

GEORGIA

Short cultural policy profile

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1. Fact and figures

- **Political system:** parliamentary republic with a single chamber parliament
- **Official language:** Georgian. In the territory of Abkhazia there are two official languages – Georgian and Abkhazian.

	2021	2016
Population on January 1st	3 728 600	3 720 400
GDP in million EUR	15 797	13 682
GDP per capita EUR	4 237	3 670
General government expenditure (in % of GDP)	31.44%	28.37%
Public cultural expenditure EUR	54 856 420	60 638 282
Public cultural expenditure as % of GDP*	0.35%	0.34%
Public cultural expenditure per Capita EUR	14.71	N/A
Share of cultural employment of total employment	N/A	5.2%

Sources: Population on January 1st, latest data available /<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data-browser/view/tps00001/default/table?lang=en>

Sources: : GDP in million EUR, latest data available <https://countryeconomy.com/countries/georgia/>

Sources: Share of cultural employment of total employment - UNESCO “Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) for Georgia”, 2017; Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection 2017.

2. Cultural policy system

2.1 Objectives

Decree N 303 of the Government of Georgia, a modern and long-term document stating the Georgian national cultural policy, “Culture Strategy 2025” (approved on July 1, 2016) provided for the first time in Georgian state history such a strategic document. The strategy is an attempt to select a cultural policy model that will aid its systematic and sustainable development. It consists of following elements:

- Strategic long-term planning
- Integrated approaches
- Mobilizing resources
- Monitoring
- Vision based on the balance of both global and local

The strategy development process was implemented in close cooperation with the European Union and was assessed positively by the European Union and the Council of Europe. The Culture Strategy aims to define a long-term vision for the development of culture and the creative sector in order to underline their value for and importance to national identity, social unity and sustainable development of the country. Based on the consultation, 8 main Strategic Goals were identified:

1. Awareness Raising and Education
2. Access to Culture and Cultural Diversity
3. Culture and Other Key Areas
4. Funding of Culture
5. Cultural Infrastructure and New Technologies
6. Creative Industries
7. Internationalization of Culture
8. Principles of the Governance of Culture

In 2021, the Georgian Dream government reorganized the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and in 2022, the Ministry declared the following goals in the State Budget:

- Public policy development and programme management in the culture, sport and youth field
- Infrastructure development
- Protection of cultural heritage and enhancement of the museum system
- Promotion of culture

During 2021 and 2022, the personnel policy of the new Ministry underwent significant changes, especially in the reorganization of the museum management system, which led to many lawsuits from the dismissed professional staff.

2.2 Main features

Main concepts

2015 – A stage of intensive and systematic development of cultural strategy started and the use of expert methods was intensified to reflect three types of activities required for setting the standard for a new cultural policy:

- Determination of cultural values, priorities and goals;
- Development and implementation of initiatives, actions and financing programmes;
- Policy monitoring.

Before the adoption of the “Culture Strategy 2025” only the second activity was prioritised. Despite the annual declaration of priorities and goals by the Ministry of Culture since 2004, systemising values and strategic vision had always been a weakness of the state, and monitoring had not been considered a significant part of the cultural policy. Therefore, the Georgian national cultural policy, “Culture Strategy 2025”, was the first strategic document in the cultural sphere.

Achieving “Culture Strategy 2025” goals will create an environment in which:

1. The value of culture and creativity is recognized by society, and they are integrated into every level of education;
2. Culture is accessible to every member of society, regardless of location, and cultural diversity is protected and maintained;
3. Culture and creativity are seen as an integral part of the country's development, which creates additional innovative opportunities to strengthen other sectors and contributes to the sustainability and well-being of Georgia;
4. Cultural employment is attractive and adequately valued;
5. Cultural infrastructure meets people's needs and provides them with modern, high-quality products and services;
6. Funding for culture is stable, and funding mechanisms are diverse and transparent;
7. Cultural policy is research-based; an open and transparent political process involves professionals and a broad cross-section of society;

8. Culture and creativity are important sources of jobs, economic growth, and innovation; contribute to a successful environment for individual creative expression

Such a comprehensive strategic document obliges all the main national actors of cultural policy to fulfil and develop the aims and objectives set out. However, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth newly established in 2021 is in practice (in line with Culture Strategy 2025) pursuing a selective paternalistic policy and re-centralizing a system that has been relatively decentralized since 2012. No longer relevant are:

- Decentralization of cultural funding, creation of an independent Culture Fund;
- Transparency and “expert method” policies practiced in the years 2013-2018.

Main actors and financing models

The system of administration includes the following branches of authority:

- Parliament – the legislative power; the parliamentary committee for culture (established in 2020 after the Parliamentary Elections) is responsible for legislation in the cultural sphere and supervision of the executive power
- National government – the executive power; Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth of Georgia (restored under this name in 2021) is responsible for the development of cultural policy.

In line with Georgian legislation, the governments of Abkhazia and Ajara Autonomous Republics have their own Ministries of Culture (which are responsible for programmes within their respective administrative borders).

Municipalities of Georgia represent the lower-level administrative units in Georgia, where local self-government is exercised. The local authorities of administration (municipalities) and self-government (sakrebulo – city or village councils) bear responsibility for cultural activity in the regions.

Local authorities lacking legislative and financial levers for implementation of their own cultural policy (except for big cities -Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, Batumi, capital of Ajara Autonomic Republic), instead implement the cultural policy of the central government.

The most influential are NGOs that collaborate with international donors and networks and play an advisory or lobbying role in the area of culture.

2.4 Historical background for the past 70 years

The principles of democratization and decentralization of culture, support for cultural diversity and preservation of the national identity, which forms the basis of contemporary cultural policy, trace back to the main objectives of the cultural sphere of the First Republic of Georgia (1918-1921).

1950-1960 - Georgia is one of the republics of the Soviet Union, which was formed after the Soviet Russia occupied and annexed the First Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918-1921).

1964 – 1981 – the so-called stagnation of the Brezhnev period is characterized by the development of cultural infrastructure and the building of professional human resources.

1974-1990 – the formation of a national liberation movement, which culminated in the violent suppression of anti-Soviet demonstrations by the Soviet army on April 9, 1989.

April 9, 1991 - the adoption of the Declaration of Independence of Georgia.

The post-Soviet period in the history and cultural development of Georgia is extremely complex:

The first stage (1991-1993) - a period of rebuilding an independent Georgian state characterized by contradictions and dramatic events: the control lost over the South-Ossetian Autonomous Territory; the Tbilisi War; the war in Abkhazia and devastation when the entire state policy was aimed at struggling against centrifugal trends and could not pursue a target-oriented cultural policy; changes were initiated in the framework of the persisting Soviet style system.

The second stage (1994-2003): 1994 -99 - a period of formation of state structures in the territory controlled by the state with a neutrally homogenous policy; formation of a presidential republic, adoption of the Constitution (1995), cooperation with the Council of Europe, UNESCO and other international organizations, 2000-2003 - a period anticipating the foundation of a decentralization policy.

The third period (2003-2012) (23.11.2003 - Rose Revolution) is marked by an intensification of centralized power, a weakening of self-governing institutions, self-censorship of the mass media and, consequently, a growth in the role of the state structures (Ministry of Culture and Cultural Heritage) in financing and administration of cultural policy.

With the Georgian Dream party coming to power in 2012, the hugely centralized system of rule by Mikheil Saakashvili and the National Movement party was somewhat decentralized, and the expert methods used in 2013 marked a turning point

in the development of cultural policy and were applied until 2021. In 2014, the EU-Georgia Association Agreement was signed. 2015-2017 - the first Culture Strategy 2025 was developed and adopted with EU participation.

2021 - The Georgian Dream government reorganized the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

3. Current cultural affairs

3.1 Key developments

The coalition "Georgian Dream", which won the parliamentary elections in October 2012, formed a new cabinet of ministers. Respectively, the new leadership of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection started to develop a new strategy of cultural policy. In 2016 the strategic document Culture Strategy 2025 was adopted. The formulation of the Strategic Goals and the sub-goals therein is of an integrative nature, which is an obvious innovation in the practice of cultural policy in Georgia.

Specific tasks (Chapter III: Sector-specific Tasks) are based on traditional forms of art and culture.

This section of the document was based only on those expert opinions that were collected by the Ministry in the process of developing the Strategy (no strategies and full-scale research on the forms of art were available). Accordingly, the need for scientific, statistical research for the development of sub-strategies for each form of culture was declared. The development of sub-strategies began with the implementation of the 2017-2018 Action Plan for Implementation of the Culture Strategy. Despite a promising start, no significant steps were been taken towards strategy development and implementation in 2018-2021. No changes were made in the culture funding model and diversification of financial resources, or in the implementation of the principle of "good governance" and full integration of culture in other industries in the context of sustainable development.

One of the reasons for this stagnation was probably the lack of interest of the political elite in the tumultuous processes of cultural reform. In 2018-2020, the Ministry of Culture as a separate institution was abolished and the sphere of culture was governed by a single Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports.

Constitutional reforms and a transition to a parliamentary republic were implemented in 2018-2020. The political struggle in the run-up to the 2020 parliamentary elections was extremely tense and culture was not a priority in the public debate.

In 2020, COVID-19 created a new reality that had the greatest impact on culture.

As a result of the world pandemic, it has become necessary to gradually restrict mass cultural and sports activities in Georgia.

During the state of emergency, in order to provide access to cultural services for those staying at home, art institutions under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia started the mass online campaign #stayathome #cultureforyou.

Despite calls from the cultural sector to develop an anti-crisis plan (following the example of some European countries) to support culture in general and free artists in particular, the state only supported state cultural institutions - according to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (the minister's summing up address of 27.12.2020) "... all public sector jobs in the cultural sector were preserved and the Ministry allocated additional resources for the full functioning of the cultural organizations subordinate to the Ministry" (Culture Support Programme budget :2020 Plan -70,899.0 GEL).

Accordingly, the main goal of the government programme for 2021-2024 - "Towards Building a European State" (published in December 2020) was declared:

"To overcome the crisis created by the pandemic, thereby ensuring a rapid recovery and development of the economy to create a stable and secure environment for every citizen."

The following was again declared in the field of culture: "State programmes and initiatives promoting the development of arts and culture will be continued and expanded in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the Culture Strategy through 2025. Legislation regulating the arts and culture will be improved, including legislation in the field of cultural heritage. A flexible arts and culture management model will be established, which will be approximated to European standards and an effective funding mechanism."

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth newly formed in 2021, on which great hopes were pinned, has formally declared its commitment to the priorities of the Cultural Strategy 2020-2025. However, while implementing in practice a policy of

recentralization, it actively reforms the sphere of cultural heritage in general and the National Museum of Georgia in particular, does not base its decisions on expert methods and does not take into account best scientific practices. The mass dismissal of professionals from the system has caused controversy among the public and several lawsuits have been won against the Ministry related to the professional discrediting of dismissed scientists.

3.2 Key themes

The last and most important challenges for Georgia, as well as for the world, was the crisis associated with the COVID 19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

During Covid 19, problems were identified in the legislative framework of Culture defining economic, social and labour rights, including the lack of free artist status; as a result, free artists are considered unemployed and the meagre state aid measures do not apply to them. A common problem has been the inability of the state to make quick and flexible decisions in force majeure situations. In particular: pandemics, lockdowns and strict bans have affected freelancers and representatives of non-state and private cultural institutions/enterprises most severely. However, the special governmental anti-crisis measures (programs, funds, subsidies, tax exemptions, etc.) were not extended to them. With few exceptions, the lockdown has caused not only economic but significant socio-psychological damage to the field as a whole, and especially to members of the performing arts.

Also, the need for more digital development in the creative industries were identified.

For Georgia, both for the state and the people as a whole, the war in Ukraine has become a test of commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration, and at the same time of balanced hospitality due to the huge flow of Russian and Belarusian citizens crossing the border into Georgia. Such a flow is of great concern to the population and experts, since it is fraught with various risks, changing the demographic situation, especially in large cities, which consequently changes the cultural landscape as well.

In this context, a flexible and coherent national strategy for the preservation of cultural diversity, cultural correlation and social integration is particularly important.

Assistance to refugees from Ukraine is also an important issue. Both the state and the population, especially cultural actors, have worked to the greatest extent possible to provide assistance to Ukrainian citizens in Georgia; numerous cultural projects by NGOs and private initiatives are aimed at supporting them.

An important contribution by the Ministry of Education and Science has been the opening of the Ukrainian language sector in schools for refugee children. The Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth also has projects to support them - summer camps were run for Ukrainian children.

As well as external challenges, an important internal topic for discussion is the real policy of the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth, which formally adheres to the priorities stated in the Culture Strategy 2020-2025. However, the lack of transparency, the closed nature of the Ministry and the inadequacy of some decisions taken both in the reform of institutions and personnel policy, and, as a consequence, the deprofessionalisation of the system, especially in the cultural heritage sphere (in 2021-2022, the structure of the Georgian National Museum was fragmented and many professionals were fired), cause conflicting and mostly negative assessments from the professional community.

In 2021, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia was recognized by the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information as the most closed. <https://idfi.ge/> (2022)

Debates about recentralization and selective paternalization, the unrealized diversification of funding for culture, and the failed Culture Fund are ongoing in the media and among NGOs. However, there is no effective influence on the shut-in Ministry. There are precedents of lawsuits against the Ministry, some of which were won by the plaintiffs in the first stages of the proceedings.

Since all these changes are taking place within the ruling of one political force, the Georgian Dream party, they presumably depend to some extent on the background of the top officials too - the humanitarians and art-managers have been replaced by law enforcers (Thea Tsulukiani, the lawyer and former justice minister, who is also Deputy Prime Minister under Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili, former Minister of Interior, was appointed Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth in 2021).

3.3 International Cultural Cooperation

Since regaining independence, Georgia has been active in working with international organizations and is a member of the UN, Council of Europe, European Union, World Tourism Organization, ICCROM, and GUAM, BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation). Georgia participates in the EU Neighborhood Policy.

The Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth of Georgia (in all its modifications) has developed and implemented bilateral and multilateral foreign cultural policies. In

the Culture Strategy 2025 the seventh strategic goal is "Internationalization of Culture". The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also has a responsibility for international cultural cooperation and the protection of Georgian cultural heritage abroad. Both ministries cooperate closely on Euro-Atlantic integration.

There are agreements between Georgia and such international organizations as UNESCO (since 1995), ICROM, ICOM and ICOMOS. Georgia is included in HEREIN, the Participation Programme and the Creative Cities Network (UNESCO). Georgia is also a member of the BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation) working group on culture and European Heritage Days (since 1999).

Georgia has ratified 12 UNESCO conventions (Including the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (ratified in 2008)). Responsibility for the provision and monitoring of the Conventions is carried out by the National Committee of UNESCO, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3 monuments of Georgian cultural heritage are inscribed on the World Heritage List of UNESCO (Historic Monuments of Mtskheta, Upper Svaneti, Gelati Monastery) and 3 Georgian elements are inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Furthermore, Georgia is actively involved in the work of UNESCO for the protection of cultural property in case of armed conflict.

In 2010, Georgia ratified the European Landscape Convention and in 2011 - the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. In 2011 Georgia joined Eurimage. In 2015, Georgia became the first Neighborhood country to join the Creative Europe Programme. In 2016 Georgia joined the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes project and the Ministry became a member of ENCATC. By 2017, Georgia had become a member of IFACCA, EUROPA NOSTRA, Bureau of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape. In 2021 Tbilisi and Batumi joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

In 2021 Tbilisi became the World Book Capital within the framework of the UNESCO World Book Capital programme. In 2021 Georgia was elected as a member of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Self-Expressions

On 23 June, 2022, according to a decision made by the European Council, Georgia was granted European Perspective to become a member of the European Union. It should be granted candidate status once a number of priorities have been addressed.

Georgia will be the focus of Europalia Arts Festival in 2023.

4. Cultural Institutions

4.1 Overview

According to Georgian legislation, cultural organisations (as other organisations) may have three types of legal status – state, private commercial legal entities and nonprofit (non-state) legal entities.

The higher art schools, cultural heritage sites, archives, libraries, museums, most theatres (only a few are NNLEs), symphony orchestras, 3 folk ensembles and the Folk Centre, the Writers’ House, and the Cinema Centre are subordinated to the state (central and municipal authorities.).

Architecture, design, fashion, handicrafts, art galleries, TV and radio (except 2 public broadcasters), film studios, publishing houses, production and advertising firms, gaming, audio and video, multimedia and club industries, contemporary and electronic music fields are privately owned.

The nongovernmental sector more or less covers the areas of cultural heritage and cultural industries. Most of the intellectual resources are concentrated in this sector, but in terms of infrastructure it is still rather poor.

The cultural infrastructure was severely damaged during the hostilities of the 1990s and the economic crisis. Uncontrolled privatization in the 2000s destroyed many cultural heritage sites and disrupted the integrity of the historical city network. At the same time, the restoration and renovation of facilities of national importance (state theatres, higher art schools, churches, etc.) was carried out in cooperation with the state, international donors and the private sector. Often the share of the private sector far exceeded that of public investment. Today, the issue of cultural infrastructure is still acute and budget funds cannot cover its needs.

Art education, especially in the regions, is also facing serious challenges. The law on decentralization has empowered municipalities to implement arts education policies. They are responsible for funding out-of-school arts education. Undoubtedly, the Covid 19, economic and financial crisis, wars, uncontrolled decentralization and general political negligence towards arts education has drastically influenced the general state of arts education in the country thus affecting both the infrastructure (equipment) and human resources. This has resulted in a talent drain of gifted young professionals, especially in the performing arts thus undermining the country’s cultural assets.

"The cultural infrastructure dissemination in Georgia according to the CDIS survey is 0.312. This final result of 0.312 is low for the average indicator of spaces designed for museums, libraries, exhibitions and performing arts in Georgia" (Source: UNESCO "Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) Georgia", 2017). In the Culture Strategy 2025 approved in 2016, this issue is given a strategic role: "Cultural Infrastructure and New Technologies."

4.2 Data on selected public and private cultural institutions

Table 1: Cultural institutions, by sector and domain

Domain	Cultural institutions (sub-domains)	Public sector		Private sector	
		Number (2021)	Number (2016)	Number (2021)	Number (2016)
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage sites (recognized)	7 915	7 915	N/A	N/A
	Complex monuments of national and world value	15	15	-	-
	<i>Archaeological sites</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Museums	Museum institutions	18*	183	216	N/A
Archives	Archive institutions	2**	2	-	N/A
Visual arts	Public art galleries / exhibition halls	1***	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performing arts	Scenic and stable spaces for theatre	29	29	23	N/A
	Concert houses	5	5	-	N/A
	Theatre companies	29	45	23	-
	Dance and ballet companies	5	3	1	N/A
	Symphonic orchestras	4	2	-	-
Libraries	Libraries	1****	1****	N/A	N/A
Audiovisual	Cinemas	1	1	N/A	N/A
	Broadcasting organisations	2	2	N/A	N/A
Interdisciplinary	Sociocultural centres / houses of culture	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (please explain)	Child musical, art and painting schools	10	200*****	N/A	N/A
	Higher education institutions	5	5	N/A	N/A

Source(s): **State Department for Statistics,**

* 12 museums and 4 house-museums are part of the Georgian National Museum

** Archives are under the Ministry of Justice

*** The National Gallery is part of the Georgian National Museum up to 2021

**** 2 opera and ballet theatres and 3 state folk song and dance ensembles subordinate to the state

***** "Tbilisi Modern Ballet" subordinates to Tbilisi Municipality

**** The National Library is under of the Parliament of Georgia.

***** From 2009, the information about other libraries has no longer been available from administrative sources

***** 200 Music schools are under the municipality

5. Cultural Funding

5.1 Overview

Culture action plans are prepared and aggregated in the draft state budget several months prior to the next budget year.

All budget institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth Affairs submit, in accordance with the administrative hierarchy, their budget applications and forecasts to the Ministry which integrates them into a single application.

Under Georgian legislation (The Law on Culture, Article 29) financing of the cultural sector shall be determined by the state budget: the state safeguards the protection and development of culture by allocating finance under the state programme; and cultural activity determined by the state programme is financed from the state budget in compliance with the Constitution and the Law on the Budgetary System and other legislative acts.

According to the Law on the State Budget of Georgia, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs is allocated a total amount for culture, sports and youth affairs. These funds are distributed among subordinated organisations, legal entities of public law and specific state programmes for culture, cultural heritage, sports and youth affairs. Special programmes are developed for different areas of culture.

Local authorities allocate approximately 30% of all state expenditure for culture (in the 1990s the share of municipal (the Tbilisi city hall) and regional (the Autonomous Republic of Adjara) expenditures was higher).

Some spheres of culture are financed from different state institutions, namely: archives are funded from the budget of the Ministry of Justice; the national library from the budget of the Georgian Parliament; while public TV and radio broadcasting has direct funding from the state budget.

In compliance with Article 14 of the Tax Code, reserve funds shall be created in the local budgets of the autonomous republics.

Under the Law on Culture the state supports donations and sponsorship of private individuals and legal entities in the sphere of culture applying tax incentives and other privileges established by Georgian legislation. However, Article 14 is not supported by adequate definitions in the Tax Code or other legislative acts.

Notably, from 2018 to March 2021, the culture sector was part of the combined Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia. Information on funds spent on culture separately is not available.

The total budget of Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia was:

In 2018– GEL 149 379 900 (fact)

In 2019 - GEL 170 378 400 (fact)

In 2020 - GEL 104 746 400 (target)

However, only GEL 13 243 600 was spent on culture in 2020 (fact). This was due to the crisis caused by Covid-19, whereupon the budget was significantly reduced. The Law on the State Budget of Georgia for 2021 allocated the funds for culture, art, sport, youth policy and other activities through the newly established Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth. GDP for 2021 is calculated as GEL 53 443 000 000. In 2021 the total public cultural expenditures were GEL 191 997 470 and the public cultural expenditures in percentage of GDP is 0.35% respectively.

There are no statistics on financing of culture at the regional and local level.

5.2 Public cultural expenditure by level of government

Table 2: Public cultural expenditure by level of government, in GEL and in EUR, 2021/2016

<i>Level of government</i>	Total cultural expenditure in 2021			Total cultural expenditure in 2016		
	<i>In GEL</i>	<i>In EUR</i>	<i>% share</i>	<i>In GEL</i>	<i>In EUR</i>	<i>% share</i>
State (central)	191 997 470	54 847 848	100%	158 872 300	60 638 282	100%
Regional	N/A	-----	-----	N/A	-----	-----
Local	N/A	-----	-----	N/A	-----	-----
TOTAL	191 997 470	54 847 848	100%	158 872 300	60 638 282	100%

Source: Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth, 2021. State Budget of Georgia (2017)

Note: * **The expenditure figures are budget figures only**

The table shows the expenditures of the central government only.

Other statistics on cultural expenditures are not available at the municipal level for two reasons: Most of these statistics have not been collected (except in a few large cities) and unlike government agencies, municipal structures have no obligation to publish these statistics.

With a slight increase in financing of culture in the national currency (GEL 191 997 470 in 2021, compared to GEL 158 872 300 in 2016), due to inflation total expenditures in 2021 decreased to EUR 54 847 848.57, when in 2016 they were EUR 60 638 282.

5.3 Public cultural expenditure per sector

Table 3: Public cultural expenditure by sector, in GEL and in EUR, 2021/2016

<i>Field / Domain</i>	Total cultural expenditure in 2021			Total cultural expenditure in 2016		
	<i>In GEL</i>	<i>In EUR</i>	<i>% share</i>	<i>In GEL</i>	<i>In EUR</i>	<i>% share</i>
Cultural Heritage	19 825 000	5 664 285	10.37	5 518 300	2 106 221	3.5
Museums	12 239 000	3 496 857	6.37	10 616 900	4 052 252	6.7
Archives*	5 900 000	1 685 714	3.07	6 745 000	2 574 427	4.2
Libraries**	90 000	25 714	0.04	8 306 300	3 170 343	5.2
Intangible Heritage / Folk Culture	4 670 500	1 334 428	2.43	N/A	N/A	N/A
Visual Arts	450 900	128 828	0.22	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performing Arts	44 018 500	12 576 714	23	46 825 900	17 872 480	29.4
Books and Press***	2 610 000	745 714	1.2	1 293 100	493 549	0.8
Audiovisual and Multimedia****	77 988 000	22 282 285	40.61	51 115 500	19 509 732	32.1
Interdisciplinary Socioculture, Cultural Rel. abroad Administration Cultural education	19 848 000	5 670 857	10.33	22 912 800	8 745 343	14.4

Not covered by the above domains	4 357 040	1 244 868	2.26	5 538 500	2 113 931	3.7
TOTAL	191 997 470	54 856 420	100%	158 872 300	60 638 282	100%

Source: State Budget of Georgia, the Ministry of Finance. <https://www.mof.ge/4536>

Note: The data for sectors is only available for the national budget; the data for municipalities is not available.

* **Archives** (within the budget of the Ministry of Justice).

** **Libraries (National)** (within the budget of the Parliament of Georgia).

*** **Books** (within the budget of the National Centre for Georgian Books)

**** **TV and Radio** (direct financing from the state budget).

The figures in the table reflect only the central budget expenditures. Other information on cultural funding is sporadic; apart from individual large cities, information is not available at the local government level. The data in the table are taken from the Law on the State Budget for 2021 published by the Ministry of Finance.

GEL to euro exchange rate in 2021 was 3.5, and in 2016 it was 2.62.

6. Legislation on culture

6.1 Overview of national cultural legislation

The Constitution of Georgia is the supreme law and all other laws and legislation must comply with it. The Constitution (new edition of 2010) has provisions related to culture (cultural rights, freedom of expression and creativity, copyright protection, heritage protection, etc.).

Law setting out cultural policy frameworks or declarations of principle - Law on Culture (1997).

Laws establishing the scope, operation(s), governing structure(s) and procedures for funding cultural institutions includes cultural heritage issues:

- Law on Library Management.1996.
- Law on Museums (last amendment 2007).2001
- Law On National Archive Fund and National Archive.2006.
- Law on Cultural Heritage. 2007

On architectural - urban activities:

- Law on State Supervision of Architectural and Construction Activity, 1997 (last amended in 2009),
- Law on Architectural Activity, 1998
- Concerning Spatial Organization and City Construction Basis, 2005 (last amendment 2011)

Also, the legislation on "Living Culture" and on cultural industries includes:

- Law on State Support to National Cinematography, 2000
- Law on Design, 2010
- Law on Professional Theatres, 2013

Culturally relevant laws are:

- Concordat- Constitutional Agreement between the State and the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia (2002)- it influences Christian cultural heritage issues in Georgia, and abroad
- Law on the Official Language, 2015
- Law on the Import and Export of Cultural Goods, 2001

The protection of intellectual property is regulated by:

- Law on Copyright and Related Rights, 1999
- Law of Georgia on Border Measures Related to Intellectual Property, which defines special mechanisms to prevent the import and export of counterfeit goods. 1999

The following laws regulate the social protection of cultural workers:

- Law on Creative Workers and Creative Unions, 1999 (last amendment 2011)
- Law of Georgia on State Pension, 2005
- Law of Georgia on Social Assistance, 2006
- Law of Georgia on State Compensation and State Academic Scholarships, 2005 (applies to scientists and not artists).

The field of communication is regulated by:

- Law on Telecommunications, 2005
- Law on Broadcasting, 2004
- Law on Independent National Regulatory Authorities, 2002

At this stage (from 2021), the newly formed Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth continues to develop the Code of Culture.

6.2 Overview of international cultural legislation

An important component for Georgia's integration into the European Union is the improvement of mechanisms for implementing international conventions and agreements. In this context, in the field of culture Georgia has a wide range of international legal instruments ratified and implemented in the country:

UNESCO Conventions:

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (adopted 1992)
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970; (adopted 1993)
- Convention concerning the International Exchange of Publications, 1958; (adopted 1993)
- Convention concerning the Exchange of Official Publications and Government Documents between States, 1958; (adopted 1993)
- Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960; (adopted 1993)
- Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972; (adopted 1993)
- Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the European Region, 1979; (adopted 1992)
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict; 1954 ; (adopted 1992)
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict; the 1999 Second protocol; (adopted 2009)
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage; 2003; (adopted 2008)
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; 2005; (adopted 2008)

Other international Conventions and Declarations:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (adopted 1999)
- European Cultural Convention, (adopted 1997)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; (adopted 1994)
- Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, 1997 (adopted 1999)
- International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations, 1961; (adopted 2004)
- Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage; (adopted 2000)

- The Council of Europe Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production (updated) 2017. (adopted 2019)
- Bern Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works WIPO, 1986; Revised by the 1971 Paris Act (adopted 1995)
- The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Copyright Treaty of December 20, 1996 (WCT WIPO, 1996); (adopted 2001)
- Geneva Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms Against Unauthorized Duplication of their Phonograms, 1971; (adopted 2002)
- WIPO 20.05.2002 The WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty of December 20, 1996 (WPPT) (adopted 2001)
- The Brussels Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement); TRIPS, WTO, 1995; (2000)
- The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, (adopted 2010)
- Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information, 1993; (adopted 1995)
- UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, 1995 (adopted 1995)
- Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property of March 20, 1883, as Revised at Stockholm in 1967 (adopted 1993)
- Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), as modified in Washington in 2001 (adopted 1993)
- Nice Agreement Concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks of June 15, 1957, as revised in Geneva in 1979 (adopted 2003)
- The Madrid System (or Madrid protocol) for the International Registration of Marks, 1989 (adopted 1998)
- The Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs, 1967 /1999; (adopted 2003)
- Locarno Agreement. Establishing an International Classification for Industrial Designs (1968)
- Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Designs, 1961; (adopted 2003).