultural practices to be recognised by the public authorities was on the agenda. Particularly UNESCO's declaration of 1988–1997 as the World Decade for Cultural Development and its efforts within the scope of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions signed in 2005 can be considered the most explicit manifestations of this approach. Accelerated also by the recent discussions on cultural commons, this approach aims for citizens to be active stakeholders in public policies especially in the field of culture.

Yet another approach parallel to cultural democracy is the "cultural economy" which became influential after the 1980s. This approach views culture as a field that has externalities which can produce

certain economic benefits. Cultural practices turn into important elements that shape the identity and image of cities and therefore influence local economy. Cultural activities creating tourism revenue, artists concentrating in and gentrifying certain parts of the cities, or the artistic facilities starting to be seen as a positive factor affecting the (re)location decisions of industrial investments can be considered among the examples of culture's economic externalities or spill-over effects.[18] Seen as a field that needs to be maintained with public resources in order to attract a wide audience, cultural practices under the name of creative industries especially after 1990 focus on the issue of copyrights, which, broadly speaking, emerges through the support for people's talents. Now, participation pivots around the roles of the consumers and users who will enable the production of this economic value.

While such discussions are held on the democratic quality of cultural policies and different approaches are accentuated in the West, in Türkiye neither the academia nor the political arena shows sufficient interest in the politics of culture. Even though cultural demands based on religion, sect, ethnicity, sexual identity are ongoing subjects of debate within the context of human rights and political freedoms in Türkiye, the democratic quality of cultural policies is seldom discussed. In fact, back in 2009, Osman Kavala was saying that there have always been discussions in Türkiye pertaining to the field of culture but that the discussion of cultural policies on the local level and within the context of social and public

16 Hande Paker, *Arts and Culture for Ecological Transformation* (İstanbul: İKSV, February 2021), p. 36-37.

17 Üstel, *Kültür Politikasına Giriş: Kavramlar, Modeller, Tartışmalar*, p. 73.

18 Margaret Wyszomirski, "The Local Creative Economy in the United States of America", in *The Cultural Economy*, eds. Helmut K. Anheier and Yudhishthir Raj Isar (SAGE Publications: September 2008), p. 199-212.

objectives such as participation in and access to cultural activities, democratisation of the urban life, and social inclusion was only now beginning. Despite the intervening 15 years, this observation can still be deemed valid.[19] In the relevant literature, the discussions on local practices and reactive differences are few and far between, even in the discussions on the authoritarianism of the modernisation efforts during the early years of the Republic or in the evaluations of the post-1980 popular and populist practices. However, Türkiye has a crowded population across a vast geography with a culturally diverse and politically contentious character. Therefore, the field of cultural policies inevitably contains the contradictions created by these differences.

In such a landscape, our study was designed with the intent to diagnose the structural and political obstacles to establishing a holistic, inclusive, egalitarian, and rights-based cultural ecosystem on the local level and to understand what sort of initiatives, mechanisms, and practices are needed to overcome them. With this objective, we will try to address the cultural policy processes in different cities in terms of participation, democratic approach, or the impeding factors. The analysis of the findings of the research carried out with the above-detailed methodology also requires an analytical framework comprised of different layers. Therefore, while defining the field of cultural policies as an ecosystem and evaluating the democratic operation of this ecosystem, we will begin our discussion by diagnosing the potentially functional processes.

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19 "Osman Kavala, "Why Cultural Policies?," in *Introduction to Cultural Policy in Turkey*, eds. Serhan Ada and Ayça İnce (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2009).ecosystem/.

2   The Ecosystem from Nature to Culture

Surely the difficulty of defining the concept of culture lies in the breadth of the notion. Everything ranging from a wild plant in the habitat of a person to the most abstract artwork exhibited in a contemporary museum of art may pertain to culture. The cultural realm has a very wide spectrum with its active artist, audience, supporter, politician and the utilised space, infrastructure, and equipment. To be able to think about such a large number and variety of interacting elements at once, we may envisage culture as an ecosystem.

National Geographic defines the ecosystem as "a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life".[20] However, etymologically, it derives from the ancient Greek word *oikos*[21] which means the home, the family, and *systema* which means the stand, to stand.[22] As of the 1930s, ecosystem begins to be used in the sense of interrelated principles, phenomena, ideas, etc.[23] Thus, ecosystem can be described as the principles, phenomena, and ideas that constitute the home and the processes that allow for this interaction. However, it bears repeating that beyond this simple description there is an almost century long discussion on this term.

Braat and de Groot state that the term ecosystem was first used in the 1930s to denote the most fundamental ecological unit.[24] As of the 1950s, it starts to be used to indicate the ecosystem processes

20 "Ecosystem", *National Geographic*, education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/ecosystem/.

21 Pierre Dansereau, "Ecosystem", *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ecosystem.

22 "Sistem" [System], *Nişanyan Sözlük* [Nişanyan Dictionary], nisanyansozluk.com/kelime/sistem.

23 Pierre Dansereau, ibid.

24 Leon C. Braat and Rudolf de Groot, "The Ecosystem Services Agenda: Bridging the Worlds of Natural Science and Economics, Conservation and Development, and Public and Private Policy", *Ecosystem Services*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 2012, p. 4–15; 5.

irrespective of whether they are beneficial to the people inside the ecological system. In late 1960s and early 1970s, this term transforms to describe the works, fields and products that are beneficial to human communities. Rather than an ethical concern, a human centred pragmaticism is prevalent in the usage of the term during this period.[25]

In the very beginning of the second millennium, the public interest in the term assumes an international dimension and enters the agenda of the United Nations (UN). In 2000, in his report titled *We the Peoples: The role of the United Nations in the 21st Century*, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan makes a call for a Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.[26] He says, "We must spare no effort to free our fellow men and women, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the danger of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources can no longer provide for their needs", and calls on Member States to help provide the necessary financial support for a situation assessment.[27]

Following this call, in 2001 a process of assessment is launched with the participation of 1,300 experts from across the world. The aim of such a comprehensive study is to evaluate the changes in the ecosystem and how their consequences affect human well-being. Yet another objective is to identify the scientific data-based actions for the conservation and sustainable use of the resources of the ecosystem.

The *Millennium Assessment* (MA) is important for our study as well because it addresses the products and services of the natural ecosystem in different categories. The products and resources directly offered by nature, the support and regulations required to maintain this service, and the elements that contribute to the cultural life of the human being present a framework that summarises the vital roles that the ecosystem plays in the life of the human being. This framework summarised in the next drawing depicts the functions of nature by placing human well-being as the central focus for assessment. In the first category of provisioning services, we can find the products that directly or indirectly meet

the vital needs of people such as food, fuel, fibre, fresh water, and genetic resources, raw materials, natural medicines, and fuel products. The category of regulating services includes the benefits people obtain from the regulation of ecosystem processes, including air quality regulation, climate regulation, erosion regulation, disease regulation, water purification, waste treatment, biological control, pollination, natural hazard regulation. The natural ecosystem also offers nonmaterial benefits that people obtain through spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection,
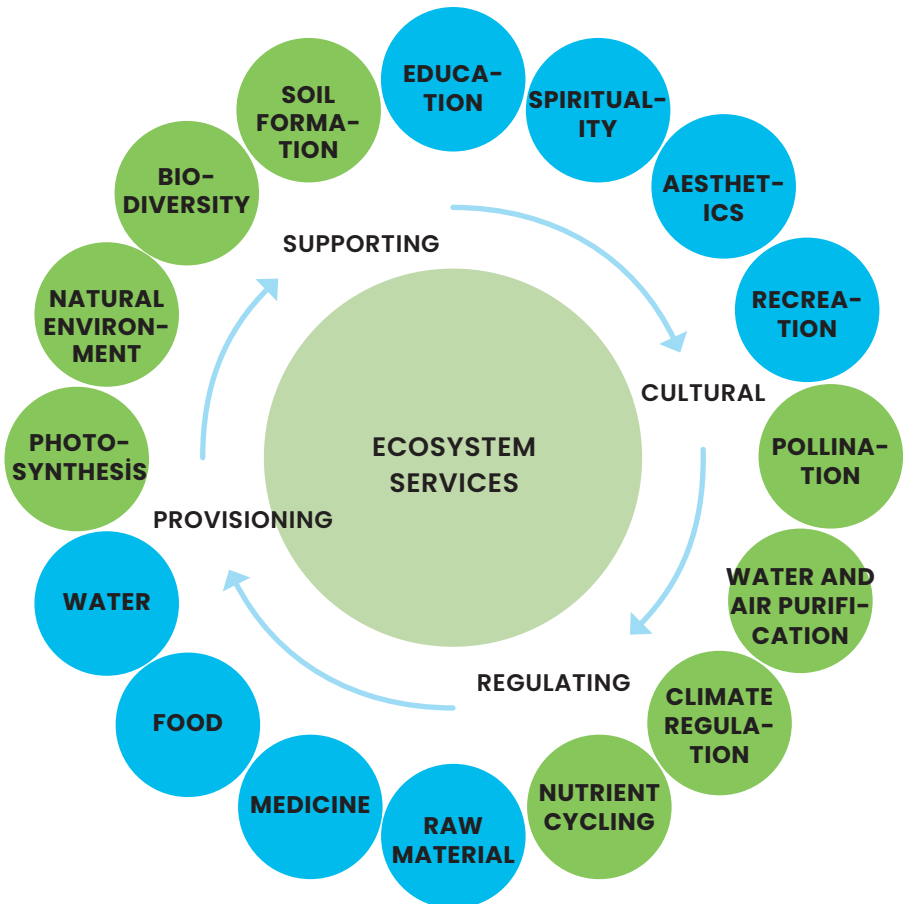
25 Braat and de Groot, ibid., p. 6.

26 Kofi A. Annan, *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century* (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 2000).
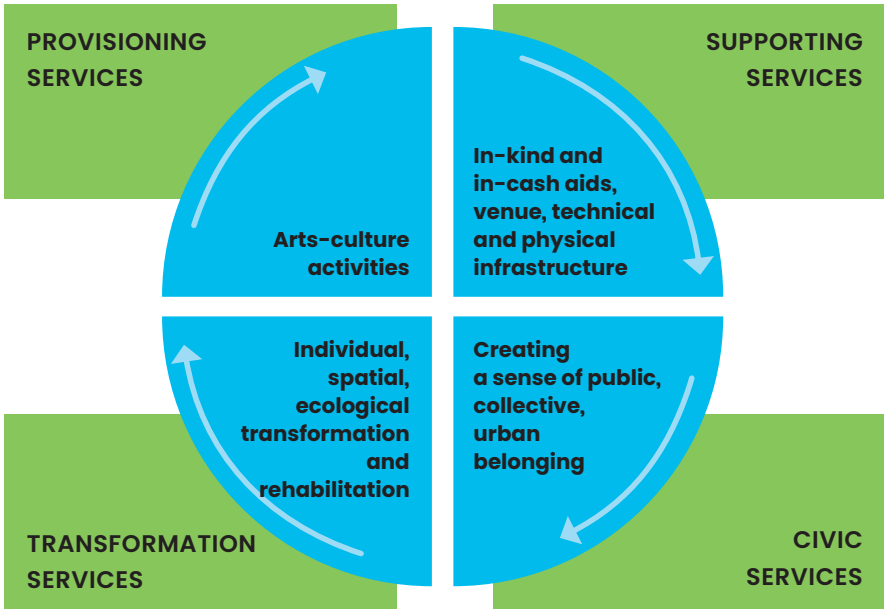
27 Annan, ibid., p. 57.

recreation, and aesthetic experiences. This category named cultural services includes cultural diversity, spiritual and religious values, traditional information systems, educational values, inspiration, aesthetic values, social relations, sense of place, cultural heritage, and recreation and ecotourism.

The final category of supporting services describes the cycles that are necessary for the production and maintenance of all other categories such as photosynthesis, soil formation, primary production, and nutrient and water cycling. While the changes in the other categories have relatively direct and short-term impacts on people, supporting services differ from provisioning, regulating, and cultural services because their impacts on people are either indirect or occur over a very long time.

MA categories exhibit the natural processes that people depend on for their life on earth. The operation of the ecosystem and the critical importance of the resources derived from this operation for humans and other species and therefore the imperative of their conservation is thus clearly expressed. However, since people unlike other species live by socialising, social relations, cultural production, and interactions are also among the building blocks that enable and shape their existence. In this sense, the human is a cultural as much as a biological being because it can build a life only as a community and culture is the most vital basis for the existence of communities. Therefore, just as we talk about a natural ecosystem, we can also address the cultural sphere as an ecosystem and take the analytical template of MA as reference to diagnose the existing products, services, and relationships in this ecosystem.

Considering culture as an ecosystem will also enable us to diagnose the public interventions in the cultural policies required for the maintenance of the viability of this ecosystem. Against the historical backdrop summarised in the previous section, these interventions are crucial in terms of the recognition of cultural rights and the establishment of cultural democracy. Like the problem of environmental justice posed by the problems in the natural ecosystem, the failure to design and implement cultural policies

PROVISIONING SERVICES

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Arts-culture activities

In-kind and in-cash aids, venue, technical and physical infrastructure

Individual, spatial, ecological transformation and rehabilitation

Creating a sense of public, collective, urban belonging

TRANSFORMATION SERVICES

CIVIC SERVICES

in a pluralistic, democratic, and effective manner also causes a problem of cultural justice. Focusing on the different operation and production aspects of the cultural ecosystem and diagnosing and proposing solutions for the problems experienced in these processes will be a method that facilitates the creation of locally participatory and inclusive cultural policies which is the main objective of our report. To this end, in the remaining part of the study we will examine the different dimensions of cultural lives in the cities of Türkiye by adapting the analytical framework of MA to the field of culture.

Adapting the MA framework to cultural policies allows us to address the products, actors, and institutions in the field of culture within the regulations and relationships that enable them by using a single framework that can reveal the impact of this entire field on our social life. The field of culture that our social life depends on is as critical as the vital care and precautions we should take to diagnose and ensure the maintenance of the natural elements, resources, and processes that we depend on for our biological existence. Therefore, we should look at the actors of the cultural

field, the relationships of civil actors among themselves and with the public authorities, and the effect of cultural productions emerging as a result of these interactions through the perspective of a holistic ecosystem and design the cultural policies in line with the functions, potential, and problems of this ecosystem. Surely it is not possible to make an exact reference to MA's original categories within the context of cultural policies. Even though we can keep the category headings of provisioning and supporting services, we must reinterpret the scope of all categories.

First, let us consider the activities directly provided in the field of culture like in nature. All the activities such as concerts, shows, plays, courses, choruses, festivities, festivals, and exhibitions are among these cultural provisioning services. In fact, it is this category that first comes to mind at the mention of cultural policies. The thought that organising a cultural activity indicates the existence of a cultural policy is quite prevalent especially among the public authorities. The quantitative aspect, which we will elaborate on, like the number of activities, spectacles, audience, and venues, is considered as the fundamental performance indicator in the field of culture.

Beyond the direct actions taken in the field of culture, the practices towards creating the grounds for others' activities constitute the second category, namely the supporting services of the cultural ecosystem. Just like in the supporting services of the natural ecosystem, the cultural field offers venues, opportunities, and tools that are not cultural activities in and of themselves. We will address the mechanisms and facilities such as the allocation of venue, transfer of resources, and means of transportation that provide the infrastructure and enable the organisation of cultural activities under this category.

While these first two categories point at the tangible outputs of cultural policies, we will design the last two categories borrowed from the approach of ecosystem services to identify the social impacts of these outputs. As we adapt the regulating services, which generate the products and resources present in nature, to the social field we are reminded of the public context that enables people

to live together. This is because unlike the other species of the planet, people live through a partnership that is constructed not mechanically or instinctively but culturally. It is the shared cultural elements that enable and encourage individuals to come together and collaborate. We will use this category, which we suggest naming the civic services, to identify the social consequences of cultural practices. Under this heading, we will address sociopolitical impacts such as the building of a fellowship of townspeople, the encounter of differences, and the establishment of an environment of dialogue and peace.

Lastly, transposing the cultural services of the natural ecosystem to the cultural policies gives us the chance to analyse the transformative potential of culture. While the civic services are intended to preserve and maintain the social nature of the human being, our final functional category aims for people to attain, and when necessary, transform the qualities that are required for the continuation of this unity. Cultural activities may serve to protect, develop, and rehabilitate the individuals and the built environment. In fact, cultural activities may be beneficial to processes of education and health as well as the image and financial potential of the cities.

In brief, just as people obtain numerous benefits from the natural environment they live in, the cultural ecosystem they occupy also plays important roles in shaping their lives. A theatre play, a chorus, a dance show may not seem vital in and of themselves. However, just like Jordi Pascual says, this is similar to the fluttering of a butterfly's wings:[28]

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28 Jordi Pascual, "On Cultural Policies, Sustainability and Participation", in Local Cultural Policies Handbook: Steps, Tools and Case Studies, ed. Eylem Ertürk (Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2011), p. 23, culturalfoundation.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Books_LocalCulturalPoliciesHandbook.pdf.

"Let's share a trite image: a fluttering butterfly in the jungles of Java unleashing a tropical tempest in the Caribbean Sea. The ecological connection between local and global is obvious to the average world citizen. If we changed fluttering butterfly by grassroots creativity or sense of place, this average citizen would not be moved by the same affection; (s)he would not even understand why grassroots creativity or sense of place is something related to his/her happiness, or to the sustainable development of the community in which (s)he lives. Cultural diversity is not yet as important as biodiversity. Eppur si muove. These debates are gaining ground in the global agenda."

Today it is possible to consider ecological problems holistically on a plane extending from the local to the global, by the same token, the social significance of cultural policies also deserves a similar perspective. In order to solve the environmental problems of the planet, we need to recognise, expose, preserve, and improve the public potential of culture. Just as MA offers a very valuable perspective to present the natural ecosystem and our problematic yet harmonious union with it, using the same analytical framework also for the cultural field may make important contributions to cultural justice and the democratisation of cultural policies.

In the following sections of the report, we take a closer look at the cultural lives of cities in Türkiye within the context of the categories that we have devised inspired by MA. Using the field research and survey findings and referencing secondary sources, we will focus on the provisioning, supporting, civic, and transformation services of the cultural ecosystem, respectively, and identify the required changes and actions on the local level to render these processes more democratic, participatory, and equitable.

3 Provisioning Services of the Cultural Ecosystem

In the first category of cultural policies, which we will address with reference to MA, we contemplate the produced and provided products. Like the sources of nutrition, water, and raw materials offered by nature, the cultural ecosystem also presents cultural products that constitute the yeast of living together. In this section we explore these products. Since we do not see this merely as a cataloguing effort, we problematise and open to discussion the provisioning services of the cultural ecosystem around the concept of cultural democracy.

The definition of cultural policy that Füsun Üstel makes in her book *Kültür Politikasına Giriş* [Introduction to Cultural Policy] summarises all the products provided in the cultural ecosystem. Citing Mulcahy, she says that the scope of cultural policy which was initially thought to consist of "museums, the visual arts (painting, sculpture, and pottery), the performing arts (symphonic, chamber, and choral music; jazz, modern dance, opera, and musical theatre, and 'serious' theatre), historic preservation and humanities programmes (such as creative writing and poetry)" expanded over time to encompass "libraries and archives, battlefield sites, zoos, botanical gardens, arboretums, aquariums, parks, as well as community celebrations, fairs, and festivals; folklore activities such as quilting, 'country' music, folk dancing, crafts; perhaps certain varieties of circus performances, rodeos, and marching bands."[29]

In light of the interviews and focus group meetings we held during the field research, we can say that the scope and affluence of cultural life in the cities of Türkiye correspond to this description. Throughout the research, we saw, heard, and read about a great number of activities in a broad range extending from traditional crafts to contemporary art presented in the form of concerts, exhibitions, festivals, biennials, workshops, and shows. We see that

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29 Kevin V. Mulcahy, "Cultural Policy: Definitions and Theoretical Approaches", *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2006, p. 321.

scores of activities are organised on a regular basis particularly on official and religious holidays, to observe international days and weeks (World Environment Day, Mobility Week, Women's Day, etc.), on the occasion of special organisations (sports competitions, festivals, festivities, national or international meetings, etc.), on natural and annual cycles (new year's, Newroz, vintage, harvest, etc.), or on dates of local significance (Independence Day, commemoration of Atatürk's visit to the city, etc.).

We cannot help but notice that theatre occupies a special place among all these activities. In every city we visited for the field research and the focus group meetings, we came across amateur theatre companies. As much as those that continue their work with the support of the ministry or local governments, the existence

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND:
WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND AT THE MENTION OF "CULTURE"? IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE, WOULD YOU TELL US ALL THE WORDS OR EXPRESSIONS THAT EVOKE CULTURE?

of many amateur companies that stage plays with a completely amateur spirit and the labour and resources of volunteers was very striking. We encounter amateur theatre initiatives on different scales ranging from those that turn an apartment into a stage to those that establish city theatres equipped with a stage, foyer, and study halls.

Meanwhile, the responses provided by the city residents to the public opinion survey that represents the urban population of Türkiye, describe culture primarily with reference to the traditions and customs that belong to the past. Emerging second in the description of culture is the organisation of artistic activities in different branches of art, which is followed by historical heritage.

The interesting thing is the difference between the public perception of culture and the activities that local governments organise in the field of culture. In fact, in the online survey we conducted with the participation of municipality representatives, when we ask about the activities their institutions organise, 67% cite at least one festival, 61% a music recital or concert, 61% a children's event, 49% a theatre play, 42% a course and handicrafts exhibition, 41% a talk or book signing, and 39% an ecological or environmental event.

MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: HOW MANY TIMES DID YOUR MUNICIPALITY ORGANISE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES OVER THE LAST YEAR?*
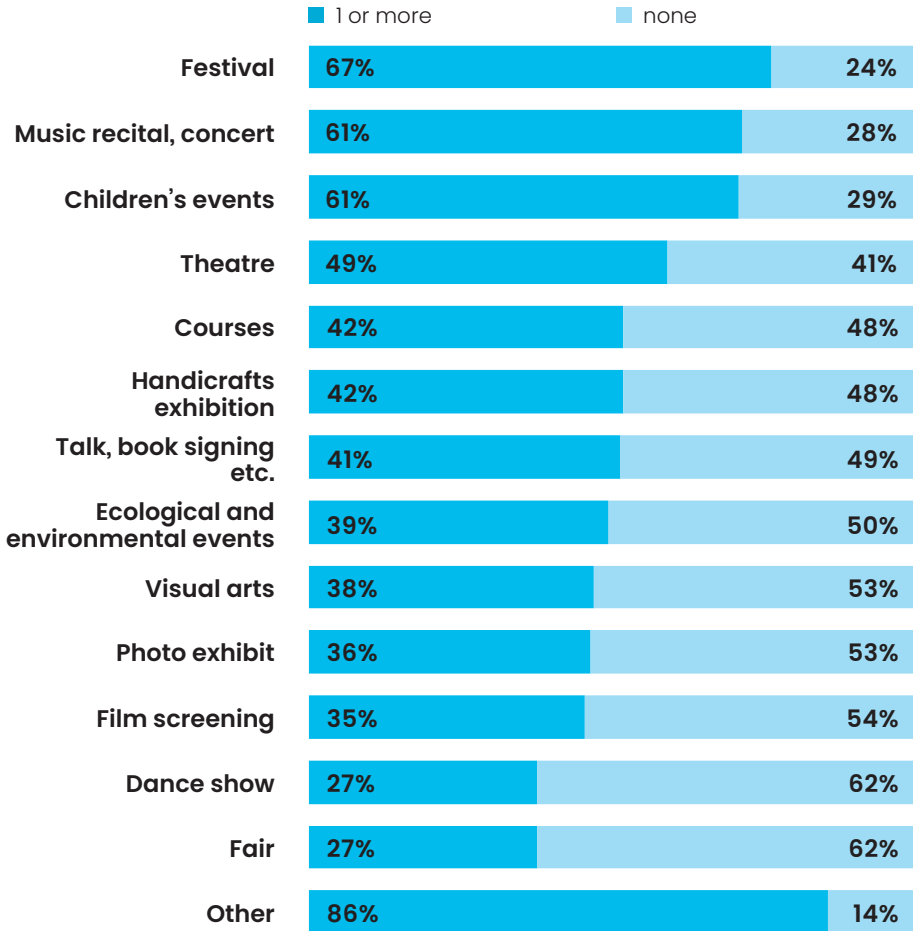
Activity	1 or more	none
Festival	67%	24%
Music recital, concert	61%	28%
Children's events	61%	29%
Theatre	49%	41%
Courses	42%	48%
Handicrafts exhibition	42%	48%
Talk, book signing etc.	41%	49%
Ecological and environmental events	39%	50%
Visual arts	38%	53%
Photo exhibit	36%	53%
Film screening	35%	54%
Dance show	27%	62%
Fair	27%	62%
Other	86%	14%

* The options of "No idea/ No response" are not reflected in the graph. You may access the detailed results at ortaklasa.iksv.org**.**

When we ask the same question in the online survey that we conducted with the participation of CSOs active in the field of arts and culture, we see that close to half of the survey participants organised talks, discussions, book signing, and courses; these activities are followed by visual arts, children's and musical events, and festivals, respectively.

CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING FIELDS OF ACTIVITY DO YOU ORGANISE EVENTS?

Field	Percentage
Discussion, book signing	45%
Courses	45%
Visual arts	40%
Children's events	39%
Music recitals, concerts	36%
Festival	33%
Film screening	28%
Ecological and environmental events	28%
Photography exhibition	28%
Theatre	27%
Handicrafts exhibition	17%
Dance show	16%
Fair	6%
Do not organise events	10%
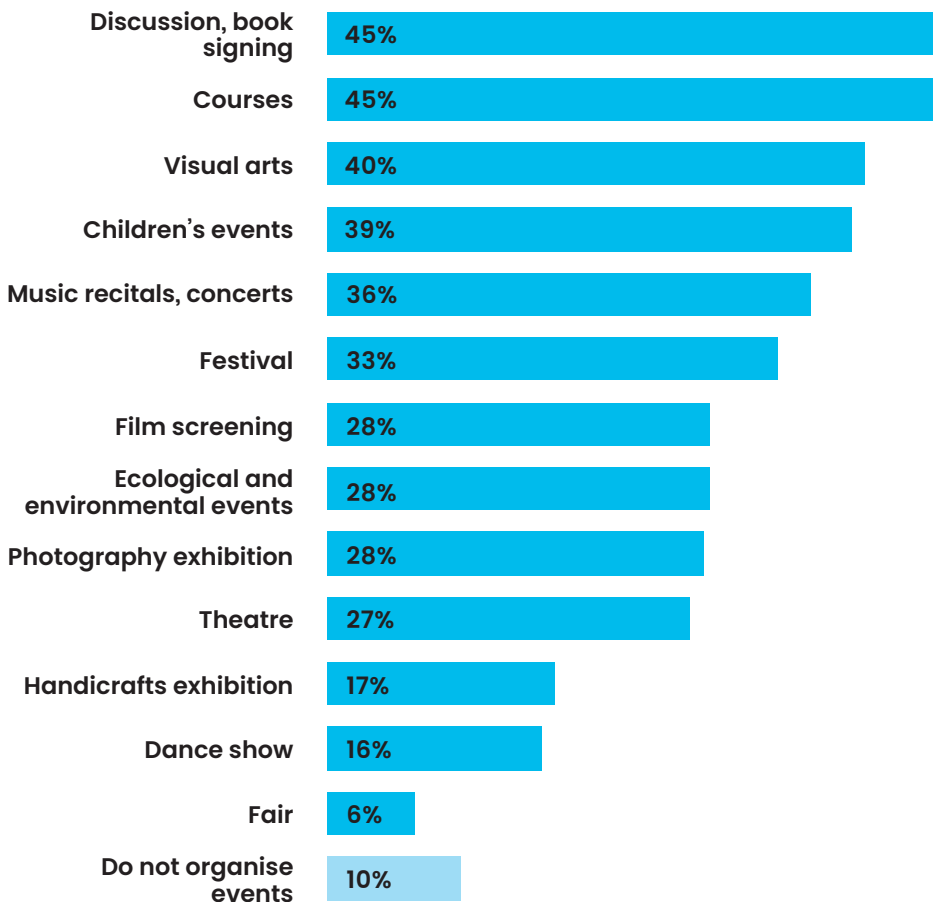
Even though there is no exact correlation between the public's definition of culture and the cultural activities organised by local governments, according to the public opinion survey results, a majority of 59% of city residents say that the municipality activities sufficiently or partially meet their expectations.

Sufficiently meet the expectations	13%
Partially meet the expectations	46%
Do not meet the expectations	40%

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: DO THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY MUNICIPALITIES MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?
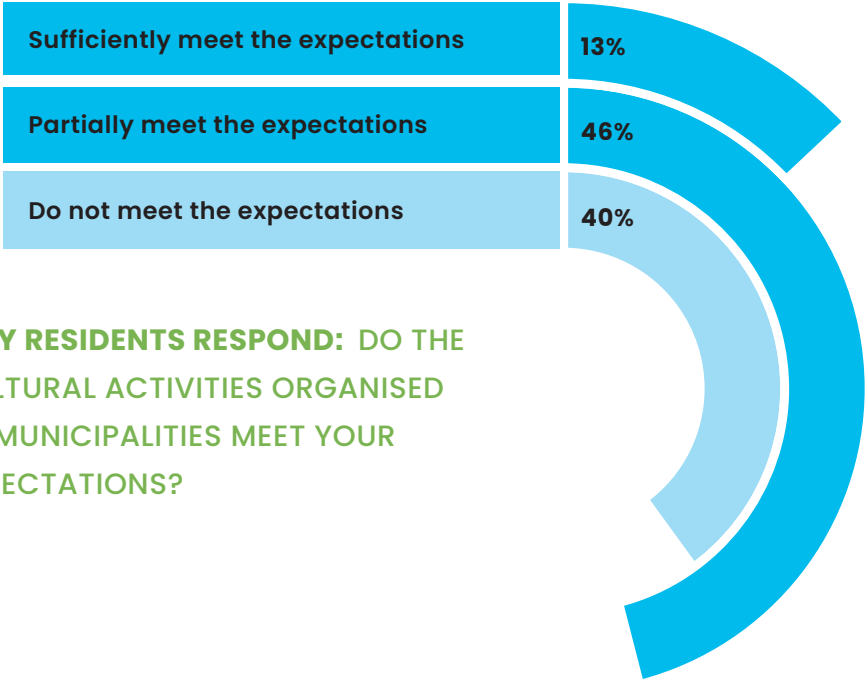
When we pose the same question in the online surveys to municipality and CSO representatives working in the field of arts and culture, the picture becomes somewhat complicated. While 62% of the municipality representatives say that their expectations are sufficiently or partially met, among CSO representatives this rate falls to 18%.

Sufficiently meet the expectations	62%
Do not meet the expectations	21%
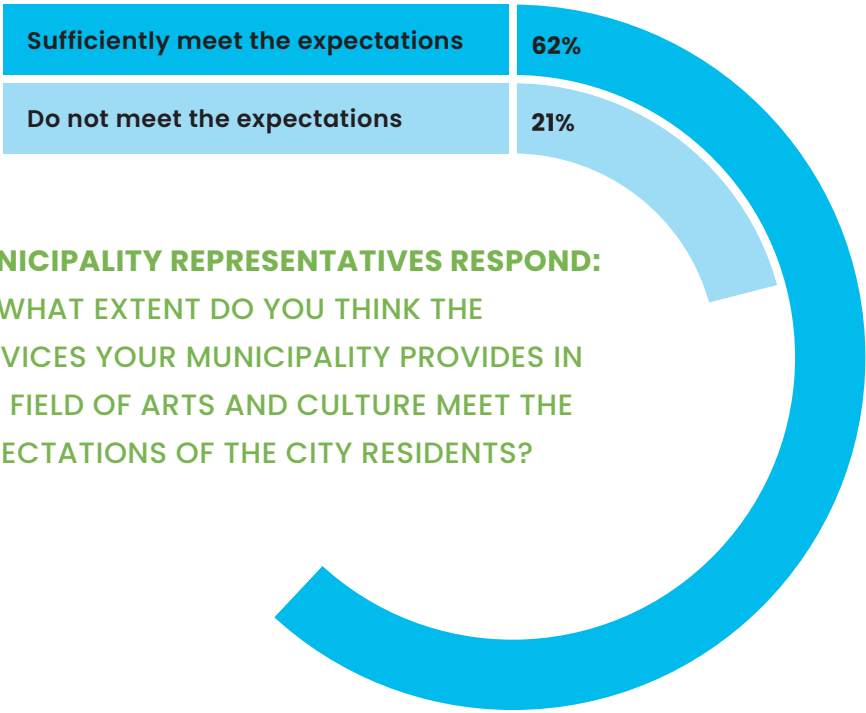
MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THE SERVICES YOUR MUNICIPALITY PROVIDES IN THE FIELD OF ARTS AND CULTURE MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE CITY RESIDENTS?

Sufficiently meet the expectations	18%
Do not meet the expectations	63%
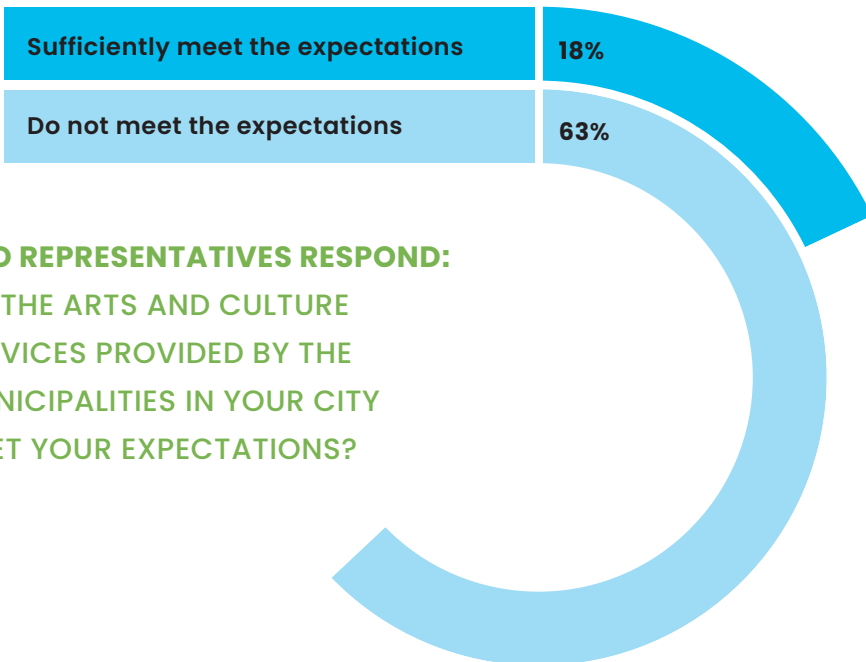
CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
DO THE ARTS AND CULTURE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MUNICIPALITIES IN YOUR CITY MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

In the results of the online surveys, the differences between the satisfaction levels of the two groups become even more evident when we ask the municipality and CSO representatives specifically about the adequacy of the cultural activities organised in the cities. For instance, when we ask about the o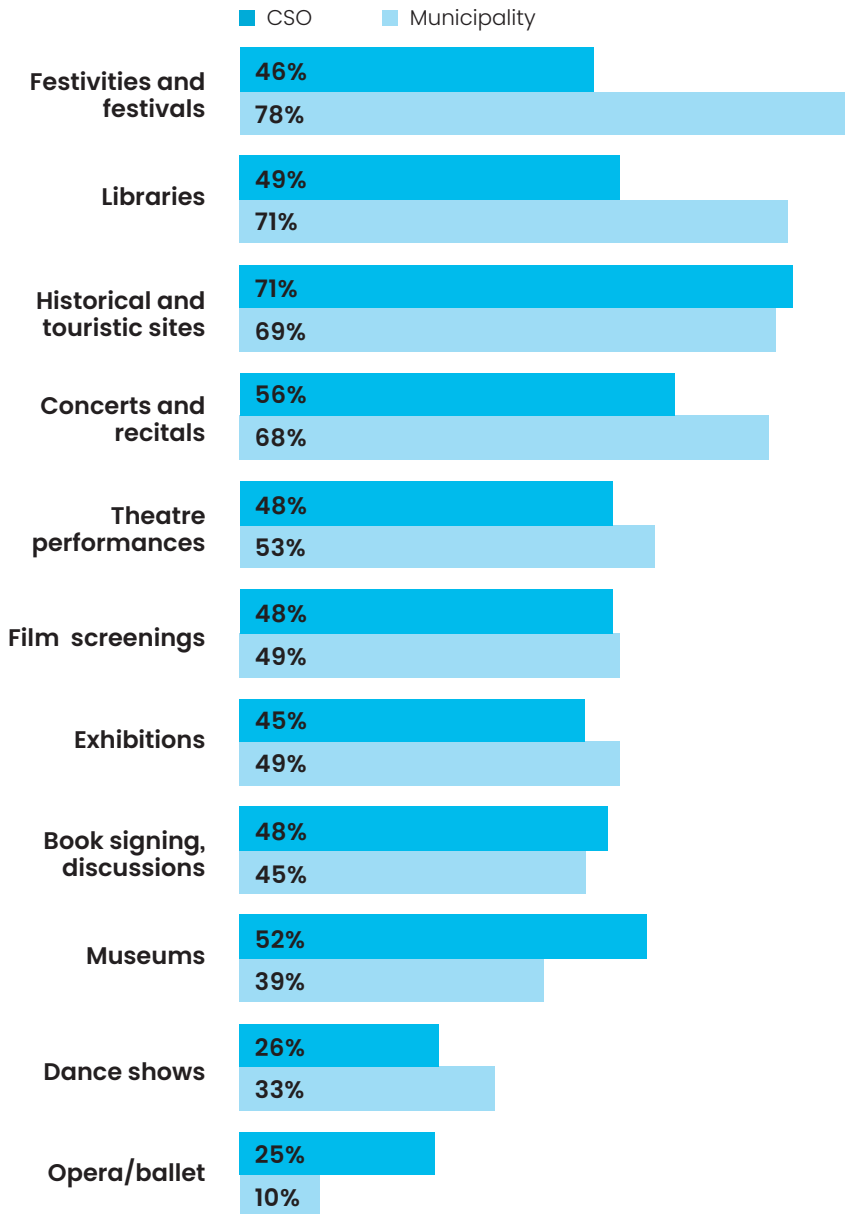pera and ballet performances both groups talk about the insufficiency of this type of activities while the difference between the responses of the two groups rises over 10%. Meanwhile, in terms of festivities and festivals, close to 80% of municipality representatives are completely satisfied with these activities while the rate of satisfaction among CSO representatives is less than 50%. Similarly, the level of satisfaction regarding libraries and musical activities is higher among municipality representatives. In terms of museums, the expectations of half of CSO representatives are met while this rate falls to 40% among municipality representatives.

The differences in the rates of expectations met attest to the difficulty of evaluating cultural activities through general criteria. As the rate of cultural activity provision increases the demand and need also tend to increase. Increased participation in cultural activities may also result in a demand for the organisation of more activities. We will revisit this subject in more detail in subsequent sections, but beyond the nature and number of these activities, let us first look at the question of how the provided services are determined.

MUNICIPALITY AND CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN YOUR TOWN ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE CITY?

■ CSO   ■ Municipality

Festivities and festivals
- CSO: 46%
- Municipality: 78%

Libraries
- CSO: 49%
- Municipality: 71%

Historical and touristic sites
- CSO: 71%
- Municipality: 69%

Concerts and recitals
- CSO: 56%
- Municipality: 68%

Theatre performances
- CSO: 48%
- Municipality: 53%

Film screenings
- CSO: 48%
- Municipality: 49%

Exhibitions
- CSO: 45%
- Municipality: 49%

Book signing, discussions
- CSO: 48%
- Municipality: 45%

Museums
- CSO: 52%
- Municipality: 39%

Dance shows
- CSO: 26%
- Municipality: 33%

Opera/ballet
- CSO: 25%
- Municipality: 10%

3 1 DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION IN PROVISION

As we mentioned in the "Cultural Policies: Culture, Cultures, Democracy and Rights" section, the democratisation of culture indicates the increased use of public resources to expand the practice of the right to culture. As we will discuss below, even though the resources allocated to culture in Türkiye fall very short of those in developed countries, in the light of the research findings we see that the cities host a large number of cultural activities. However, the problem is by whom and for whom these activities are devised, because ever since their conception, cultural policies contain a differentiation and tension between "high" and "popular" culture. The distinction between the field of "high" culture, which created by certain aesthetic, intellectual, artistic, and political codes within a historicity, and the "popular/common" culture created by simple codes within everyday life which can be rapidly consumed without a special knowledge, cultivation or experience, evokes the question of how the cultural products are offered and whom they address.

Manifestations of this dichotomy can be observed within the cultural panorama of cities in Türkiye as well. Along with the cultural references that bear traces of the classical and contemporary Western culture under the influence of the enlightenment ideology of the republic, traditional conservative sensibilities catering to certain religious, national, and ethnic feelings may also manifest depending on the dominant political climate in the city. It is the power construct of the local governments that turns this climate into action and determines which cultural approach will hold sway over which city and when.

Since the 1970s to date, the strong executive power, that is the phenomenon of the mayor, is dominant not only in cultural policies but also in the general governance of the cities.[30] Mayors are the hegemonic figures of local politics as they occupy a dominant position in the bureaucratic operation of the local government, are politically strong due to the laws and workings of the political parties and also economically powerful owing to the relationships

of profiteering that they influence. So much so that, rather than mayors governing the cities it is possible to talk about cities that are the fads and feats of mayors. However, the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye defines the local governments as institutions that "meet the common local needs".[31] Even though "the local" has been administratively defined by the laws, the identification of "common needs" requires a process of negotiation, that is, the participation of the citizens. This condition pertains to the democratic quality of cultural policies as well. The conformity of the cultural services provided by municipalities with the common needs and expectations determines the democratic quality of cultural policies.

Democratic cultural policies are of critical importance for the concept of cultural rights as well. This is because the prevalent approach of "culture for everyone" in the intended democratisation of culture relies on a single definition of culture and does not represent the identities within the cluster of "everyone" and is therefore in contradiction with democratic representation. The cultural demands of different communities in a given geography are disregarded, the justice in representation of cultural rights cannot be secured. The conception of local government identified with the strong mayor signifies a power accumulated in the person of the mayor and therefore "culture for everyone" is personally defined by the mayor. The absence and/or dysfunctionality of democratic participation and decision-making processes constitutes a barrier to the fair representation and practice of cultural rights at the level of local governments.

Let us note that the propensity to centralised power is a management approach quite frequently encountered in the management of CSOs as well. Surely the CSO activities are not expected to cater to all cultural groups since they do not have a claim to public legitimacy. As they are voluntary organisations,

30 Ulaş Bayraktar, "Présidents avant-gardes: les maires comme patrons des villes turques" (Avant-gardes Presidents: Mayors as the bosses of Turkish cities), *Confluences Méditerranée*, vol. 4, no. 107, 2018, p. 111–123, cairn.info/revue-confluences-mediterranee-2018-4-page-111.htm.

31 1982 Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, Article 127.

the cultural field and community of their focus is predetermined, however, their management processes are expected to be open to the participation and monitoring of their constituents. During the field research, we listened to experiences where inhouse democracy could not be sufficiently exercised in the CSOs either. Having consultation organs or operating the available mechanisms and paying heed to their recommendations are crucial for the institutionalisation process of civil organisations, and more importantly, for the democratisation of cultural policies in Türkiye. In this sense, it bears remembering that the democratisation of cultural policies should be considered through a perspective that goes beyond public institutions.

## 3 2 THE PROVISION BUDGET

After establishing that the cities in Türkiye have vibrant cultural lives despite democratic failings, we can move on to discuss the material sources that enable this richness. There is no reference we can consult regarding the funds that CSOs dedicate to cultural activities, therefore, in this section we can only analyse the budgets that public authorities allot to this field of service, and unfortunately the available data demonstrate the inadequacy of the sources allocated to culture in Türkiye.

In the central government's annual budget of approximately €173.2 billion approved for the year 2023, the amount allocated to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was €635.2 million, which corresponds to less than 0.004 of the total budget. This rate makes the Ministry of Culture and Tourism the agency with the 12th lowest budget among the 32 central government agencies. [32]

An international comparison further elucidates the inadequacy of central resources allocated to culture. According to the 2021 data of

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32 The Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, "Merkezi Yönetim Bütçe Kanunları" [Central Government Budget Laws], sbb.gov.tr/merkezi-yonetim-butce-kanunlari/#1550658802053-28e1db68-a098.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON CULTURAL SERVICES, BROADCASTING AND PUBLISHING SERVICES, 2021 (PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE)

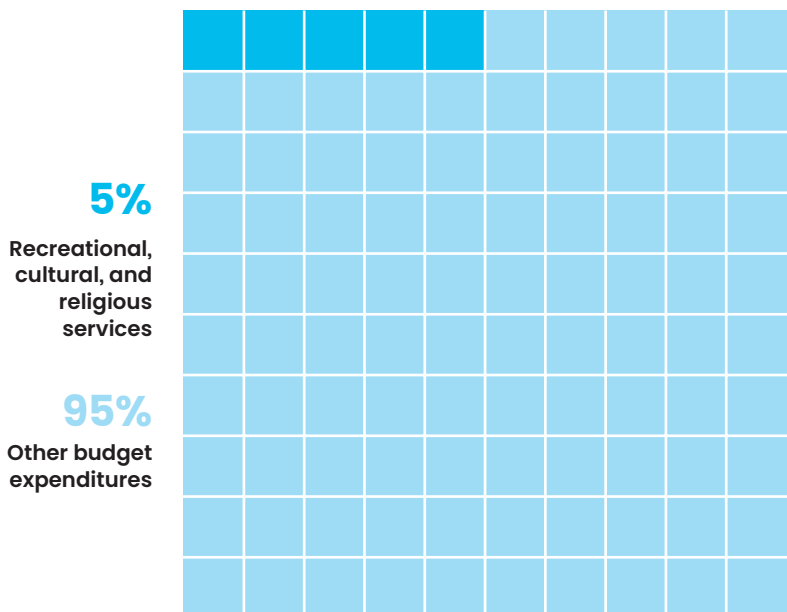■ Cultural services   ■ Broadcasting and publishing services
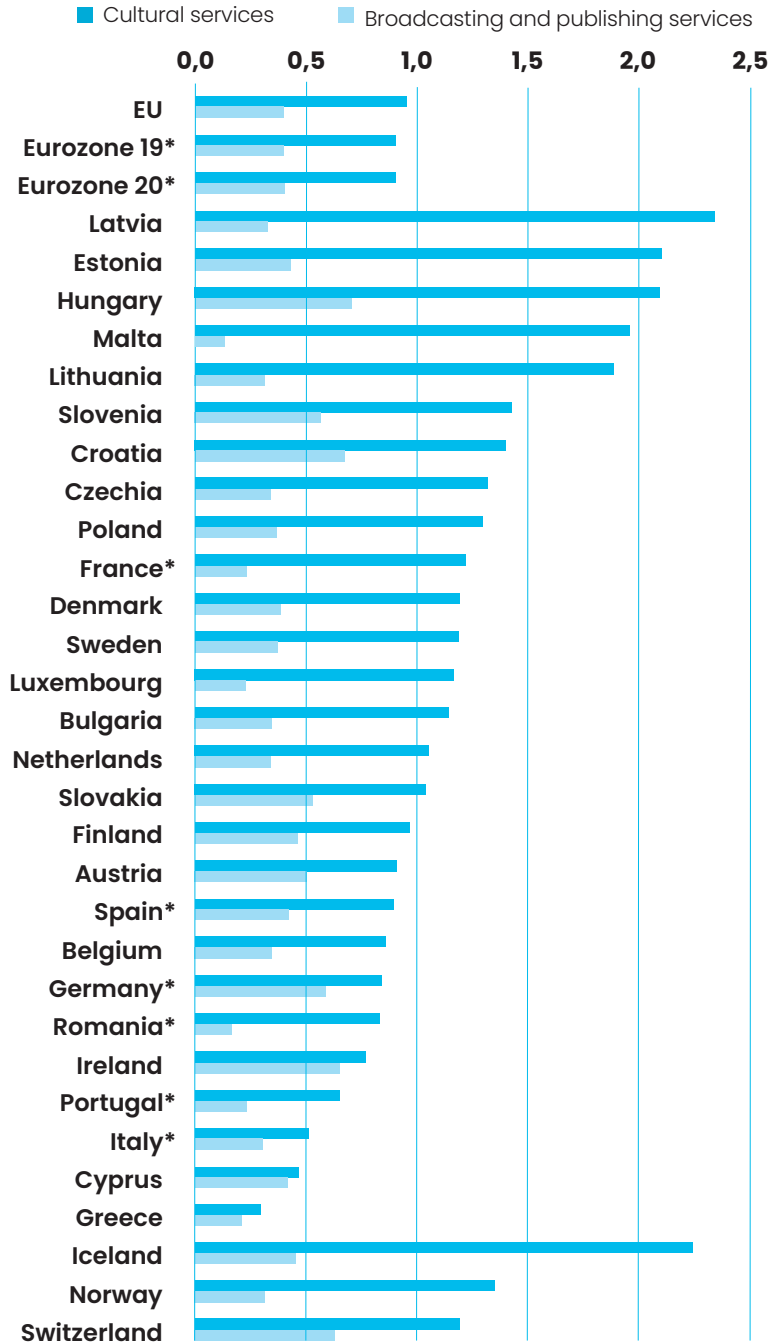
*Temporary
source: Eurostat
(gov_10a_exp)

Eurostat, "general government expenditure across the EU on cultural services amounted to €71.2 billion or 1.0% of all general government expenditure", while in Iceland, Latvia, Estonia, and Hungary this rate rose above 2%.[33]

Having established the inadequacy at the central government level, we can consult different sources to see the budgets that municipalities allocate to the field of culture. Firstly, according to the Local Administrations Consolidated Budget expenditures data published by the Ministry of Treasury and Finance, local governments allocated 1.7% of their budgets to cultural services for the year 2022.[34] In the online survey we conducted with the participation of municipality representatives, the average of the responses to the question "What is the percentage of the total budget that your municipality allocated to arts and culture last year?" is 5.5%. Interestingly, in the Ministry of Treasury and Finance data, the percentage of the budget allocated to Recreational, Cultural and Religious Services, which is the main category of Cultural Services, is 5.2%, which is extremely close to the percentage emerging from the survey.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS BUDGET EXPENDITURES IN 2022

5%

Recreational, cultural, and religious services

95%

Other budget expenditures

This percentage, which increases with the 3% share allocated to Recreational and Sports Services, suggests that the theoretical confusion on what culture and cultural services mean is experienced in practice as well. It is seen that the recreational, sports and religious services, which are not named when describing culture conceptually or enumerating cultural activities, are administratively considered within the category of culture.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS BUDGET EXPENDITURES IN 2022

Recreational and sports services	**57%**
Cultural services	**34%**
Broadcasting and publishing services	**4%**
Unclassified recreational, cultural, and religious services	**4%**
Religious services	**1%**
Research and development services pertaining to recreational, cultural and religious services	**0%**
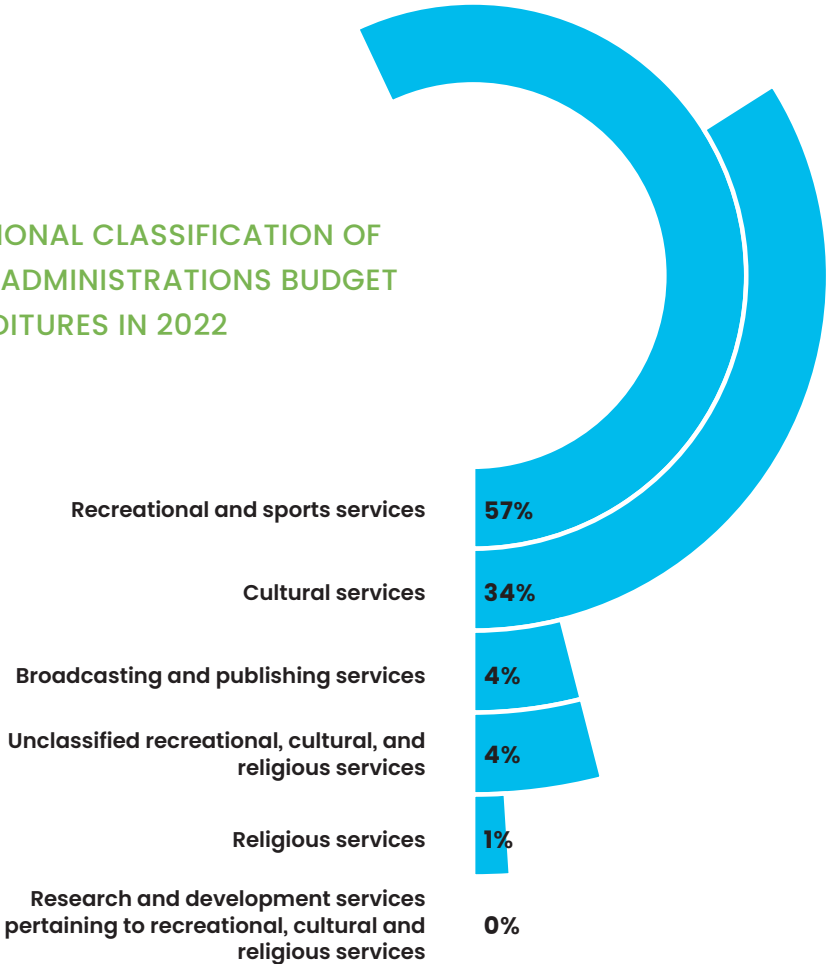
33 "General government expenditure on cultural services, broadcasting and publishing services, 2021 (% of total expenditure)", *Eurostat*, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Government_expenditure_on_cultural,_broadcasting_and_publishing_services.

34 Ministry of Treasury and Finance: Directorate General of Public Accounts, "Mahalli İdareler Bütçe İstatistikleri" [Local Administrations Budget Statistics], muhasebat.hmb.gov.tr/mahalli-idareler-butce-istatistikleri.

It is worth noting that in response to the online survey question on the budget allocated to culture, more than a quarter of the municipality representatives declare that municipalities allocate no resources to cultural activities. However, more than a quarter of the respondents state that at least a quarter of the municipality budget is allotted to culture. The contradiction of the views pertaining to the allocation of no budget and a large percentage of the budget can be seen as yet another manifestation of the ambiguity in the perception of cultural expenditures.

MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: WHAT WAS THE AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE ALLOCATED TO ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE TOTAL BUDGET OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY LAST YEAR?

None	27%
1	13%
2	11%
3	4%
4	3%
5-9	17%
10-19	16%
20+	9%
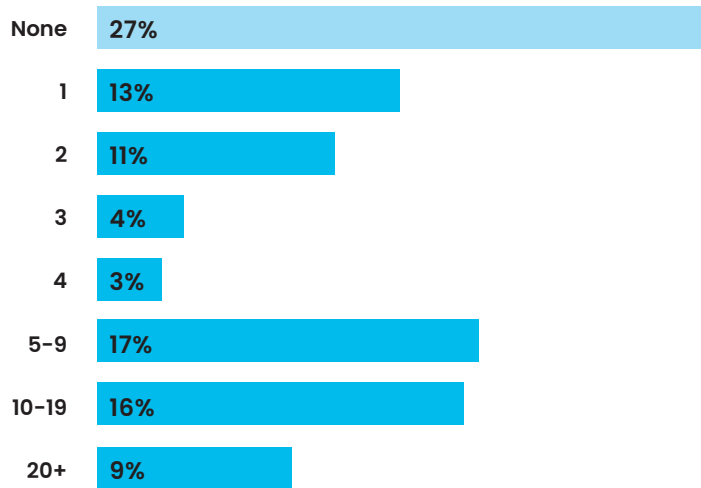
In our discussion on the municipal budgets allocated to culture, lastly, we can touch upon the cultural expenditures of the cities that we visited within the scope of the in-depth interviews and focus group meetings.[35] Based on their 2022 annual reports, the average of the budgets allocated to culture in these five cities is 4.9%, which is again close to the national average.[36] Even though the average is close, the differences between the cities are striking. There is an almost tenfold difference between the Konya Metropolitan

Municipality that allocated 9.8% of its 2022 budget to culture and the Mersin Metropolitan Municipality that allocated 1%. Just like in the Ministry data, the difference results from the categorisations used in the annual reports: when the report is based on the category of Recreational, Cultural and Religious Services, there is a high budget but when culture is singled out, it reveals a much lower share in the budget. In Mersin, the budget share is published as cultural services while in Bursa it is published as the budget of the Directorate of Cultural and Social Affairs. In Izmir, the reason for the difference is seen very clearly: the percentage that rises to 7.89% when viewed as Recreational, Cultural and Religious Services, drops to 1.31% when the budget of the Directorate of Arts and Culture is taken as reference.

BUDGETS ALLOCATED TO CULTURE ACCORDING TO THE ANNUAL REPORTS

Konya Metropolitan Municipality	9,8%
İzmir Metropolitan Municipality	7,89%
Ordu Metropolitan Municipality	4,3%
Bursa Metropolitan Municipality	1,7%
Mersin Metropolitan Municipality	1%
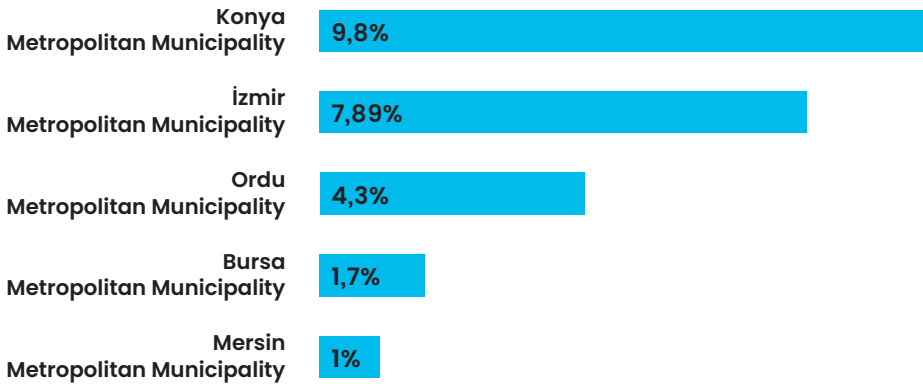
35 Another institutional dimension worthy of note is that even though there are municipality subsidiaries playing role in the organisation of cultural activities, we were not able to access the budget data of these businesses which are subject to private law. Therefore, we are unable to include this analysis in our study.

36 Konya Metropolitan Municipality, "Faaliyet Raporu 2022" [Annual Report 2022], sp.gov.tr/upload/ xSPRapor/files/79gB6+Konya_Buyuksehir_22_PP.pdf; İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, "Faaliyet Raporu 2022" [Annual Report 2022], izmir.bel.tr/YuklenenDosyalar/Dokumanlar/43_24052023_111140_.pdf; Ordu Metropolitan Municipality, "Faaliyet Raporu 2022" [Annual Report 2022], ordu.bel.tr/uplouds/788083cd-792a-4b15-9297-f39e9d36830f_2022%20FAALİYET%20RAPORU-k_compressed.pdf; Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, "Faaliyet Raporu 2022" [Annual Report 2022], bursa.bel.tr/yayinlar_pdf_viewer?id=2305; Mersin Metropolitan Municipality, "Faaliyet Raporu 2022" [Annual Report 2022], mersin.bel.tr/uploads/fil es/2022yilifaaliyetraporu84093036-547354.pdf. We could not access the activity report of Tunceli, and Diyarbakır is ruled by a government-appointed trustee, therefore these two cities were left outside the analysis.

Ultimately, the budget distribution of municipalities reveals two phenomena. Firstly, the scope of cultural policies is quite ambiguous; cultural services and recreational and even sports services are considered together. Secondly, when cleared of this ambiguity, the budget shares allocated to culture hardly reach 1%, precisely as Karakaş had remonstrated years ago. [37]
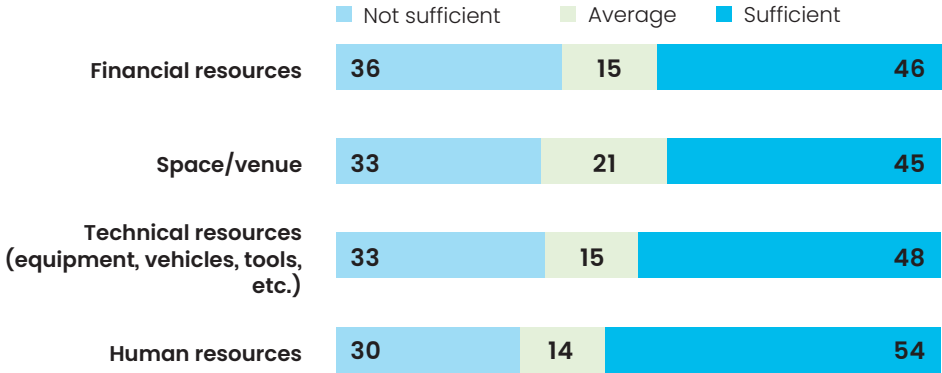
Indeed, the municipality representatives who responded to the online survey state that the biggest problem (61%) they encounter in organising arts and cultural activities is finding funding. When we ask the same question to CSO representatives, this rate further rises to 83%. The quantitative, physical, and technical shortcomings of the cultural venues stand out as yet another critical problem area, which is closely related to funding and elucidates the gravity of financial difficulties encountered in organising cultural activities. 36% of the municipality representatives who participated in the online survey find the funds that their institutions allocate to culture inefficient, while 66% of the CSOs state that the inadequacy of funding encumber collaboration.

[37] In the speech he made at the "Symposium on the Cultural Approach to the European Union" organised in 2001 by the Culture Initiative and documented by İKSV, the former minister of culture Ercan Karakaş was criticising the inadequacy of the budget allocated to culture. According to Karakaş, in many countries around the world the budgets allocated to culture did not fall under 1% while in Türkiye it did not even come close to this percentage. Ercan Karakaş, "Yaratıcılık ve Kültür Yaşamına Katılım" [Creativity and Participation in Cultural Life], in *Türkiye'de Kültür Politikaları* [Cultural Policies in Türkiye], ed. Evren Barın Egrik (Istanbul: İKSV, 2006), p. 50.

MUNICIPALITY AND CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS CAUSE YOU PROBLEMS IN THE ORGANISATION OF ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES?

■ CSO ■ Municipality

Factor	CSO	Municipality
Finding funding	83%	61%
Technically and physically inadequate infrastructure of the venues	55%	32%
Finding event venues	52%	29%
Vehicle/transportation problems	53%	27%
Finding artists / experts	24%	22%
Receiving press coverage	34%	16%
New audience development	41%	14%
Political climate / polarisation	45%	14%
Receiving permission	32%	13%
Programming	19%	11%
Tender processes	33%	11%
Content development	13%	11%
Event announcement	24%	9%

MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
CONSIDERING ALL ITS SERVICES, HOW SUFFICIENT ARE THE RESOURCES YOUR MUNICIPALITY ALLOCATES TO ARTS AND CULTURE?*

Legend: ■ Not sufficient ■ Average ■ Sufficient

	Not sufficient	Average	Sufficient
Financial resources	36	15	46
Space/venue	33	21	45
Technical resources (equipment, vehicles, tools, etc.)	33	15	48
Human resources	30	14	54

CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: HOW INFLUENTIAL ARE THE FOLLOWING FACTORS IN YOUR ABILITY TO REACH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?*
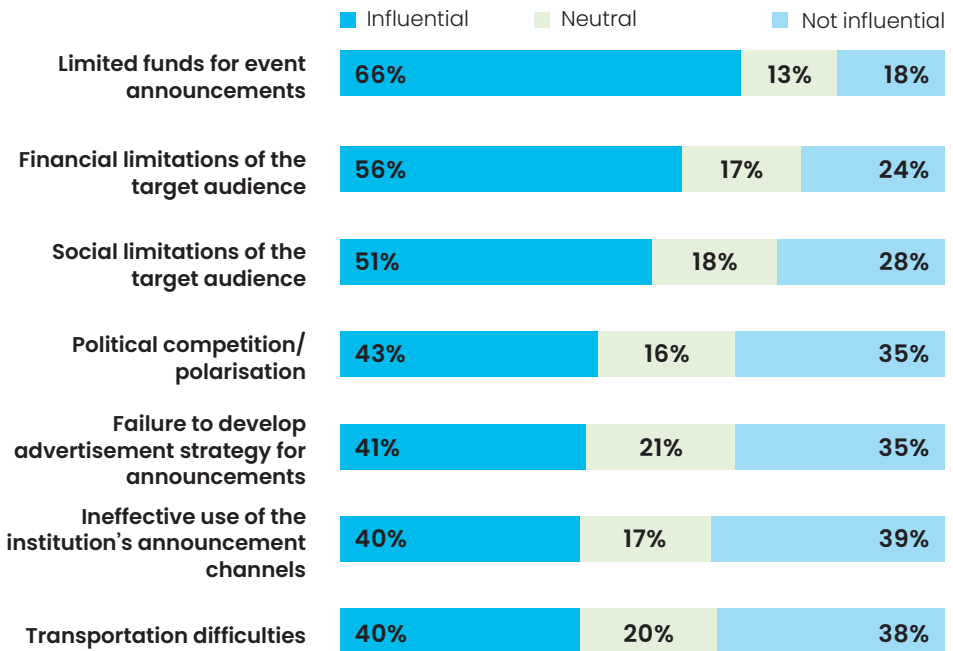
Legend: ■ Influential ■ Neutral ■ Not influential

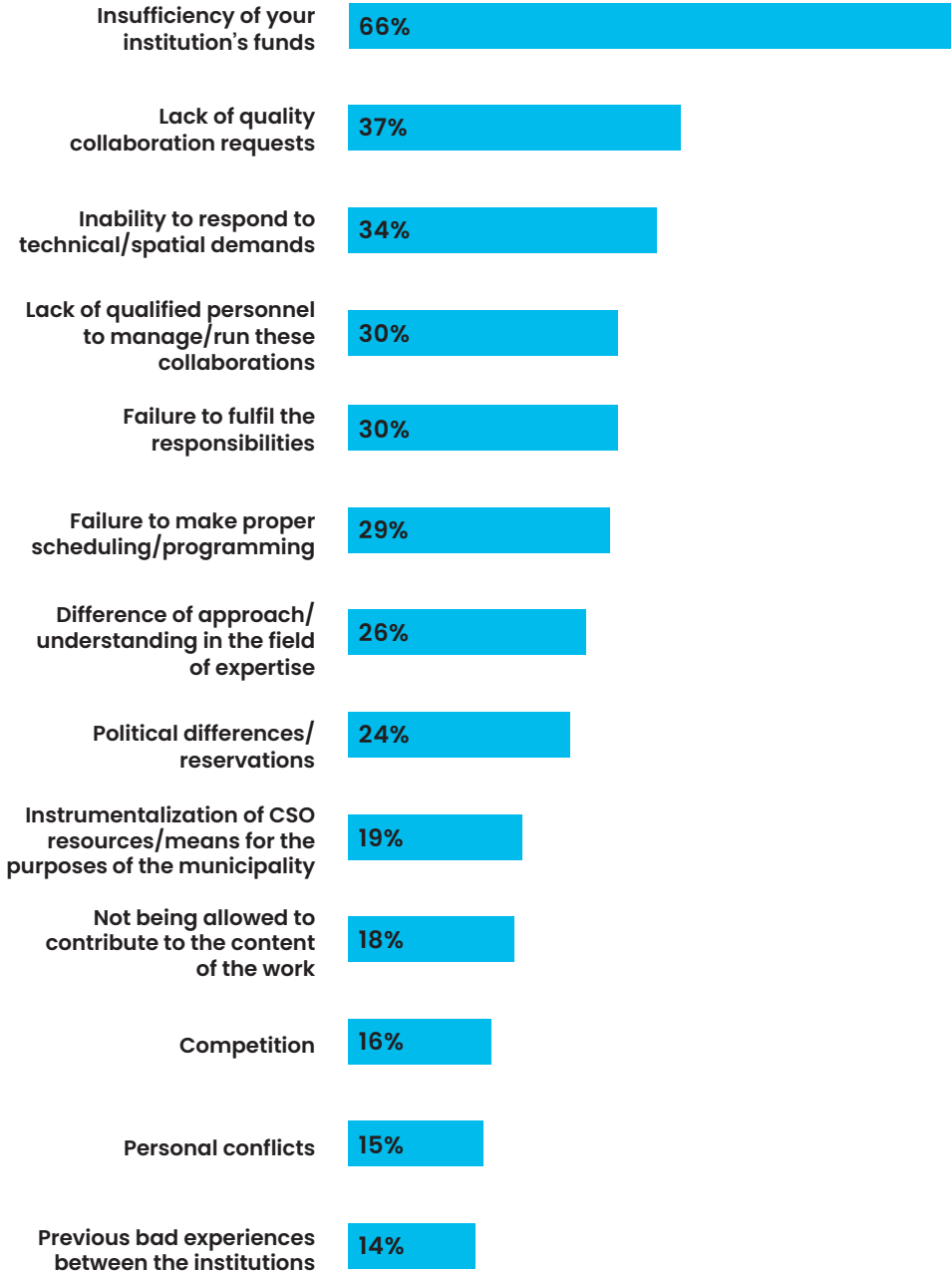|	Influential	Neutral	Not influential
Limited funds for event announcements	66%	13%	18%
Financial limitations of the target audience	56%	17%	24%
Social limitations of the target audience	51%	18%	28%
Political competition/ polarisation	43%	16%	35%
Failure to develop advertisement strategy for announcements	41%	21%	35%
Ineffective use of the institution's announcement channels	40%	17%	39%
Transportation difficulties	40%	20%	38%

* The options of "No idea/ No response" are not reflected in the graph. You may access the detailed results at ortaklasa.iksv.org.
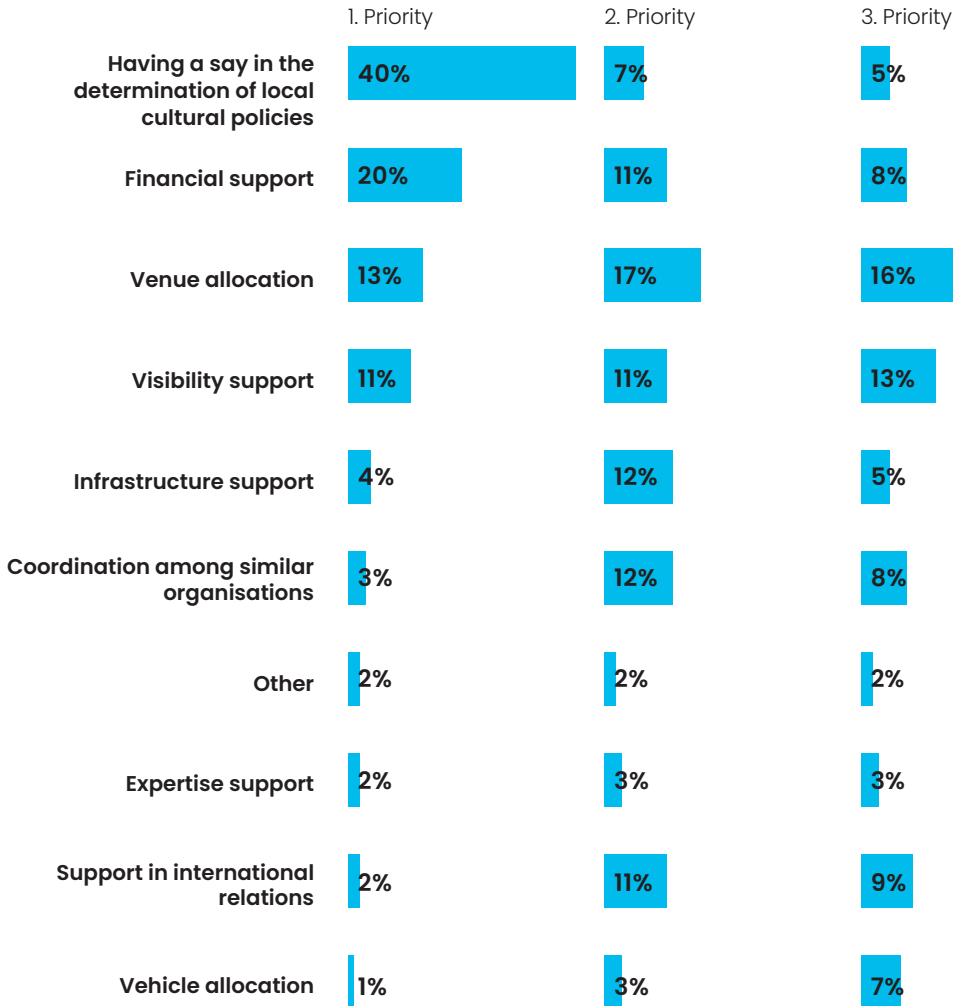
CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: IN YOUR EXPERIENCES OF COLLABORATION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS COMPLICATED YOUR RELATIONSHIPS, TO WHAT EXTENT?

Insufficiency of your institution's funds	66%
Lack of quality collaboration requests	37%
Inability to respond to technical/spatial demands	34%
Lack of qualified personnel to manage/run these collaborations	30%
Failure to fulfil the responsibilities	30%
Failure to make proper scheduling/programming	29%
Difference of approach/ understanding in the field of expertise	26%
Political differences/ reservations	24%
Instrumentalization of CSO resources/means for the purposes of the municipality	19%
Not being allowed to contribute to the content of the work	18%
Competition	16%
Personal conflicts	15%
Previous bad experiences between the institutions	14%

In brief, we see that the municipalities organise a large number of activities in a wide spectrum with quite limited budgets. CSOs suffer from similar financial difficulties. In fact, 83% of the CSOs that participated in the online survey say that they lack sufficient funds to organise activities and 66% say they lack funds to announce their events. The shortcomings of the venues and technical infrastructure also poses a problem for more than half of the CSOs. Despite the severity of the financial difficulties they are trying to deal with, the main motivation for the CSOs seeking to collaborate with municipalities is not financial support. Only 20% of the CSOs participating in the online survey indicate funding as their biggest expectation from the municipalities, while 40% hope to have a say in the local cultural policies.

Notwithstanding the gravity of the financial impossibilities that we explained in detail, the findings of the online survey show that the foremost expectation of CSOs from the local governments is to have a say in the determination of cultural policies, which indicates the importance of the demand and need for democratisation. This, in turn, brings us to the question of how the decisions pertaining to the provisioning services of the local cultural ecosystem are made, and how these decisions are executed.

CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
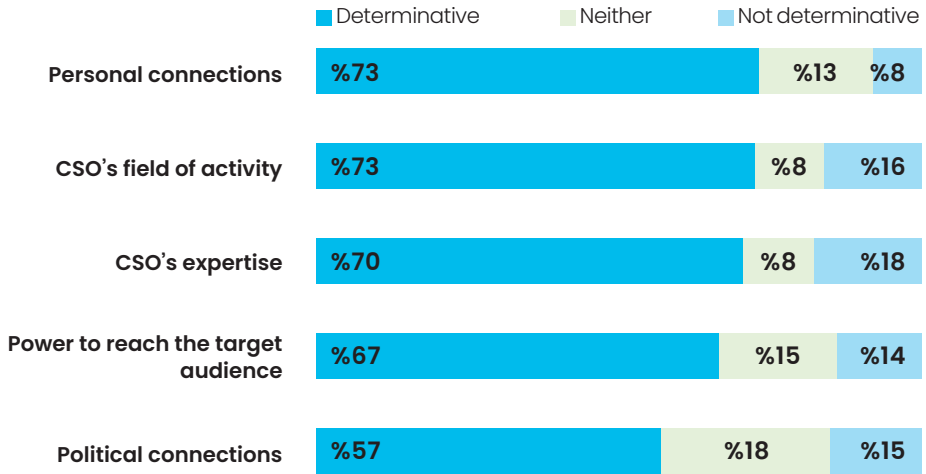WHAT ARE YOUR FOREMOST EXPECTATIONS FROM
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS?

	1. Priority	2. Priority	3. Priority
Having a say in the determination of local cultural policies	40%	7%	5%
Financial support	20%	11%	8%
Venue allocation	13%	17%	16%
Visibility support	11%	11%	13%
Infrastructure support	4%	12%	5%
Coordination among similar organisations	3%	12%	8%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Expertise support	2%	3%	3%
Support in international relations	2%	11%	9%
Vehicle allocation	1%	3%	7%

3 3 THE MANAGEMENT OF PROVISION

The cultural policies report titled *Cultural Planning for Local Authorities* published by İKSV in 2016 had revealed that the notion of cultural planning is not sufficiently established in Türkiye. Researchers found that the municipalities in Istanbul examined within the scope of the study allow limited space for culture in their strategic plans, and cultural planning is usually understood as the planning of arts events. Local authorities that focus on events tend to assess their success in the field of culture merely through quantitative indicators such as the number of activities, participants, and venues. Another problem identified by the report was the failure of coordination between different institutions and among the units of these institutions due to the lack of a platform where all the data pertaining to the field of culture on the national level can be regularly collected and shared with the public.[38]

This landscape of the local governments' strategic plans and administrative operations naturally points at the lack of effective and sustainable cultural policies in the cities. Instead, the practices in the field of culture are shaped through short-term perspectives built around certain actors and their relationships. Indeed, 73% of the CSO representatives who responded to our online survey emphasise that personal connections are determinative in the collaborations established with the municipalities.

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38 R. Gökçe Sanul and Eda Ünlü Yücesoy, *Cultural Planning for Local Authorities* (İstanbul: İKSV, February 2016), p. 14–15.
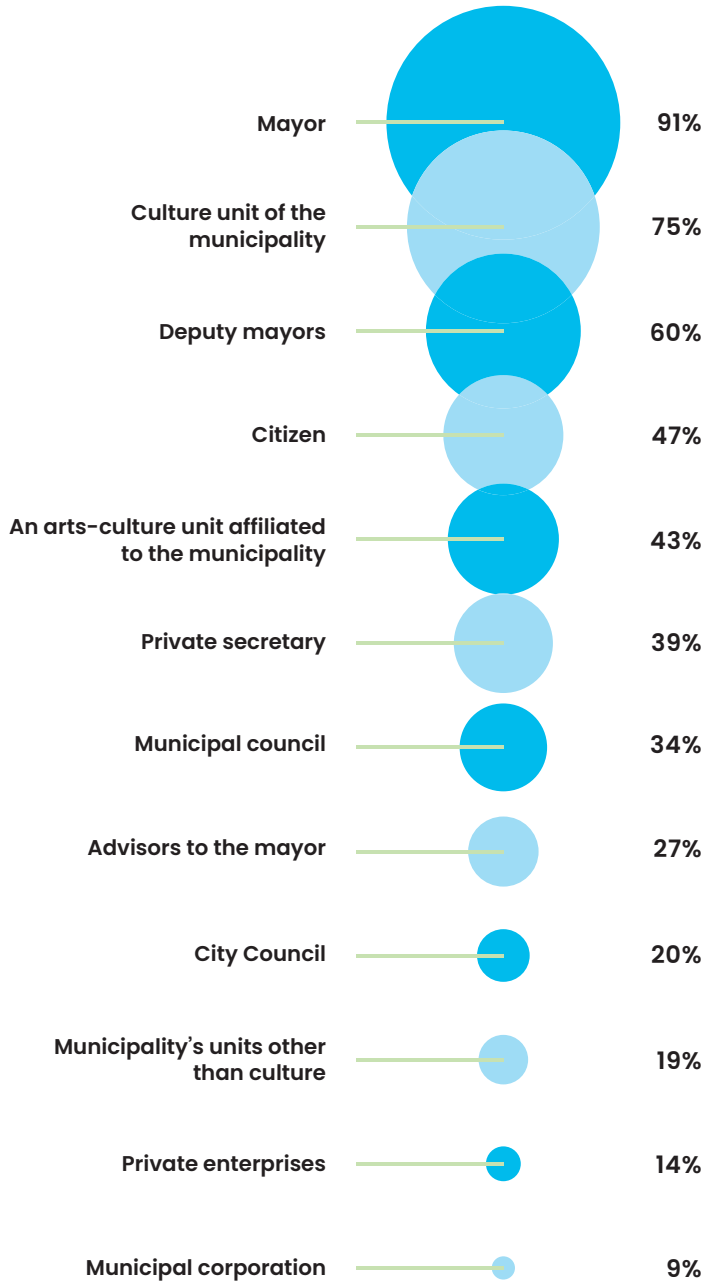
CSO REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW DETERMINATIVE ARE THE FOLLOWING FACTORS IN CSO-MUNICIPALITY COLLABORATION?*

■ Determinative ■ Neither ■ Not determinative

	Determinative	Neither	Not determinative
Personal connections	%73	%13	%8
CSO's field of activity	%73	%8	%16
CSO's expertise	%70	%8	%18
Power to reach the target audience	%67	%15	%14
Political connections	%57	%18	%15

In this sense, it is not at all surprising that mayors are the most influential local government actors in the planning of cultural events. As of their candidacy, the promises, projects, and priorities of the mayors constitute the fundamental dynamism of the cultural life of that city throughout their term in office. These orientations are influenced by the personality of the mayor as much as their political priorities, belonging, and relationships. The mayors who deem themselves competent in the entire field of culture ranging from architectural, urban, and/or artistic designs to arts events, become the main determinants of the cultural policies of the institutions under their administration. Indeed, 91% of the municipality representatives who participated in the online survey acknowledge the position of the mayors in determining the cultural policies.

* The options of "No idea/ No response" are not reflected in the graph. You may access the detailed results at ortaklasa.iksv.org.

MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: HOW INFLUENTIAL ARE THE FOLLOWING ACTORS IN MAKING DECISIONS REGARDING THE LOCAL CULTURAL POLICIES OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY?

Actor	Percentage
Mayor	91%
Culture unit of the municipality	75%
Deputy mayors	60%
Citizen	47%
An arts-culture unit affiliated to the municipality	43%
Private secretary	39%
Municipal council	34%
Advisors to the mayor	27%
City Council	20%
Municipality's units other than culture	19%
Private enterprises	14%
Municipal corporation	9%

Given the weight of personal relationships, the personal power of the mayor reveals a network woven by political and personal relationships with the mayor ultimately at the centre. Those who may have some say in cultural policies or play a role in the process along with the mayor also emerge from within this network. We have observed the frequent replacement of the personnel and administrators in the culture departments, which unlike the other service units are considered to require no technical qualification and are assumed to be departments where everyone can be assigned to. Such that, on the day of a focus group meeting, we heard that the directors of culture in three different municipalities were removed from office in the city where the meeting was taking place. Therefore, we understand that the culture units, which 75% of the municipality representatives who participated in the online survey said were determinative, are also controlled by the direct or indirect influence of the mayor and are subject to constant interventions.

Yet another municipal unit that affects the cultural life of cities is the corporations. Corporatisation materialised in the field of culture as in all fields of service as a byproduct of the post-1980 neoliberal management model that purports to provide public services in compliance with free market dynamics and conditions. The first example of municipality subsidiaries in the field of culture, which are essentially financed by public resources and means but are preferred for purposes of bypassing the rigid personnel management, decision, and tender processes of administrative law, was established in 1989 by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality under the name of Kültür AŞ (Culture Inc). The company that provides services in the field of arts, culture, and tourism manages the cultural sites and monuments owned by the municipality. There are similar companies in cities like Bursa, Malatya, and Mersin as well. Meanwhile, in cities like Eskişehir and Izmir, there are companies that operate in the field of culture but have a much wider sphere of activity.[39]

39 Among examples of such companies, we can cite Izmir Fuarcılık Hizmetleri Kültür ve Sanat İşleri Tic. AŞ (Izmir Fair Services Culture and Art Works Trade. Inc.) and Eskişehir Sanat Özel Eğitim Kültür Spor Özel Sağlık Reklam ve Tanıtım Hizmetleri San. Tic. Ltd. Şti. [Eskişehir Art Special Education Culture Sports Health Advertisement and Promotion Services Ind. Trade Co. Ltd.].

Looking at the managerial staff of these companies, one is quite likely to come across bureaucrats of the municipal staff or the relatives of the mayor rather than the experts of the subject. It is quite natural for the superiors or the relatives and acquaintances of the mayor to depend on the mayor's decisions and preferences. Thus, these structures that are financed with public resources but subject to commercial law are de facto managed under the influence of political will. This being the case, the actions that a political will undertakes by using public resources depart from the principle of accountability and are free of political or judicial review. Thus, the possibilities of democratic representation and citizen participation in and monitoring of the cultural events run through these companies are effectively destroyed.

During the in-depth interviews we conducted as part of the field research, we found out that besides the official administrators and personnel of the municipality's own units or companies, the arts and cultural professionals who are close to the mayor have the opportunity to determine or assume bigger roles in the activities of the municipality. It was stated during the interviews that the arts professionals, who have gained the trust of the mayor or their inner circle, play active roles in the programming and execution of municipality activities and the use of its venues and resources as well as the identification of new policies.

Associations with the municipality can be established not only through direct, personal relationships with the mayor but also through political connections. One can engage with the municipality through ideological or organisational ties or references. Even if there is no existing personal relationship with the mayors, one can establish connections with the municipality through the central actors or leaders of the mayor's political organisation. The arts and cultural professionals such as publishing houses, television programmes, exhibition curators, festival and concert organisers can easily get in touch with the municipalities through the direct mediation or reference of the party's central organs.

As we have seen, the services provided in the cultural ecosystem

of the cities are determined through the network of political and personal relationships pivoting around the mayors. Cultural activities devised through such subjective preferences and decisions independent of certain principles, priorities and objectives hinder the development of a cultural policy. As the person in office and/or the political approach in power changes, the cultural life undergoes a complete change. In cities where the mayor and administrators can stay in office longer, for more than one electoral term, the dominant approach in cultural life is continuous, and therefore effective and sustainable cultural policies can gradually emerge. We observed the effect of this continuity in cultural policies during our fieldwork in the Konya Metropolitan Municipality and Selçuklu and Nilüfer Municipalities.

An interesting aspect of these examples is that the mayors of these towns were replaced in the previous elections. Considering the dominance of personal relations that we emphasised above, having new mayors in office even if from the same political party could be expected to affect the cultural life. In fact, in other cities that we visited we found out that the newly elected mayors, albeit from the same party as their predecessors, made radical changes in cultural policies. The new mayors may end or change the nature of the previous mayor's programmes to emphasise their personal distinction and the authenticity of their own administration. However, in the aforementioned cities the newly elected mayors have largely abided by and continued the programmes and activities of the previous term, which allows for the emergence of a continuity, and relatively speaking, a regime in cultural policies.

The real change is experienced when a mayor from another political party comes to office. As the political priorities and the mayor's personal orientations change, the cultural life goes through a complete transformation. For instance, a venue hosting the meetings of provincial associations may be turned into a contemporary art space; the programme of a traditional festival can be radically changed in line with the political discourse of the party assuming power; or the public sculptures of the city produced through scientific symposia can be rounded up and exiled to a

remote location. On a more symbolic level, the renaming of existing cultural venues is also a very common practice.

Political changes to cause such radical changes in the cultural lives of the cities further increases the responsibility of the civil society in the field. The presence of long-term, effective cultural policies, in contrast to the variable dynamics of political relationships, is possible only through a strong civil society activism. One of its very important examples is the experience of the Sinop Biennial - Sinopale that has been organised since 2006 to date. In the city where three mayors from two different parties have come to office since the day it was initiated, this event of international repute is organised independently by artists and cultural actors in collaboration with city residents and by using the different venues of the city.[40]

Albeit not as independent and long-running as the Sinop Biennial, the involvement of the civil society in cultural policies is not limited to Sinop. Some municipalities carry out participatory practices in cultural planning through their strategic planning processes. The public/neighbourhood meetings, surveys, and workshops organised during the preparation of the plan enable the civil society to also have a say in determining the policies that the new local government will pledge to follow throughout its five-year term.

Even if conducted in a participatory manner, the fundamental problem of the strategic planning processes is the lack of monitoring mechanisms for the identified objectives. Unfortunately, there is no means of inspecting how and to what extent the strategic objectives and activities have been realised. The legislation lays down performance programmes and related performance audits based on the strategic plans; however, it has not stipulated any processes of accountability.[41] It is difficult to claim that there is a mechanism other than a political review which will emerge in the next elections with the electorate's assessment of how faithful the administration remained to the promises it made at the start of its term. Ultimately, even if the strategic planning processes are conducted in a participatory manner, the extent to which they democratise the local cultural policies is an important subject of discussion.

On the other hand, in certain cities there are attempts to render the cultural policies more democratic and participatory. For instance, in the district of Hozat in Tunceli, which we visited during the field research, the programme of their annual festival is developed in the meetings attended by the public. Meanwhile in larger towns, the local governments may ask for people's opinion through periodic surveys, however, it is difficult to expect such public opinion polls on single events to create a cultural policy. Ultimately, cultural policies require a term and perspective beyond cultural event organisation. Besides the workshops held during the strategic planning processes or the participatory practices organised before the events, having institutional structures that will follow up with the adopted decisions is an absolute prerequisite for the emergence of cultural policies. Even though they were not long-term or effective, we should acknowledge the existence of attempts that have aimed to devise cultural policies on the institutional level.

For instance, in 2009 the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality organises an Izmir Cultural Workshop with the objective of transforming Izmir into a "Mediterranean Metropolis of Art, Culture and Design". Aiming to implement the outputs of this workshop, an Izmir Mediterranean Academy is established in 2013 to operate in the fields of history, design, ecology, arts, and culture. The same year, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee of the Izmir Mediterranean Academy is founded to collectively outline the arts and culture policy of Izmir with the participation of local academicians, artists, and cultural professionals. Following this committee, the "İzmir Culture Pla+form Initiative" is born with the aim of fostering communication among the arts and cultural actors of the city and increasing the visibility of their cultural productions.[42] The initiative's journal titled *Pla+form*, which continues to be published until December 2021, provides

40 Sinopale, sinopale.org.

41 Among the principal regulations pertaining to the performance monitoring of local governments are Law no. 5018 on Public Financial Management and Control (mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.5018.pdf), Law no. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities (mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=5216&MevzuatTur=1& MevzuatTertip=5), Law no. 5393 on Municipalities (mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.5393.pdf), and Law no. 5302 on Special Provincial Administration (mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.5302.pdf).

42 İzmir Kültür Pla+formu Girişimi (İzmir Culture Pla+form Initiative), "Başlarken" [Introduction], Pla+form, no. 1, August 2015, izmeda.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/PLATFORM-S01-issuu.pdf.

visibility for the local artists. The "Izmir Culture Communication Meetings" organised in addition to this periodical aim to increase the communication and collaboration among cultural practitioners, venue owners, academicians, software developers, artists, and other cultural professionals. Under the title of "Models and Strategies", they hold meetings to identify a cultural strategy consonant with the dynamics of Izmir.[43]

A similar structure named Istanbul Arts and Culture Platform (IKSP) is established under the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality as well. In February 2020, an IKSP Formation Workshop is organised with the broad participation of arts and cultural professionals, artists, representatives of professional societies, and experts. The first meeting of the Advisory Board selected from among the workshop participants is held in 2020, however, the platform cannot be continued.[44]

As a result, when we look at the provisioning services of the cultural ecosystems in the cities of Türkiye, we see that a large number of activities are organised in numerous disciplines of arts and culture. Influenced by the performance culture of municipal management in Türkiye, these activities tend to be structured to serve the quantitative success criteria. In this approach where aspects such as the quality, consistency, and sustainability of the practices do not carry much weight, it becomes difficult to develop an effective, participatory, and sustainable cultural policy. The priority placed on performance and quantifiability necessitates rapid execution of the process and therefore may cause the democratic participation and negotiation processes to be disregarded. Even in cities that experimented with more democratic methods and structures, problems arise either in the implementation of the plans thus created or these efforts fail to be long-term and remain merely as event planning and organising processes.

43 Nursaç Sargon, "İzmir Kültür Pla+formu Girişimi (İKPG)" [İzmir Culture Pla+form Initiative], *Meltem İzmir Akdeniz Akademisi Dergisi* (Meltem Journal of the Izmir Mediterranean Academy), no. 4, 2018, p. 99.
44 "Istanbul Kültür Sanat Platformu Danışma Kurulu ilk toplantısını yaptı" [Istanbul Arts and Culture Platform Advisory Board held its first meeting], *Kültür İstanbul*, 4 September 2020, kultur.istanbul/ istanbul-kultur-sanat-platformu-danisma-kurulu-ilk-toplantisini-yapti/.

4   Supporting Services of the Cultural Ecosystem

Within the framework of the Ecosystem Services, nature does not only provide the food and raw materials necessary for the survival of species but also the viable environment and cycles that enable the provisioning services and life. There can be no provisioning services without the soil cycle, the process of photosynthesis, and the formation of habitats. When we adapt this service category to the cultural ecosystem, we can think about the means that public authorities provide to support, encourage, and facilitate the cultural activities of civil and private organisations in addition to the services directly provided by these authorities.

Surely, the interdependency between the provisioning and supporting services of the natural ecosystem does not pertain to the cultural ecosystem. In nature, no provisioning services can be provided without the supporting services. However, in the cultural ecosystem, the political power can dominate the entire field on its own or in the opposite case, all cultural activities can be carried out independent of governmental decisions and resources. Even though cultural needs in microscales can perhaps be met singlehandedly, considering the demographic and physical magnitudes of the cities we live in neither the public nor the civil or private organisations can singlehandedly undertake the cultural services.

In view of this inadequacy, public authorities must inevitably collaborate with other organisations. Owing to this necessity, the supporting services of the cultural ecosystem describe the processes wherein the public authority enables, allocates public resources for, and facilitates access to various cultural productions. The analysis of the democratic quality of these processes contains three axis of discussion: How freely can the non-public actors carry out activities in the cultural sphere? How equal is the distribution of the provided support? How equitable is the access to the provided activities? In this section of the report, we address the supporting services of the cultural ecosystem in light of the principles of freedom in artistic production, equality in the utilisation of public resources, and equitability in access.

4 1 SUPPORT AS A MEANS OF FREEDOM

Local governments bear the responsibility of producing services for "the common local needs", and therefore are responsible for maintaining and supporting the diversity of cultural expressions. Until the 1970s, local governments did not have a political character distinct from the central government, thus they could not take any initiative regarding local cultural needs and demands. On the local level as well, the ideological orientation and policies of the central government were followed to the letter. Such that, according to the first report published within the scope of İKSV's cultural policy studies, the name of the municipality was not even mentioned in the project for the installation of 50 sculptures in the public spaces of Istanbul, which were designed for the 50th anniversary of the Republic and marked the first collective public art practice of the Republic era.[45] We cannot see the Municipality of Istanbul in a central role even in this process that symbolises the transition from monumental to modernist sculpture, and for the first time, bends the central and ideological framework of culture. In this project, which aimed for works that were not compelled to depict a historical subject but were expected to represent the contemporary Turkish art and artist, for the first time in Türkiye, artworks were commissioned for predetermined sites.[46]

After the local elections of 1973, social democrat mayors came to office with an identity separate from the central government, which marked the first step towards local governments acquiring an independent political character. However, during this period which lasted from 1973 to 1980, we cannot come across much experience in the field of cultural policies.[47]

The 12 September 1980 coup d'etat completely transformed the socio-economic and political life of Türkiye and rendered neoliberal politics dominant in the country. With the local elections of 1984, the liberal approach came to power on the local level as well which commenced the era of imagining the cities as culturally marketable products. We have discussed the political consequences of this new approach of municipal administration that turned the cities into a project where the local governments played the leading role. As an institution that produces and distributes unearned income, the municipalities also instrumentalised culture and began to see it as an accessory or package of this cycle of rentier economy. Cultural venues and

organisations thus entered the agenda of the municipalities as a promotion material to draw investment and tourists and an element of attraction to create urban profiteering.

Following the local elections of 1994, when conservative mayors came to power in the metropolises, the municipalities' view of culture as a marketing tool took on another dimension. The cities turned into spaces where Islamic and nationalist symbols were used in abundance while the field of culture became a field and an instrument to exhibit, spread, and exalt these ideologies. The management structure of the cultural units under the municipalities were changed, their repertoires were brought in line with the political sensitivities of the municipalities.

We can see the most crystalised form of this transformation in the example of the Istanbul City Theatres, an institution that dates back to 1914. The City Theatres regulations began to be changed incrementally

45 Ezgi Bakçay, *Art in Public Space: Proposed Models and Recommendations for Istanbul* (Istanbul: İKSV, July 2011).

46 In his memoirs, Tan Oral talks about this process as follows: "However, when divided by 50, the proffered money was diminishing; therefore, instead of the 50 recognised artists and in favour of the rest, the number was suddenly reduced to twenty. And the money was increased from ten thousand to twenty thousand. (…) Nevertheless, everything was going well. A celebration committee headed by a minister was making the decisions. The deputy governor was notifying the artists via letter. The artists were given their advance payments. Due to the short notice, the artists were not creating new works to observe the 50th anniversary but were sending their old works for this purpose, what can you do, in the letters they sent it said, free style. Then in a meeting attended by the province and municipality representatives, the provincial celebration board approves the project, and the Istanbul governor says, 'We saw the sketches, but we did not intervene. We left it to the discretion of the jury'. The sketches are sent to Ankara and approved there as well. The works are produced. And gradually they start to be installed in their respective sites. And there you have the free style works produced to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Republic: 'the form of a tall and thin woman keeping guard', a peacock, an abstract woman figure, quadrilateral forms decked with abstract figures, copper form, negative form, balloons, form (lone form), round form, rain, white form named echo, monumental column decked with emotional reliefs, a composition, domelike form, etc. The writers and critics are satisfied as well. Interviews, photographs, congratulations… Followed by comments, talks, a series of 'what do I know', 'I told you so', 'not my circus, not my monkey', 'I concur with you', and the removal of the sculptures, and some saying, 'How dare you remove them', etc. So then where did it go wrong, have you found the fault?" Tan Oral, *Yaza Çize* (Istanbul: İris Yayıncılık, 1998), p. 138-141.

47 Nevertheless, speaking of this period we must remember the "A Million Books for Children" campaign organised by the Ankara Mayor Ali Dinçer by collecting used newspapers with the support of public banks on the occasion of the UNESCO International Year of the Child, and the Fatsa Folk Culture Festival organised during the short term of the Fatsa Mayor Fikri Sönmez which was attended by many prominent intellectuals of Türkiye. Owing to their innovative and participatory nature, both are inspiring experiences for present day cultural policies. Hatice Kapusuz, "Bir Milyon Çocuk Kitabı" [A Million Books for Children], *Bianet*, 22 October 2016, bianet.org/yazi/bir-milyon-cocuk-kitabi-179831; Merve Erol and Ender Ergün, "Fatsa: Örnek Bir Özyönetim Deneyimi. Başka bir dünya mümkün diyorsan" [Fatsa: An Exemplary Self-government Experience. If you say another world is possible], *1+1 Express*, 11 July 2022, birartibir.org/baska-bir-dunya-mumkun-diyorsan/.

after Gencay Gürün, who was the general art director of the City Theatres during the terms of the mayors Dalan and Sözen, retired and left the institution in 1994. The peak of this change was the replacement of the Repertoire Board with the Literary Board dominated by bureaucrats in 2012. The same year, the City Theatres General Art Director Ayşenil Şamlıoğlu and six executive board members resigned from the institution claiming that they had lost their artistic autonomy with the appointment of bureaucrat members to the board such as the Deputy Secretary General, Department Head of Culture, and Director of City Theatres. Immediately afterwards, the train of resignations was joined also by Kenan Işık, who was the City Theatres General Art Director between 1996 and 2000 and acted as the artistic consultant of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Kadir Topbaş for the last four years.[48]

By 2013, the pressures on the artists take on a more political aspect. City Theatres actor Levent Üzümcü is dismissed from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality City Theatres with the decision of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality High Disciplinary Board and his civil service rights are repealed on the grounds of a speech he made at the 2013 Socialist International and the statements he gave to the social media and the press following the Gezi Events. This goes down in the history of the City Theatres as a first.[49]

The current traces of the process of opening the cultural field to political and bureaucratic interventions, which we have observed in the Istanbul City Theatres, become more crystalised in Southeastern Anatolia. The municipalities run by the Halkın Demokrasi Partisi (People's Democratic Party, HADEP), which wins the local elections of 1999 in most of the cities in the region, establish city theatres and conservatories. After 2003, they begin to stage works and give concerts in Kurdish. As of 2016, these efforts are terminated as the mayors in the region are removed from duty and replaced by government appointed trustees. The contracts of the artists are rescinded, and the institutions are dissolved.

Yet another example of the complete transformation of urban cultural policies following the change in municipal administrations was experienced in Kars at the Kars Art Centre which was active between 2004 and 2009. In 2004, the Caucasian Cultures Festival began to be supported by Anadolu Kültür, which was founded with the initiative of

Osman Kavala as a not-for-profit cultural institution where experts from various fields of the art world, the business world, and civil society came together. Later on, the Public Education Centre, which was taken over upon the behest of the mayor, was transformed into a production and performance space that would host arts and culture events. The venue that hosted 364 different activities between 2005 and 2008 was returned to the Public Education Centre by the new administration that came to office after the local elections of 2009; the Art Centre was shut down, the activities of the theatre based in the art centre were terminated, and the festival was cancelled.[50]

Surely, Anadolu Kültür's contributions to cultural works in the cities of Anatolia are not limited to Kars. Since its foundation over 20 years ago, Anadolu Kültür collaborated with hundreds of organisations providing financial support to hundreds of independent artists and cultural initiatives. Through the thousands of exhibitions, talks, concerts, and film screenings it organised, supported, or mediated, it provided inspiration and means especially for the cultural life of Anatolia. In fact, all the independent arts and cultural workers we spoke with during the in-depth interviews and focus group meetings we held in Diyarbakır unanimously said that the Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi (Diyarbakır Arts Centre), also founded over 20 years ago by Anadolu Kültür, is a very important impetus and reference in the cultural life of the city.[51]

In the light of all these observations on the cultural life of Türkiye, we can state that the cultural ecosystem cannot sufficiently guarantee the freedoms of the art and cultural professionals due to political and ideological concerns. Ethnic identities, cultural values and foremost language, religious sensitivies, and sexual orientations are the redlines and political boundaries of the field of freedom accorded to artists in

48 Nilay Vardar, "100 Yıl Tiyatroyu Sanatçılar Yönetti" [Artists have been running the theatre for 100 years], *Bianet*, 19 April 2012, m.bianet.org/bianet/sanat/137714-100-yil-tiyatroyu-sanatcilar-yonetti.

49 Derya Ülkar, "Şehir Tiyatroları siyahlar içinde" [City Theatres in mourning], *Milliyet*, 27 August 2015, milliyet.com.tr/gundem/sehir-tiyatrolari-siyahlar-icinde-2108234.

50 Eylem Ertürk, "Kars'ta Kültür ve Sanat: 2005-2009 Kars Sanat Merkezi Deneyimi" [Arts and Culture in Kars: The Kars Arts Centre Experience 2005-2009] in *Kültür Politikaları ve Yönetimi: Yıllık 2010* [Cultural Policies and Management: Almanac 2010], eds. Ülkü Zümray Kutlu and Cas Smithuijsen (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, November 2010).

51 The most important figure behind these efforts, Osman Kavala has been in prison since October 2017 despite the European Court of Human Rights decisions of violation and the insistent calls of the international public for his release.

Türkiye and as such represent a weak aspect of the cultural ecosystem.

The practice of shaping the cultural life through political sensitivities is not limited to the activities organised by public authorities. The arts and cultural actors, who have been criticised or distanced on the central or national level, no longer have the chance to participate in local activities or organise an event. Recently, many such news were on the agenda of the country. The last-minute removals of artists, who have been the target of criticisms for various reasons, from municipality programmes and even the cancelation of independent events have become frequent occurrences.[52]

In short, the rise in political tension and the exacerbation of social polarisation have begun to politicise also the supporting services provided within the local cultural ecosystem and cause discrimination in the provision of support and opportunities to artists on grounds of certain sensitivities. Such that, even the events that art and cultural professionals plan to carry out without any state support can be obstructed and become the target of interventions. Under these circumstances, even the safeguarding of the most fundamental freedoms of thought, expression and action can be considered as a cultural supporting service. Let alone the discussion on how to improve the support mechanisms for cultural practices, ensuring that they are not impeded may be an important opportunity for the development of cultural policies in Türkiye.

So, what sort of an ecosystem landscape do we see as regards the support mechanisms for those who continue their artistic practices by remaining within these boundaries? Let us discuss that in the next section.

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52 "AK Partili belediye Eypio'nun konserini iptal etti" [AKP municipality cancelled Eypio's concert], *Gazete Duvar*, 26 June 2023, gazeteduvar.com.tr/ak-partili-belediye-eypionun-konserini-iptal-etti-haber-1625598; "Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi Hüseyin Turan'ın konserini iptal etti" [Bursa Metropolitan Municipality cancelled Hüseyin Turan's concert], *Gazete Duvar*, 18 June 2023, gazeteduvar.com.tr/bursa-buyuksehir-belediyesi-huseyin-turanin-konserini-iptal-etti-haber-1624386; "CHP'li Silifke Belediyesi Fettah Can'ın konserini iptal etti" [CHP municipality of Silifke cancelled Fettah Can's concert], *Habertürk*, 12 April 2018, haberturk.com/chp-li-silifke-belediyesi-fettah-can-in-konseri-iptal-etti-magazin-haberleri-1916253-magazin; "Denizli Belediyesi Mabel Matiz ve Melike Şahin konserlerini iptal etti" [Denizli Municipality cancelled the concerts of Mabel Matiz and Melike Şahin] *Gazete Duvar*, 18 June 2023, gazeteduvar.com.tr/denizli-belediyesi-mabel-matiz-ve-melike-sahin-konserlerini-iptal-etti-haber-1624229; "Halk TV, Görkemli Hatıralar'ın çekiminin Eren Erdem tarafından engellendiğini belirtti" [Halk TV said that the shooting of Görkemli Hatıralar was stonewalled by Eren Erdem], *Evrensel*, 23 July 2023, evrensel.net/haber/495353/halk-tv-gorkemli-hatiralarin-cekiminin-eren-erdem-tarafindan-engellendigini-belirtti.

4 2 EQUALITY IN SUPPORT

In the previous section we said that even the absence of hindrance to cultural activities could be considered a form of support within the current cultural ecosystem of Türkiye. Surely, we should state that the entire cultural life of the country is not subject to such an absolute oppression and censorship. Not every cultural event has to contradict with the lines of sensitivity that we roughly demarcated above. In this section, by looking at different cities of Türkiye, we will try to identify the support mechanisms in the field of cultural policies that are relatively free of political tensions.

The first form of support is the financial opportunities directly provided by the municipalities. Starting from the term of Bedrettin Dalan who governed the Istanbul Municipality between 1984 and 1989 with a liberal approach befitting the spirit of the 12 September coup d'etat, the phenomenon of projects became the fundamental agenda of the municipalities. The projects are the foremost form of relationship that the local governments establish with external actors. As of their nomination for candidacy, the mayors build their political campaign based on concrete projects. The buildings and infrastructures to be constructed, the aids to be distributed, the activities to be organised are all presented to the public as a succession of projects. The pledged political programme usually seems like a catalogue of projects. It is purported that the more quantitatively hefty and contextually authentic and ambitious this catalogue is, the greater will be the promise of the candidate and the success of the mayor.

Over time, the goal of presenting and realising numerous and contextually "crazy" projects became such a leitmotif of municipal administration in Türkiye that the electors and local actors alike began to see the local policies through this lens. To evaluate the candidates, they focused on their projects and started to devise their own suggestions, needs, and demands also with the project logic. Therefore, the candidates who seemed ambitious not only conveyed their own projects but also became the addressee of project proposals coming from all segments of the society.

The field of arts and culture was not safe from this project logic either. Along with the 2000s, especially the increasing fund and grant

opportunities during the EU negotiation process caused the project logic in the field of arts and culture to turn into a dominant format also within the civil society. For the civil actors, who acquired the habit of thinking within the project logic, the local governments also came to be seen as a source of finance. All sorts of practices that can be conceived in the field of arts and culture ranging from festivals to programmes, concerts to theatre performances, orchestras to conservatories came to be conveyed to the mayor as a project subject.

Even though some of these project ideas also anticipate the financial profit of the project designers, most are focused on serving the personally or institutionally believed idea of public interest. Nevertheless, this manner of relationship signifies the utilisation of a pecuniary resource because even if it is in-kind support, its actualisation inevitably entails a transfer of funds. Among the forms of support that arts and culture initiatives frequently request from the local governments are in-kind assistances such as meeting the travel and/or accommodation needs of the guests, arranging the transportation of the participants to the event, design and print of the promotion materials, making the announcement (social media, message, open air announcements, etc.), procuring the necessary technical equipment (light, microphone, camera, etc.), or venue allocation.

As we mentioned in the previous section, the final decision regarding the support to be given by the local governments that often receive such requests is mostly dependent on the will of the mayor; therefore, the collaboration of local governments and arts and culture organisations acquires a personal character. Being in direct contact with the mayor or having connections with those who have this affinity, and familiarity with the political organisation or circle of the mayor are determinative in benefiting from the municipality's support. The local governments centred around the will of the mayor, or of the mayor's close circle, may become the architect of civil or private events along with their own activities.

A local cultural life centred around the mayor has the potential of inequality in two aspects. Firstly, the absence of objective criteria pertaining to the selection of events to be supported by the municipality's resources and the relevant decision to be subject to a

personal or political affinity with the mayor or their close circle create an inevitable inequality between the soliciting persons and institutions. The ones who have access to the personal and/or political circle have a much higher chance of benefiting from the support provided by the municipality.

Projects of national or international character that have or promise such a visibility also have a bigger chance than projects devised only on the local scale. In most of the interviews, respondents talked about the influence of Istanbul on the cultural lives of other cities in this respect. We observed a consensus that the activity proposals containing the works of artists coming from abroad or Istanbul will be more readily supported and get attention than a proposal consisting merely of local elements. This of course puts the cities' own artists in a disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the artists of major metropolises and especially Istanbul and creates a second axis of inequality.

Beyond the inequality between those who can and cannot receive the support of the municipality, the events subject to support entail yet another inequality. The local governments in Türkiye tend to play the lead role in every sort of activity they support or partake in. There is a general conviction that municipalities attempt to appear like the essential actor of the work at hand regardless of the extent or nature of their support. Municipalities see themselves in such a determinative position that they think they have the right to intervene in the programme, content, and flow of the events they provide support for. The entire visibility is centred upon the municipality, ranging from the size of the municipality logo to the visuals to be shared or the press bulletins to be written. Regardless of whose idea or labour is used, the activity in question turns into an institutional event that will be reduced to a number and perhaps an image in the municipality's annual report. This, in turn, creates an inescapable asymmetry for most of the organisations that collaborate with or are supported by the municipality. The fate of being in a much more secondary and weaker position in comparison to the resources and means of the municipality is yet another element of inequality inherent to the supporting services of the municipality.

In the direct support provided for the cultural field in the cities, both the inequalities pertaining to the selection of the beneficiaries and the

inherent asymmetry caused by the support, point at the significant democratic failings in the supporting services of the local cultural ecosystem. Nevertheless, certain exceptional experiences show that support can be provided in a more objective and egalitarian setup.

As the first example we can talk about the platform called "Mersin'e Değer Katanlar" (MEDEKA - Those Enriching Mersin) established by the Mersin Metropolitan Municipality in 2021. The Platform is comprised of committees on literature, tourism-archaeology, urban architecture and aesthetics, plastic arts, photography, cinema, city ambassadors, music and performing arts, urban history studies and urban memory, academic research, gastronomy, and sports. It aims to bring the city's active and experienced figures in the relevant fields to the processes of policymaking. The projects and ideas conveyed to the municipality are evaluated and decided in these committees, which can also propose and carry out projects and organisations in their fields. In fact, since its foundation to date, many activities such as exhibitions, festivals, and camps have been organised and awards given on the subjects of literature, photography, and urban studies through MEDEKA.[53] Upon the success of the platform, a similar structure specific to Tarsus was created under the name "Tarsus'a Değer Katanlar" (Those Enriching Tarsus) consisting of eight committees, and numerous events have been organised through this structure such as the Tarsus Festival which draws a great deal of interest.[54]

Certainly, these committees that bring together many actors and institutions from the fields of arts and culture are more participatory in their selection and development of the activities. The activity suggestions directly submitted to the municipality or conveyed to the committees are first discussed and decided in the committees before being carried out. There is no budget allocated to the committee, therefore the committee does not evaluate the financial aspect of the activity. It only assesses the significance and merit of the proposed work for the city. We understand that even though it does not have a binding legal status, the decisions of the committee are usually taken into consideration by the local authorities. Thus, it seems that an evaluation process, beyond the personalities and relationships of the mayor and their circle, is put into practice in the organisation of cultural events.

On the other hand, it is clear that a merely event-oriented negotiation process cannot suffice to create a democratic cultural policy in the city. Even though arts and cultural actors thus have an influence on the decisions pertaining to their fields, no step has yet been taken to enable the coordination of the relevant committees towards the development of cultural policies with the contribution and participation of all these actors. Once they move from event-based decisions to policymaking, MEDEKA will probably turn into an inspiring experience.

The independence of MEDEKA consists of an evaluation pertaining to the suitability of the support requested from the municipality; it does not have a budget and therefore it functions like an advisory board not bound by the municipality. On the other hand, the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality implemented the first local cultural fund of Türkiye in 2023.[55] The mechanism named "İzmir Culture Fund" (İzKF) aims for the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality to provide in-kind and financial support to the arts and culture projects proposed by cultural producers and artists from the private sector and the civil society which are received upon an open call and evaluated by an independent committee with transparent criteria. The accuracy of the information and the budget of the applications to be received through open call are planned to be administratively, financially, and technically verified by an expert team assigned by the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Arts and Culture. The projects that fulfil the requisite qualifications and pass the preliminary examination will be assessed by an independent Evaluation Committee in two stages in line with the previously announced criteria. Unlike the support provided through personal and political connections and bound to grounds of collaboration that are disabled by an asymmetry in favour of municipalities, the projects to be supported by the Culture Fund are evaluated in light of certain criteria by an independent committee. Also, following the provision of support, the municipality does not become an actor in the cultural

53 Mersin Metropolitan Municipality, "MEDEKA: Mersin'e Değer Katanlar" [Those Enriching Mersin], medeka.mersin.bel.tr.

54 Mersin Metropolitan Municipality, "MEDEKA: Mersin'e Değer Katanlar" [Those Enriching Mersin], medeka.mersin.bel.tr.

55 İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, "İzmir Culture Fund", www.izmir.bel.tr/en/News/a-support-program-for-cultural-producers-is-being-launched-with-the-izmir-culture-fund-izkf-project/49629/162.

production but remains as its supporter, which distinguishes İzKF from the other practices implemented to date.

Due to problems and restrictions arising from the legislation, it was decided that organising a competition is the only way to put this fund into practice. However, there is no information on how the committee, which is to act as the competition jury, will be determined. Moreover, local culture organisations to access public resources by competing with one another does not give a very democratic picture. Nevertheless, independent cultural organisations to be able to receive the municipality's financial support autonomously renders the fund an innovative and inspiring development.

The traditional centralist structure and the major-oriented local politics is not very inclined to hand over the power of distributing public resources to independent committees, however, the initiatives in Mersin and İzmir are worth noting as early examples of an inclination to this end. Surely, the manner in which these committees are formed will also determine the democratic quality of these practices. In any case, we should acknowledge that such methods have the potential of ensuring a more impartial and equal distribution of the support that local governments will provide to local cultural entities.

As a final method of support, we may address the policies geared towards facilitating the cultural events of civil and private organizations. In Türkiye, tax policies are under the authority of the central government, therefore, legally, the local governments do not have a facilitative role to play in the financing of cultural policies. As we have seen also in the example of İzKF, the financial mechanisms for supporting the cultural activities of persons and organisations can only take the form of tenders or contests. However, we see that the central government's steps to facilitate and encourage cultural events on the national scale influence the local cultural policies as well.

One of the first steps in this direction was the Law no 5225 on the Encouragement of Cultural Investments and Initiatives adopted in 2004. According to the law, the total expenditures, donations, and aids pertaining to the activities of general and special budgeted public administrations, provincial special administrations, municipalities,

villages, associations serving public interest, foundations granted tax exemption by the Cabinet, institutions and organisations performing scientific research, or events approved for support by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism were eligible for deduction from income and corporate tax. With this regulation, private institutions found the opportunity to increase their public visibility by utilising their tax as sponsorship. We should nevertheless emphasize that this convenience does not contain an impartiality. In fact, the law states that only the activities approved by the ministry are eligible for tax deduction.[56]

We come across the private sector's support to the local cultural life through financial incentives in various events. For instance, among the institutions that support the 21st edition of the Mersin International Music Festival this year there are 78 individuals and companies.[57]

According to Asu Aksoy, another dimension of the "mind shift" that encourages sponsorships is the take-over of the cultural heritage sites, museums, and culture centres, which are inefficiently run by the ministry personnel, by the private capital that is thought to have the management capacity and capital. [58] The Lütfi Kırdar International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Istanbul can be considered among the early examples of this mind shift. Opened in 1949 as the first indoor sports and exhibition hall of Türkiye, the Istanbul Sports and Exhibition Centre hosted numerous national and international sports competitions as well as fairs, exhibitions, meetings, and concerts until the HABITAT II Summit in 1996. In 2000, the Rumeli Fair and Exhibition Hall was annexed to the centre which has been managed by a private company since 1996, namely the International Congress Centre Facilities Management Inc (UKTAŞ) which has 142 shareholders including the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Tourism and Travel Agencies Foundation (TURSAV), and the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TURSAB).[59]

Another example of institutions that are public but managed by a

56 Directorate General of Cultural Assets and Museums, www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/yazdir?379EC12C8B6E A0EE37B8360347DA7EBB.

57 Mersin International Music Festival, "Companies", merfest.org.tr/firmalar/

58 Asu Aksoy, "The Ataturk Cultural Centre and AKP's 'mind shift' policy" in *Introduction to Cultural Policy in Turkey*, eds. Serhan Ada and Ayça İnce (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2009).

59 İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar International Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC), icec.org.

private enterprise is the Selçuklu Congress Centre (SCC) brought into service by the Selçuk Municipality in 2017. With an area of usage of 35,000 m², the centre consists of 14 halls with capacities ranging from 45 to 2,000 persons and has claim to be the largest congress centre in Anatolia. The events that this centre of impressive scale and splendour hosts also display a great diversity. The venue is managed independently by a private company. It is again the municipalities that lend a hand to the enterprise that was financially hard put particularly during the pandemic. Konya Metropolitan Municipality City Theatres and Selçuklu Municipality Art Academy rent certain sections of the centre, which provides a function and an income to this large space.

The facilitating role that the state plays in the field of culture has a dimension beyond the privatisation of public structures. In the post 2000 period, which has been identified with the maxim of "İnşaat Ya Resulullah" (Construction, the Godsend), the construction sector became the main dynamo of the national development model. Compared to the promises of the construction sector, the natural, historical, and cultural values became insignificant for the public authorities.[60] Culture also functioned as an ideal guise to legitimise the transfer of certain important plots of land to private enterprises particularly in Istanbul. All these cultural structures of national prominence such as Volkswagen Arena, Uniq Hall, Zorlu Performing Arts Centre, and Bomontiada also generated disputes of very significant profiteering. The conception of culture as an industry enabled this transformation of the industrial, public, and natural sites. While these valuable sites of a public function or character were conceded mostly to commercial objectives, the sphere of arts and culture became a packaging that concealed or legitimised this transformation.[61]

It may seem unfair to criticize these venues only because they contain commercial motives while the events they host make such significant quantitative and qualitative contributions to the cultural life of Istanbul and even the country. These architecturally spectacular structures equipped with the latest technology that enable world renowned artists and performances to visit our country are surely very valuable. However, it is also important to not normalise the utilisation of arts and culture as a prop in the transfer of such valuable public resources to

private companies. The value of irretrievable natural and public areas cannot be compared to the cultural events organised at those sites. Moreover, the question of who has access to these cultural events is yet another issue of great import.

It is difficult to claim that these structures, which require a minimum cultural and financial capital to be able to participate, cater to a very large segment of the society. While discussing the democratisation of culture we had cited criticisms regarding the allocation of public resources to centrally decided events of "high culture". The public resources no longer directly serve this purpose. However, in this new phase as well, the public lands and structures end up being transferred to private power elites that hold claim to organising cultural activities that are accessible and catering to only a specific segment of the society. This, in turn, brings us to another question of our discussion on cultural democracy. How fair is the access of the different segments of society to the cultural activities provided by the public or the private sector?

4 3 THE JUSTICE OF SUPPORT: ACCESS

The third subject we must address in terms of the democratic quality of the supporting services of the cultural ecosystem concerns the access to cultural services. Ayça İnce's cultural policies report titled *Public Engagement in the Arts* revealed that there tends to be an injustice in access to culture not only in Türkiye but across the world.[62] In fact, a recent European Commission report dated 2023 on the relationship between culture and democracy in the European Union at large, also finds that there are ongoing inequalities in cultural participation. According to the report, the patterns of cultural participation are

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60 Tanıl Bora, ed., *İnşaat Ya Resulullah* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2021).

61 Selen Avcı, "Kurtarılmış Bölge Değil Sermaye Mekanı: Bomonti'yi Diyanet'ten Önce Sermayeye Kaptırdık" [Not a liberated zone but a site of capital: We lost Bomonti to capital before religion], *sendika. org*, 9 September 2019, sendika.org/2019/09/kurtarilmis-bolge-degil-sermaye-mekani-bomontiyi-diyanetten-once-sermayeye-kaptirdik-560700. The Atatürk Congress and Culture Centre where the Bursa Region State Symphony Orchestra also gave its concerts should be noted as an example that differs from this approach. The centre constructed at the site of the Bursa Merinos Factory, which is among the first industrial buildings of the Republican era, has the capacity to host all types of performing arts, film screenings, concerts, meetings, and conferences. The complex which also contains four museums is managed by the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality. Merinos AKKM, merinosakkm.com.

62 Ayça İnce, *Public Engagement in the Arts* (Istanbul: İKSV, 2017).

socially and spatially divided, and these inequalities indicate wider socioeconomic divisions. The report notes that the unequal distribution of the potential benefits of culture carries severe consequences for Europe.[63]

The overall picture in Türkiye clearly confirms the existence of a similar threat. According to the 2022 Income and Living Conditions Survey of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), over the last 12 months, 85.3% of the individuals aged 15 and over did not go to the cinema, 93.7% did not go to any live performances, and 92.0% did not visit any cultural sites. Among poor or socially excluded individuals, these rates become even more grave reaching 93.2%, 97.7%, and 96.9%, respectively. In other words, disadvantaged groups participate in almost no cultural activities.[64]
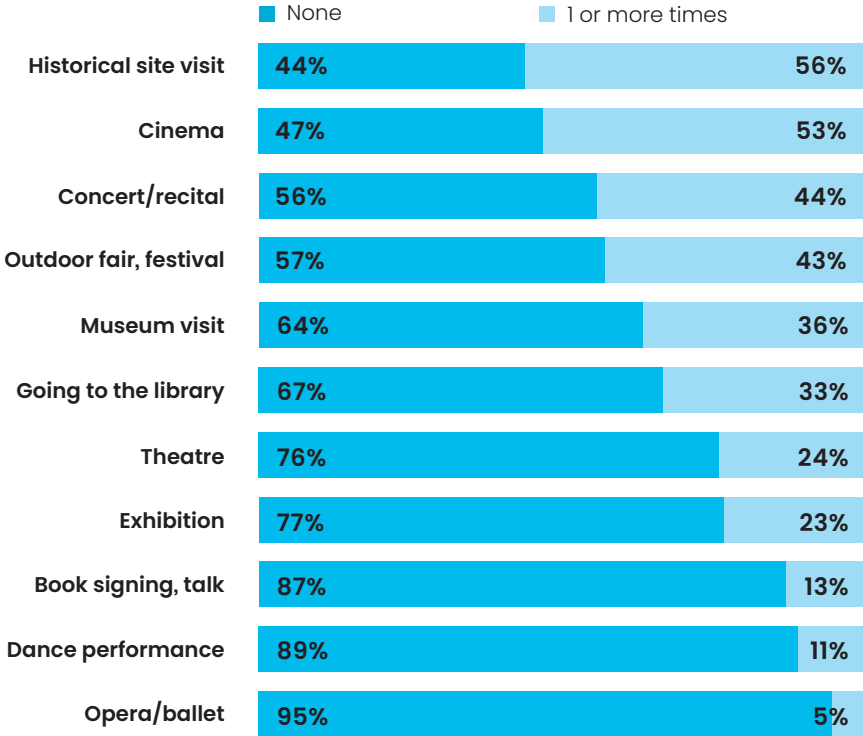
The findings of the nationwide public opinion survey conducted within the scope of the research that this report is based on also confirm the picture regarding the low rates of participation in cultural activities. According to these findings, more than half of the survey respondents visited historical sites (56%) and went to the cinema (53%) at least once over the last year. Except these two examples, more than half of the sample group participated in no other cultural activity. In terms of opera and ballet performances, we find out that only 5% of the survey participants went to such an event at least once.

When asked whether this low cultural participation is a choice, 81% of the city residents say that they are able to participate in cultural events less than they would like to.

63 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and William Hammonds, *Culture and Democracy, the Evidence: How Citizens' Participation in Cultural Activities Enhances Civic Engagement, Democracy and Social Cohesion: Lessons from International Research* (Publications Office of the European Union, 2023), p. 31, data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/39199.

64 Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), "Quality of Life Module," 2022, https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/ Index?p=Quality-of-Life-Module-2022-49760.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: OVER THE LAST YEAR, HOW MANY CULTURAL EVENTS DID YOU ATTEND IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES?

■ None   ■ 1 or more times

	None	1 or more times
Historical site visit	44%	56%
Cinema	47%	53%
Concert/recital	56%	44%
Outdoor fair, festival	57%	43%
Museum visit	64%	36%
Going to the library	67%	33%
Theatre	76%	24%
Exhibition	77%	23%
Book signing, talk	87%	13%
Dance performance	89%	11%
Opera/ballet	95%	5%

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: ARE YOU ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO?

|	
Very little or none	41%
Somewhat less than I would like to	40%
Yes, I do	16%
Quite a lot	2%
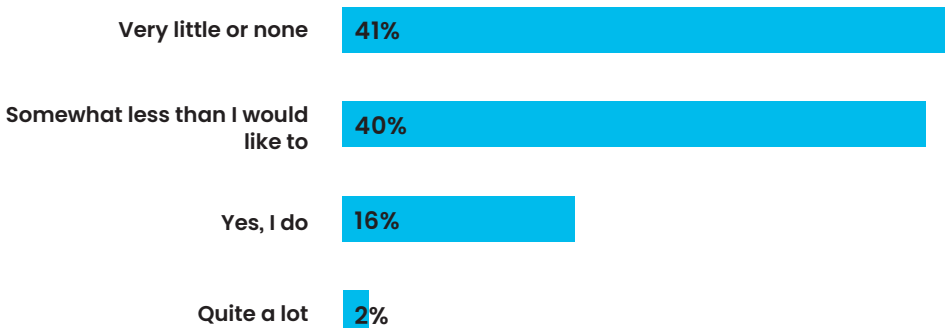
The picture does not much change when we narrow this broad range of cultural participation to the events organised by the municipality, and it appears that only 9% of city residents can participate in the cultural activities organised by the municipality as much they would like to.

One of the first reasons to come to mind for this low level of desired participation in the cultural activities organised by the municipality could be the inadequate number of events. However, almost 60% of city residents who participated in the public opinion survey say that the municipalities' cultural activities satisfy their expectations. Finding the cultural services adequate albeit rarely participating in cultural activities, reminds us of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's observation that cultural participation is not dependent on the provided services but is about the person's habitus and means. In fact, when we ask the same question in the online survey conducted with the representatives of CSOs active in the field of arts and culture, the rate falls to 18%. This, in turn, reflects the need to consider the justice of access to culture within the context of people's means rather than the services.
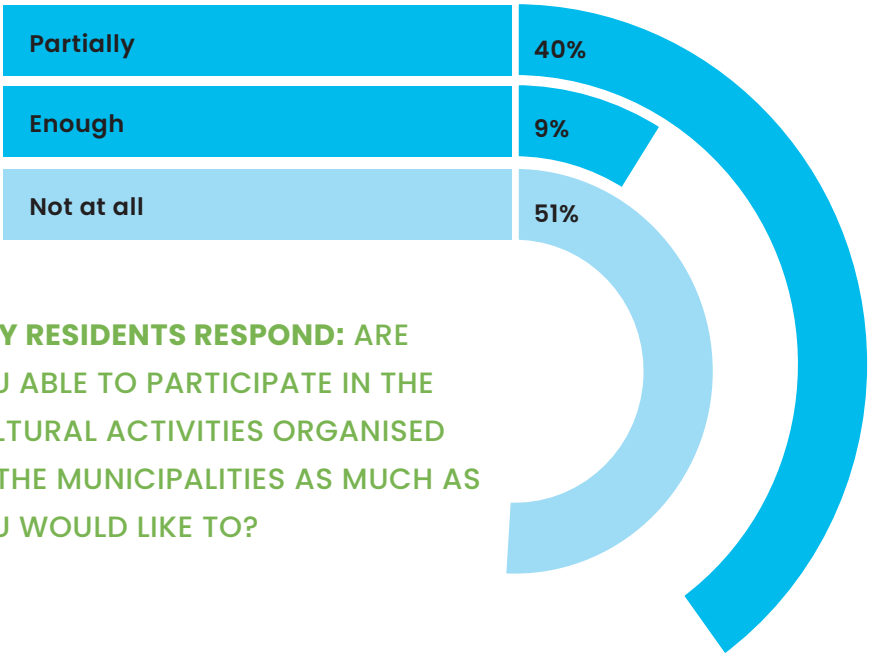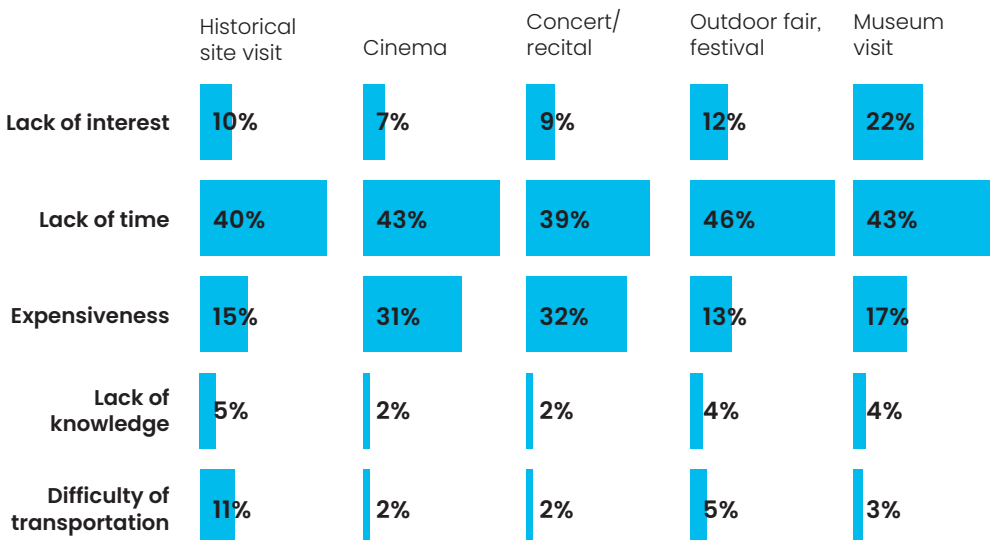
Partially	40%
Enough	9%
Not at all	51%

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: ARE YOU ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY THE MUNICIPALITIES AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO?

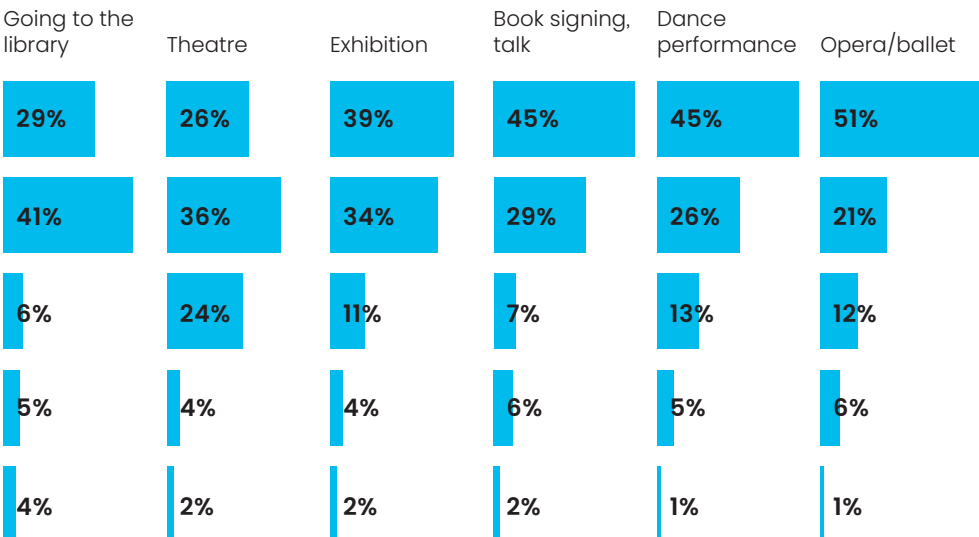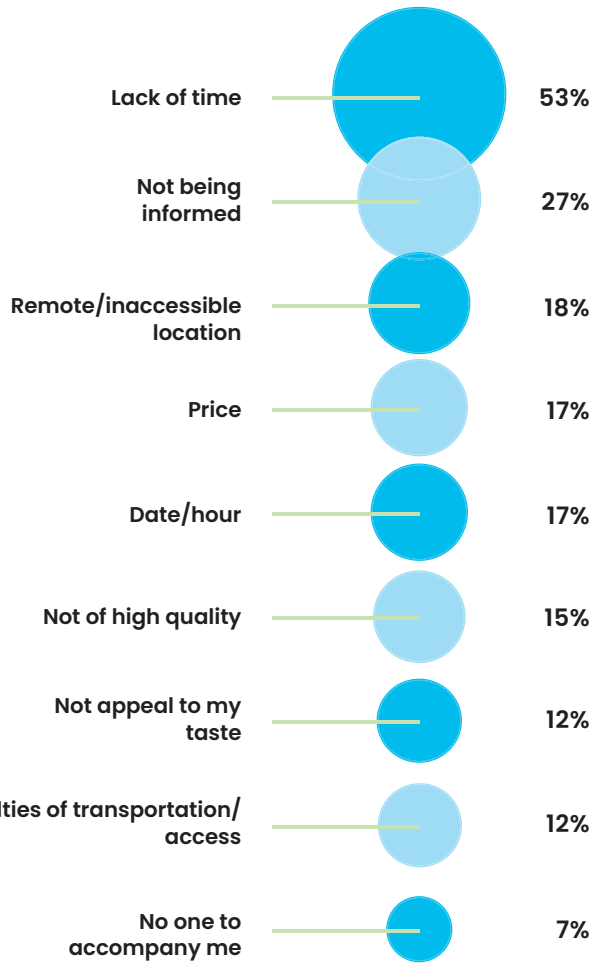|	
Sufficiently	13%
Partially	46%
Not at all	40%
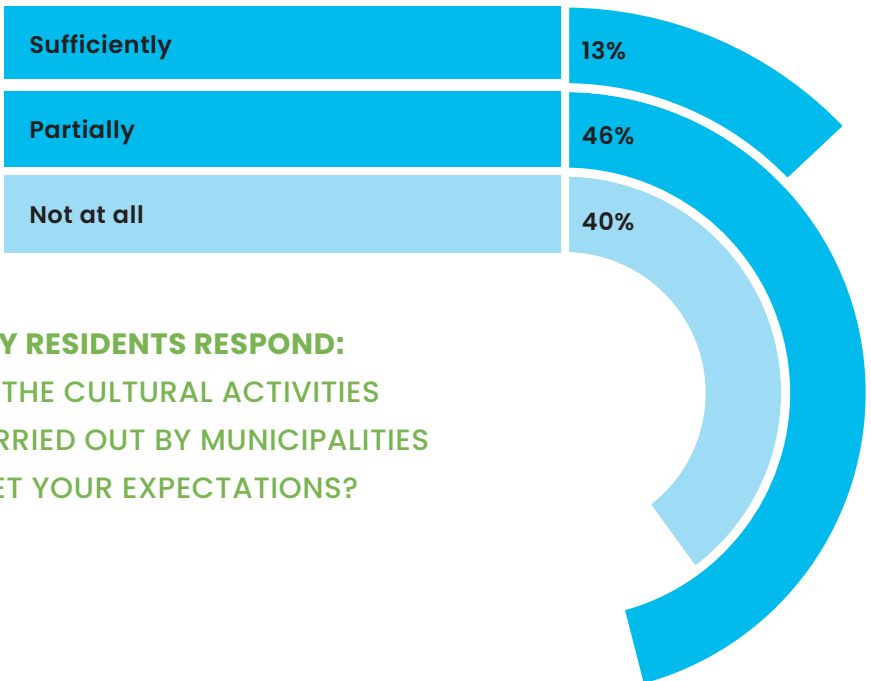
CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: DO THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY MUNICIPALITIES MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

Both surveys we have examined give certain clues pertaining to the personal reasons for the low cultural participation. The TUIK survey presents lack of interest as the principal obstacle to cultural participation in all three activities that were asked about in the research (cinema, live performances, and historical site visits). However, according to the findings of the public opinion survey that we carried out with city residents across the country within the scope of this research, lack of interest is presented as the main reason particularly in the context of exhibitions, book signing, dance performance, and opera/ballet. In terms of other cultural activities however, lack of time, which appears as a secondary factor in the TUIK study, emerges as the main reason in our survey. When we limit the question to the cultural events organised by the municipality, the rate of respondents who indicate lack of time as the reason for low participation rises to 53%.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES, WOULD YOU TELL US THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR THAT HINDERS YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THESE EVENTS, OR PREVENTS YOU FROM PARTICIPATING IN THEM MORE OFTEN?

|	Historical site visit	Cinema	Concert/ recital	Outdoor fair, festival	Museum visit
Lack of interest	10%	7%	9%	12%	22%
Lack of time	40%	43%	39%	46%	43%
Expensiveness	15%	31%	32%	13%	17%
Lack of knowledge	5%	2%	2%	4%	4%
Difficulty of transportation	11%	2%	2%	5%	3%

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: WHY CAN'T YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE CULTURAL EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE MUNICIPALITIES AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO?

Lack of time — 53%

Not being informed — 27%

Remote/inaccessible location — 18%

Price — 17%

Date/hour — 17%

Not of high quality — 15%

Not appeal to my taste — 12%

Difficulties of transportation/access — 12%

No one to accompany me — 7%

Going to the library	Theatre	Exhibition	Book signing, talk	Dance performance	Opera/ballet
29%	26%	39%	45%	45%	51%
41%	36%	34%	29%	26%	21%
6%	24%	11%	7%	13%	12%
5%	4%	4%	6%	5%	6%
4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%

In the difficult environment of ongoing economic crisis, one may expect the cost of cultural events to be an important obstacle hindering participation. Indeed, according to the TUIK data, the share of entertainment and culture in the household consumption expenditures which was 3% in 2014 falls to 2.7% in 2017; in 2019 it reaches 3.1%, which is the highest level over the recent years, but falls to 2.5% in 2022. This rate means that the household can allocate only €11.85 of its monthly average income of €468 for entertainment and culture.[65]

SHARE OF ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE IN THE HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE (%)

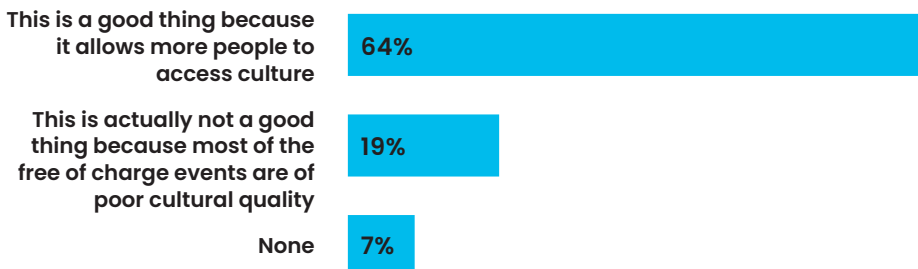| Year	Value
2014	3.0%
2015	2.9%
2016	2.8%
2017	2.7%
2018	2.9%
2019	3.1%
2022	2.5%
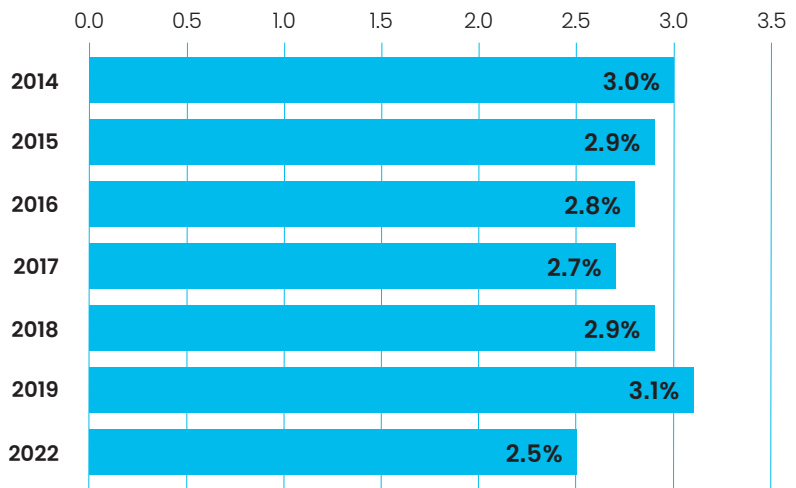
Despite these very limited budgets that can be allocated to entertainment and culture, according to the survey results, economic difficulties are not seen as one of the biggest obstacles to cultural participation, which may be owing to the free of charge activities organised particularly by the local governments. Indeed, more than half of the respondents of the public opinion survey we conducted with city residents across the country, say that they have participated in such an event and almost two thirds have a favourable opinion of these activities. However, the cultural professionals, whom we met during the in-depth interviews and

focus group meetings of the field research, were quite critical of the free of charge activities. Despite criticisms such as being of disputed quality, or not appreciated because they are free, or impeding civil or private cultural entities from organising paid events, the results of the public opinion survey we conducted across the country show that city residents have a favourable opinion of the free of charge events.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND:
TODAY, MANY CULTURAL EVENTS ARE OFFERED FREE OF CHARGE. HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED SUCH A CULTURAL EVENT?

51%
YES
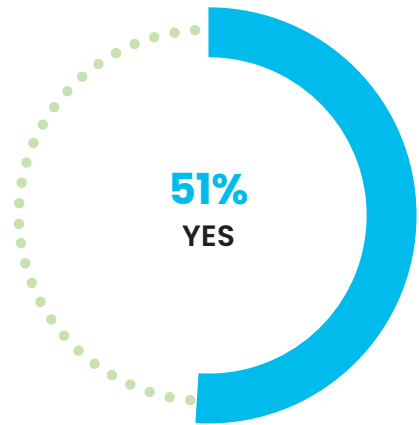
CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT FREE OF CHARGE CULTURAL EVENTS MOST CORRESPOND TO YOUR OPINION?*

This is a good thing because it allows more people to access culture	64%
This is actually not a good thing because most of the free of charge events are of poor cultural quality	19%
None	7%

* The options of "No idea/ No response" are not reflected in the graph.
You may access the detailed results at ortaklasa.iksv.org.

65 Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), "Household Consumption Expenditures," 2016, https://data.tuik. gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Household-Consumption-Expenditures-2016-24576; Özlem Ece and Fazilet Mıstıkoğlu, *Public Engagement in the Arts* (Istanbul: İKSV, 2017).

The general evaluation of our survey-based findings reveals that there is a very low level of cultural participation which cannot be explained merely with the inadequacy or poor quality of the provided services. We see that the problem of access to culture must be addressed also on the level of individuals beyond the provisioning services of the cultural ecosystem; therefore, there are possible roles that the supporting services can play to this end. In the rest of this section, we will discuss the possible actions to improve access to culture through the supporting services that can be provided within the context of cultural policies.

GENERATING INTEREST

Interest in arts and cultural events is rarely an inborn trait. People start to show an interest in arts and culture through education and the influence of their family and social circles. Pierre Bourdieu's cultural sociology studies have shown that cultural consumption depends on the actual means offered by the habitus of the person rather than the provided services. The person becomes aware of the need to visit the museum only by going to the museum. This, in turns, means that "the wish to take advantage of museums … only exists if it is being fulfilled". The objects of art "are not rare but the propensity to consume them is". Once the obstacle to access culture is thus established, "it follows that inequalities with regard to cultural works are only one aspect of inequalities in school, which creates the 'cultural need' at the same time as it provides the means of satisfying it".[66]

In this respect, we can say that one of the fundamental obstacles to cultural participation is the situation of the education system in the country. The lack of interest revealed in the survey results becomes more readily comprehensible when we consider the general problems of the education system in Türkiye, the logic of the examination systems, and the inequalities in access to education. An examination-oriented system with a curriculum based on memorisation in the multiple-choice testing logic can be ranked among the reasons of the lack of interest in cultural events.

In this education system designed according to the selection and placement examinations, there is no curriculum to foster an interest in the arts. The report titled *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey* written by Zülal Fazlıoğlu Akın and Özlem Ece demonstrates that arts education is not a priority in the education and cultural policies of Türkiye. The report establishes that the lack of a specific regulation on arts education, and the limited resources allocated for arts education are obstacles to maintaining and fostering a quality education.[67]

To counter the inadequacy of arts education, local governments may be expected to increase interest and participation in culture by organising activities of support for education within the context of their cultural policies. As we will discuss in the section on the transformation services, the local governments actually organise a large number and variety of trainings, and open courses and conservatories in the field of arts and culture. However, we must bear in mind the question of which segments of the urban population these opportunities cater to. If these training programmes of the municipalities can be accessed only by the groups already interested in arts and culture, they will have a limited impact on increasing the interest in arts and culture. For a complete transformation in this field, it is critical to uncover the interest and talents of the groups that are not interested in cultural events as well. To this end, existing cultural activities should be made available to wider audiences starting from children and disadvantaged populations by using appropriate pedagogical methods. In other words, to foster the interest in arts, municipalities must go beyond opening arts courses in specific branches. In some

66 Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel, *The Love of Art* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 1991), p. 37.

67 Zülal Fazlıoğlu Akın and Özlem Ece, *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey* (Istanbul: İKSV, December 2014), p. 111.

cities that we visited during the field research, we found out that guided tours and education concerts geared towards students are organised in museums and exhibitions. Such activities can be examples of events that enable particularly the children to discover their interest in arts and culture and increase cultural participation.

Instead of limiting such educational opportunities to specific centres, carrying them from the centre to the periphery or providing means of easy access to them can be an important political priority. These activities that the municipalities can readily organise or facilitate by giving support, may serve to overcome the lack of interest which is seen as a barrier to accessing culture.
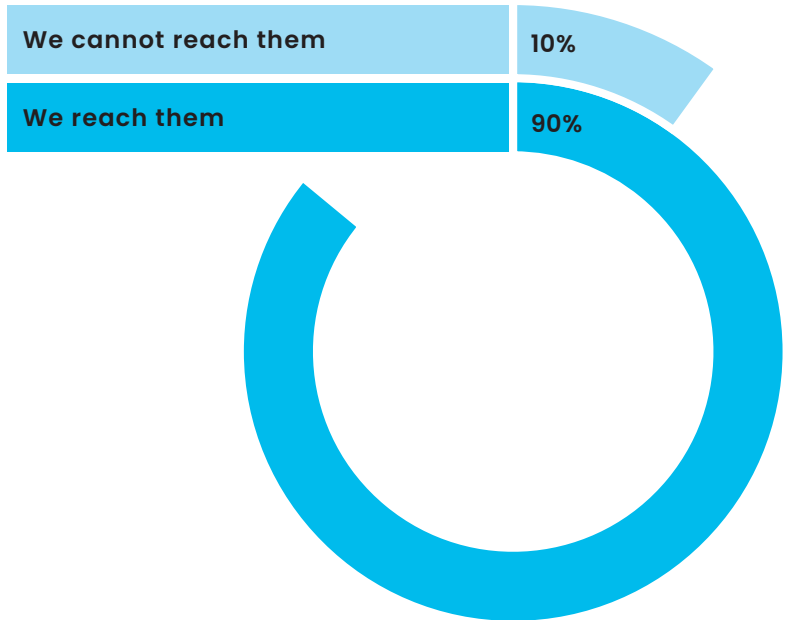
SPREADING THE INFORMATION

Even though education is among the structural factors underlying the indifference to arts and culture, the access to culture is closely linked with lack of information as well. However, beyond an ignorance related to the aforementioned cultural education, this unawareness is about being uninformed. A city resident may not be able to partake in events that they are interested and want to participate in simply because they cannot access the adequate and timely information pertaining to the organisation.

In the nationwide public opinion survey we conducted on this subject, in response to the question *"Are you sufficiently informed of the cultural activities carried out by the municipalities in your vicinity?"*, only one fifth of the city residents say that they are sufficiently informed while one third say they are not informed at all and close to half say they are partially informed. Despite these low rates, in the online surveys we conducted, in response to the question on the reach of their activities to their target audiences, the representatives of municipalities and arts and culture CSOs rank their levels of reach at 90% and 69%, respectively.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: ARE YOU SUFFICIENTLY INFORMED OF THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE MUNICIPALITIES IN YOUR VICINITY
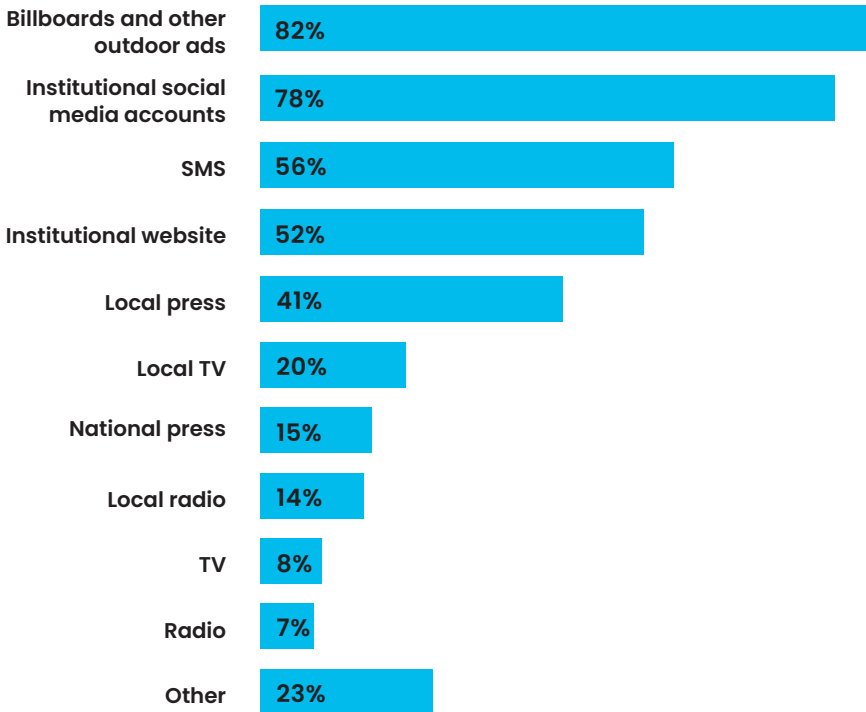
31%

Not informed
at all

47%

Partially
informed

21%

Mostly
informed
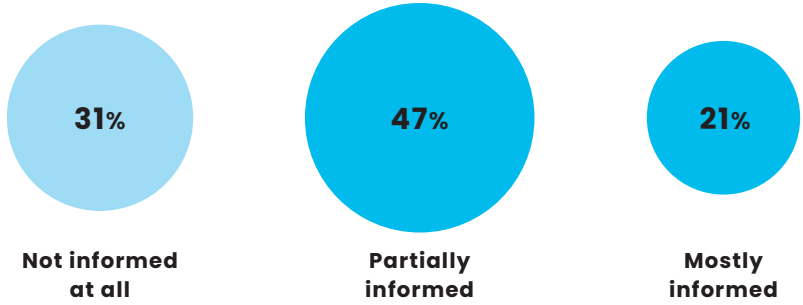
MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND: DO YOU THINK YOUR ACTIVITIES ARE ABLE TO REACH THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

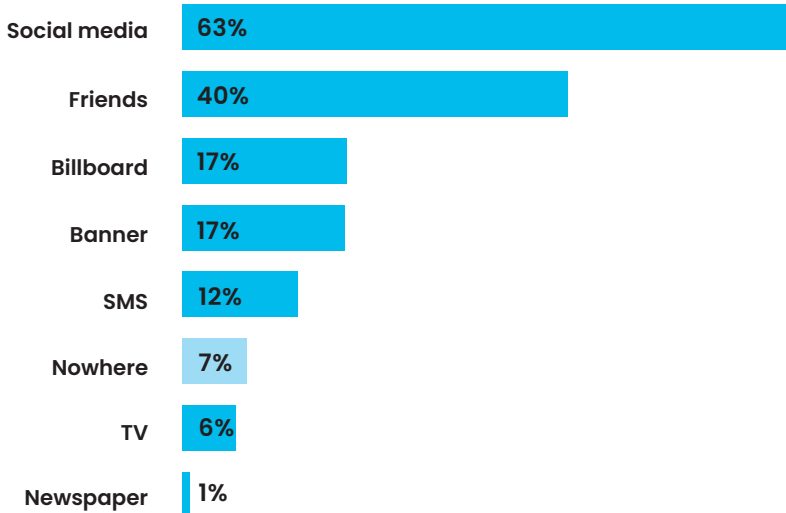| We cannot reach them | 10% |
| We reach them | 90% |

This reason for this gap between the senders and recipients of the news regarding events may be the channels through which the information is spread. Among the answers that the municipality representatives give to the online survey question of *"Which channels do you employ for your activities to reach the target audience?"*, outdoor advertising comes to the fore. The second important channel is the social media accounts.

MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTATIVES RESPOND:
WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU EMPLOY FOR YOUR ACTIVITIES TO REACH THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

Channel	Percentage
Billboards and other outdoor ads	82%
Institutional social media accounts	78%
SMS	56%
Institutional website	52%
Local press	41%
Local TV	20%
National press	15%
Local radio	14%
TV	8%
Radio	7%
Other	23%

When we ask the city residents, who participated in the public opinion survey, how they reach the information, almost two thirds of the responses point at the social media channels. The reason for the gap observed in spreading information, even though one of the most frequently used channels of the municipality is also the primary news source of the participants, may be the echo room that digital channels suffer from. Due to the algorithms of social media platforms, this influence which causes the users to be able to reach similar messages from specific groups only, might be, despite its popularity, limiting the impact of this communication channel reportedly used by all parties.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND:
THROUGH WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU RECEIVE NEWS OF THESE MUNICIPALITY EVENTS?

Channel	Percentage
Social media	63%
Friends	40%
Billboard	17%
Banner	17%
SMS	12%
Nowhere	7%
TV	6%
Newspaper	1%

Survey results reveal that the municipalities need to open new and more efficient channels of information pertaining to the arts and culture events organised in their cities. The digital culture guide of the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, *İzmir.Art*, may constitute an example for steps in this direction. The digital platform, which features the arts and culture agenda of the city and the organised events, is completely free of charge and also offers the youth free tickets for select events with the Genç Bilet (Young Ticket) application.[68] Meanwhile, the accredited membership option for persons and organisations active in the field of arts and culture makes the platform even more functional and participatory. Members who apply for and receive this status can enter the platform and announce their events. The platform, which also includes texts and videos on the cultural agenda of the city, intends to be an arts and culture magazine. The proliferation of such multifunctional information tools that are easy to design, maintain, and use can make important contributions to overcoming the lack of effective and timely announcements which appears as an obstacle to access.

DOES NO ONE REALLY HAVE TIME?

Gülten Akın's *İlkyaz* [Spring] begins with the verses "Ah, no one has time / To pause and appreciate the subtleties". The results we conveyed in the beginning show that we cannot find the time to attend everyday events, let alone appreciate the subtleties. If we take a look at the work-life statistics of Türkiye, we can easily understand that lack of time is not an unfounded excuse. In fact, a comparison of Eurostat's 2022 data and Türkiye's most recent data of 2020 statistics reveals that our country is the nation that works the longest hours on the continent. With an average working week of 42.9 hours, Türkiye works 6.6 hours per week, almost one day more than the European average. Türkiye has the highest rate at 28.1% of employed people working more than 49 hours per week, which is four times the EU average.[69]

The length of time spent to reach the cultural centres is also a reason preventing people from participating in the events organised at these venues. Thus, beyond the hustle and bustle of everyday life, the lack

of time, which is among the biggest obstacles to access, can be attributed also to the time spent to reach such events.

The geographical location and accessibility of the venues hosting the arts and cultural events also determine the time cost of reaching them. The perspective of the "15-minute city" is becoming more popular in the face of the problems of distance and time, which can be seen as obstacles to accessing various opportunities of the city beyond the arts and cultural events.[70] This new urban model born in Paris and rapidly gaining traction across the world is based on the idea of enabling the city residents to reach all daily necessities and services latest within 15-minutes without using a car. This urban planning model, which targets a scale that we may call a neighbourhood, requires cultural amenities to be included in this radius as well. In other words, as an alternative to massive and flamboyant cultural centres, it supports geographically scattered, neighbourhood-scale cultural centres of more humble capacities but in larger numbers. Such cultural spaces that can be used both by amateur troupes and professional artists can be a partial remedy to the lack of time, which is seen as an obstacle to people's access to culture.

Moreover, easing the burden of the transportation cost that needs to be met to reach these centres may be seen as an incentive. Availability of shuttle services for the events or offering discounted or free public transportation for event participants may be a significant contribution to reducing the access cost.

On the other hand, digital events that have the potential to eliminate the obstacles of time and space can be considered as one of the tactics to solve this problem. Indeed, many of the local government representatives we have spoken with said that they organised online events particularly during the pandemic. However, the findings of the public opinion survey are not very promising in terms of the city
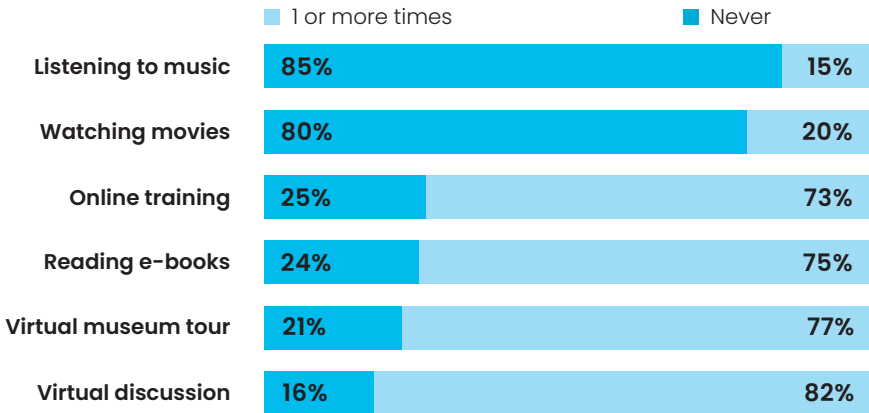
68 İzmir.art, izmir.art/.

69 "Average working hours in Europe: Which countries work the longest and shortest weeks?", *Euronews*, 22 July.

70 Irmak Dalgıç, "15 Dakikalık Kent Nedir?" [What is the 15-minute city?], *Ayrancım Gazetesi*, 1 March 2023, ayrancim.org.tr/?p=9969.

residents' interest in online events. It shows that the city residents who participated in the public opinion survey are not very interested in digital cultural media except for listening to music and watching movies.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: OVER THE LAST YEAR, HOW OFTEN DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN EACH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE EVENTS?*

	1 or more times	Never
Listening to music	85%	15%
Watching movies	80%	20%
Online training	25%	73%
Reading e-books	24%	75%
Virtual museum tour	21%	77%
Virtual discussion	16%	82%

* The options of "No idea/ No response" are not reflected in the graph.
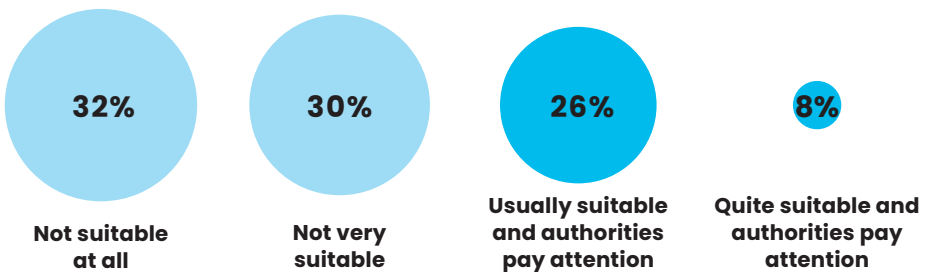You may access the detailed results at ortaklasa.iksv.org.

Undeniably, there are very structural and valid factors based on labour law and urban design that underlie the justification of not having time for cultural activities. And surely it is difficult to eliminate these obstacles in the short run. Nevertheless, there are present and potential steps to be taken to facilitate access to events through the site and scale selection of the cultural structures. On the other hand, the problem of access does not merely consist of reaching the event venue on time. We should bear in mind that there are other obstacles that need to be removed to ensure justice in access.

CULTURE WITHOUT BARRIERS

Beyond all the socioeconomic problems, one of the biggest obstacles to cultural participation is the accessibility of cultural venues. Indeed, according to the findings of the public opinion survey, a large percentage of the city residents (62%) think that these venues are not suitable for the participation of people with disabilities. Many cultural venues are almost completely inaccessible for persons with disabilities.

In contrast with structural problems such as working hours and traffic congestion, making the arts and culture venues accessible only requires determination and budget. At present, there are concrete steps taken to this end in various cities. For instance, municipalities like Malatya Metropolitan Municipality, Üsküdar Municipality (Istanbul) and Odunpazarı Municipality (Eskişehir) are opening special sociocultural venues designed and operated particularly to serve their citizens with disabilities. It is important to have centres designed with consideration for all the needs of people with disabilities, however, rather than allocating special spaces, it is of greater importance to transform the existing venues in light of universal principles of design. The ingenuity is in including the people with disabilities in the ordinary life of the city and enabling them to participate in the sociocultural events together with their fellow townspeople. To this end, instead of creating special places specifically for people with disabilities, it is important to make the necessary renovations and arrangements for their access to culture together with the others.

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW SUITABLE ARE THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN TÜRKİYE FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES? TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE AUTHORITIES TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION?

32%	30%	26%	8%
Not suitable at all	Not very suitable	Usually suitable and authorities pay attention	Quite suitable and authorities pay attention

There are different aspects of the elements that determine the participation of people with disabilities in arts and cultural activities. One of the primary elements is access to the venue. Unsuitability of public transport and physical infrastructure is very determinative in the mobility of persons with disabilities inside the city. A second element is the access to the building once they reach the event venue. Accessibility modifications need to be made for people to enter the

building and move inside the venue with ease. Besides the physical amenities such as ramps and elevators, having the human resources inside the venue to meet the special needs is of great importance.

Facilitating the cultural access of people with disabilities has dimensions outside the physical design of the venues. The aforementioned difficulties pertaining to transportation and information are more critical for people with disabilities because cultural access becomes even more challenging for these groups who have difficulties in using public transport and are devoid of special needs-oriented training programmes and information channels.

Moreover, accessibility does not consist merely of the tangible means. Even if there are no obstacles to physical access, event planning with consideration for special needs and differences in terms of content, timing, and presentation techniques plays an important role in the inclusivity of the cultural sphere. In other words, transgressing the "medical model" focused on the individuals' status of disability and activating the "social model", which positions the individuals with disabilities within the context of their interactions with the environment they live in, would enable the problem of accessibility to be addressed more inclusively.[71] For people with disabilities who need the support of another person to accompany them, the cost of tickets also becomes an economic factor in their access. Another important aspect of accessibility is the allocation of special areas for the comfortable viewing of the event and the suitability of these areas for special needs. Finally, the events to be presented with special audio and visual supports that facilitate viewing and following the events is yet another necessity.

Precisely in this perspective, the Accessible Cinema: Breaking the Vicious Circle project, which aims to put forth the cinema-specific accessibility criteria and the necessary actions, deserves special mention as it compiles the requirements pertaining to the mode of presentation beyond the physical accessibility of the halls.[72] The study which underlines measures that go beyond issues of physical accessibility such as audio description, closed caption for deaf or hard-of-hearing people, film programming adapted to special needs (autism friendly, dementia friendly, etc.), trigger warning for people with epilepsy or similar sensitivity, sign language translator, additional screen for reading lips, and trained

and experienced staff, is very important in this sense.[73]

To summarise, constructing the venues in line with universal principles of design is the primary necessity to remove the barriers to cultural access and make it more just. However, to enable universal access beyond these minimum accessibility arrangements, it is imperative to facilitate the access of people with disabilities to cultural venues by offering accessible communication and information tools and means of transport and by adapting the content and mode of presentation to their needs.[74]

This section, where we discussed the freedom, equality, and justice in the cultural sphere, aimed to show that cultural policies must have a meaning and scope beyond event organisation. A perspective that also considers the conditions and resources that enable the exhibition, presentation, and organisation of cultural events and the accessibility of these works may create the opportunity for a democratic, effective, and sustainable cultural policy. Numerous public issues, areas, and processes ranging from political rights and freedoms to public processes foremost transparent decision-making processes, from means of transportation to suitable architectural designs, which may not initially come to mind at the mention of culture must be the subject of cultural policies. Otherwise, the cultural life of the cities will be limited to event organisation and financial and in-kind support provision without a plan or a programme, which will not be sufficient to develop effective and sustainable cultural policies.

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71 Roots & Shoots Türkiye and Youth for Good, *Kapsayıcı Onarıcı Sürdürülebilir Etkinlik Rehberi* [Inclusive, Restorative, Sustainable Event Guide], May 2023, rootsandshootsturkey.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/kose-rehber.pdf.

72 Puruli Culture-Art, "Accessible Cinema: Breaking the Vicious Circle", http://www.puruli.org/en/47603/ACCESSIBLE-CINEMA-BREAKING-THE-VICIOUS-CIRCLE.

73 During the project that lasted 15 months between April 2021 and July 2022, the platform brought together "CSOs working in the field of access to cinema in Turkey and Europe. Through lobbying activities, workshops, reporting and outputs such as public service ads and surveys, [they tried] to identify the obstacles to participation in cinema events, to offer solutions, to strengthen the representation of disabled people in cinema and to establish cooperation with institutions that organize accessible cultural events in Turkey", Puruli Culture-Art, "Accessible Cinema: Breaking the Vicious Circle"; Also see: Özlem Ece and Fazilet Mıstıkoğlu's report on the meeting titled "Co-designing Public Engagement in the Arts, 25–26 May 2017," p. 42-48.

74 Accessible Cinema: Breaking the Vicious Circle, "Accessibility Venue Certificate Criteria", kultureerisim.com/upload/Node/45583/files/Access_Friendly_Venue_Checklist_EN.pdf.

5   CIVIC SERVICES OF THE CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

In the first two categories of the approach of ecosystem products and services that constitutes the main framework of our discussion, we conveyed our observations on the execution of cultural policies in Türkiye. We discussed in detail how the local governments and civil initiatives in particular contribute to the cultural lives of the cities, how they do what they do, and the democratic quality of these activities. However, this discussion does not suffice to address the arts and cultural ecosystem through the perspective of public policies because as the founder of the discipline of public policy Harold Lasswell says, there should be "a projected programme of goals, values, and practices" in order for the actions in this field to be qualified as public policy. Based on this definition, in order for arts and culture events to be addressed through the perspective of public policy,[75] these events must have a consistent goal within a system of values. In the final two sections of the report, by employing this perspective of public policies, we open to discussion the intention of the cultural practices that we observed during the field research. In the following pages, we will try to evaluate the cultural activities, which may not be always determined democratically or distributed fairly, in terms of their functions.

The MA approach is focused on the sources of food, water, and raw materials that sustain human life. The biological survival of the species is dependent on the availability of these products and services. Yet could these be enough for human life? Life imposes needs beyond the provisions of nature on the human being, who is reliant on a caregiver as of birth, is doomed to collaborate to build a life, and is dependent on social systems to sustain this life. The individual helplessness of people necessitates sociality to render their life possible.

Moreover, the sociality of people differs from that of other species like bees and ants with collective orders. The source of human sociality is not an instinctual but a voluntary collaboration. Unlike other organisms, people are not born into a natural division of labour, they have to generate and sustain collaboration as a technique. Even though during the ages of hunting and gathering, a mechanical division of labour could be easily instituted because collective life was simple and community members were similar, with the transition to

sedentary life and agricultural production much more complicated collaborations became inevitable. There was a transition from a period when everyone could assume the roles of hunter or gatherer to a period when tasks that require different skills and experience such as agriculture, commerce, defence, belief, management had to be shared. Particularly following the industrial revolution, as different individuals and communities began to live together in closer proximity, the institution of collective life became more difficult.

We may describe the cities as the habitats that enable people to live together despite the quantitative increase and the qualitative diversification and complexity of individuals and collaboration grounds. Moreover, there is a similarity in terms of the stories of the etymological roots of the word "civic", which derives from civicus meaning "pertaining to a city" in Latin, and the word *medeni* ("civic") in Arabic which derives from Medina, the city where the prophet Muhammed migrated and was renamed as the original town of Yathrib became more pluralistic.[76] Civilisation in this sense means the collective formed by people who were able to build a life together despite their differences. And how is this collective instituted?

If we were to go back to the very beginning and recall Franz Boas' definition of culture as the context that influences the social dynamics of a community, we can discern the relationship between civilisation and culture. If civilisation is the common life established by a community of heterogeneous individuals, then culture emerges as the context that influences and even enables this life. And this, in turn, reveals the relationship between civilisation and culture: Civilisation is the experience of a common life that has been culturally instituted.

To express the cultural construction of the will to common life more concretely, we can recall the politics of the commons. The associations to be built beyond identities such as family, ethnicity or religion require new bonds of commonality and belonging. To this end, people need to encounter one another, know the geography they share, be informed of the developments pertinent to this locality, and organise to develop

75 Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 71.

76 Hakan Altınay, *Medeni* [Civilised] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023), p. 20, 33.

common attitudes and actions concerning these developments. Arts and culture events play critical roles in such practices which we may briefly call the politics of the commons that aim to forge new collective grounds on the city scale and therefore target a democratic and participatory politics.

The role of culture not only in the foundation but also the democratic and peaceful maintenance of this life cannot be denied. In fact, the *Culture and Democracy* report published by the European Union confirms that participation in cultural activities strengthens democracy and social cohesion in many different ways. According to the report, "the benefits of participating in cultural activities include:

increased likelihood to vote, to volunteer and to participate in community activities, projects and organisations;

the development of positive social attitudes associated with civic and democratic values and identities, such as feelings of community belonging, tolerance, trust and empathy for people from different backgrounds;

the development of personal and social skills and competencies that are essential for functioning democracies as they enable individuals to be more effective citizens - like self-expression, the ability to listen to others, to understand different perspectives and to facilitate conflict resolution."[77]

The civilisation-founding aspect of cultural production and activities that institutes "living together" was opened to discussion in the report titled *Living Together: Fostering Cultural Pluralism through the Arts* written by Feyzi Baban and Kim Rygiel with a "focus on the role of culture and the arts in facilitating the long-term living together of newcomers [migrants, refugees] and locals". In the report, through the cultural practices of the migrants, the authors addressed the claim that "cultural forms of production, such as the arts, importantly help to facilitate an understanding of the interconnectedness of individuals, the societies we live in, and our environment".[78]

The category that we suggest describing as the civic services of the cultural ecosystem corresponds precisely to the perspective of Baban

and Rygiel that places the relationship between art and "living together" at the centre. Practices such as the design of the venues that bring people together, the organisation of events, the presence of social occasions, the presentation of communication grounds and tools that enable, facilitate, and encourage living together can be brought to life through arts and culture. In other words, arts and culture initiatives and practices play principal roles in the building and maintenance of the public space, the meeting of differences, and the construction of a shared public life. This functional aspect of the cultural ecosystem emerges through its civilisation-founding functions geared towards the building of sociality which enables human communities to have the will and desire to live together. As addressed in the report, this cultural citizenship is "broadly concerned with the development and recognition of cultural diversity on the one hand, and full cultural and political participation on the other".[79]

On the city scale, cultural citizenship corresponds to the fellowship of townspeople. Since 1930, the Municipality Law article on the "Townsmen's law" describes the democratic rights of the residents living in the same city.[80] However, during the process of urbanisation in Türkiye this bond of townspeople has signified not the place people live but the homeland they immigrated from. Therefore, the townspeople's law operates through exclusionary solidarity networks and serves to ossify the discriminatory patronage relationships. Since the democratic bond among townspeople cannot be established spontaneously, there is a need for occasions of voluntary encounters and introductions. The civic services of the cultural ecosystem become functional precisely at this point. Through the arts and culture events, people can come together and form common grounds with other city residents, whom they do not know and would normally never meet.

77 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and William Hammonds, ibid., p. 5.

78 Feyzi Baban and Kim Rygiel, *Living Together: Fostering Cultural Pluralism through the Arts* (Istanbul: İKSV, July 2018), p. 5, 55.

79 Paul J. Kuttner, "Educating for Cultural Citizenship: Reframing the Goals of Arts Education", Curriculum Inquiry, 45:1 (2015), p. 69-92, quoted in Feyzi Baban and Kim Rygiel, ibid., p. 19.

80 Municipality Law no. 5393, Article 13: "Everyone is a townsman of the town in which he lives. Townsmen shall be entitled to take part in municipal decision making and services, receive information on municipal activities and benefit from the aids distributed by the municipal administration. Aids shall be provided in such a way as not to injure human dignity."

In his cult novel titled *Aylak Adam* [The Loiterer] (1959), Yusuf Atılgan gives a wonderful snapshot of how arts and culture can thus bring people together and forge commonalities: "Two hours later, it was as though the person stepping out of the cinema amid the crowd into a narrow valley was somebody else entirely. He was thinking: 'An ephemeral creature lives in our age, unbeknownst to previous centuries. The person who has come out of the cinema. The film he saw has done something to him. He is not the self-serving person. He is at peace with people'." Unfortunately, this person who is hoped to "accomplish great deeds" expires in five to ten minutes, because "The street is filled with people who did not come out of the cinema; with their long faces, indifferences, sneaky gaits they take him into their midst and dissolve him".[81]

Not only cinema, but all branches of arts and culture contain an influence that reconciles people. Surely, it is also possible to encounter events in the cultural sphere that serve the opposite purpose, feed and are fed by discrimination, propagate hate speech, or spread animosity. Therefore, it is necessary to move beyond the credulity of thinking that art always has a good, healing influence. Such a disillusion might end up rendering any normative and principled evaluation in cultural event planning redundant and deem every sort of practice legitimate. Bearing in mind that cultural activities will serve different purposes, we should evaluate the undertaken efforts through the perspective of civilising.

In the cities we visited during the field research, unfortunately, we did not encounter many local governments that planned cultural events with the awareness of the civilising function of art. As we have already discussed at length, the cultural events of the municipalities are usually shaped for the short-term under the influence of personal or political relationships, therefore it is not possible to observe an awareness or will pertaining to the civilising potential of culture. Surely, there are also practices among the municipality activities that function as civic services. However, even these actual civic services may not be seen within the scope of cultural services. Such that, in one of the metropolitan municipalities, we listened to the case of an CSO which was conducting such cultural activities but could not collaborate with the culture unit of the municipality and instead—with the approval

and prompting of the mayor—worked with the unit responsible for migration. Even though the migration unit of the municipality is aware of the importance of culture for social cohesion and peace, the fact that the culture unit did not adopt a similar attitude suggests that even the relevant units of the municipality can ignore the long-term democratic effects of arts and cultural events.

On the other hand, many CSOs are carrying out different works to this end, which is promising. In İzmir, Bir Arada Yaşarız Eğitim ve Toplumsal Araştırmalar Vakfı (We Live Together: Education and Social Research Foundation - BAYETAV) tries to recall the multicultural, multi-identity past of the city through research and artistic works and embraces the production of knowledge, art and policy as an interdisciplinary approach that will create and multiply the opportunities of "living together".

One of the first cities to come to mind at the mention of multiculturality is Hatay. There are many examples we can give from this city, which lost its very important buildings and sites of immense memory in the earthquakes of 6 February 2023, but immediately mobilised to salvage the ancient character of the geography from the ruins. Even under dire circumstances where the most vital needs could not be met, culture managed to be a field that asserted its importance in the city. On the 40th day after the earthquake, the women held a march with frankincense burners and myrtle in Samandağ, which should be kept in mind as an impressive example illustrating how an ancient cultural practice can be a powerful tool for the expression of grief and revolt.[82]

81 Yusuf Atılgan, *Aylak Adam* [The Loiterer] (Istanbul: Can Yayınları, 2019 [1959]), p. 24.

82 It had been 40 days since the earthquake and there could not have been a more appropriate tool than an ancient cultural practice to express the grief. Arab Alawites place myrtle, the scent of which is considered holy, on the grave of the deceased on the 40th day of their passing and burn frankincense above the grave because it is believed to bring peace to their spirit. "Samandağ'da kadınlar buhur ve rihenlerle yürüdü: Hakkımızı helal etmiyoruz" [Women in Samandağ marched with incense and myrtle: We don't give our blessing], *BirGün Gazetesi*, 18 March 2023, birgun.net/haber/samandag-da-kadinlar-bahhur-ve-rihenlerle-yurudu-hakkimizi-helal-etmiyoruz-425315. The same ritual was performed en masse after the loss of tens of thousands of lives. Not everyone who participated in the march was Arab Alawite but the cultural practice of one community turned into an extraordinary occasion to become one in grief and revolt. One would be hard put to find a better example to the civilising potential of culture.

A few months later, again an Arab Alawite tradition, the Evvel July Arts and Culture Festival, turned into a similar occasion. The culture of commonality forged with the harvest, which is traditionally done collectively, and the shared products became another cultural manifestation of the resistance and solidarity that emerged after the earthquake in 2023. The latest edition of the festival was designed with a view to commemorate the memory of the lost ones, revive hope, and seek ways to rebuild the region. Featuring talks, forums, exhibitions, music and theatre performances, film screenings, special events for children, women and the youth, the festival conduced to the revival of the will to resist and live together through arts and culture in the aftermath of a catastrophe.[83]

Yet another example is the Hatay Academy Orchestra. Founded in 2019, the Orchestra is the first symphonic and only professional orchestra of Hatay. Performing both classical music and the folk music of various peoples in symphonic form, the chorus unites the different cultures of Hatay in universal music by building bridges of art between communities, geographies, and times, and provides a basis for the people who are part of these practices to come together. The orchestra, which had around 100 musicians, lost four of its members in the earthquake. Following the disaster, its conductor stayed in Antakya and after days of participating in the search and rescue efforts, he brought the members of the orchestra back together.[84] From that day forth, he has been bringing the culture of Antakya to all corners of Türkiye with the concerts they give in various cities while striving for the city and the orchestra members to get back on their feet.

These cultural practices that we have witnessed in Hatay after the earthquake are very precious also because they show how one can be party to the solution of our current collective problems through ancient practices. These practices are significant for the democratisation of culture as well.

The observations we have shared on Hatay offer an original perspective also in terms of the democratisation of politics. In other geographies, rather than the established institutions and mechanisms, we can see the tendency to appeal to ancient cultural practices in negotiation and

decision-making processes. We can observe the role that culture can play in the institution of a democratic and participatory politics also in Tunceli, which is a sui generis city with its rituals, beliefs, and values.

In the city that has a very special bond and relationship with the natural cycles, the flora, fauna, and the lake of Munzur, the municipality's culture unit has made it its priority to record and sustain this culture. They are striving to establish a memory centre of the culture which they have documented by conducting a thousands of hours long oral history study. They aim to preserve this culture by compiling the region's rituals, visit sites, elegies, and folk songs. They are trying to devise the cultural memory as a basis for common resistance to protect the geography which is under increasing threat due to the recently accelerated activities of tourism, mining, and construction. By rendering the values of the geography more visible, they intend to both foster the dynamism that keeps the local population together and ensure that the visitors to the city are more aware and respectful of the local natural and cultural values. Both objectives serve the existence of a civil life in Tunceli, that is, a life more in peace with nature and individuals. Thus, the ancient culture assumes a function to make our present-day life more peaceful and amicable.

The civic services of the cultural ecosystem also have a value beyond social cohesion and harmony with nature. As seen in the report by Baban and Rygiel, the cultural sphere plays a critical role in the establishment of peaceful relationships between the local population of a city and its new residents. Focusing on the importance of cultural activities in the promotion of the inclusion and integration of newcomers like refugees and migrants, the authors open to discussion the role of "the production of radical forms of cosmopolitanism and the importance of this for widening the boundaries of inclusion and transforming how we understand

83 Evvel Temmuz Kültür Sanat Festivali (Evvel July Arts and Culture Festival), evveltemmuz.org/ilkeler/.

84 Binnaz Saktanber, "Hatay Akademi Orkestrası Şefi Ali Uğur: Hatay kimsesizlikten öldü" [Hatay Academy Orchestra Conductor Ali Uğur: Hatay died of desolation], *Bant Mag*, 17 March 2023, bantmag. com/hatay-akademi-orkestrasi-roportaj/.

85 Feyzi Baban and Kim Rygiel, ibid., p.48.

community".[86] Cultural practices can make significant contributions to the establishment of a civil life that includes the migrants as well.

The civilising potential of the cultural ecosystem that serves the integration of migrants is crystalised at the Kırkayak Kültür Derneği (Kırıkayak Culture Association) that we visited in Gaziantep. Beyond its own work, Kırkayak also strives to create grounds for collaboration among partner organisations in the city. A case in point is the association's Haneen (Nostalgia) Women's Chorus founded in Gaziantep by the women who escaped the war in Syria. The chorus founded by the refugee women to support their wellbeing and preserve their cultures gives concerts with a repertoire of songs in all the languages spoken in Syria, that is, Arabic, Turkish, Turkmen, Akkadian, Armenian, Circassian, Assyrian. Kırkayak's relationship with the chorus has been continuing ever since it was invited to give a concert at the Zeugma Film Festival.[86] The Mutfak (Kitchen) they opened with the same intent functions as a community centre that brings together women of Türkiye and Syria and offers dishes made with the recipes of their own cuisines and contributes to their economic empowerment.[87] As we can see in these two examples, arts and culture events play very important roles in community building and maintenance; they facilitate interactions among peoples, enabling the civilised coexistence of different groups.

These examples summarise how cultural activities can contribute to people living together in peace, that is, to ensuring a civilised alliance. The lack of civilisation, which is a service, an output of the cultural ecosystem, weakens the fellowship of townspeople and the bond of citizenship that are crucial to the operation of democratic mechanisms and institutions. The civic services of the cultural ecosystem beget the sociality that enables the establishment of democratic negotiation and decision-making processes which provide for and facilitate social cohesion. Thus, these civic services pave the way not only for cultural policies but also the overall development of democratic politics.

86 Kırkayak Kültür Sanat ve Doğa Derneği [Kırkayak Association for Culture Art and Nature], "Faaliyet Raporu" [Annual Report], kirkayak.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022.pdf.

87 Kırkayak Kültür Sanat ve Doğa Derneği, "Mutfak | Matbakh Workshop," kirkayak.org/mutfak-matbakh-workshop/.

6   TRANSFORMATION SERVICES OF THE CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

The final category of the MA model that we adapted to cultural policies is the cultural services which point at the nonmaterial benefits people obtain from nature. The cultural services of the ecosystem enable and facilitate people's spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection, recreation, and aesthetic experiences.[88] Aesthetic inspiration, cultural identity, sense of home and spiritual experience offered by nature are among the first cultural services to come to mind.[89] As we adapt the cultural services of the ecosystem to cultural policies, we suggest considering this category as the transformation services, because the cultural services of nature also hold the promise of transforming people. Nature not only contributes to our physical and mental health, cognitive capacity, spirituality, sense of belonging and security thus enabling our survival, but also conduces us to lead a more healthy, peaceful, and productive life. The cultural ecosystem also has transformative effects on people and human life. There are numerous studies that have established the link between cultural participation and well-being. For instance, "the 2011 Eurobarometer on Well-being found that EU citizens ranked participation in cultural life and access to cultural heritage as a core component of well-being once basic needs were fulfilled".[90]

Based on this observation as well, in this last section of the report we address the services of the cultural ecosystem that serve to transform the people and their living environments.

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88 José Sarukhán and Anne Whyte, eds., *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2005), p. 40.

89 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Cultural services | Ecosystem Services & Biodiversity (ESB). Food and Agriculture Organization", fao.org/ecosystem-services-biodiversity/background/cultural-services/en/.

90 Culture Action Europe, "No sustainability without culture and the arts," 16 January 2018, cultureactioneurope.org/news/no-sustainability-without-culture-and-the-arts/.

6 1 CULTURE FOR INDIVIDUAL TRANSFORMATION

In the two reports published within the scope of İKSV's cultural policy studies, there are findings pertaining to the role that arts and cultural activities play in individual transformation. The report titled *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey* published in 2014 establishes that arts education contributes to creativity, creative thinking, and the ability to form connections (cognitive and emotional learning), aesthetic awareness (criticism), learning artistic practices, and acquiring and developing artistic skills.[91]

The report titled *From Early Childhood to Youth: Growing up with the Arts* written by Feyza Çorapçı also propounds that "Nourishing children artistically in their formative early childhood years which is a critical period in their development, significantly increases their chance to become individuals who are socially and emotionally more competent, with stronger communication skills and psychological adaptation".[92] In the report, we read that children exposed to arts at an early age have higher chances of acquiring skills such as "questioning, investigation, imagination, creative and critical thinking, self-expression, and empathy" and that "when social issues are tackled through art, it becomes possible for children to critically think about the environment they want to live in and to have a sense of social responsibility".[93] Therefore, we know from previous studies that cultural participation has important contributions to individual development especially during childhood; it enables individuals to be more harmonious, social, creative, and self-confident, and has the power to transform them.

Among the cultural activities geared particularly towards child development, the first to come to mind are the trainings in specific branches of art. According to the 2013 statistics included in the report *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey*, 21.9% of the non-formal education courses in Türkiye are organised by municipalities.[94] In all the cities we visited during the field research, we came across many facilities that can serve this purpose. There are continuous and free trainings provided especially for children in various branches of art such as drama, dance, painting, as well as musical instrument courses and chorus activities. An important question is which social

segments have how much access to these courses and trainings that usually draw much interest.

The legislation does not allow the municipalities to open art courses. Meanwhile, artistic trainings run through courses cannot offer official diplomas. Yet another problem is the lack of necessary opportunities for people who graduate from these courses to continue their artistic activities. As far as we have seen, not only the course graduates but art professionals are not provided with the space, atelier, technical equipment, and consumables they require to perform their arts either. We did not encounter any municipality support for the productions of artists except for periodic events like sculpture symposia or commissioned works such as façade or wall paintings. Artist in residence programmes, that are widely implemented across the world, are rarely carried out and are usually initiated by the CSOs. The local governments support the artists by buying their works, paying copyrights, offering exhibition opportunities, but make no contribution to the artistic production process between the courses and the exhibitions.

The only exception to the municipality support for cultural production may be the opportunities provided to writers. We saw two examples of these venues in the Göl and Misi Writers' Residences of the Nilüfer Municipality, which "have been actualized to offer writers, poets, translators, editors, academicians and researchers the opportunity to finalize their works and projects in a tranquil, home-like environment". [95]

91 Zülal Fazlıoğlu Akın and Özlem Ece, ibid., p. 14.

92 Feyza Çorapçı, *From Early Childhood to Youth: Growing up with the Arts* (Istanbul: İKSV, 2019), p. 15.

93 Feyza Çorapçı, ibid., p. 8.

94 Zülal Fazlıoğlu Akın and Özlem Ece, ibid., p. 65.

95 Nilüfer Writers' Residences, yazievleri.nilufer.bel.tr/.

Yet another development we should note regarding the work environments created by municipalities for groups other than artists is the libraries which are rapidly increasing in number over the last years. Besides the private libraries opened within the examination training centres or as cafes, the municipalities are also opening a large number of similar venues for the use of their townspeople. Until the 2000s, there were not many libraries except the public libraries under the central administration and the libraries of education institutions. Even though the Atatürk Library, which is one of the first libraries of the Republic, was a unit of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, its counterparts were not opened in other cities. Today, there are close to 60 libraries only under the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.[96] In all the cities we visited, there are scores of libraries owned by the municipalities.

This interest of the local governments towards the libraries may be related to the city residents' increasing interest in books and reading. However, 67% of the city residents, who participated in the public opinion surveys we conducted across the country, say they did not go to any libraries over the last year, while 16% say they went once or twice. Likewise, TUIK's 2022 Income and Living Conditions Survey shows that 69% of the individuals aged 15 and over did not read any books in the last 12 months. Interestingly, in the one-third of the population who read at least one book last year, the age group of 15 to 24, which corresponds to high school or university students, is the group that reads the most with a reading rate of 50.9%, excluding schoolbooks.[97]

CITY RESIDENTS RESPOND: OVER THE LAST YEAR, HOW MANY CULTURAL ACTIVITIES DID YOU ATTEND IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES?

	None	1 or more times
Going to the library	67%	33%

The interest in libraries at a time when book reading statistics are so low is explained by the varying functions of these venues. In an examination-focused education system that creates an environment where examination preparation is more important than the school courses, the venues outside the schools where the students can prepare for the examinations become very important. Besides the placement exams, those preparing for public personnel selection examination, language, vocational expertise, and promotion examinations show a great interest in libraries where they can study comfortably at no cost and with free internet. Thus, the libraries turn into cultural venues that support the academic development and education of those who are preparing for the examinations. The provision of this service publicly enables the users to socialise and forge new acquaintances with their peers. The new generation libraries, examples of which we came across during the field research, offer reading and studying spaces in addition to meeting and exhibition halls, digital content production studios, food and beverage venues, and even playgrounds thus contributing to the social development of the youth.[98]

In conclusion, we observe that in the cities of Türkiye sufficient emphasis is not placed on the potential for individual transformation through arts and cultural activities. Such activities seem to consist merely of courses and classes geared towards the extracurricular artistic education of especially children and young people, and venues for their examination preparations. However, we have clearly witnessed the great transformative power of the cultural ecosystem in the recent disasters that we experienced. To remember this, we commit the next section to a discussion on the crucial functions that the cultural sphere serves to ease the pains we experience.

96 İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Atatürk Library, https://ataturkkitapligi.ibb.gov.tr/en/Kitaplik/Kutuphanelerimiz.

97 Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), "Quality of Life Module," 2022, https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Quality-of-Life-Module-2022-49760&dil=2.

98 Mimar Sinan Uyumayan Kütüphanesi [Mimar Sinan All-Nighter Library], yildirim.bel.tr/tr/kutuphaneler/mimar-sinan-uyumayan-kutuphanesi. Selçuklu Yeni Nesil Şehir Kütüphanesi [Selçuklu New Generation City Library], selcuklu.bel.tr/haberler/guncel-haberler/3271/yeni-nesil-sehir-kutuphanesi-faaliyetlerine-basladi-konya-nin-en-renkli-ve-fonksiyonel-kutuphanesi-selcuklu-da.html.

6 2 TRANSFORMATION THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE IN TIMES OF DISASTER

Since 2020 we have experienced one disaster after another in Türkiye. Fires, floods, earthquakes, and the pandemic. Especially during the pandemic, beyond its medical consequences, the virus also had a profound social effect on us due to the complete interruption of cultural activities. After being deprived of the means of coming together and the cultural activities, we tried to use alternative methods and digital tools to be able to benefit from "the healing power of the arts".[99]

During those difficult times, many municipalities and CSOs organised various online cultural activities. Social media channels of institutions turned into the main medium of such activities in this period when social distancing was the rule and certain age and risk groups were permanently, and others were frequently, confined to their homes. Online concerts, talks, theatre performances and film screenings, artistic trainings, and virtual exhibition and museum tours emerged as the sole events of cultural life during the pandemic. Beyond the digital channels, alternative methods were also tried for cultural activities that would not violate the social distancing measures. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality organised drive-in cinema events and concerts on stages built in the ferries that could be viewed from the balconies and through digital platforms.[100] At Kültürhane (Culture House) in Mersin, an exhibition was held that could be visited without going indoors.[101]

Yet another painful experience where we witnessed the transformative power of arts and culture during times of crises was the earthquake. In the cities affected by the earthquake that we visited during the field research, we saw the critical services that the cultural ecosystem can provide in times of such grave disasters.

The first dimension of these services emerged through the physical venues. We saw that in all the cities affected by the earthquake, the undamaged cultural venues were transformed to first provide shelter and then food and health care. These venues, most of which were detached houses or low rises, were relatively less affected by the earthquake and opened their doors to the survivors, thus functioning as shelters in the early days of the disaster which was compounded by fierce weather conditions.

We observed that the physical means provided by the Congress and Culture Centre in Malatya and Nurhak Municipality Culture Centre in Kahramanmaraş played a vital role in the aftermath of the earthquake. Mersin Yenişehir Municipality also opened the doors of both the Atatürk Cultural Centre and the fair and exhibition centre to those who escaped the earthquake zone and took refuge in Mersin. Later, these venues were used to collect, sort, and package the earthquake relief materials. All the social and cultural units of the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality were also opened to the earthquake survivors.

During this period, not only the public institutions but also the CSOs began to use their safe venues to meet the urgent needs. In the days following the earthquake, the arts and culture centres RoMekan, MaMusic, and Mordem Sanat (Mordem Art) in Diyarbakır opened their doors and provided free food and beverages for numerous people affected by the earthquake. Kırkayak Kültür and Nar Bilim Kültür ve Sanat Derneği [Nar Science Culture and Art Association] in Gaziantep, Geko in Adana, and Kültürhane and D5 Sanat Ortamı (D5 Art Space) in Mersin opened their venues to the survivors and hosted the organisation of assistance efforts in the following days. Designed to host crowds and equipped with units like kitchens, toilets and changing rooms, the spatial means that these structures can provide in times of disasters were thus employed, albeit most painfully. Consequently, we saw that owing to their physical means and even without organising events, the cultural venues can respond to urgent needs and have a transformative potential that can alleviate the effects of the crises.

Another role that the cultural ecosystem can play in emergencies is the mobilisation of the existing human capital in this field. As we addressed in the civic services section, cultural events create common grounds that enable people to come together. We saw how the communities

99 Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, *The Uniting Power of Arts and Needs of the Cultural Field During the Pandemic* (Istanbul: İKSV, 2020).

100 Gizem Sade, "İzmir'de Covid-19 kısıtlamalarının gölgesinde nostaljik 'arabalı sinema' etkinliği düzenlendi" [Nostalgic "drive-in cinema" in İzmir under the shadow of Covid-19 restrictions], *Euronews*, 16 May 2020, tr.euronews.com/2020/05/16/izmir-de-covid-19-k-s-tlamalar-n-n-golgesinde-nostaljik-arabal-sinema-etkinligi-duzenlendi; "Haluk Levent İzmir'de Arabalı Vapurda 23 Nisan Konseri Verdi" [Haluk Levent gave a 23 April concert on the ferryboat in İzmir], *Yeni Asır*, 23 April 2020, yeniasir.com.tr/gundem/2020/04/23/haluk-levent-izmirde-arabali-vapurda-23-nisan-konseri-verdi.

101 "Türkiye'nin ilk 'yarı açık' sergisi" [Türkiye's first "semi-outdoor" exhibition], *Mersin Olay*, 30 August 2022, mersinolay.com/haber/8189/turkiyenin-ilk-yari-acik-sergisi.html.

formed around cultural activities in normal times create the means for a collective mobilisation under extraordinary circumstances such as the earthquake. Artist communities, cultural entities, artists, technical teams, and their audiences from all over Türkiye ran to the disaster zone or organised relief efforts in their own towns and delivered assistance to the region. The Kaf Kolektif (Kaf Collective) in Kahramanmaraş, for instance, reached the city immediately after the earthquake and turned a schoolyard they chanced upon into the headquarters of a massive relief effort organisation. Created by young people most of whom were working in the field of culture, this collective started off as the personal endeavour of a few friends and grew into a big community of people from their own fields. The group that set up units like a kitchen, carpentry atelier, and bakery also enables other assistances to reach the neighbourhood and facilitates a more productive and efficient use of the resources by organising the distribution of the incoming support. Nar Art in Gaziantep also channels its communities formed in the field of arts and culture to meet the urgent needs of the earthquake survivors with particular emphasis on the psychosocial rehabilitation of children through the activity tents that they have set up.

Mordem Art based in Diyarbakır further increased the role of arts and culture communities in earthquake relief and recovery, and spearheaded the establishment of a platform. Only two weeks after the earthquake, the association contacted all the cultural institutions and entities working in the field of children across Türkiye and brought together 43 different groups to identify the fundamental principles of the activities to be carried out for the children in the disaster zone, and to facilitate their coordination. This organisation called the Çocuk Sanat Alanı Platformu (Children's Art Space Platform), which is still active, emerged from the need for creating child-friendly spaces (play and activity tents) and the importance of solidarity and cooperation to conduct coordinated and systematic activities in these fields (arts workshops, art therapies, film screenings, drama, music, etc.).[102] The platform is an important experience demonstrating how the communities formed in cultural spheres can come together when required by extraordinary circumstances and facilitate bigger and effective alliances.

Thus, we see how the civic services of the cultural ecosystem can acquire a transformative function at such times and present comprehensive and rapid solutions to social needs.

Similar platforms were established also to create financial sources for earthquake relief and to support the artists affected by the earthquake. The Sanatla Dayanışma Platformu (Art in Solidarity Platform), which was founded to this end, generated €29,266 with the donation of 226 artworks.[103] A similar platform, the Omuz Dayanışma ve Paylaşım Ağı (Omuz Solidarity and Sharing Network) was founded as "a support initiative dedicated to the arts and culture workers facing economic difficulties and precarious working conditions", which became ever more evident particularly during the pandemic. After the earthquake, the collected support of its 9th period was allocated to those affected by the earthquake and 111 artists were provided with a financial aid of €115 each.[104] İKSV also formed an Instrument Support Fund for the Earthquake Region. With sources allocated from the foundation budget and the contributions of numerous supporters, a fund of approximately €215,567 was created. By this means, a total of 384 instruments were provided to music students and instructors affected by the earthquakes. In the provision process of the instruments, İKSV collaborated with the companies Doremusic, Sala Müzik, Cangöz Müzik, Keylan Müzik, and Zuhal Müzik.[105] The fact that the communities formed around arts and cultural activities can transform their cooperations into such rapid and significant material resources deserves to be noted as a phenomenon pertaining to the transformative services of the cultural ecosystem.

It bears remembering that the cultural ecosystem's means of creating communities is not limited to the mobilisation of the artists themselves. Particularly the followers of famous artists are more prepared to heed to the calls and support the initiatives of these artists whom they

102 Mordem Sanat (Mordem Art), "Çocuk Sanat Alanı Platformu Duyuru Metni" [Call of the Children's Art Space Platform], Instagram, 23 February 2023, instagram.com/p/CpAacb-oSdz/?img_index=1.

103 Sanatla Dayanışma (Art in Solidarity), sanatladayanisma.org/.

104 Omuz Dayanışma ve Paylaşım Ağı [Omuz Solidarity and Sharing Network], omuz.org/en.

105 İKSV, "Instrument Support Fund for Music Students and Teachers in the Earthquake Region," 23 February 2023, https://iksv.org/tr/news/instrument-support-fund-for-music-students-and-teachers-in-the-earthquake-region.

admire and trust. Initiatives like AHBAP[106] and İhtiyaç Haritası (Needs Map),[107] which played crucial roles in alleviating the pains of not only the earthquakes of 6 February 2023 but several disasters in our recent past, were pioneered by famous artists, which points at another function that the field of arts and culture may have in social mobilisation and transformation.

The rehabilitation services provided by the cultural ecosystem following the earthquake were surely not limited to children. After opening their venues for emergencies, all the arts and culture units of local governments rapidly mobilised the healing potential of the arts by organising activities geared towards earthquake victims. Private institutions and artists physically participated in many emergency efforts ranging from search and rescue operations to meeting vital necessities and the construction of living spaces; they organised aid campaigns, gave concerts and financial support. At a time when volunteers from every walk of life rushed to the earthquake-affected region, the artists equipped with communication and creativity skills provided very important support to all the social segments traumatised by the disaster.

Beyond disasters like earthquakes, floods, and fires that concentrate in a specific region and time, our planet is experiencing a chronic and constant disaster, the climate crisis. It is evident that arts and cultural activities have roles to play in raising awareness concerning this crisis and facilitating behaviour and policy change. In the next section, we present our observations on these roles.

6 3 ARTS AND CULTURE FOR ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

We are brutally depleting the environment and the cities and losing our natural habitats and ancient assets. Today we can hear the alarm bells go off violently and to prevent this destruction and massacre we must use every means available at a scale that starts from the cities we live in and expands across the entire planet. The cultural ecosystem is essential in this respect as well. In this age called post-truth, it has become very difficult to even explain and publicise the phenomena that are scientifically beyond the slightest doubt. Due to the mistrust created by political polarisation, even the most serious warnings are not taken seriously and are instead denied. As the end of humanity rapidly

approaches, arts and cultural activities become crucial to meet the need for new channels and tools to give warning and develop and implement precautions.

In fact, the report titled *Arts and Culture for Ecological Transformation* written by Hande Paker reveals that arts and culture can transform dominant discourses, exhibit scientific data in a manner that immediately captures the audience, present the phenomena in a way that touches the hearts and minds through its storytelling, help re-imagine an alternative world, and initiate debate.[108] As Paker says, by immediately capturing the people, arts and culture can overcome communication barriers and raise awareness and mobilisation about the increasingly dire ecological problems. In this sense, the cultural sphere which has the power of transforming the accustomed language of information, organisation, and action, can create a collective consciousness for the urgent mobilisations required by our day and age.

Paker's policy document based on this report describes the landscape of experiences that aim for a transformation on the axis of arts, culture and ecology in Türkiye.[109] In the document, we see how the ecological problems are addressed by events such as SALT's *CLIMAVORE: Seasons Made to Drift* exhibition, 16th Istanbul Biennial, Festtogether, Bozcaada Jazz Festival, Sustainable Living Film Festival, Bozcaada International Festival of Ecological Documentary; and institutions like the Gazhane Museum, Mordem Art Centre, Centre for Spatial Justice, Postane, Açık Radyo (Open Radio), K2 Güncel Sanat Merkezi (K2 Contemporary Art Centre), Urla Nefes; and artists like

106 AHBAP first emerged from the calls for aid and solidarity made by the famous musician Haluk Levent on his personal social media account. The community became an association in 2017. With its volunteers and the resources that it mobilised, AHBAP played critical roles in most of the disasters that followed. ahbap.org.

107 İhtiyaç Haritası (Needs Map) was founded as a social cooperative in 2015 led by the famous actor Mert Fırat to provide a digital platform that brings people in need with the individuals and organisations that volunteer to meet these needs. Later, it became an organisation with volunteers from across Türkiye, which is active in the field especially during times of disaster. https://www.needsmap.coop/.

108 Hande Paker, *Arts and Culture for Ecological Transformation* (İstanbul: İKSV, February 2021), p. 56.

109 Hande Paker, *Ekolojik Dönüşüm İçin Kültür ve Sanat: Türkiye'den Örnekler* [Arts and Culture for Ecological Transformation: Cases from Türkiye] (İstanbul: İKSV, October 2021).

Serkan Taycan, Ekin Kano, and Yasemin Özcan. Unfortunately, during the field research we came across very few experiences pertaining to ecological transformation through arts and culture, which Paker had illustrated with examples. In the cities we visited, even though there is a clear anxiety regarding the environmental problems of the planet, the arts and culture initiatives against this threat were either inadequate or scattered. We understand that the arts and cultural organisations and actors are unfortunately unable to find much elbowroom within the social order imposed by the social relationships and political mechanisms. One part of this challenge is the difficulty of building intersecting networks which are crucial to such activities. The lack of transparent support mechanisms to ensure the structural permanence required for these networks is felt in every corner of Türkiye.

The inadequacy of regular public support for arts and culture in Türkiye and the injustices in the distribution of available resources render this field dependent on the national and international funders and the support from the private sector. For organisations and communities that try to actualise their ideas by turning them into projects, the project logic indicates a temporary, limited, and fragmented opportunity. The project processes, with rigidly fixed frameworks and periods, and complicated administrative and financial managements cannot sufficiently provide the flexibility required by arts and cultural professionals. Nevertheless, as in the example of Diyarbakır that we have mentioned, we see that many independent arts and culture entities across Türkiye accomplish very valuable works using such financial assistances. We have seen numerous civil society organisations that sustain their institutional development by benefiting from the funds of especially the Kültür için Alan (Spaces of Culture)[110] which is specific to a couple of cities; the VAHA Project[111] available across Türkiye; the Sustainability Fund of the SAHA Association; [112] the CultureCivic [113] which is an EU project; the support from international cultural agencies; and the funds of the European Endowment for Democracy.[114]

Sponsorships is yet another financial resource that arts and culture entities apply for. Along with local organisations that seek the support of tens of small businesses, ranging from kebab joints to grocery stores, to

be able to organise a concert, we often come across large-scale arts and culture events sponsored by big companies and conglomerates. On the other hand, this comprehensive funding of the private sector for arts and culture is also accompanied by discussions of social whitewashing. Especially in the field of ecology, the companies that harm the environment through their commercial activities try to acquire an environmentally friendly image in the public opinion by supporting cultural events that address this issue, which is a practice that has come to be called "greenwashing" and resulted in the tendency to be wary of such support extended for the arts and culture events.

Therefore, public resources are of even greater significance for the arts and culture organisations that are stuck in project-based funds and private sponsorships with the risk of social whitewashing. In order for these resources to be able to serve the abovementioned ecological transformation, they need to be used more effectively and widely by the arts and culture entities. During our field research, we had the chance to see two experiences to inspire such a transformation.

In Ordu, the first solo exhibition of the artist titled *Fata Morgana* may be an example to the public-civil collaborations that we have indicated the need for. "Spreading over an area of approximately hundred hectares, (…) *Fata Morgana* is the broadest solo public art exhibition concerning land in the art history of Türkiye" and creates an important perception in people's relationship with nature through its impressive expression of the dialogue between nature and the artwork.[115] This exhibition, which serves ecological transformation through art precisely as we have indicated earlier, was made possible with the support that the artist enlisted from very different institutions such as CultureCivic, Saha Association, Ordu Fikir

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110 Spaces of Culture, https://spacesofculture.com/.

111 VAHA, vahahubs.org/.

112 SAHA Sustainability Fund, https://www.saha.org.tr/en/projects/saha-sustainability-fund.

113 CultureCIVIC Culture and Arts Support Programme, culture-civic.org/.

114 European Endowment for Democracy, democracyendowment.eu/.

115 *Fata Morgana*, https://fatamorgana.alperaydin.art/en/intro-english/.

Bandosu (Ordu Band of Ideas), and Ordu Metropolitan Municipality. The alliance of civil, international, and public institutions in *Fata Morgana* can be considered an inspiring example of this necessary collaboration.

A second example is the Circular Ulusal Çevre ve Sanat Etkinlikleri (Circular National Environment and Art Events) organised for the fourth time by the Mersin Metropolitan Municipality. Aiming to "raise awareness on environmental problems and crises, join them with arts, and voice the environmental problems through contemporary art", the event actualises the relationship between art and ecology through a collaboration between municipality and the arts and cultural organisations.[116] Curated by the competent figures of the field for the past two years, the exhibition brings together local and international artists and should be noted as an inspiring experience for its authenticity in putting the ecological problems on the agenda of the city through the works of art. Meanwhile the Selçuklu Municipality Art Academy in Konya, which we visited during our field research, was staging a theatre play to spread awareness of zero-waste among elementary school students.[117] As part of the project, third, fourth, and fifth grade students from all the schools in the city are shuttled from their schools to the play performed at the Selçuklu Congress Centre. It is aimed for tens of thousands of students to gain ecological and zero-waste awareness.

In conclusion, we can state that the transformative potential of the cultural ecosystem also creates effective opportunities against the burning problems of the planet. The positive and negative functions that the cultural policies might have in the protection and transformation of the planet can be observed more readily on the city-scale. We may conclude the discussion on the transformative effect of the cultural ecosystem by starting that conversation.

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116 Mersin Metropolitan Municipality, "Circular 4. Ulusal Çevre ve Sanat Etkinlikleri'nin Lansmanı Yapıldı" [Circular 4th National Environment and Art Events was launched], 4 June 2023, mersin.bel.tr/haber/circular-4-ulusal-cevre-ve-sanat-etkinliklerinin-lansmani-yapildi-1685857300.

117 Selçuklu Municipality, "Öğrenciler Tiyatro ile Sıfır Atık Bilinci Kazanıyor" [Students gain zero waste awareness through theatre], selcuklu.bel.tr/haberler/guncel-haberler/3516/ogrenciler-tiyatro-ile-sifir-atik-bilinci-kazaniyor.html.

6 4 TRANSFORMATION OF THE CITY THROUGH CULTURAL POLICIES

During our field research, we saw the potential of arts and culture events to transform our cities most clearly in the experience of the Ordu Fikir Bandosu (Ordu Band of Ideas), which was among the supporters of the *Fata Morgana* exhibition. The transformation created in the city by this collective, which emerged through the cooperation of volunteers from Ordu, is of a scope and significance that could be the subject of a separate study. The initiative was the dynamo of the social resistance that prevented the Black Sea Coastal Road from passing through the city centre, which was undoubtedly the biggest victory of the group that has accomplished many feats in the name of preserving the natural, historical, and cultural values of the city. Meanwhile, the Vosvos Festival that continues to be organised since 1995 is the best-known activity of the group. It is possible to see the signature of the Band in the organisation of innumerable arts and culture events ranging from enabling the launch of the first archaeological excavation in the Black Sea region to the restoration of many historical buildings, from the district of Perşembe receiving the title of Cittaslow to the organisation of numerous exhibitions and festivities in Ordu. The Band is an inspiring experience of how a group composed of ordinary citizens can protect and transform a city through arts and culture.

On the other hand, it is obvious that cultural practices do not only have positive effects on the city. In fact, cultural activities and initiatives also contain the risk of a transformation that increases the existing inequalities in the city.

There are many factors that affect the physical and social development of the cities. National development strategies, international developments, infrastructural and superstructural investments, and service priorities of the local governments play role in the social, economic, and physical development of the cities. The urban spaces that receive investment and acquire means of strategic significance, economic appeal and physical accessibility develop, while the places devoid of urban investment and interest regress more and more. The inequalities between cities manifest similarly inside the cities as well. And the arts and cultural practices may unwittingly serve these inequalities.

The cultural ecosystem's role in the materialisation and escalation of these inequalities manifests in two different ways. Firstly, as mentioned above, cultural professionals devoid of the public authorities' financial and technical assistance might have to live in relatively poor neighbourhoods of the city in order to sustain their lives and artistic work. Over time, spaces catering to these groups begin to be opened in the districts where artists gradually cluster. The increasing interest of the artists and related financial initiatives starts to boost the real estate prices in these neighbourhoods. This process called gentrification signifies the physical and economic transformation of the poor districts. The derelict areas of the past are gradually transformed with the interest of the avant-garde artists and students followed by the upper-middle classes, which begins to impose a living cost that cannot be afforded by the former residents of the district. The transformation gains speed as these groups are forced to leave their districts which increases the possibility of the real estate changing hands. Even though this is a different form of the urban transformation process brought on by the influence of arts and cultural initiatives rather than the direct intervention of public authorities, it is similar in terms of the consequences of this process, which is widely discussed by the urban population that has been diversified through such dynamics. Over time, the urban spaces inhabited by the poor go through a gentrification that they cannot afford.

Cultural policies should adopt an approach that pays heed to their effects on the city in this sense as well. While overseeing the civilising and transformative services of the policies in urban life, their effects on the life conditions of different social segments should also be considered.

We can turn to İzmir for an experience wherein the cultural activities are carried out in harmony with the neighbours. In the Umurbey neighbourhood of İzmir, an artists collective, which calls itself Darağaç in reference to the old name of the neighbourhood, seems to have been successful in not triggering a gentrification process in this area where they produce and exhibit their works. "Due to the yet to mature galleries, the recently opened artists workshops and the shortcomings of the exhibition spaces in İzmir", the young artists aiming to reach "a common discourse and a space where they can display their works" have managed to not be an instrument in the gentrification of the neighbourhood, owing to the close personal relationships they have established with the locals of the

district.[118] The collective describes Darağaç as a place where "everyday conversations by the doorsteps turn into art events; the locals become the artists and the artists become the audience". It is an example that can inspire local cultural policies as it reveals the transformation potential of the cultural ecosystem without radically transforming the immediate environment.

Cultural policies that are not devised properly also run the risk of leading to an unjust transformation of the cities due to the field's connection with tourism. The name of the relevant ministry (Ministry of Culture and Tourism) that obliges the two fields to be considered together underlines the cultural events' role in the promotion of a place. Due to this approach, rather than cater to the city residents, arts and culture events may end up being devised to promote the region in other cities and countries. The resources allocated to events garnering national and international interest are justified with the revenue to be obtained from the tourists who will come to the city to attend these events. Thus, cultural policies are seen as a promotion and public relations activity targeting nonlocals and trivialising the question of how the locals will benefit from these events. This, in turn, causes the transformation of certain parts of the city to cater to the needs and expectations of the tourists visiting the area for a short period of time, rather than those of the settled population. Just like the drawing rooms of the past, which were used only when entertaining guests, the touristic areas that emerge in the city are unjustly transformed and become inaccessible to the locals.

The simplest way to overcome this unjust transformation effect of the cultural policies is to strengthen the city's relationship with its inhabitants, rather than promote the city to the tourists. This is a more urgent necessity in the cities that have been receiving an influx of migration since the 1950s. In order to survive in the city of their arrival, migrants have to join informal solidarity networks of kinship originating from the towns they have left behind. Therefore, their relationship with the history, values, and spaces of the place they live in remains limited, and the city turns into a fragmented geography with different cultural ghettos. To overcome this fragmentated state that also impedes the development of the ability to live together, which we describe as civilisation, the promotion activities

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118 Darağaç Kolektif (Darağaç Collective), "Hakkımızda" [About Us], daragac.com/hakkimizda/.

dedicated to tourism should be transformed and channelled towards the local population of the city. This approach, which has recently become visible in practices such as city museums, information boards, and walking maps, needs to be urgently addressed in terms of cultural policies as well.

An inspiring experience in this regard is "The Towns Belong to the Children" project, which we heard about during our field research in Diyarbakır but found out that it is being implemented in other cities since 2003 as well. Launched in 2007 by the Diyarbakır Association for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets (DKVD), which was founded in 1996, and the Foundation for the Protection and Promotion of the Environment and Cultural Heritage (ÇEKÜL), the project entails visits to museums, archaeological sites, handcrafts ateliers, and nature excursions organised with children aged 9-13 who are selected especially from disadvantaged social segments aiming to acquaint them with the city where they live by actually seeing and feeling it.[119] The children, who participate in artistic trainings such as ceramics, model making and painting workshops, receive "cultural envoy" certificates at the end of the project.[120] In the words of the association chair whom we spoke with during the field research, "the transformation of random walls into historical city walls in the eyes of the young and old city residents" summarises the great potential of cultural policies in strengthening the townspeople's sense of belonging to the city they live in.

In conclusion, the transformative services of the cultural ecosystem include policies that serve individual development as of young ages, help cope with the consequences of disasters, are effective in the development of ecological sensitivities, the transformation of the physical environment and the strengthening of the sense of belonging to it. A consistent cultural policy can be established by heeding to this important potential of culture in transforming us and our habitat through cultural activities planned by clearly naming the anticipated transformation. Otherwise, all this potential might be wasted, or worse yet, serve the opposite purposes.

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119 The project implemented by ÇEKÜL since 2003 continues in other cities albeit not in Diyarbakır. cekulvakfi.org.tr/proje/kentler-cocuklarindir.

120 Diyarbakır Association for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets (DKVD), "The Towns Belong to the Children," www.dkvd.org/projects/the-towns-belong-to-the-children.

7   Recommendations and Conclusion

In the light of the findings of the hundreds of interviews and three sets of surveys we conducted in tens of cities within the scope of the research that this report is based on, we can claim that the cities of Türkiye have rich and dynamic cultural lives but are devoid of a clear normative framework, institutional management, and long-term planning that are required for this dynamism to evolve into a systematic, consistent, and sustainable public policy.

There is no doubt that particularly the public authorities allocate significant sources and tools to culture, however, the lack of principles and targets to ground these efforts prevents the emergence of a consistent public policy. The cultural events that are usually shaped by personal preferences and relationships weaken the democratic quality of the relevant decision-making and execution processes as well. This dominant structure and operation of the cultural event organisation hinders the employment of the civilising and transformative potential of the cultural ecosystem that we have discussed in detail. However, we have witnessed in many of the cities we visited that CSOs, independent art initiatives, and artists, despite their limited resources, create innovative and inspiring works in their respective fields of focus. In order for the public resources to be used more consistently and democratically and to reveal the potential of the cultural field, it is essential to pave the way for CSOs to play more active roles in the decision-making and management processes pertaining to culture.

To establish such collaborations, which can transcend short-term considerations and relationships geared towards elections and the use of political power, and enable the transfer of the required vision and experience to the management for the more efficient use of the resources, we may summarise what the municipalities can do within the landscape presented by this report as follows:

Even if local governments appropriate significant resources to culture, the arbitrariness and ambiguity of budget processes make it difficult to monitor financial management. In view of the principle of accountability, the budgets allocated to culture need to be regularly shared with the public.

Due to personal and political relationships, the adopted local cultural management is devoid of the expertise and experience required by the field. In order to develop a new cultural management model, firstly the units working on culture should be given the importance they deserve, the management responsibility should be assigned to capable hands, and the in-service training of personnel in the relevant units should not be neglected.

In conformity with their political responsibilities, the final decision-makers and administrators should include the arts and culture CSOs in the management process. There is a visible need to establish committees that are influential in the decisions; relevant cultural professionals and experts should sit in these committees and organise the management processes in line with the needs and priorities of the field and the public.

It should be borne in mind that the role of local governments does not consist merely of direct procurement but that they are also responsible for supporting the activities of the independent cultural initiatives whose numbers and activities increase by the day. The most crucial aspect of this support is to ensure that the cultural professionals can perform their artistic activities freely. It is essential that in the process of execution, the offices representing a political view maintain equal distance from all disciplines, opinions, and approaches; respect everyone's freedom of expression and production; and exert the necessary effort to protect these freedoms.

To ensure the compliance of public services with the principle of equality and prevent any violation of respect for cultural diversity, it is of utmost importance for the funds to be distributed transparently by independent expert committees and in view of objective principles determined by international standards.

Incentive and informative mechanisms should be designed in order to draw the interest of a wider audience in the cultural activities offered by local governments. Beyond the number of activities, it is important to strive towards increasing the participation of especially the disadvantaged groups in the services being offered.

Creating spaces to organise activities in different regions of the city beyond the central venues, designing the cultural venues in adherence to the universal principles of accessibility, and developing partnerships with the arts and culture CSOs that are familiar with the given environment to plan and manage the activities in these spaces will be important steps towards the democratisation of culture.

Recognising that cultural activities have meaning and function beyond recreational public relations events is of critical importance particularly for the local governments which are rooted in the fellowship of townspeople. The sense of belonging to one's locality, the sense of community to be built by fostering relationships among people who share the space holds great significance in terms of the urban culture. Planning cultural activities by giving heed to their functions of belonging, encounter, and dialogue and devising cultural policies towards this aim is of critical importance also in terms of the principles of multicultural and peaceful urbanity.

It should be kept in mind that cultural policies have the potential to transform the individual and the environment they live in. The utilisation of this potential is vital particularly for the cognitive development of children and for more liveable and safer cities. There is a pressing need to make long-term cultural policy plans, set out realistic and scientific targets to this end, ensure the activities and venues are devised accordingly, and create grounds and opportunities of collaboration with artists as well as expert individuals and organisations.

It might be naïve to expect the municipalities to take the aforementioned steps for a consistent cultural policy on their own. Arts and culture CSOs also have important responsibilities to enable such a political transformation. In light of the report findings, we may enumerate the roles that the civil society can assume in this process as follows:

Even though their essential focus is cultural events, the arts and culture CSOs should put their advocacy efforts on their agenda

for the emergence of consistent local cultural policies. Instead of regarding politics merely as an everyday power struggle and shunning it, they should view it as a social ground that their existence rests upon and be involved in the field by transcending ideological and partisan disputes.

Clearly, such an involvement needs to have a collective character beyond individual initiatives. In this respect, it is of great importance for arts and culture CSOs to come together without waiting for an occasion or invitation from the local governments and get collectively involved in the cultural policies through joint platforms.

The existence of civil platforms will also change the grounds of collaboration that runs through especially mayor-focused personal relationships imposed by the current political habits. The grounds of partnership that individual arts and culture CSOs try to establish on their own inevitably result in the reproduction and ossification of the antidemocratic and personalised connections. The existence of collective platforms has the potential to enable the establishment of the grounds of partnership that transcend personal relationships.

The goal of democratising the operation of the municipalities can be realistic only if the independent arts and culture organisations can also evaluate themselves through this perspective. Democratising the decision-making and management processes by surpassing the organisation and/ or community powers concentrated in a single person, or a small group is the responsibility of the civil society as much as the public authorities. It is imperative to have processes that diagnose the democratic failings and problems of the structures and operations through a critical perspective.

There is a flagrant need to take steps towards adopting a transparent management particularly in financial matters and share up-to-date and transparent information regarding financial collaborations and initiatives with the community members and the public at large.

The fact that project-based activities, which preponderate the funding of events, depend on the agenda and conditions of the funders causes the priorities of the arts and culture CSOs to take the back seat and blur over time. Therefore, alternative sources of financial support should be diversified, and grounds and practices should be developed to receive the backing of local persons and institutions.

For cultural justice, it is of critical importance to strive to ensure that arts and cultural activities in the cities are not limited to city centres but are provided to all social segments in line with universal principles of accessibility.

It should be borne in mind that the arts and culture CSOs to determine their targeted long-term personal, social, urban, and political transformation and to plan their activities with a long-range vision beyond single cultural events will be an important element in the emergence of inclusive cultural policies on the local level.

In brief, for the rich and dynamic cultural lives of our cities to also be reflected in the cultural policies to be developed on the local level, there is need for a long-term and consistent perspective in the identification of targets to this end, and the planning and management of the provided services. It is not realistic to think that this perspective will emerge spontaneously or that it can be provided by a certain person or institution. It seems not only possible but also crucial to collaboratively devise the required vision by bringing together the potentials of this field where such diverse and numerous cultural workers and organisations operate.

Suggesting a model and method that may be functional for such a transformation is not only beyond the limits of our study, where we contented ourselves with identifying and analysing the problems and demonstrating the character of the required interventions, but would also be a denial of the requirements of the cultural diversity in Türkiye. Rather than a roadmap that enumerates the things to be done, we would like this report to be seen as an assessment that points at the starting point for rethinking cultural policies.

ANNEX 1 List of Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews

Tarih	Şehir	Kurum
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Diyarbakır Association for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets (DKVD)
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi (Diyarbakır Arts Centre - DSM)
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Amed Şehir Tiyatrosu (Amed City Theatre)
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Merkezkaç Sanat Kolektifi (Merkezkaç Art Collective)
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Loading
11.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Mordem Sanat ve Ekolojik Yaşam Derneği (Mordem Art and Ecological Life Association)
12.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Wejegeh Amed
12.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DTSO)
12.03.2023	Diyarbakır	A4 Atölye (A4 Atelier)
12.03.2023	Diyarbakır	Diyarbakır Siyasal ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Enstitüsü (DİSA)
13.03.2023	Tunceli	Hozat Municipality
13.03.2023	Tunceli	Tunceli Municipality
14.03.2023	Malatya	Malatya Provincial Directorate of Culture
14.03.2023	Malatya	Malatya Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture
14.03.2023	Adıyaman	Mersin Metropolitan Municipality Disaster Coordination Centre
14.03.2023	Adıyaman	İhtiyaç Haritası (Needs Map)
15.03.2023	Gaziantep	Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture and Tourism
15.03.2023	Gaziantep	Kırkayak Kültür (Kırkayak Culture)
15.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Nurhak Çevre Derneği

		(Nurhak Environmental Association)
15.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Nurhak Municipality
15.03.2023	Adıyaman	Gölbaşı Disaster Coordination Centre
16.03.2023	Gaziantep	Nar Sanat (Nar Art)
16.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality
16.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Kaf Kolektif (Kaf Collective)
16.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Chamber of Architects
16.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Disaster Coordination Centre
16.03.2023	Kahramanmaraş	İhtiyaç Haritası (Needs Map)
17.03.2023	Hatay	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Disaster Coordination Centre
17.03.2023	Hatay	İhtiyaç Haritası (Needs Map)
17.03.2023	Hatay	Hatay Academy Orchestra
17.03.2023	Hatay	Mustafa Kemal University Department of Archaeology
17.03.2023	Hatay	Van Tuşba Kent Tiyatrosu (Van Tuşba City Theatre)
17.03.2023	Hatay	Hatay Deprem Dayanışması (Hatay Earthquake Solidarity)
17.03.2023	Hatay	Ali İsmail Korkmaz Foundation (ALİKEV)
18.03.2023	Hatay	Hatay Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Culture Art and Theatres
19.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin Chamber Chorus / Mediterranean Opera and Ballet Club Association (AKOB)
19.03.2023	Mersin	D5 Sanat Ortamı (D5 Art Space)
19.03.2023	Mersin	Çözümsel Sanat Topluluğu (Analytic Art Group)
19.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin University Faculty of Fine Arts (GSF) Department of Sculpture
19.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin Sinefil Sinema Derneği (Mersin Cinephile Cinema Association)

20.03.2023	Mersin	Yenişehir Municipality Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs
20.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs
20.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin Metropolitan Municipality Department of Urban Participation and Civil Society Relations
20.03.2023	Mersin	İçel Sanat Kulübü (İçel Art Club)
20.03.2023	Mersin	Mezitli Municipality Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs
20.03.2023	Mersin	Mersin International Music Festival / Mersin Sanat Etkinlikleri Derneği (Mersin Association of Art Activities)
21.03.2023	Konya	Konya Tourism Agency
21.03.2023	Konya	Selçuklu Congress Centre
21.03.2023	Konya	Selçuklu Municipality Art Academy
21.03.2023 Theatres	Konya	Konya Metropolitan Municipality City
21.03.2023	Konya	Çınar Sanat Atölyesi Derneği (Çınar Art Workshop Association)
22.03.2023	Konya	Konya Metropolitan Municipality Social Innovation Agency
22.03.2023	Konya	Konya State Theatre
22.03.2023	Konya	Selçuklu Municipality Yeni Nesil Şehir Kütüphanesi (New Generation City Library)
12.04.2023	Ordu	Gülyalı Municipality
12.04.2023	Ordu	Ordu Taşbaşı Sanat Alanı (Ordu Taşbaşı Space for Art) / Ordu Plastik Sanatlar Derneği (Ordu Plastic Arts Association)
12.04.2023	Ordu	Ordu Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture, Tourism Art
12.04.2023	Ordu	Serüven Kitap-Kafe Kültür Sanat Merkezi (Serüven Book-Cafe Culture and Art Centre)
13.04.2023	Ordu	111Film
24.04.2023	İzmir	İzmir Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture and Art

24.04.2023	İzmir	Teos Kültür Sanat Derneği (Teos Arts and Culture Association) / İzmir Kültür Platformu Girişimi (İzmir Culture Platform Initiative)
24.04.2023	İzmir	Karantina
24.04.2023	İzmir	Darağaç Collective
24.04.2023	İzmir	Bir Arada Yaşarız Eğitim ve Toplumsal Araştırmalar Vakfı (We Live Together: Education and Social Research Foundation - BAYETAV)
25.04.2023	İzmir	Selçuk Efes Kent Belleği (Selçuk Ephesus Urban Memory Centre)
25.04.2023	İzmir	Selçuk Municipality Directorate of Culture
25.04.2023	İzmir	İzmir Foundation for Culture Arts and Education (İKSEV)
25.04.2023	İzmir	K2 Güncel Sanat Merkezi (K2 Contemporary Art Centre)
25.04.2023	İzmir	Atölye Deneme Sanat ve Ekoloji Derneği Association of Art and Ecology)
26.04.2023	İzmir	İzmir Development Agency
26.04.2023	İzmir	Sarı Denizaltı (Yellow Submarine) / Odeon Pergamon
27.04.2023	Bursa	Caféturc Music & Arts
27.04.2023	Bursa	Bursa Culture, Arts and Tourism Foundation
27.04.2023	Bursa	Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture and Social Affairs
27.04.2023	Bursa	Senfoni Mızıkacıları (Symphony Musicians)
28.04.2023	Bursa	ÇEK Sanat (ÇEK Art)
28.04.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs
28.04.2023	Bursa	İmalat-Hane
28.04.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer Municipality Meteor Art Gallery
28.04.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer City Council
28.04.2023	Bursa	Çalı Köy Filmleri Festivali (Çalı Village Films Festival)

ANNEX 2 List of Focus Group Meetings

Tarih	Şehir	Kurum
01.06.2023	Ankara	Çağdaş Drama Derneği Bursa Temsilciliği (Contemporary Drama Association Bursa Office)
01.06.2023	Balıkesir	Ayvalık Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı (Ayvalık Foundation for Culture and Arts - AKSV)
01.06.2023	Balıkesir	Seyir Kültür Sanat Derneği (Seyir Association of Culture and Art)
01.06.2023	Bursa	Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Department of Culture and Social Affairs
01.06.2023	Bursa	Bursa Culture, Arts and Tourism Foundation
01.06.2023	Bursa	Caféturc Music & Arts
01.06.2023	Bursa	ÇEK Sanat (ÇEK Art)
01.06.2023	Bursa	Etnomüzikoloji Derneği (Association of Ethnomusicology) / Bursa Uludağ University State Conservatory
01.06.2023	Bursa	İmalat-Hane
01.06.2023	Bursa	Kültürakt
01.06.2023	Bursa	Müzikist
01.06.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer Municipality Meteor Art Gallery
01.06.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer Municipality Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs
01.06.2023	Bursa	Nilüfer City Council
01.06.2023	Bursa	Senfoni Mızıkacıları (Symphony Musicians)
01.06.2023	Çanakkale	Bir Tohum Vakfı (One Seed Foundation)
01.06.2023	Çanakkale	Troya Kültür Derneği (Troy Culture Association / Troia Vakfı (Troia Foundation)
01.06.2023	Çanakkale	ÇATKAV - Çanakkale Tarih ve Kültür Vakfı (Çanakkale History and Culture Foundation)
02.06.2023	Aydın	KUSAV - Kuşadası Altın Güvercin Kültür Sanat ve Tanıtım Vakfı (Kuşadası Golden Pigeon Culture Art and Promotion Foundation)

02.06.2023	Aydın	Germencik Municipality
02.06.2023	Aydın	KUKSET - Kuşadası Eğitim Kültürü Sanat Spor ve Turizm Derneği (Kuşadası Education Culture Art Sports and Tourism Association)
02.06.2023	Aydın	Kuşadası Municipality
02.06.2023	Bursa	Çocuk Hakları Kültür Sanat Derneği (Children's Rights Culture and Art Association)
02.06.2023	İzmir	Atölye Deneme Sanat ve Ekoloji Derneği (Association of Art and Ecology)
02.06.2023	İzmir	BAYETAV Art
02.06.2023	İzmir	Bornova Municipality
02.06.2023	İzmir	Darağaç Collective Association
02.06.2023	İzmir	Dikili Municipality
02.06.2023	İzmir	İzmir Metropolitan Municipality
02.06.2023	İzmir	İzmir Development Agency
02.06.2023	İzmir	İzmir Kent Değerlerini Koruma ve Geliştirme Derneği - Kentimiz İzmir (Conservation and Development of City Values Association of Izmir – Our City İzmir)
02.06.2023	İzmir	K2 Güncel Sanat Merkezi (K2 Contemporary Art Centre)
02.06.2023	İzmir	Karabağlar Municipality
02.06.2023	İzmir	Selçuk Municipality
02.06.2023	İzmir	Teos Arts and Culture Association (Teos Arts and Culture Association) / Konserve İnisiyatifi (Konserve Initiative)/ İzmir Kültür Platformu Girişimi (İzmir Culture Platform Initiative)
02.06.2023	İzmir	Urla Sanat Rotası Derneği (Urla Art Route Association)
02.06.2023	İzmir	Yerdeniz Kitapçısı (Yerdeniz Bookstore)
02.06.2023	Manisa	Akhisar Sinema Derneği (Akhisar Cinema Association)
02.06.2023	Muğla	Bodrum Municipality

02.06.2023	Muğla	Komünite Bodrum (Kolektif Bodrum Derneği) (Collective Bodrum Association)
14.06.2023	Ankara	Anadolu Müzik Kültürleri Derneği (Association of Anatolian Music Cultures)
14.06.2023	Ankara	Kültür Sanat ve Göç Etkinlikleri Merkezi Derneği (Association of Culture Arts and Migration Studies Centre) / ETHOS Ankara Uluslararası Tiyatro Festivali (ETHOS Ankara International Theatre Festival)
14.06.2023	Ankara	Flying Broom Foundation
14.06.2023	Eskişehir	Eldem Kültür Sanat Eğitim Vakfı (EKSAV – Eldem Culture Art Education Foundation)
14.06.2023	Eskişehir	Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality
14.06.2023	Eskişehir	Eskişehir Society and Art Association (ETOS)
14.06.2023	Eskişehir	Toy Gençlik Derneği (Toy Youth Association)
14.06.2023	Karaman	Çınar Sanat Atölyesi Derneği (Çınar Art Atelier Association)
14.06.2023	Konya	Karaman Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism
14.06.2023	Konya	Karatay Municipality
14.06.2023	Konya	Konya Metropolitan Municipality Social Innovation Agency
14.06.2023	Konya	Konya Kültür AŞ (Konya Culture Inc.)
14.06.2023	Konya	Necmettin Erbakan University / Türkiye Dil ve Edebiyat Derneği (Language and Literature Association of Türkiye)
14.06.2023	Konya	Selçuklu Municipality Art Academy
14.06.2023	Konya	Selçuklu Congress Centre
14.06.2023	Yozgat	Sinema Okuryazarları Derneği (Cinema Literates Association)
15.06.2023	Adana	Adana Metropolitan Municipality Golden Boll Film Festival
15.06.2023	Adana	Adana Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Culture

15.06.2023	Adana	Çukurova University Faculty of Communication
15.06.2023	Antalya	Muratpaşa Municipality
15.06.2023	Hatay	Füsun Sayek Association for the Development of Health and Education
15.06.2023	Hatay	Hatay Senfoni Orkestrası Kültür ve Sanat Derneği (Hatay Symphony Orchestra Culture and Arts Association)
15.06.2023	Kahramanmaraş	Kaf Collective
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mediterranean Opera and Ballet Club Association (AKOB)
15.06.2023	Mersin	D5 Sanat Ortamı (D5 Art Space)
15.06.2023	Mersin	Kültürhane
15.06.2023	Mersin	Maya Eğitim Kültür Araştırma Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği (Maya Education Culture Research and Solidarity Association)
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin Alzheimer Derneği (Mersin Alzheimer Association)
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Urban Participation and Civil Society Relations
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin Sanat Etkinlikleri Derneği (Mersin Association of Art Activities)
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin Sinefil Sinema Derneği (Mersin Cinephile Cinema Association)
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin International Music Festival
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mersin University Faculty of Fine Arts (GSF) Department of Sculpture
15.06.2023	Mersin	Mezitli Municipality
19.06.2023	Istanbul	Akbank Sanat (Akbank Art)
19.06.2023	Ordu	111film
19.06.2023	Ordu	Güzel Ordu Derneği (Beautiful Ordu Association)
19.06.2023	Ordu	Ordu Metropolitan Municipality

19.06.2023	Ordu	Ordu Final Okulları (Ordu Final Schools)
19.06.2023	Ordu	Ordu Taşbaşı Sanat Alanı (Ordu Taşbaşı Space for Art) / Ordu Plastik Sanatlar Derneği (Ordu Plastic Arts Association)
19.06.2023	Ordu	Ordu University / Yazarlar ve Şairler Derneği (Association of Writers and Poets)/ Karadeniz Çevre Platformu (Black Sea Environment Platform)
19.06.2023	Ordu	Serüven Kitap-Kafe Kültür Sanat Merkezi (Serüven Book-Cafe Culture and Art Centre)
19.06.2023	Rize	Fındıklı Municipality
19.06.2023	Rize	Gola Culture, Art and Ecology Association
19.06.2023	Sinop	Sinop Denizci Otel (Sinop Denizci Hotel)
19.06.2023	Sinop	Sinop Municipality
19.06.2023	Sinop	Sinop Sustainable Development Association / Sinopale
19.06.2023	Trabzon	Oğuz Mahallesi Üretici Kadınlar Dayanışma Derneği (Women Producers Solidarity Association of Oğuz Neighbourhood)
22.06.2023	Batman	Batman Proje ve Mobilite Derneği (Batman Project and Mobility Association)
22.06.2023	Batman	Şermola Performans Batman
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	A4 Atölye (A4 Atelier)
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Amed City Theatre / Ma Music
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Amed Underground
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Çocuk İçin Sanat İnisiyatifi (Art Initiative for Children)
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	DKVD - Diyarbakır Association for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	DSM - Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi (Diyarbakır Arts Centre)
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DTSO)
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Loading
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Merkezkaç Sanat Kolektifi (Merkezkaç Art Collective)

22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Mordem Sanat ve Ekolojik Yaşam Derneği (Mordem Art and Ecological Life Association)
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Children First Association
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Swing Amed
22.06.2023	Diyarbakır	Wejegeh Amed
22.06.2023	Gaziantep	Ga Toplum ve Kültür Merkezi (Ga Society and Culture Centre)
22.06.2023	Gaziantep	Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality
22.06.2023	Gaziantep	Nefes Foundation for Arts and Culture
22.06.2023	Kilis	Kilis Municipality
22.06.2023	Mardin	13 Metrekare Sanat Kolektifi (13 Meter Square Art Collective)
22.06.2023	Mardin	Artuklu University Faculty of Architecture
22.06.2023	Mardin	Ro-Graf Fotoğraf Derneği (Ro-Graf Photography Association)
23.06.2023	Elazığ	Almila Art Association
23.06.2023	Elazığ	Fi Sanat (Fi Art)
23.06.2023	Elazığ	Piyes Tiyatro (Piyes Theatre)
23.06.2023	Kars	Kars Sinema Topluluğu (Kars Cinema Group)
23.06.2023	Tunceli	Tunceli Municipality
23.06.2023	Tunceli	Tunceli Sinema 62 (Tunceli Cinema 62)
23.06.2023	Tunceli	Munzur University Department of Performing Arts
23.06.2023	Van	Chalak Events
23.06.2023	Van	Nöbetçi Oyuncular (Nöbetçi Oyuncular Theatre Company)
23.06.2023	Van	Sahne Sanatları Alanı (Space for Performing Arts)
23.06.2023	Van	Üvercinka Kültür Sanat (Üvercinka Culture and Art)
23.06.2023	Van	Van Regional Theatre

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Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) is a non-profit cultural institution. Since 1973, the Foundation has continued its efforts to support the advancement of culture and the arts in Istanbul. İKSV regularly organises the Istanbul Festivals of Music, Film, Theatre and Jazz, the Istanbul Biennial, Leyla Gencer Voice Competition and autumn film week Filmekimi. At the Nejat Eczacıbaşı Building, the Foundation hosts concerts at its performance venue Salon İKSV and offers creative events for children and youngsters at İKSV Alt Kat.

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