



Country profile

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Last profile update: September 2018, by **Mr. TEODOSIEVSKI**

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The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

1. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: CULTURAL POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS	2
2. GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL POLICY	5
2.1 Main elements of the current cultural policy model	5
2.2 National definition of culture.....	5
2.3 Cultural policy objectives	6
3. COMPETENCE, DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATION	7
3.1 Organisational structure (organigram)	7
3.2 Overall description of the system	8
3.3 Inter-ministerial or intergovernmental co-operation.....	9
3.4 International cultural co-operation	9
4. CURRENT ISSUES IN CULTURAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND DEBATE	12
4.1 Main cultural policy issues and priorities	12
4.2 Specific policy issues and recent debates.....	12
4.3 Other relevant issues and debates	19
5. MAIN LEGAL PROVISIONS IN THE CULTURAL FIELD	21
5.1 General legislation	21
5.2 Legislation on culture	26
5.3 Sector specific legislation	28
6. FINANCING OF CULTURE.....	38
6.1 Short overview	38
6.2 Public cultural expenditure.....	40
6.3 Trends and indicators for private cultural financing	41
7. PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	42
7.1 Cultural infrastructure: tendencies & strategies.....	42
7.2 Basic data about selected public institutions in the cultural sector.....	42
7.3 Status and partnerships of public cultural institutions.....	43
8. PROMOTING CREATIVITY AND PARTICIPATION	44
8.1 Support to artists and other creative workers.....	44
8.2 Cultural consumption and participation	45
8.3 Arts and cultural education.....	46
8.4 Amateur arts, cultural associations and civil initiatives	48
9. SOURCES AND LINKS.....	49
9.1 Key documents on cultural policy.....	49
9.2 Key organisations and portals.....	49

1. Historical perspective: cultural policies and instruments

After World War II, the Republic of Macedonia¹ became part of the Yugoslav Federation; therefore, its cultural policy was subject to the state ideology of building up a socialist culture. Over the past sixty years, cultural policy went through three main development stages:

- a centralist and state-run period which lasted from 1946 until the mid-1950s;
- a *transitional period* that lasted until 1974 and contained some elements of decentralisation; and
- from 1975 onwards, a phase of *self-management* began which defined national and municipal responsibilities for culture including decision making and funding.

After 1945, the role of the government in culture was vastly extended. New institutions were established, programmes were set up to train qualified staff to run these institutions and the culture and the arts were popularised. In the past, Macedonian culture hardly had an opportunity to flourish as its own national culture. It is therefore understandable that there was a certain amount of *national and romantic spirit* throughout this period.

Following a long period of strict centralism, Macedonia entered, like other Yugoslav Republics, a period of self-management in the mid-1970s which offered certain opportunities to develop democratic elements, similar to that of other European countries. Municipal cultural institutions were created and were completely financed by the 31 individual local communities. While promising in theory, steps towards decentralisation became "suffocated" by bureaucratic incompetence, lack of professionalism and a thicket of regulations. In the 1990s, after the country gained independence from Yugoslavia, the cultural policy once again became politically and administratively centralised. The municipalities lost all the competencies they had gained in the field of culture.

There was no explicit cultural policy document which outlined a specific strategy and / or goals of cultural development, and therefore, one could hardly speak of a consistent cultural policy after 1990. The Constitution and the 1998 *Law on Culture* provided a certain global orientation toward culture including provisions for civil rights and freedoms, minority rights, the obligation of the government to support and develop culture, etc. However, in practice, there is still a combination of the old and new pragmatism and *ad hoc* temporary solutions.

As early as 1945, Macedonia has been organised as a multicultural country. The Ministry of Culture financed the activities of institutions such as the Theatre of Nationalities (Turkish and Albanian Drama, established in 1947), as well as several cultural associations (amateur and professional), vocal and dance folk groups, etc. Daily newspapers and weekly magazines, monthly children's magazines and radio and TV programmes were available in the respective languages of different cultural communities. Writers, artists, actors, musicians etc., of all the nationalities (Albanians, Turks, Serbs, Romans etc.) were members of the same professional associations together with the Macedonians.

After 1990, the once "homogeneous" society started to slowly disintegrate. It turned out that some communities (especially Albanian) were not satisfied with the overall cultural policy in the past or with state support and provisions for cultural minorities. Certainly, the process of democratisation has encouraged the communication of different views and perspectives, also with regard to the culture of minority communities. It has also helped to point out mistakes made in the past. For example, many private publishing companies were established (over 80% of them Albanian) in a very short period of time after 1990 in order to compensate for the lack of books in the languages of different minority groups. Numerous private radio and TV stations were opened and started to broadcast programmes in minority languages (most of them

¹ In accordance with UN Resolutions 817 and 845 /1993, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" is currently being used by the Council of Europe and the European Union as the provisional designation of the country in official and internal documents. Except in the historical parts of the present (non-official) text, this designation is referred to, even if abbreviated in some places for editorial reasons.

Albanian and Roma). Several new festivals were established to promote the culture of minority groups. Several new associations and NGOs started to work etc. The Ministry of Culture financially supported most of these activities (except radio and TV).

On the other hand, this approach led to almost complete cultural separation along ethnic lines such as the creation of a foundation for the Association of Albanian Publishers and Association of Albanian Writers. Demands were also made to split up the Theatre of Nationalities into an Albanian Theatre and Turkish Theatre etc.

The ethnic conflict in 2001 (re-)opened certain multicultural questions and the treatment of minority rights (primarily of the Albanian ethnic population) in the field of culture. Following the conflict and the institution of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the Constitution was amended with some specific provisions for the different cultural communities (see also chapter 4.2.8). Some experts say that "the Ohrid Framework Agreement is a new vision for a Third Republic, which is to be radically different from the first one established with ASNOM (Antifascist Parliament of the Peoples Liberation of Macedonia) in 1944, and the second one, inaugurated with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia". It means specifically that the constitutional amendments from 2001 establish citizenship in the country for all nationalities or ethnic groups living on its territory and adopting its Constitution – the Macedonian people and parts of Albanian, Turkish, Serbian, Roma, and Bosnian people. In this context, some experts say that Macedonian traditions should be kept up and, consequently, the country should become "the pilot-state of 21st century multiculturalism".

2. General objectives and principles of cultural policy

2.1 Main elements of the current cultural policy model

The general objectives of cultural policy are provided via the Constitution: civil rights and freedoms, creative autonomy, the obligation to support and develop culture, the right of the different ethnic or national groups to establish institutions for culture and art, the protection of the cultural and historical heritage, etc. During the first decade after gaining independence there was no global, recognisable concept behind the cultural policy system, neither did it follow any particular model. Any developments and changes in the cultural policy "system" were ad hoc and driven by political movement towards decentralisation, multiculturalism etc. The *Law on Culture* (1998) identified some objectives as being of "national interest", such as establishing general conditions for the continuity of culture; creating favourable conditions for outstanding cultural achievements; encouraging cultural diversity; cultural development etc.

Since the introduction of budget financing in the cultural sphere in 1990, financial resources are being allocated to the institutions on a yearly basis for the following items: salaries and other allowances (i.e. per diems and travelling allowances for the permanently employed staff), allowances for annual programmes, investments, heating of buildings, insurance of equipment, buildings, exhibitions, etc.

However, changes took place in the following areas:

- privatisation of the publishing houses (1995);
- equal recognition of public and private entities that work in the field of culture;
- new higher taxes on cultural goods and services; and
- symbolic privileges for donations and sponsorships for cultural activities, etc.

In December 2003, the government passed the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*. It provided the framework within which the network of the cultural institutions (national and local) was to be organised and re-allocated responsibilities for culture to the municipalities.

In 2004 for the first time a National Programme for Culture 2004-2008 was adopted by the Parliament. According to this National Programme, the basic principles of the cultural policy are:

- attainability;
- diversity;
- openness;
- responsibility; and
- flexibility.

After the constitution of the new coalition Government (June 2017), in May 2018 a new *National Strategy for Cultural Development in the Republic of Macedonia 2018-2022* was adopted by the Parliament.

See also chapter 2.3 for objectives of the National Strategy.

2.2 National definition of culture

The *Law on Culture* (1998), which is still in force, defines culture to include "creativity, dissemination of artistic creativity and protection and use of creativity". A new *Law on Exercising of the Public Interest in Culture* is in preparation.

2.3 Cultural policy objectives

The *Law on Culture* (1998) specifies some cultural objectives as being of "national interest", e.g. establishing general conditions for achieving continuity in culture; creating conditions for outstanding cultural achievements and their protection; encouraging cultural diversity; protecting and developing the cultural identity of different communities; cultural development etc.

On the other hand, according to the National Programme for Culture 2004-2008 (which was the first of its kind in Macedonia), the main cultural policy objectives were:

- decentralisation;
- development;
- protection and (re)creation of the cultural heritage;
- creativity, with special focus on young people;
- creating favourable conditions for outstanding cultural achievements; and
- cultural management.

This National Programme also formulated the following cultural policy priorities:

- decentralisation;
- balanced support to cultural heritage and contemporary culture;
- cultural management;
- promotion of the cultural identity of the communities;
- cooperation with NGO's; and
- international regional cooperation.

In May 2018, a new *National Strategy for Cultural Development in the Republic of Macedonia 2018-2022* was adopted by the Parliament. Its general goals are equal cultural rights for all and freedom and diversity for artistic creation and cultural identities. One of its specific goals is structural reform in the field of culture.

The new *National Strategy for Cultural Development* also defines principles of the strategic development, as follows:

- Democratisation of culture and cultural democracy ;
- Creativity, pluralism, inclusiveness;
- European context;
- Liberation in the field of culture.

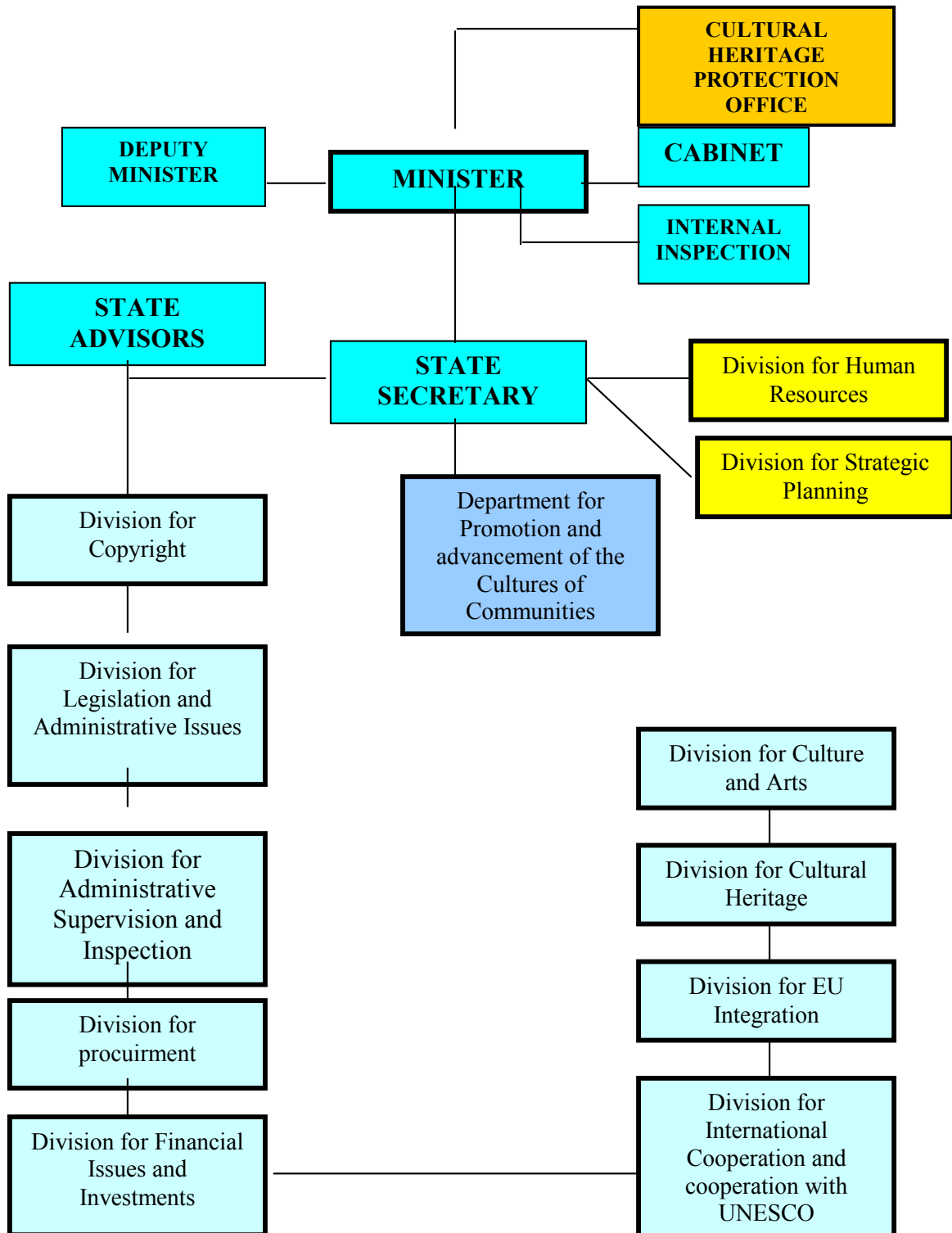
The document also formulates the basic principles of the cultural strategy and the main directions of the reforms, the basic instruments for realisation of the priorities, the necessary reforms in the Ministry of Culture, strategic plans for each cultural domain etc.

The document is followed by an Action plan for implementation of the Strategy, including necessary measures, expected effects and indicators, as well as terms and financial indicators.

The opposition did not support the new National Strategy.

3. Competence, decision-making and administration

3.1 Organisational structure (organigram)



A new organisational structure is in preparation.

3.2 Overall description of the system

Up until the beginning of the 1990s, citizens were both directly and indirectly involved in decision-making on issues considered of local importance including the field of culture. This model of self-government was, however, practically not functioning and in 1990, the independence of municipalities was abolished. Their entire competence in the field of culture was transferred to the Ministry of Culture. On July 1, 1991, the Ministry of Culture became responsible for all public cultural institutions, which had been formerly the responsibility of the municipalities. This signified the transition from a completely decentralised system, based on the principles of socialism and self-management, to (at that time) a completely centralised system.

Today, there is a single level of local self-government, consisting of 80 municipalities, including the City of Skopje with 10 municipalities. The City of Skopje is a separate unit of local self-government in which the common needs and interests of citizens are accomplished, which derive from the character of the City of Skopje as the capital of the Republic of Macedonia. The municipalities are legal entities.

The decision-making process is shared between the Ministry of Culture, the government and the parliament. The Ministry of Culture drafts laws and documents for the government, which passes them on to the Parliamentary Committee for Culture for discussion and enactment. The Ministry of Culture appoints directors of national cultural institutions, approves their programme and work, allocates the funds etc.

In 1998, the *Law on Culture* was adopted, setting a framework for cultural policy decision-making and the financing of cultural activities. It includes principles and activities such as freedom of creative work; introduction of a civil concept in culture; an equal position for all public and private entities in the field of culture; introduction of a decentralised system for culture; financing of the national interest in culture by means of open competition etc.

The *Law on Local Self-Government* (2002) gave the municipality's greater independence in the field of culture.

While society has been undergoing tremendous changes (privatisation, restructuring of the economy, unemployment above 30%, social differentiation, etc.), the cultural sector had been left untouched until 2003. At this time, the *Law on Culture* was amended and the *National Programme for Culture 2004 - 2008* was adopted by the Parliament. In December 2003, the government passed the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*, which started the process of decentralisation in the field of culture.

In 2004, the Parliament adopted the *Law on Territorial Organisation* and the *Law for the City of Skopje*.

There have been certain changes to the architecture of the system after the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* (2001), for example, to facilitate the participation of the minorities in the public administration system and within the cultural policy making processes e.g. via specific councils and working groups at the Ministry of Culture etc. At the beginning of 2003, the Office for Promotion and Advancement of the Cultures of Nationalities was also established at the Ministry of Culture. It provides balanced financial support to cultural projects of all ethnic groups and since 2005 it has begun a gradual implementation of the employment policies stipulated in the *Law on Culture*.

In this context, in 2003 the Parliament also established the *Committee on Ethnic Relations*. It consists of 19 members, including seven seats reserved for ethnic Macedonian legislators and seven for ethnic Albanian deputies. The Serbian, Vlach, Turk, Romany, and Bosnian minorities have one member each. The interests of minorities not represented within the parliament are represented by the national ombudsman. The formation of the committee is part of the implementation of the *Ohrid agreement*. In 2010 this Committee did not work because the

chairman wanted to put on the agenda several burning issues like the controversial project "Skopje 2014", the implementation of the Law on Passports etc., which was opposed by the members of the ruling coalition.

See also chapter 4.2.4.

3.3 Inter-ministerial or intergovernmental co-operation

The Ministry of Culture co-operates with a number of other ministries and government agencies, especially with:

- the *Ministry of Finance* on the planning and realisation of the cultural budget, the tax and customs policy;
- the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* on the co-ordination of international cultural co-operation;
- the *Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning* on the protection of architectural heritage in the process of urban planning;
- the *Ministry of Transport and Communications* on the protection of cultural heritage in connection with permits for the construction of buildings;
- the *Ministry of Internal Affairs* on the prevention of illegal archaeological excavations and illegal trade of cultural goods;
- the *Secretariat for European Integration* on the co-ordination of activities to harmonise Macedonian and European legislation, and
- the *Ministry of Labour and Social Policy* on social and retirement policy in the cultural sector.

3.4 International cultural co-operation

3.4.1 Overview of main structures and trends

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the international cultural cooperation within the framework of the Ministry's competencies and financial possibilities. It also co-operates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in coordinating international cultural cooperation.

Especially since December 2005, when it was granted the status of candidate country, EU integration has been the most relevant issue in the country. Harmonisation of the legal system with EU standards is a priority in the programmes of the government and the parliament. The EU integration process has been on the agenda of all levels of government. However, in the past two years (2016-2017) the political opposition has argued that the EU integration process is no longer a priority of the government, even in the cultural field.

There are Macedonian cultural centres in Sofia (Bulgaria), New York (USA) and Istanbul (Turkey) that play a certain role in international cooperation.

3.4.2 Public actors and cultural diplomacy

The Ministry of Culture (in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) is the main body responsible for international, bilateral and multilateral cultural co-operation, which is realised through international conventions, other international agreements, bilateral agreements and programmes for co-operation. Bilateral cultural co-operation agreements include educational and scientific programmes as part of framework agreements that are signed for 1-3 years. Therefore, these agreements are the major instrument in international cooperation. Other instruments such as cooperation treaties, co-production agreements or state guarantees are also used. So far, the Ministry of Culture has signed bilateral agreements for cultural cooperation with over 50 countries.

On the other hand, local authorities are also independent in establishing and realising international cultural cooperation. At the same time, a significant part of international cultural

co-operation is realised through direct co-operation between institutions and individuals and is frequently endorsed and financed by the Ministry of Culture.

The financial support for international cultural co-operation varies each year, depending on the annual budget of the Ministry of Culture and the programmed activities. However, the usual estimation is 2-3% of the annual budget of the Ministry for the programmes and activities in the field of international cultural co-operation.

In 2006 the government announced the idea of appointing recognised artists, writers, and musicians etc., as cultural ambassadors abroad. Following this Decision, 10 cultural ambassadors have been appointed in the past several years. They did not have full diplomatic status. However, in 2017 the Ministry of Culture, due to lack of actual results and verified benefits, cancelled this practice.

3.4.3 European / international actors and programmes

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for implementing and monitoring all the international (bilateral or multilateral) agreements and conventions. The Ministry of Culture (with UNESCO National Commission) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, depending on the field of interest, are responsible for implementing and monitoring the conventions in the field of culture, such as the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The Convention was ratified on May 22, 2007. In the past several years UNESCO has supported 15 projects in the fields of culture, education, science etc., and 8 grants for young researchers, professionals in the protection of cultural heritage etc.

Since January 2008, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (as a candidate for full EU membership) has access to European Union funds for culture. A Culture Contact Point was established (as part of the Ministry's Department for EU Integration), to inform and advise Macedonian institutions on accessing these funds. This CCP has been transformed into a Division for cooperation and implementation of EU cultural programmes in the Ministry of Culture. Macedonian participation in the EU Programme "Culture 2007 - 2013" included 55 projects, of which 27 literary translations.

In 2018, the Centre for Cultural Cooperation of the "Initiative 16+1" was open for cultural cooperation with 16 South-East European countries and PR China.

In 2018, the Minister of Culture signed the Davos Declaration 2018 "Towards a high-quality *Baucultur* for Europe".

3.4.4 Direct professional co-operation

Direct professional co-operation is also mostly financed by the Ministry of Culture and it represents the main international co-operation in recent years. Through the Annual competition for financing the national interest in culture, the Ministry of Culture supports international projects of national institutions, NGO's, associations and artists in promoting cultural cooperation with European countries and other parts of the world.

In 2015 a Protocol for cooperation was signed between the National Conservation Centre and the Turkish Agency for cooperation and coordination (TIKA). The Protocol foresees realisation of the conservation projects on several mosques in Skopje.

3.4.5 Cross-border intercultural dialogue and co-operation

There are no exact strict government programmes to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, but certain programmes are channelled via the Ministry of Culture or intergovernmental organisations. The Ministry of Culture supports specific trans-national activities for young people or youth groups, through funds available for travel grants, language or cross-cultural training courses.

The *Treaty for good neighbourly relations* (2017) with Bulgaria and the *Final Agreement for the Settlement of the Name Issue* (2018) with Greece are a serious step towards intercultural dialogue and co-operation.

The *Final Agreement for Settlement of the Name Issue* in article 14.8 points out that "The Parties shall support the broadening of tourist exchanges, and the development of their cooperation in the fields of alternative tourism, including cultural, religious, educational, medical, and athletic tourism and shall cooperate in improving and promoting business and tourist travel between them". Article 8.2 and 8.3 are important for referring to some aspects of the controversial project "Skopje 2014", saying that:

"2. Within six months following the entry into force of this Agreement, the Second Party shall review the status of monuments, public buildings and infrastructures on its territory, and insofar as they refer in any way to ancient Hellenic history and civilization constituting an integral component of the historic or cultural patrimony of the First Party, shall take appropriate corrective action to effectively address the issue and ensure respect for the said patrimony.

3. The Second Party shall not use again in any way and in all its forms the symbol formerly displayed on its former national flag. Within six months of the entry into force of this Agreement, the Second Party shall proceed to the removal of the symbol displayed on its former national flag from all public sites and public usage on its territory. Archaeological do not fall within the scope of this provision."

3.4.6 Other relevant issues

For years there has been a constant debate in the Macedonian Parliament and in the media about the possibilities of changing the Constitution and giving the Diaspora the right to vote, which is still unresolved. Especially, in 2007, there was a constant public and Parliamentary debate over the government's official proposal to change the *Law on Electing Representatives in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia* and give the Diaspora the right to vote, which was opposed by the opposition parties. Still, in 2009 the Parliament passed the changes in this Law, giving the Diaspora the right to vote. In the 2011 Parliamentary elections, the Diaspora elected 3 members of the Parliament for the first time.

In 2015 the opposition coalition again raised the issue of voting rights for the Macedonian Diaspora. The main argument is the big difference between the number of votes for the Diaspora and the other members of the Parliament. Namely, the Diaspora candidates are elected with only several hundred votes instead of the usual 4-5.000 for the others.

4. Current issues in cultural policy development and debate

4.1 Main cultural policy issues and priorities

After the Parliamentary elections in 2016 and the new coalition Government (2017) the main cultural policy issues are the necessary reforms in the field of culture as well as the reforms of the whole system. Most of the main cultural issues were elaborated in the new National Strategy for Cultural Development (see chapter 2.3 for objectives of the National Strategy) and the Ministry of Culture has already started some of the necessary reforms. They established 20 working groups for revising the most important issues in the global cultural policy (decentralisation, new laws in the field of culture, transformation of the Ministry of Culture, international cooperation, cultural industries, protection of the cultural heritage, theatres, "Skopje 2014" etc.).

Some of the issues are present in the cultural policy since 2005, such as the question of decentralisation and the re-allocation of the responsibilities (not only in the field of culture) to the municipalities and to the City of Skopje.

The first step was made in December 2003 with the government's *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*. According to this *Decision*, only 51 (from the previous 115) institutions gained the status of national institutions. It also included a major change in the re-allocation of the responsibilities for culture. Since June 2005 this decentralisation model has been put into practice. The previous Government did nothing in this direction.

The new Government (June 2017) has announced its main cultural priorities (freedom of creativity, equality, universal good) and most important principles (accessibility, inclusiveness, cultural democracy, new models of financing culture etc.).

4.2 Specific policy issues and recent debates

4.2.1 Conceptual issues of policies for the arts

Lack of any recognisable concept for the cultural policy system often initiated superficial ad hoc debates and polemics in the past several years about the real national interest / priorities in the field of culture; whether the focus should be on the so called "living culture" (art, theatre, film etc.) or cultural heritage, etc. These two "concepts" (combined with more or less old-fashioned details), in some broader meaning, also represent the general cultural interests and priorities of the two major political parties that have been in power for the past 20 years.

There has been no serious political / public debate in the period 2008-2016 on any of the important conceptual issues and policies in the field of culture, such as: the necessity of having a clear concept of the cultural policy system or following any particular model, financing culture, the independent cultural sector etc. The *Draft of the National Strategy for Culture 2013-2017* was a good chance for a political and public debate because the opposition had contributed serious conceptual and other comments on the document. But since the opposition was forced out of the Parliament (December 24, 2012) and stayed out until June 2013, there was practically no debate and the Strategy was adopted by the Parliament in the absence of the Macedonian opposition parties.

On the other hand, in 2017 the Ministry of Culture organised 10 public debates throughout the country on the *Draft of the National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022*, explaining and debating the new conceptual issues of policies for culture and arts.

4.2.2 Heritage issues and policies

The *Law for Protection of Cultural Heritage* (2004) defines public services in this field and all available legal mechanisms to ensure the protection of cultural monuments. Cultural heritage

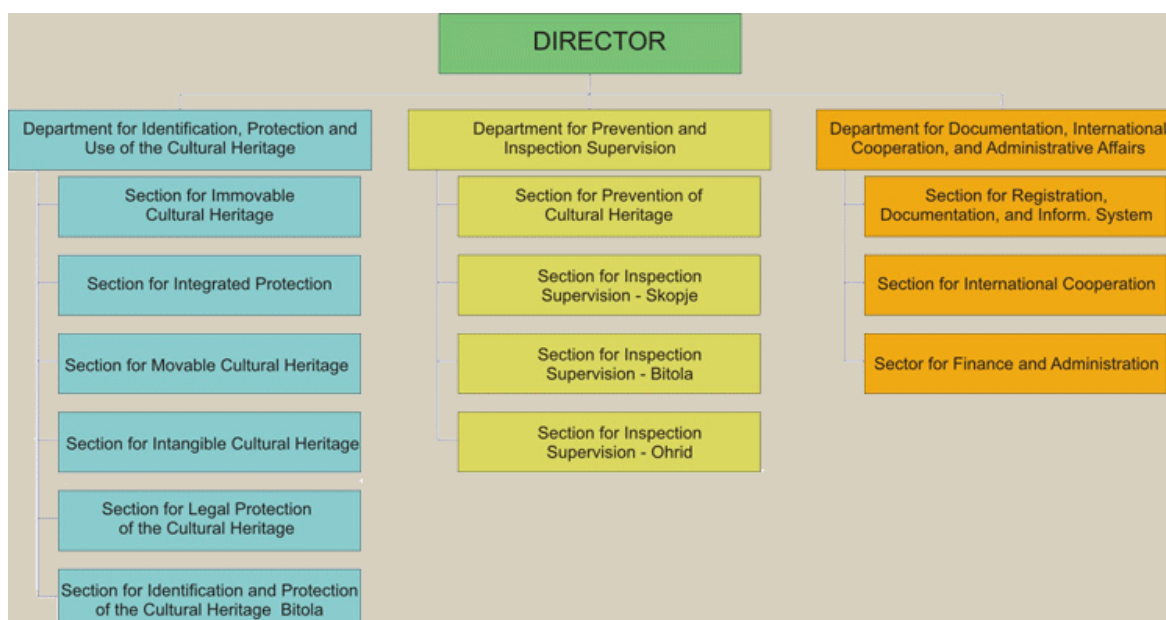
may be publicly or privately owned and may be exported only in exceptional cases with permission from the Minister of Culture.

Private owners have an obligation to care and maintain cultural heritage and property, and to provide access to them for scientific / cultural research purposes and in some cases to provide access to the general public. Under certain conditions the owner has the right to receive compensation from the Ministry for some maintenance costs.

In 2007, the *Law for Protection of Cultural Heritage* was amended, in order to harmonise it with EU legislation and standards. Bigger changes were made in the procedure of restitution of cultural heritage goods, the measures for getting permission for archaeological excavations, some of the control measures etc.

In 2004, the Ministry of Culture established a new Cultural Heritage Protection Office (CHPO) as a constituent part of the Ministry, operating as a legal entity.

Organisational structure CHPO



There is special legislation on the protection of archival material and its handling, librarianship, and the preservation of films and film material of historic, artistic and other cultural significance.

There are several recent major issues for heritage policies:

- new strategy for protection of cultural heritage and a new law on protection of the cultural heritage;
- revision of the National Registry of Cultural Heritage (especially for the illegal entries made during the notorious project "Skopje 2014");
- revalorisation of the cultural heritage;
- illegal archaeological excavations and illicit traffic of cultural heritage, etc.

Cultural heritage protection and archaeological excavations have been the government's top priority in the past several years. The budget for archaeological excavations, especially in 2006-2009, tripled compared to the years before, but is declining since then.

Table 1: CHPO – 2016 - 2018 budget

Cultural Heritage Protection Office	2016	2017	2018
Salaries, goods, services, transfers, capital expenses	45 552 000	48 066 000	49 550 000
Activities	155 587 000	149 294 000	133 200 000
Total in MKD	201 139 000	197 306 000	191 550 000
Total in EUR	3 297 360	3 234 524	3 140 163

Source: Ministry of Finance, Budget 2016/17/18

In July 2013, the director of the Cultural Heritage Protection Office and the chief inspector for protection of cultural heritage were arrested as part of the so called "Falanga 2" process for issuing permits for illegal archaeological excavations and helping to illicit trafficking. In June 2014 the director was sentenced to three years in prison, and the chief inspector to five years.

In 2013, the CHPO established a National Information System for Cultural Heritage. This portal provided an overview of the immovable, movable and intangible cultural heritage of the Republic of Macedonia. Its purpose was to present data about the heritage to the general public.

In 2017, the National Council for Cultural Heritage was constituted within the Ministry of Culture. It consists of 11 members and the president of the Council is the Minister of Culture.

4.2.3 Cultural / creative industries: policies and programmes

One of the burning public dilemmas in the field of culture during the period 2002-2010 has been whether there is a cultural market in the country, and whether culture could exist under market conditions.

One of the arguments on the deficit of a private market for culture is the small size of the territory and the modest population, as well as the small language market (for example in the field of publishing). Together they limit the conditions required to develop a fully functioning cultural industry.

Initial mapping of the creative industries in Macedonia was done between 2006 and 2009, and again in 2012 in cooperation of the Ministry of Culture and the British Council.

However, these initiatives were far from any real practice. For example, the British Council and the Ministry of Culture have "... expected 180.000 creative businesses to be opened in 2013 generating new 150.000 jobs"

(<https://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/blog/13/03/22/creative-industries-development-macedonia/>). This was unrealistic because it would mean to employ almost half of the unemployed persons in Macedonia. Of course, nothing of this happened. On the other hand, the open competitions for cultural industries projects in 2013 and 2014 showed that there still was a big misunderstanding about the real meaning of the cultural industries: a lot of the projects came from the national and local institutions; most of the others had nothing to do with culture or industry, etc. Some of the financed projects as cultural creative industry projects ("Creative catering", "Food Festival", Music instruments made of everyday rubbish", "Producing almond milk and cheese products", educational workshops etc.) showed complete lack of understanding the essence and the role of cultural industries.

The *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022* foresees a new mapping of the potential resources for creative and cultural industries on national, local and urban level along with an integrated strategy for the development of creative and cultural industries and its inclusion in the cultural politics on national and local levels.

4.2.4 Cultural diversity and inclusion policies

Officially recognised ethnic (cultural) minorities are those mentioned in the Preamble of the Constitution: Albanians, Turks, Roma, Serbs, Bosnians and Vlachs.

According to the latest census of 2002, the total population was 2 022 547 of which 64.18% are Macedonians (1 297 981). The rest of the population is made up of:

Table 2: Share of ethnic minority groups, 2002

Ethnic minority groups	Total number	% share of total population
Albanians	509 083	25.17
Turks	77 959	3.85
Romans	53 879	2.66
Serbs	35 939	1.78
Bosnians	17 018	0.84
Vlachs	9 695	0.48
Others	20 993	1.04

Source: State Statistical Office.

In 2006, there was an official demand made by Croatia to recognise the Croatian ethnic minority as a Constitutional minority, but this demand was not accepted by the Macedonian government.

These minority groups have the constitutional right to freely express, nurture and develop their own cultural, religious, and linguistic identity and national features. The Ministry of Culture pays great attention to this, particularly in the decision-making process about projects submitted in open competitions, and in the creation of the yearly cultural programmes.

Following the signing of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* of August 13th 2018, the following amendments have been made to the Constitution for the different cultural communities:

- in units of local self-government, where at least 20% of the population speaks a particular language, that language and its alphabet will be used as an official language, in addition to the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet; and
- laws that directly concern culture, the use of languages, education, etc., are to be passed by a majority vote in the Assembly. In this regard, there must be a majority of votes from those members of parliament who claim to belong to the communities that are not part of a majority population.

The new Census that started in October 2011 was interrupted and then completely cancelled after only 4 days. It started with the resignation of the president of the State Census Commission, and very soon with the resignation of the whole Commission because of some differences in the legislative interpretation and serious disagreements about the methodology for conducting the census on the field (especially in areas with ethnically mixed populations), which would have resulted in incorrect data. Government officials stated that there were technical problems and a lack of preparedness for this large statistical operation to be finished in 15 days. It was planned that a new Census would be organised within 6 to 12 months, but it never happened.

The new Government (2017) has stated that the new Census will be organised in 2020.

What concerns other social groups and communities, unofficially, is that there is a gay community that consists of nearly 30-40 000 people, but it has never been officially recognised. On the other hand, the gay community has recently been the subject of vigorous public polemics over whether people with "different" sexual orientation should be included in the new *Law on Protection and Prevention of Discrimination*, the *Law on Family* etc. The former government refused to mention this group in the laws.

The *Law for Protection and Prevention against Discrimination* was adopted in January 2011, without explicitly mentioning sexual orientation. U.S. State Department stated in its 2012 report that in Macedonia there is social prejudice towards members of the LGBT community, who were exposed to harassment and demeaning language in the media.

In 2013 the Network for Prevention of Discrimination (founded in 2010 by a number of NGO's and citizens' associations) published an open letter to members of the Parliament asking them to demand additional detailed information on the 2013 *Report of the Parliamentary Commission for Prevention of Discrimination*. The open letter said that the report had no educational points, did not establish causes for certain kind of discrimination, nor affirmed measures to overcome the situation.

In September 2013 the Macedonian ruling party in the Parliament raised the question of changing the Constitution in order to re-define marriage as a community between a man and a woman and that a child can be adopted only in that kind of marriage. The Parliament did not support the initiative. But the new Parliament (April 2014), without the participation of the opposition parties, supported the initiative to change the *Constitution* not only in redefining marriage but also in several other points.

4.2.5 Language issues and policies

The official language is Macedonian. In 1998, the *Law on the Use of the Macedonian Language* was passed. A breakdown of cultural communities with other languages is provided in chapter 4.2.4.

In this context, it should be mentioned that for almost three years the Committee for Culture in the Parliament was not working, waiting for the final decision whether the *Rules of Procedure* will change and if the Parliamentary committees can be conducted in the Albanian language as well. The Parliament representatives from the Albanian political parties did not want to take part in this Committee until the "language question" in the Rules of Procedure was solved.

In August 2008, the Parliament passed the new Rules of Procedure and the new *Law on the Use of the Albanian language*. According to this document, starting from 2009, the Parliamentary committees can be conducted in the Albanian language as well.

In January 2018, after a long and burning public debate, the Parliament passed the new *Law on the Use of Languages*. The Law stipulates the use of the Albanian language on national and local level. The President of the Republic refused to sign the Law.

See also chapter 5.1.9.

4.2.6 Media pluralism and content diversity

According to the State Statistical Office (No. 2.1.18.18), in 2017 there were 115 business entities performing broadcasting activities in the Republic of Macedonia, of which 64 transmitted radio programmes and 51 transmitted television programmes. Of the total number of business entities that transmitted radio programmes, one is a public broadcasting enterprise (Macedonian Radio Television), 60 are commercial broadcasting companies, and 3 are non-profit broadcasting institutions. According to the data, the public radio broadcasting enterprise broadcast a total of 38 020 hours of radio programmes, mostly(56.3%)music programmes. The commercial radio broadcasting companies broadcast a total of 461 283 hours of radio programme, mostly (60.9%)music programmes as well. Of the total number of business entities that transmitted television programme, one is a public broadcasting enterprise and 50 are

commercial broadcasting companies. The public television broadcasting enterprise broadcast a total of 23 729 hours of television programme, of which most, or mostly (42.1%) was documentaries and music programmes. The commercial television broadcasting companies broadcast a total of 395 190 hours of television programme, of which 22.7% was fiction.

The Macedonian Radio and Television broadcasts TV programmes in seven languages (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serb, Bosnian and Vlach) and radio programmes in nine languages (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serb, Bosnian, Vlach, Greek and Bulgarian). The share of domestic versus imported programmes in Macedonian Television is 70:30.

The Public Broadcasting Service tax was 190 MKD (around 3.1 EUR). It was cancelled due to the Government's decision in 2017. Since then, the Government is financing the Public Broadcasting Service.

By the adoption of the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services, the Broadcasting Council was transformed into the Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services. Main bodies of the Agency are the Council and the Director of the Agency. The Council consists of seven members, who elect the President and Deputy President among the members. The members of the Council are appointed by the Parliament.

The Ministry of Culture has no responsibility over the media.

See also chapter 5.3.7.

4.2.7 Intercultural dialogue: actors, strategies, programmes

The FYR of Macedonia is a multi-cultural, multi-confessional and multi-linguistic country where intercultural dialogue is one of the most important issues. In fact, the whole political system is designed on these bases. In strictly cultural terms, the main authority responsible for programmes and policies addressing the issue of intercultural dialogue at national level is the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry has also established an Office for the Promotion and Advancement of the Cultures of Nationalities.

The main policy document identifying intercultural (interethnic) dialogue as an objective or priority of the government is the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* from 2001. In that context, the general intercultural dialogue has been fostered, especially after the *Ohrid Framework Agreement*. ICD has been on the agenda of all the ministries and government agencies, especially the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Secretariat for European Affairs, the Agency for Youth and Sport, the Agency for the Rights of the Communities etc. ICD is an important part of several national strategies, including the National Strategy for Culture; the National Strategy for Education; the National Strategy for Youth etc.

In 2003, the Parliament established the Committee on the Political System and Ethnic Relations. It consists of 19 members, including seven seats reserved for ethnic Macedonian legislators and seven for ethnic Albanian deputies. The Serbian, Vlach, Turk, Romany, and Bosnian minorities have one member each. The interests of minorities are not represented within the Parliament, but are instead represented by the national ombudsman. The formation of the committee is part of the implementation of the *Ohrid Agreement*.

The NGO sector is a big promoter of intercultural dialogue, especially the Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia which has several programmes for intercultural dialogue. In 2005, the Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia held a regional conference on "Multiculturalism in Macedonia: an emerging model".

On August 2nd 2018 (Day of the Roma holocaust, when 3.000 Roma men, women and children were killed in Auschwitz) Roma people in Skopje held a march named "Stop to the racism – Justice for the Roma people". They marched to the Italian Embassy to deliver a protest note against the politics of Italy towards Roma people.

4.2.8 Social cohesion and cultural policies

The key target for the new Government in the social politics is to bring the poverty rate down to below 16% before the year 2020 (the poverty rate was 21.9% in 2016).

Other future priority social measures and activities are:

- Programme for minimal income;
- Social Debit Card "Solidarity";
- Functional institutional network for the social protection of older people, centres for disabled people, day care centres etc.;
- Legal changes in the use of the social apartments (for families with low income, young couples, disabled persons etc.);
- Increase of 50% of the financial help for disabled people during the Government's mandate, etc.

There are special measures and activities for children and young people as well.

4.2.9 Employment policies for the cultural sector

In 2018, there are 2 712 people (2 189 in 2008) who are actively employed in cultural institutions financed by the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry of Culture itself has 225 employees (98 in 2008).

Due to the long period (since the 1993 Government's Decision) of employment restrictions in the public sector (including the cultural sector), most of the cultural institutions were left without new, younger educated experts. Some examples show that for nearly twenty years there has been no new employment in some institutions (institutes for protection of cultural heritage, conservation centres, theatres etc.). In the period 2014-2017 this policy of employment restrictions has changed and the Ministry of Culture has allowed the employment of a lot of younger people (especially actors). According to the data provided by the Ministry of Culture, in that period over 630 people were employed in the cultural sector.

However, it has often been stated that most of the employment in the cultural sector in the past years was not on a professional / expert basis, but for members of the ruling political parties.

There are no (exact or approximate) figures about the number of employees in the private sector.

In May 2018, the average net salary per employee (per month) was 24 509 MKD (401 EUR). The average salary for those working in public cultural institutions is around 20 861 MKD (341 EUR). For highly educated staff, salaries are approximately 50% higher and are more or less comparable with professionals in other institutions financed by the state.

4.2.10 Gender equality and cultural policies

The 2012 *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men* replaced the previous 2006 *Law*. It contains the same definition of discrimination provided in the previous law, clarifies the reporting responsibilities of all public actors and obliges public authorities to adopt gender responsive strategic plans and budgets. It regulates the basic principles and special measures for equal opportunities for women and men, the responsibilities, tasks and obligations of the public entities etc. The main objective of the Law is to promote the principle of establishing equal opportunities for women and men in the political, economic, social, educational and other fields of social life. Other implemented legal measures in this direction are: the 2009 amendments to the *Law on the Ombudsman* which required the Office of the Ombudsman to establish a unit for "protection of citizens from discrimination"; the 2012 amendments to the *Law on Labour Relations* which expressly prohibit discrimination against women workers during pregnancy, maternity and parenthood regardless of the type or duration of work and the 2010 *Law on Free Legal Aid* which assists women without financial resources to access justice.

In 2012 the *Labour Law* was amended to avoid employment discrimination, prohibiting employers to ask for a pregnancy test in the process of recruitment and / or to dismiss an employee because of pregnancy.

A report on gender equality in the Ministry of Culture was published in 2012. According to the report, out of 146 public servants, 83 were women and 63 were men. 31 women and 12 men hold management positions. There is no such data for the cultural institutions.

4.2.11 New technologies and digitalisation in the arts and culture

The UN research "E-Government Survey 2014: E-Government for the Future We Want" (2014) stated that Macedonia was on the last place in all segments of the analysis: the lowest index on e-government in the region, the lowest percentage of electronic services for the population, the lowest percentage of citizen's contribution in the decisions of the local and central authorities etc.

That is why one of the goals of the new Government (2017) is to develop the IT sector and to foster the communication between the citizens and the state administration. One of the priorities is to create electronic registers for all Government's electronic services given to the citizens. The Government will also prepare a long-term national strategy for development of the informatics society, it will support formation of research units in the business sector for efficient transfer of modern technologies and it will reduce the tax on IT technology to 5% etc.

Table 4: Internet use by population, aged 15-74, 2016-2017

	2016	2017
Internet users	1 153 938	1 212 347
Frequency of Internet use:		
Daily	977 674	1 006 775
Once a week (at least)	142 350	181 697
Regular use (daily or once a week)	1 120 024	1 188 472
Less than once a month	33 914	23 875

Source: State Statistical Office, Macedonia in Figures, 2018.

4.3 Other relevant issues and debates

One of the constant burning cultural issues in the period 2009-2017 as the controversial (and in some parts illegal) government project "Skopje 2014". It was enforced by the previous government without consulting the Parliament or the expert community. The so called project completely reshaped the (modernistic) city centre of Skopje with antic-look monuments (including a giant 30 metre high monument to Alexander the Great, his father Phillip II etc.), public buildings in pseudo-baroque and neo-classic style, a triumphal arch etc. The entire cost of the project is still unknown, but is estimated to be 700 million EUR (although the former government's estimation was around 80 million EUR).

The critics (mostly from the opposition parties and intellectuals) were arguing that it was only a facelift, an "ugly, money-wasting, architecturally failed and politically lunatic project".

Moreover, the so called "Wiretapping" scandal, involving the Prime Minister and other government Ministers, unveiled numerous irregularities, arbitrariness and low bending around this notorious project.

In 2017, the Minister of Culture formed a working group to analyse all aspects of the whole project and to suggest solutions for each part of it.

5. Main legal provisions in the cultural field

5.1 General legislation

5.1.1 Constitution

The *Constitution* guarantees the following rights related to culture:

- civil rights and freedoms;
- creative autonomy;
- the obligation to support and develop culture;
- the right of the different ethnic or national groups to establish institutions for culture and art;
- the protection of the cultural and historical heritage; and
- copyright protection.

5.1.2 Division of jurisdiction

After 1990, despite certain laws (*Law on Culture, Law on Local Self Government*), there was no actual division of jurisdiction between national and local levels of government. The Ministry of Culture was in fact responsible for all the cultural institutions in the country (appointing directors of the institutions, providing funds for salaries, running costs and programmes etc.).

In December 2003, the government passed the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*. According to this Decision, only 51 (from the previous 115) institutions gained the status of national institutions that are completely financed by the Ministry of Culture. All other cultural institutions are considered local and should be financed by the local governments (running costs etc.) but, on the other hand, the salaries are still subsidized from the Ministry of Culture. The local institutions can still apply for annual funding from the Ministry of Culture for programmes and specific projects. Since June 2005 this division of jurisdiction has been put into practice.

Municipalities, within the legal framework, independently regulate and perform activities of local importance determined by law and are responsible for their performance. In the field of culture the municipalities are competent for institutional and financial support to cultural institutions and projects; preservation of the folklore; customs; traditional handicrafts and similar cultural heritage; organization of cultural events; encouraging of various specific forms of artistic work etc.

It is important to stress that for the first time the City of Skopje adopted a Strategy with an Action Plan for the Development of Culture in the City of Skopje for 2012-2015. The document contained several strategic goals (development of plural and democratic model of cultural policy; transparency, expertise and efficiency in cultural actions; cooperation between all cultural actors, educational programmes; development of creative industries etc.), an action plan with time frame, methodology and procedures etc. The opposition had a lot of comments on this document: that the document was not prepared by the city's administration that it is unrealistic and antipode to the current cultural reality and that it is not based on a broader public debate and expertise, etc.

The *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022* foresees new rapid decentralisation in the next several years.

5.1.3 Allocation of public funds

The *Law on Local Self Government* (2002) re-allocated some responsibilities to the municipalities, such as: accomplishing and development of local interest in culture; institutional and financial support of cultural institutions and projects, preserving of folklore, customs, old crafts and similar cultural values; organising cultural events; encouragement of various specific forms of art.

According to the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture* 64 cultural institutions are considered local institutions. It means that the local authorities are responsible to provide the financing of some of the basic costs (running costs etc.) but, on the other hand, the salaries are still subsidized from the Ministry of Culture. The local institutions can apply for annual funding from the Ministry of Culture for programmes and specific projects. Since June 2005, this has been put into practice.

The whole process of the annual funding of the so called national interest in the cultural field was criticised in the past several years by the opposition parties, intellectuals, cultural workers and NGO's, especially the programme for funding publishing houses, film, visual arts etc. The main points of criticism were on the grounds of insufficient transparency, that the biggest percentages of the funds were being allocated according to "party standards" and to people and firms close to the ruling political party, insufficient financial indicators for the projects etc. On the other hand, in the past several years the Ministry of Culture did not publicly announce members of the commissions who decided on the allocation of public funds. Furthermore, there were no annual reports of any kind, especially financial reports or any kind of financial information about the projects financed through the annual competitions.

In 2017, for the first time in many years the annual funding was organised on transparent basis, with publicly announced expert commissions and with final financial reports about the projects financed through the annual competitions. The new *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022* and the new *Law on Exercising the Public Interest in Culture* (which is in preparation) foresee additional reforms in the annual funding (two or more public competitions per year, a public call for the members of the expert commissions, limitation of the number of applications per applicant, introduction of "arm's length principle" where possible etc.).

5.1.4 Social security frameworks

General social security measures apply in the same manner to the culture field as for any other sector. This also applies to unemployment schemes.

General social security measures also apply to freelance artists who have gained their status in appropriate procedures and have been confirmed by a proper Act of the Minister of Culture.

The *Law on Culture*(1998) does not distinguish between independent professional and amateur artists. Every person, regardless of age, sex, education and religion has the freedom and the right to engage in creative work. The law defines an artist as a "person who creates or performs an authored artistic activity". If an individual chooses art as a profession (the only one from which an income is earned), then he / she must legally register as such with the court in order to obtain the legal legitimacy as an independent artist. Independent artists are responsible for paying their health, retirement and disability insurance taxes. However, the Ministry can provide a financial help from the budget to cover these expenses. The Minister of Culture decides which independent artists will receive these funds based on specific criteria including the type, scope and quality of their creative work, in a procedure and a manner determined by law.

In the year 2000, a Book of Rules was published. It outlines the selection criteria to be used in the allocation of public funding to independent artists, derived from the budget of the Republic. An annual competition is announced each September in the newspapers. The latest data shows that there are over 100 independent artists who benefit from the state budget, among whom writers, film workers, actors, musicians and visual artists etc. On the other hand, it also shows that the selection criteria are not clear since a lot of users of the funding are from the entertainment industry, fashion and crafts etc. It also shows that one of the main "criteria" is the political affinity of the artists.

That is why, on the bases of the *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022*, a working group was established to propose new rules and criteria for this category. This category should also include the cultural workers.

5.1.5 Tax laws

According to the *Law on Value Added Tax*, the turnover of cultural institutions, as well as that of other taxpayers who perform cultural activities, is exempt from VAT, provided they have approval from the Ministry of Culture. A privileged tax rate of 5% is applied to the turnover of publications, instead of the general rate of 18% that also applies to audio and visual products.

The *Law on Income Tax* stipulates that donations and sponsorship made to public culture institutions from personal or company income can be calculated as deductible expenses up to a rate of 3% of the total income.

The *Law on Personal Income Tax* states that professional independent artists can deduct a fixed percentage share of their income as expenses generated by their creative work. The rates vary depending on type of activity and range between 25% to 60%; for example, sculptures 60%; painting 50%; classical music, ballet, theatre and film performances 30%; for pop and folk music 25%, etc. Income tax is not charged on earnings generated from awards or on scholarships to pupils and students granted by government agencies and foundations.

The *Law on Customs Duty* list the following items which do not have to pay import fees: printed material; objects and materials in the field of culture that are imported according to international agreements; goods that are brought into the country free-of-charge and are used for non-profit making cultural purposes; goods that are not produced in the country that are used for non-profit making cultural activities and are not intended for further sale; objects imported by museums, galleries, and the National and University Library that are intended for public use; objects exhibited during fairs and exhibitions; objects intended for cultural and artistic events and film-making; works of art that artists declare as their own works; awards and other objects received at foreign exhibitions, performances, etc., and objects received from foreign donors.

In January 2007, the *Law on Sponsorship and Donations* came into force. The *Law* encourages private persons and companies to sponsor humanitarian activities that are in the public interest (including arts and culture). The *Law* provides deductions (up to 20%) on the total yearly personal income for private donations, but not more than 24 000 MKD (400 EUR)! Companies obtain deductions if they have donated more than 5% of their total yearly income. It is estimated that in the period January 2007 - June 2008, 2.5 million EUR was donated from the private sector for humanitarian purposes (including art and culture). More donations were registered in the first half of 2008 (1 591 000 EUR) than for all of 2007 (915 712 EUR).

In 2010 the Parliamentary Committee for Culture had a debate on some key issues of the *Law on Sponsorship and Donations*. Some of the recommendations were: to simplify the procedure for sponsorship, to suggest bigger tax reductions, to clearly mark the cultural projects of public / national interest, to encourage companies to sponsor and donate to culture etc.

However, 2012 showed again that most of the sponsorship and donation funds go to pop and folk concerts and sports events and just a small percentage to culture. Most of the marketing experts argue that additional tax reductions and benefits should be offered.

5.1.6 Labour laws

General labour laws apply in the same manner to the culture field as in any other sector that is funded from the government's budget. There is also (more or less) a unified system of salaries for those working in the public sector.

The *Retirement Law* that came into effect in September 2007 made huge changes in the general retirement policy that seriously affected the cultural sector. Changes were made to the

beneficial status of some groups in the cultural sector. It especially concerns the ballet dancers in the Macedonian National Ballet, who now are required to work more years longer than before. The old law had guaranteed a beneficial status to this profession - one year was calculated as a year and a half - so the ballet dancers could retire after 20-25 years' work (at the age of 40-45). Now, according to the new law, the beneficial status is still appreciated but the calculations have changed: 1 year for every third year! So the ballet dancers will have to work for nearly ten more years: female dancers until 53 years of age and male dancers until 56. The same problem applies to all the brass instrumentalists in the Macedonian music institutions.

The amendments (2014) to the *Retirement Law* provide the possibility (on a written request) for men to work until 67 and for women until 65. However, several women university professors submitted to the Constitutional Court an initiative for equalisation of retirement rights. The Macedonian Helsinki Committee also objected to these amendments.

There is also standardised collective bargaining agreements used when negotiating contracts with state run institutions. The first *Collective Agreement* was signed in June 2005 (as a first of its kind in the period of Transition) and it was amended in March 2006. A new *Collective Agreement* is in preparation.

One of the burning issues in 2012 on the position of cultural workers was the government's decision to change their status into public servants under the *Law on Public Servants*. However, the Constitutional Court has overruled the articles in this Law confirming that the status of cultural workers is already regulated by the *Law on Culture*.

On the other hand, following the new urgent amendments (February 2014) to the *Law on Culture*, the status of employees in the public cultural institutions has radically changed. According to the amendments there are 3 groups of employees: administrative staff (whose labour rights fall under the *Law on Administration*), cultural service providers (whose labour rights fall under the *Law on Culture*) and technical staff (whose labour rights fall under the *Law on Employees in the Public Sector*). The main category – the so called cultural service providers – has several subcategories: artist, assistant artist, skilled stage worker, skilled cultural collaborator, and skilled collaborator in the protection of cultural heritage, etc. Then, each subcategory has several levels. For example, the subcategory "artist" is further divided into "first category artist", "second category artist", concert maestro, etc.

The *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022* and the new Law on exercising the public interest in culture (in preparation) promote a status for cultural workers outside of the *Law on Administration*. The Government has also indicated that the *Law on Administration* should be revised in 2019.

5.1.7 Copyright provisions

Copyright and related rights are regulated by the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* (1996). Although this law generally provides copyright protection according to international standards, additional amendments are required to harmonise articles in line with the directives of the European Union.

In the period of transition, especially prior to 1996, violations of copyright were widespread such as the unauthorised copying of literary works, multiplication and distribution of videotapes, musical and film CDs and computer software. Since the establishment of many private broadcasting companies and cable operators, the unauthorised broadcasting and re-broadcasting of audio-visual works is ever more present.

The Ministry of Culture has several inspectors to investigate copyright violations as part of their official responsibility and upon request from rights-holders. Collecting bodies, competent courts, customs bodies and other government agencies are all involved in the direct implementation of the law and the protection of copyright.

In 2003, the Ministry of Culture undertook a huge "operation" to publicly destroy over 39 000 illegal videotapes, CDs and computer software. It did strengthen the public interest and awareness of the problems of copyright and reduced the amount of piracy to a certain degree.

Author's rights remain in force 70 years after his / her death. Audio-visual rights, also remain in force 70 years after the legal publishing of a work. In the case of multiple authors, property rights remain in force until the death of the last living author.

Moral rights are applied. While there has not been any specific debate about moral rights, there has been a constant public debate (initiated by authors and the media) on the protection of author's rights in popular and classical music.

A new *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* was adopted and came into force at the end of 2010. It strengthened copyright protection so that most of violations were subject to the Criminal Law. A Coordinative body had been established and is responsible for field actions.

The *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* was constantly mentioned in the past few years during the public debates over the controversial government project "Skopje 2014", when several modern buildings from the 1960s and 1970s were set to be re-designed in a pseudo-baroque manner. But there was no reaction from the Ministry of Culture.

Another burning issue in 2014 was the activation of the performer's and the phonogram producer's right of remuneration from the single equitable remuneration for public use of phonograms with performances published for commercial purposes. The 2013 amendments to the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* require the broadcasting organisations to have an electronic system for control and evidence of the broadcasted musical works. The Association of Broadcasters strongly opposed this measure, claiming that they work on popularisation of Macedonian music.

5.1.8 Data protection laws

2007 saw the implementation of three important laws: the *Law on Free Access to Public Information*, the *Law on Safety of Classified Information* and the *Law on Protection of Personal Data*. Public attention was mostly focused on the *Law on Free Access to Public Information* and the *Law on Protection of Personal Data*.

According to the NGO sector (Foundation Open Society Institute, "Metamorphosis" and other 13 organisations included in the monitoring system), improvement in the implementation and application of these laws was necessary. This especially applied to the *Law on Free Access to Public Information*. 625 applications were submitted to 75 institutions at central level and 31 at municipal level; with only 38% having been answered at central level and 58% at local level.

The data delivered in the Report of the Commission for Protection on Free Access to Public Information for 2012 showed that during the seven years of implementation of the Law there were 3 545 complaints registered. The Commission had positively solved 2 583 complaints. In 2012 there were 1 225 complaints, out of which 151 are personal complaints and the rest are from NGO's and foundations. 907 complaints (74.4%) are due to the silence of the administration. Most of the complaints are about public health institutions (525), state institutions on the central level (396), local institutions (226), judicial institutions (44) etc. However, the Open Society Institute sent an Open letter to the President of the Parliament saying that the Commission's Report deals with false information, that there is a cover up of unsuccessful implementation of the law, there are no recommendations to overcome the high percentage of the cases of "silence of administration", etc.

The 2017 Report of the Commission for Protection on Free Access to Public Information showed an increase of the number of the complaints from citizens and companies due to the "silence of administration" (over 75% of the complains). The Commission has responded positively in 87% of the cases. In 2017 there were 758 registered complaints (619 in 2016) to the Commission – of which 285 (25%) from citizens and 473 from citizens associations and companies.

5.1.9 Language laws

The Constitution and the *Law on the Use of the Macedonian Language* (1998) determine its official status and its use in the public sphere.

According the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* (2001), in the units of local self-government, where at least 20% of the population speak a language other than Macedonian, that language and its alphabet will be used as an official language, in addition to the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet (see also chapter 4.2.4).

Macedonian Radio Television as a Public Broadcasting Service fosters the use of the Macedonian language and the Cyrillic alphabet in radio and television programmes. The Second Channel of Macedonian Radio Television is completely open to programmes in the languages of the cultural communities, namely: Albanian, Turkish, Serbian, Romany, Vlach etc. (see also chapter 4.2.6).

In 2008, the Parliament passed the new Rules of Procedure and the new *Law on the Use of the Albanian Language*. According to this document, starting from 2009, the Parliamentary committees can be conducted in the Albanian language as well.

In January 2018, after a long and burning public debate, the Parliament passed the new *Law on the Use of Languages*. The Law stipulates the use of the Albanian language on national and local level. The President of the Republic refused to sign the Law.

5.1.10 Other areas of general legislation

The *Law on Import, Circulation and Distribution of Foreign Printed Material, Foreign Films and Informative Activities* regulates the means of import, circulation and distribution of foreign printed materials and films, foreign information agencies, accreditation of foreign journalists etc. The main authority for foreign correspondents is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Foreign countries and international organisations can establish information agencies but only based on bilateral agreement. Foreign TV crews that stay less than 30 days will need permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to do so. Foreign companies will not have the right to make surveys or inquires of any kind.

The *Law on Estimation* (2010, amended 2012) regulates the process of estimation in copyright and related rights and the Ministry of Culture is authorised to give licences to the estimators in this field. This law also affects the (market) estimation of the value of the artworks, antiquities etc.

5.2 Legislation on culture

The main law in the field of culture is the *Law on Culture* (1998) which was meant to be a unified law for the cultural field. When it was passed in 1998, partial co-ordination was achieved between the existing constitutional system and the new social, political and economic conditions in the country. It also guaranteed the freedom of creative work and related rights; made possible the introduction of a civil concept of culture; an equal status for public and private entities that work in the field of culture; introduction of a decentralised system for culture; financing activities in the "national interest" through an open competition, etc. However, it is important to note that past experience with the *Law on Culture* revealed many weaknesses and pointed out the necessity for amendments. It became clear that a re-evaluation of the *Law on Culture* was necessary. Subsequently, the *Law on Culture* was amended 17 times.

The *National Strategy for Cultural Development* has stated that the *Law on Culture* has become old-fashioned, rigid and anachronous. A new law on exercising the public interest in culture is in preparation.

Since proclaiming independence in 1990, a number of new laws were passed in the field of culture including:

Title of the act	Year of adoption
<i>Law on Compulsory Deposits to the National Library</i>	1994 (amended 2008/2011)
<i>Law on Copyright and Related Rights</i>	2010 (amended 2011/2015)
<i>Law on the Use of the Macedonian Language</i>	1998 (amended 1998/2003/ 2005/2008/2010/2013/ 2015/2017)
<i>Law on Culture</i>	1998 (amended 1998/2003/2005/ 2007/2010/2011/2012/2013/ 2014/2015/2016/2018)
<i>Law for Protection of Cultural Heritage</i>	2004 (amended 2004/2007/2011/2013/2014/ 2015/2016/2018)
<i>Law on Museums</i>	2004 (amended 2008, 2010, 2011/2015/2016)
<i>Law on Libraries</i>	2004 (amended 2008/2010/2011/2015/2016)
<i>Law on Memorial Monuments and Commemorative Sites</i>	2004 (amended 2008/2015)
<i>Media Law</i>	2005
<i>Law on the Film Fund</i>	2006 (amended 2008, 2011, 2012)
<i>Law on Publishing</i>	2014 (amended 2015)
<i>Law on Audiovisual Goods</i>	2008 amended 2011
<i>Law on the Protection of the Skopje Old Bazaar as significant cultural monument</i>	2008 amended 2010
<i>Law on Copyright and Related Rights</i>	2010
<i>Law on Governing of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage in the Ohrid Region</i>	2011 (amended 2015)

<i>Law on the National Artist of the Republic of Macedonia</i>	2011 (annuled 2017)
<i>Law on the Protection of the old town centre of Krusevo as significant cultural heritage</i>	2012
<i>Law on the Support of Domestic Music Production</i>	2013 (annuled 2018)
<i>Law on Film</i>	2013 (amended 2014/2015/2016/2018)
<i>Law on State Awards</i>	2006 (amended 2007)
<i>Law on Audiovisual Goods</i>	2008 (amended 2011/2016)
<i>Law on the Protection of the old town centre of Kratovo as significant cultural heritage</i>	2014
<i>Law on the Protection of the old town centre of Bitola as significant cultural heritage</i>	2015

5.3 Sector specific legislation

5.3.1 Visual and applied arts

In the last decade the visual arts have been characterised by artistic diversity, ranging from "traditional" painting and sculpture to contemporary works using video, installations, performances, computer art and alternative forms of expression.

There is a relatively well-developed network of museums and galleries that, in one way or another, deal with visual arts. However, only 3 institutions are entirely and professionally dedicated to studying and representing the visual arts: the National Gallery of Macedonia, the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Skopje and National Gallery Tetovo. The work of other institutions is important, too. Although not entirely dedicated to visual arts, it is part of the overall programme of activities of e.g. the Museum of the City of Skopje, the Cultural Information Centre in Skopje, the Art Gallery in Bitola, and the Art Gallery in Strumica etc.

Fine art gatherings are organised once a year (approximately for 15 or 20 days) in artist colonies. Invited artists (local and foreign) attend and create works that afterwards belong to the colony. They are significant actors in the production and especially popularisation of the visual arts. It should be pointed out that some of these colonies and especially the older ones (Prilep, Strumica and Resen) possess great and important collections of local and international art.

Table 5: Art exhibitions in Macedonia, by type, 2017

	Art exhibition organisers	Type of exhibition				Visitors
		Total	One-man	Group	Retro-spective	
Museums	15	145	65	63	17	55 039
Art galleries	1	34	24	8	2	17 000
Community Centres	16	120	59	57	4	31 280
MASA*	1	4	3	1	-	-
Cultural centres	20	213	117	88	18	107 309
Artists' associations	2	15	3	11	1	3 700
Others	14	44	10	32	2	15 420

Source: State Statistics Office, News Release No. 2.1.18.16 / 2017

* Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts

In 2017 there were 20 fine art colonies organised (23 in 2014) with 986 participants.

There are no special regulations for visual arts.

5.3.2 Performing arts and music

According to the State Statistical Office data, in the 2016/2017 season, compared to 2015/2016, the number of performances at professional theatres increased with 10.3%, while attendance increased with 2.1%. The average attendance per performance was 185 visitors.

In the period 2016/2017, compared to 2015/2016, the number of performances at professional youth and children's theatres decreased with 4.8%, while attendance decreased with 7.1%.

In amateur theatres, for the same period, the number of performances decreased with 16.1%, and the number of visitors decreased with 23.2%.

In 2016/2017, in comparison with 2015/2016, the number of concerts and attendance at the Philharmonic Orchestra decreased.

Table 6: Theatres in Macedonia, by type, 2016/2017

Type	Number	Performances	Employees	Attendance
Professional	17	1 285	1 215	238 200
Prof. Children	2	197	36	20 512
Amateur	8	99	138*	19 287
Total	27	1 581	1 357	277 999

Source: State Statistical Office, News Release No. 2.1.17.36 / 2017

* Active members

The two leading musical institutions are: the Philharmonic Orchestra and the Macedonian Opera and Ballet (both in Skopje). Their main objective is to present works from world music

literature from various stylistic periods and promotion of works by local composers. Apart from these, several chamber ensembles are active, as well as many individual musicians.

The concert life is mainly concentrated in Skopje (as capital city), whereas in the other towns it is occasional, depending on the conditions and possibilities to stage concerts, the interest and the tradition of the performing arts practice. Concerts in smaller towns are, almost without exception, chamber concerts.

The Ministry of Culture also supports the programme activities of the professional folk dance group Tanec, which fosters vocal, dance and vocal-instrumental folklore tradition.

In 2017, the new building for the Macedonian Philharmonic was finally opened.

Table 7: Macedonian Philharmonic, 2013 - 2017

	Concerts	Attendance
2013/2014	38	21 900
2014/2015	31	34 106
2015/2016	35	39 350
2016/2017	30	34 250

Source: State Statistical Office, News Release No. 2.1.17.36 / 2017

There are no specific regulations for the performing arts as a separate field. But during the debates on the new National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022, the Syndicate of the Cultural Workers (SKW) initiated a proposal to the Ministry of Culture to evaluate the need of a separate law for the performing arts. A working group was established and the proposal is now in a process of evaluation.

In 2013 the Ministry of Culture prepared and the Parliament adopted the *Law on the Support of the Domestic Music Production* which was strongly opposed by experts and the opposition. The Law aimed to support and promote domestic music production – mainly pop and folk music – for a period of ten years, to a total value of 5 million EUR. By means of yearly competition the creation of 200 new compositions (150 in the area of entertainment and 50 in folk music and children's songs) were supposed to be financed. Compositions were to be selected in several categories: "talent", "renowned singer", "outstanding performer", "top performer", "songs that promote family values in society and families with many children" and "compositions that promote the history of Macedonia", and were financed with 3 000 EUR (1 500 EUR for the composition and production, and 1 500 EUR for a video clip). The "Children's song" were financed with 400 EUR (for the composition and production). The "Stars" category will be financed with 4 500 EUR (3 000 EUR for composition and production, and 1 500 EUR for a video clip). Macedonian Radio and Television as a Public Broadcaster was authorised to carry out all of the work (announce a public call, choose members of the Commission, recordings etc.).

Due to a new cultural policy in this sector the Ministry of Culture annulled this Law in 2018.

5.3.3 Cultural heritage

There are approximately 11 200 buildings registered as part of the immovable cultural heritage (4 421 archaeological sites; 1 726 churches and monasteries with over 150 000 square metres of mural fresco paintings; etc.) and 500 000 museum pieces. Institutional responsibility for cultural heritage (by types) rests with the institutes for the protection of cultural monuments (immovable cultural heritage) and museums, libraries and the national cinémathèque (moveable cultural heritage). The process of revalorisation of the cultural heritage is in process for several years.

The first institution for protection of cultural heritage was founded in 1949 in Skopje as a Central institute for protection of cultural monuments and natural rarities (today known as the National Conservation Centre).

Until 2004 there were 7 institutes (together with public museums, as one legal entity) responsible for the protection of immovable cultural heritage (1 national and 6 with regional scope), including conservation and restoration. These institutes are legally obliged to register the monuments designated as cultural heritage. As a result of their work, 11 200 immovable objects from different periods have been recorded. The period of time required to complete the validation process is quite slow in comparison to the speed at which objects are recorded (proportion 10:1). In the period 1991-1997 the share of the protection of the immovable cultural heritage in the total budget for culture ranged from 8 to 13%. In contrast to this, in the period until 1991, the percentage of protection funds used to be as much as 35%.

In 2004, the new *Law for Protection of Cultural Heritage* was adopted by the Parliament. It defines public services in this field and all available legal mechanisms to ensure the protection of cultural heritage (immovable and movable). Cultural heritage may be publicly or privately owned and may be exported only in exceptional cases with permission by the Minister of Culture. Private owners have an obligation to care and maintain cultural heritage and property and to provide access for scientific and cultural research purposes and in some cases to provide access to the general public. According to this law the newly established Cultural Heritage Protection Office is the main responsible body in this field. The government appoints the director of this Office. The institutes for protection of cultural heritage have to separate from the public museums and transform into national conservation centres.

There are 3 national parks: Galichica (since 1958), Mavrovo (1949) and Pelister (1948).

Museums are mainly responsible for the protection of moveable cultural heritage. To a certain extent, the National and University Library (for medieval manuscripts) and the National Cinémathèque (for films) also play a role.

Table 8: Museums in Macedonia, 2018

Museums	
Public (national)	21
Public (local)	11
Total	32

Besides the national and local museums, there are several museums and museum collections with an unclear legal status (according to the Law on Museums), concerning the ownership, national or local jurisdiction etc.

Table 9: Exhibits by type of collection, 2012

Type of inventoried exhibits	Number
Archaeological	179 746
Ethnological	38 237

Historical	56 574
Arts	15 135
Technical	134
Paleontological	524
Geological	859
Zoological	129 713
Botanical	9 088
Other	641
Inventoried exhibits – total	430 642
Uninventoried exhibits	189 948
Exhibits on display	30 434

Source: State Statistic Office, Culture and Public Informing, 2012.

There is no official museum policy document yet, but the key issues and priorities have been stated in the *National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022*:

- necessary changes to the Law on Museums,
- review of the status (national and local) of the museums and decentralisation of the museum network,
- analysis of the space conditions in the major museums,
- analysis of the permanent displays, etc.

There is no national museum association or formal network, but some of the museums are members of ICOM.

It is important to underline that in the past ten years several new museums have been opened: *Museum on Water* in Ohrid, *Memorial House of Mother Theresa*, *Museum of Macedonian Struggle* (both in Skopje) and the *Memorial House of Tose Proevski* in Krusevo, etc. However, there has been a lot of public argument surrounding the work on the museums. Contrary to the Law on Museums, all the work, even on the permanent displays in the museums, has been carried out by the Ministry of Culture, without appointing any managing or professional staff in the museums. On the other hand, some of the museums are controversial in form, especially the *Memorial house of Tose Proeski* (pop star recently deceased), or the *Memorial House of Mother Theresa*.

5.3.4 Literature and libraries

After the privatisation of the state-owned publishing houses (12) in 1995, the period of transition saw the appearance of many new publishers. The number of entities registered for publishing activities reached 250-300. The financial resources that were allocated for publishing increased, both in the official language and in the languages of the minorities: Albanian, Turkish, Vlach etc.

Government support is accomplished through the traditional forms of annual open competitions for financing of publishing projects. The Ministry of Culture continually allocates financial resources for the stimulation of literary creative work. These resources are intended

to support authors (paying author's fee, literary awards) and publishers (preparation and printing expenses).

In the period 2008-2015, the Ministry of Culture and the former government supported publishing hundreds of thousands of books in several so called capital editions ("Macedonian literature through the centuries", with 130 volumes, that cost 24 million MKD / 400 000 EUR; "100 Nobel prize winners in the Macedonian language", which cost approximately 500 000 EUR; "The stars of world literature"; "130 volumes of Macedonian literature in the English language", etc.). However, the new Government found out that the funds were spent while the books stayed in the basement of several cultural institutions and never reached the potential users (libraries, school, universities, etc.).

Table 10: Published books and brochures (by language and circulation)

	2013	2014
Total	864 (724.000)	924 706.000)
Macedonian	689 (571.000)	811 (650.000)
Albanian	77 (100.000)	27 (15.000)
Turkish	7 (6.000)	3 (3.000)
English	13 (5.000)	14 (5.000)
In several languages	75 (41.000)	63 (30.000)
Other languages	3 (1.000)	6 (4.000)

Until 1992, the municipalities (the local government) acted as founders of the public libraries (32). The government established the National Library as a public institution in 1945 and financed it completely. In the period of transition all public libraries were completely financed from the Budget of the Ministry of Culture.

Table 11: Basic data on libraries by type, 2016

	National	Tertiary educational institutions	Specialised	Other non-specialised	Libraries - national institutions	Public libraries
Number of libraries	1	62	52	3	6	51

Capacity of seats	535	1404	436	246	135	572
Books (number of copies)	1 131 071	1156480	339064	90050	596720	1252863

Source: State Statistic Office: News Release No. 2.1.17.31 / 2017

Table 12: Libraries, number and members*

Libraries	2010	2013	2016
Libraries – number	62	62	57
Members	62000	102375	43 00

Source: State Statistic Office: Macedonia in Figures 2018

* Only national and public libraries.

In order to successfully cover the city area, the Skopje City Library "Miladinovci Brothers" still uses the so called "library-bus" - a specialised van that brings books to most distant villages in the area. This "library-bus" now has 1 500 registered users (mostly children) who pay a symbolic membership fee of 50 MKD (0.90 cents) per year.

In 2008, the Ministry of Culture announced a new measure to improve the book funds for libraries: every publisher is obliged to give (without any compensation) to the National and University Library 110 copies of the books that were supported by the Ministry of Culture. Most of the publishers were surprised by this measure, saying that it will decrease the financial help that they get from the state. It is estimated that this new measure will provide around 30 000 new books per year for the libraries.

In 2009, a new wing, measuring 15 000 sqm, was opened at the National and University Library at a cost of 86 million MKD (1.5 million EUR).

As a result of good co-operation between the Macedonian National Library in Skopje and the "Yunuz Emre" Institute from Ankara (Turkey) in the project "Reconstruction of the Balkan cultural heritage", 3 544 manuscripts and 1 000 fragmented pages (in total of 900 000 pages) in Arabic, Turkish and Persian language were digitalised in 2013. In the second phase of the project an electronic and a printed catalogue will be published.

5.3.5 Architecture and spatial planning

The *Law on Space and Urban Planning* (1996) defines the types, the content and conditions under which architectural and environmental plans are to be drawn up and eventually accepted by the government. This law defines both the Space Plans of the state and the Urban Plans (General Urban Plan, Detailed Urban Plan, Urbanity Documentation for an Inhabited Place and Urban Plans for Border Areas and Sites with Buildings of Public Interest). All these plans should be drawn up according to certain standards that would ensure protection of the environment, cultural monuments, archaeological sites etc. The government decides on an annual programme to implement and finance these plans from the overall state budget.

The 1996 *Law* also defines the procedure for selling state property and building sites through a public auction) and for acquiring building permits for construction etc.

Other relevant laws that have an impact on architecture and the environment are the *Law on Building Sites* (1996) and the *Law for the Protection of the Environment* (1996).

5.3.6 Film, video and photography

Film production has undergone fundamental transformations since 1991 which has resulted in the reorganisation and financing of films. After the establishment of the first private production house in 1989, the number of producers grew to over 100 firms. However, reality indicates that this unexpected and highly illogical increase in the number of production firms was not motivated by a willingness to promote film production. Quite the opposite, the motivation was to have an opportunity to access public money. Nonetheless, some production firms have initiated a new model of co-productions and search for new co-financers from within the country and abroad.

The only national producer is Vardar Film, which at one time managed to maintain a certain rate of production including several feature films and documentaries. In the period between 1991 and 2000, 12 feature films and 47 short films were produced. According to the *Government's Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture* (December 2003), Vardar Film will be reorganised as a film centre.

In 1954, there were 77 movie theatres located throughout the country, 86 in 1972 and since 1980 the number has continually decreased. Today, movies are screened in 21 film theatres and 41 cultural centres. In 2003, 704 films were shown, of which 22 Macedonian, 674 foreign and 8 co-productions. The number of visitors was 277 211. Almost 95% of the foreign movies originate from the USA, whereas the number of movies from European and other countries is significantly low.

In 1960, the capital Skopje had 17 cinemas, which has reduced to only two today. In 2006, 3 cinemas were closed. The total number of cinemas in Macedonia in 2007 was 16, with 6 686 seats. 426 films were shown at 3 834 cinema performances, with 130 546 visitors.

According to the data of the State Statistical Office, in 2014, compared to 2013, there was a decrease in the number of shown cinema performances and cinema attendance. The number of shown cinema performances in 2014, compared to 2013, decreased by 11.9%, while cinema attendance dropped by 2.3%.

Table 13: Basic data on cinemas, 2002-2017

	2002	2007	2012	2017
Number of cinemas	27	16	14	14
Number of performances	9 114	3 834	5 906	16 228
Visitors	431 000	130 000	297 000	471 000

Source: State Statistical Office: Macedonia in Figures, 2018

In May 2006, the *Law on the Film Fund* was adopted by the Parliament. This was actually the first attempt to create a fund for financing culture as a kind of "arms-length" body of the Ministry of Culture. Twice a year (May and September) the Film Fund is to announce a public competition for funding film projects of national interest. Only registered film producers can apply for the competition. A minimum of 75% of the budget should be spent locally. The Film Fund should mostly finance films that can return some of the invested money. The Film Fund should also establish contacts with international producers and distributors and assist in the promotion and marketing of films etc.

In 2008 - 2011 the Film Fund has supported 79 film projects, of which 36 have been completed: 12 feature films, 13 documentaries, 8 short films and 2 animated films. In 2012 four feature

films supported by the Film Fund were released, together with 2 documentaries, 13 short films and 3 animated films.

An interesting public debate arose in the past several years when the government side-stepped the Film Fund and gave direct, additional funds, to 2 films: "Stories from the Wild East" (2 million EUR) and "Third half-time" (1 million EUR). This was not a first time as the government also gave money (500 000 EUR) directly to the director Milcho Manchevski for his film "Mothers". Although most of the public was against the government's direct interference, some of the producers and film workers found it a helpful solution to the Film Fund's limited funds.

In 2013, after 13 years of agony, the only national producer "Vardar Film" was transformed into "Vardar Film Macedonia", to be in charge of international film promotion, logistic support to foreign film producers, distribution of Macedonian films etc.

In 2015 the Macedonian Film Agency approved for financing 3 feature films with majority Macedonian support (6 in 2014), 3 feature films with minority Macedonian support (4 in 2014), 1 documentary film with minority Macedonian support, 9 short fiction films with majority Macedonian support (8 in 2014), 1 short fiction film with minority Macedonian support, 3 short documentary films with majority Macedonian support, 1 short animation film with minority Macedonian support and 1 short animation film with majority Macedonian support (2 in 2014).

The *Law on Film* (2013) provided better conditions for private sector investment (domestic and foreign) in the film industry. It foresaw the return of 20% of the invested private funds after the film is finished. The law also increased the amount of the participating funds for a film from 500 000 to 1 million EUR. According to this law the existing Film Fund changed into Agency for Film, with a Managing Board and Film Council. The law came to power on January 1st 2014. In 2018, changes of the *Law on Film* are in preparation.

Instead of the old *Law on the Founding of the Cinemateque of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia* (1974), a new *Law on Audio-visual Goods* was passed in 2008. The law regulates the basic conditions and working methods of a cinema, types of cinemateques and its set up, technical components, professional staff and other questions of interest. According to this Law, a cinemateque can be public (national or local) and private. The Minister of Culture decides whether these conditions are met.

In 2009, a new complex with five film depots was built for the Macedonian Cinemateque. So for the first time in 35 years of existence the Cinemateque has optimal conditions for film storage. The new depots will store 12 000 film boxes with 4 200 originals and copies of the national film production. The new depots will also be used for storing museum pieces, photo and video documentation, laboratories etc.

In 2015 the films ("Before the Rain", "Dust", "Shadows" and "Mothers") by Milcho Manchevski have been digitalized.

The beginning of video production (as an independent art form) is closely connected with the Macedonian Television. Starting in 1985, it produced over 20 videos (financed by the Programme for Culture and Arts) and 2 experimental video films.

5.3.7 Mass media

The last statistical survey (2014) shows that there were 1 674 employees in the television industry (in 2011 there were 1 771 employees) of which 500 were in the Macedonian Television as a Public Broadcasting Enterprise. In radio stations there were 525 employees, of which 213 in the Macedonian Radio (as a Public Broadcasting Enterprise).

Since June 2013 the TV signal has been completely digitalised.

There are no additional laws or regulations which encourage the production of indigenous programmes with cultural or artistic relevance.

In 2014 there were 20 daily newspapers (22 in 2013 and 27 in 2012) with a daily circulation of 17 727.

One of the most relevant issues in 2012 was media freedom, freedom of speech and decriminalisation of slander. According to the Ministry of Justice, 296 journalists were accused and prosecuted in the past three years for slandering government officials or other holders of public office. Most of them were cancelled but 9 journalists were convicted and had to pay fines of 5-32 000 EUR (in each case). At the same time, some of the so called pro-government media accused several journalists of giving negative information to "Freedom House" about the media situation in the country.

All this, together with suggestions from EU representatives, resulted in long negotiations between the former government and the Association of Journalists about the decriminalisation of slander. The final agreement was that the maximum penalty should be 27 000 EUR, introducing a kind of scaling of responsibility: 2 000 EUR for the journalist, 10 000 EUR for the editor in chief and 15 000 EUR for the media company. At the same time, these cases should not be treated under *Criminal Law* but under *Civil Law*. The Association of Journalists has stated that it was the best they could do at the time.

According to the Reporters without Borders' World Press Freedom Index, in 2013 Macedonia was ranked in 116th place of the total of 176 countries, a drop of 22 positions compared to the previous year. According to Reporters without Borders, the reasons for the deterioration of media freedom in Macedonia lies in judicial harassment based on often inappropriate legislation, the lack of access to public data, physical and psychological violence against those who work in news and information, official and private advertising markets used as a tool, the grey economy's hold over vital parts of the media. No representative of the government commented on the findings presented in the Reporters without Borders' report.

On the 2018 World Press Freedom Index Macedonia is positioned on 109th place. It is a slight improvement and the Rapport explains that "The fall of the Gruevski "regime" has led to a slight reduction in government control of the media but it is still too soon to be sure of the government's intention to engineer a lasting improvement in the situation" (<https://rsf.org/en/republic-macedonia>). There has been no significant change in the economic situation of the journalists, who are usually poorly paid and have none or little job security.

See also chapter 4.2.6.

5.3.8 Other areas of culture specific legislation

Information is currently not available.

6. Financing of culture

6.1 Short overview

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for distributing public funds for culture on the basis of an annual plan, which is developed by the Ministry at the end of the year for the following year. The allocation of the overall state budget to different sectors is prescribed by law (annual *Law on the National Budget*). Culture's share of the state budget in 2002 to 2006 ranged from 2.40% to 1.80%. In 2005, culture's share of the state budget was 2.227%.

Table 14: Expenditure for culture

	Ministry of Culture (in mill.denar)	Financing of the cultural activities (in mill.denar)	% for culture in the State Budget
2008	501	2780	2.3
2009	633	2570	2.3
2010	656	2359	2.1
2011	280	3174	2.3
2012	315	2801	2.0
2013	323	3288	2.3
2014	337	3352	2.2
2015	332	3696	2.2
2016	355	3460	2.1
2017	359	4899	2.6

Source: National Strategy for Cultural Development in the Republic of Macedonia 2018-2022

The Ministry of Culture is the main source of funding for culture. It provides annual funding to the national cultural institutions (salaries, investments, running costs such as heating, insurance of equipment, buildings, exhibits, etc.) and to specific programmes that distribute funds on the basis of competition. The amount of money reserved to pay the salaries of those employed on a full time basis in cultural institutions represented a share of 62% of the total budget for culture in 1992. This figure decreased to 59% in 1995, 39% in 2000 and 35% in 2002 and 45.12% in 2005.

In December 2003, the government passed the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*. According to this Decision only 51 (from the previous 115) institutions gained the status of national institutions that are completely financed by the Ministry of Culture. All other cultural institutions are considered local and should be financed by the local governments (salaries, running costs etc.). The local institutions can apply for annual funding from the Ministry of Culture for programmes and specific projects. Since June 2005, this has been put into practice.

In 2005, the structure of the cultural budget was: 45.12% for salaries; 2.65% for heating; 0.99% for insurance and other services to the institutions; 2.65% for capital investments (reconstructions, equipment etc.) and 44.24 % for programmes and projects.

Table 15: Expenditure of the Ministry of Culture, 2004-2013

Year	value in MKD	% of total	value in MKD per capita	yearly change %
2004	147 102 712	0.0	73.6	0.0
2005	290 266 224	0.1	145.1	97.3
2006	294 195 937	0.1	147.1	1.4
2007	383 395 250	0.1	191.7	30.3
2008	500 904 760	0.1	250.5	30.6
2009	632 956 949	0.2	316.5	26.4
2010	674 902 000	0.2	337.5	6.6
2011	293 390 000	0.1	146.7	-56.5
2012	315 250 000	0.1	157.6	12.5
2013	366 466 000	0.1	183.2	16.2

Source: Centre for Economic Analyses, <http://www.mkdbudget.org>.**Table 16: Financing of cultural activities, 2004-2013**

Year	value in MKD	% of total	value in MKD per capita	yearly change %
2004	1 418 454 179	0.4	709.2	0.0
2005	1 371 638 021	0.4	685.8	-3.3
2006	1 315 776 161	0.4	657.9	-4.1
2007	1 600 004 690	0.5	800.0	21.6
2008	2 779 811 936	0.8	1 389.9	73.7
2009	2 570 277 837	0.8	1 285.1	-7.5
2010	2 511 410 000	0.7	1 255.7	-2.3
2011	3 365 785 000	1.0	1 682.9	34.0
2012	2 888 830 000	0.8	1 444.4	-9.0
2013	3 399 355 000	1.0	1 699.7	17.7

Source: Centre for Economic Analyses, <http://www.mkdbudget.org>.

Table 15 includes the expenses of the Ministry alone (salaries - including the salaries for the Cultural Heritage Protection Office, subventions and transfers, capital expenses, the fund for the national artist etc.). Table 16 includes the transfers to the institutions or other subjects for financing of their cultural projects according to the annual programme, the salaries and other expenses of the national institutions etc.

The significant disproportions in the Ministry's budget between 2006-07 and 2010-11 is mostly related to the scheduled activities that were "imposed" on the Ministry of Culture, like the "Skopje 2014" project (the building of numerous memorial monuments), then publishing projects, temporary archaeological campaigns etc. In practice, very little funds were left for regular cultural activities.

6.2 Public cultural expenditure

6.2.1 Aggregated indicators

From 1995-2002, cultural expenditure represented 0.53% of the GDP. This figure represents a decrease from the periods 1993-96 (0.56%) and 1986 (0.61%).

The growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the first quarter of 2015 was 3.2%. In the first quarter of 2015, Household final consumption, including Non-profit institutions serving households, increased by 1.6% in nominal terms compared to the same period of 2014, and its share in the GDP structure was 69.6%. In the same period, Export of goods and services increased by 13.4% in nominal terms, while Import of goods and services increased by 5.5%.

According to the estimated data, the growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the first quarter of 2018 was 0.1%. In this quarter, the biggest increase was recorded in the following sections: R, S and T - Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities; Activities of households as employers; Undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use by 12.1%; G, H and I - Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; Transportation and storage; Accommodation and food service activities by 10.5%; M and N - Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities by 8.5%. In the first quarter of 2018, Household final consumption, including Non-profit institutions serving households, increased by 4.0% in nominal terms, and its share in the GDP structure was 64.3%. In the same period, Export of goods and services increased by 10.4% in nominal terms, while Import of goods and services increased by 9.1%.

Table 17: Gross domestic product at current prices (in million MKD), 2013-2015

Year	2013	2014	2015
GDP	501 891	527 631	558 954

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia: Gross Domestic Product, 2015

Table 18: Cultural expenses as part of GDP, at current prices (in million MKD), 2005-2017

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2014	2017
Share of GDP	6 155	7 124	7 495	10 548	13 296	13 643	14 464

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

6.2.2 Public cultural expenditure broken down by level of government

There is no data available on the local (municipal) expenditure on culture. It is believed that more than 90% of the total public expenditure on culture comes from the Ministry of Culture. However, within the new re-organisation of the network of public cultural institutions and the re-allocation of some responsibilities to the municipalities, it is believed that this figure will change in the near future.

6.2.3 Sector breakdown

The figures in Table 19 represent the direct budgetary transfers from the Ministry of Culture to the cultural institutions. The Ministry of Culture does not finance the press, the media, the archives etc.

Table 19: Sector breakdown in MKD, 2017 and 2018

Sector	2017	2018
Protection of Cultural Heritage	242 651 143	441 400 000
Museums	398 299 276	420 300 000
Visual Arts	28 803 321	37 100 000
Publishing	162 251 531	96 200 000
Libraries	86 322 362	88 000 000
Film	149 874 562	159 863 000
Performing Arts	2 942 608 819	1 629 100 000
International co-operation	96 561 818	121 169 000
Cultural events, festivals, other manifestations	93 663 098	113 331 000
Decentralisation	234 335 000	249 882 000
TOTAL (MKD)	4 435 370 930	3 235 176 000
TOTAL (EUR)	72 710 998	53 035 672

Source: Ministry of Finance 2018.

6.3 Trends and indicators for private cultural financing

Information is currently not available.

7. Public institutions in cultural infrastructure

7.1 Cultural infrastructure: tendencies & strategies

The *Law on Local Self Government* (2002) re-allocated some responsibilities to the municipalities, such as: development of local interest in culture; institutional and financial support of cultural institutions and projects, preserving folklore, customs, old crafts and similar cultural values; organising cultural events; and encouragement of various specific forms of art.

According to the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture*, 64 of 115 cultural institutions are considered local institutions. It means that local authorities are responsible to provide financing of basic costs (salaries, running costs etc.) of these institutions.

According to the new *Law for the City of Skopje*, the City of Skopje is responsible for:

- institutional and financial support of the cultural institutions and projects of importance for the City of Skopje;
- fostering the folklore, tradition, old craftsmanship and similar cultural values;
- organising cultural events, encouragement of various specific forms of creativity; and
- recognising events and persons of importance for the City of Skopje.

7.2 Basic data about selected public institutions in the cultural sector

Table 20: Cultural institutions financed by public authorities, by domain

Domain	Cultural institutions (subdomains)	Number (Year)	Trend (++ to --)
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage sites (recognised)	4 421 (2003)	++
	Museums (organisations)	28 (2017)	++
	Archives (of public authorities)	(not available)	(not available)
Visual arts	Public art galleries / exhibition halls	69 (2017)	++
	Art academies (or universities)	3 (2017)	-
Performing arts	Symphonic orchestras	3 (2010)	++
	Music schools	NA	NA
	Music / theatre academies (or universities)	3 (2017)	+
	Dramatic theatre	27 (2017)	++
	Music theatres, opera houses	2 (2010)	NA
	Dance and ballet companies	1 (2010)	NA
Books and Libraries	Libraries	167 (2010)	--

Audiovisual	Broadcasting organisations	135 (2011)	++
Interdisciplinary	Socio-cultural centres / cultural houses	35 (2010)	NA

7.3 Status and partnerships of public cultural institutions

According to the *Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture* (2003) there are 51 national institutions that can be considered as major cultural institutions. They all are legally independent but financed (nearly 100%) by the Ministry of Culture (salaries, running costs, programmes etc.). The Minister of Culture appoints the directors based on a public competition.

8. Promoting creativity and participation

8.1 Support to artists and other creative workers

8.1.1 Overview of strategies, programmes and direct or indirect forms of support

Cultural creativity is supported on the state level in several ways:

- direct budgetary support for projects of national interest through annual public competition in all cultural fields, regardless of the status of the institution or the artist;
- direct budgetary contributions for independent artists (retirement, health insurance etc.);
- indirect support through tax and customs deductions; and
- ad hoc support from the reserve budgetary funds for projects outside the competition procedure.

8.1.2 Special artists' funds

There are no special artists' funds provided by the government. Or, better to say, there is ad hoc government support, especially for the film industry, but without any publicly known or approved criteria. This method has been often criticized by some of the public media in the past decade but without any success.

8.1.3 Grants, awards, scholarships

Through public competition, the Ministry of Culture supports the professional development of talented young artists and professionals in the area of film, theatre, music, dance, literature, visual arts, and protection of movable and immovable cultural heritage. The priority is given to studies that do not exist within the Macedonian educational system.

Other examples of direct support include: an annual open competition for artists to spend time at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, and several state awards ("11th October" Award which is the most important national award; "St. Kliment Award" etc.) given to artists (on public competition) as a recognition for their life-time achievement.

The Ministry of Culture provides funding for the annual awards given by professional artists association to their members for special achievements.

In 2008, the Ministry of Culture announced the introduction of a new category / position of "national artist". The title was reserved for the most significant artists as a recognition of their contribution to the development and popularisation of Macedonian art and culture. The *Law on National Artists* was approved in 2011. The title was awarded by the President of the Republic, based on the proposal from the Minister of Culture. The title provides a lifelong monthly payment of 1 000 EUR and a monograph of his / her work to be published by the Ministry of Culture.

Another form of direct support to artists was the "national pension", which was awarded to significant artists and experts in the protection of cultural heritage. The artists and experts who were awarded this lifelong national pension actually get the difference between their pension and the highest pension in the country.

However, having in mind the actual practice within the last decade, the new Government determined that these two new categories were a kind of political corruption to the artists and cultural workers enforced by the former government. The Ministry of Culture consequently annulled the laws in 2018.

8.1.4 Support to professional artists associations or unions

Until the end of 2000, professional artists associations were treated as national institutions and were completely financed (salaries, running costs, annual programmes etc.) by the Ministry of Culture. Pursuant to the government policy of reducing the number of employees in public

administration and in accordance with the *Law on Citizens' Associations and Foundations*, professional artists associations are now treated as civil associations i.e. only their projects are funded.

Through an open yearly competition, the Ministry of Culture provides international membership fee costs for the professional associations (ICOM, ICOMOS, AICA, FREEPRESCI, BLUE SHIELD etc.).

8.2 Cultural consumption and participation

8.2.1 Trends and figures

Table 21: Distribution of household expenditure on recreation and culture, in %, 2003-2011

Year	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011
Share in %	3.3	3.5	3.3	2.9	2.9

Source: *Macedonia in Figures 2012*, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

Table 22: Consumer price index* on recreation and culture, 2006-2011

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Index	103.7	100.6	99.8	95.8	100.6	99.1

Source: *Macedonia in Figures 2012*, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

* previous year =100.

Table 23: Household consumption expenditure on recreation and culture, at current prices (in million MKD), 2003-2009

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
In MKD	4 941	5 431	6 309	7 952	8 761	9 345	9 384

Source: *Macedonia in Figures 2010*, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

Table 24: Number of visitors in specific cultural fields, in thousands, 2000-2013

Year	Professional theatres	Cinemas	Museums	Libraries (members)
2000/2001	286	427	163	69
2005/2006	248	96	163	74
2010/2011	342	119	957	62
2012/2013	236	425	491	62
2016/2017	238	471	476	43

Source: State Statistical Office: *Macedonia in Figures 2012*; *Macedonia in Figures 2014*, *Macedonia in Figures 2018*.

Heavily subsidised activities (e.g. theatres, museums, concerts etc.) have, more or less, a stable number of visitors.

There is no accurate data on participation in activities that are not publicly subsidised (e.g. press, private or cable television etc.).

There have been no official surveys taken in recent years on the cultural activity of social groups differing with respect to gender, age or education. There are no special surveys monitoring the participation of national minority groups or immigrant groups in the cultural life of a community or the composition of the audience at multi-cultural festivals.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that Prof. Predrag Cveticanin from Nis, Serbia, conducted a research in 2007 on cultural needs and habits of citizens of Serbia and Macedonia which to a certain extent reflects cultural habits in selected fields and for certain parts of Macedonia. It is available under: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/73755569/Kulturne-Potrebe-Navike-i-Ukus-Gradjana-Srbije-i-Makedonije>.

8.2.2 Policies and programmes

There are no specific programmes or policy initiatives to promote participation in cultural life or an explicit policy linking participation in cultural life to the broader issues of civic participation, citizenship, civil society development / cohesion etc.

Special segments of the population (school children, students) pay 50% of the full ticket price for museums, but this can hardly be called a programme or policy initiative.

In 2008, the project "Active citizenship and participative cultural policy" was promoted by the Multimedia Centre for Performing Arts. The project-workshop was aimed at the representatives of local administrations, cultural institutions and local NGOs of initially five communities. The main goal was finding suitable mechanisms that would lead to systematic cultural development in the local communities.

Cultural participation is one of the key goals of the new National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022. The document insists on accessibility and participation in cultural processes and on investing in the development of the public and the cultural needs of the citizens. It also underlines the necessity of the equal participation of deprived and marginalized groups in the cultural production and socio-cultural life. One of the main players in this direction are the national institutions and its programmes that have to ensure development of public and inclusive projects for everyone.

8.3 Arts and cultural education

8.3.1 Institutional overview

The education of artists and experts takes place within the framework of the secondary and higher education institutions in the country, that fall within the departmental competence of the Ministry of Education and Science. The Ministry of Culture does not have the competence to participate in the preparation of the curricula and in the establishment of the network of educational institutions. However, within the framework of inter-departmental co-operation, it can influence educational policy, from the point of view of culture.

On the other hand, cultural education is one of the key points of the National Strategy for Cultural Development 2018-2022. It projects closer cooperation and coordination between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Science on the student quotas for certain important culture study programmes, specific student programmes for deficit professions (for example studies on conservation and restoration) in the cultural field etc.

Some of the main measures are:

- Cultural programmes and activities in the primary and secondary education;
- New programmes in the higher education for protection of cultural heritage;
- Establishment of an institute for cultural politics and development
- Training courses for the highly educated staff in the museums, libraries and other institutions for protection of cultural heritage, etc.

8.3.2 Arts in schools (curricula etc.)

The *Strategy for Education 2018-2022* as a strategic document in the educational field is mainly directed to:

- Quality of the education and its relevance to the development priorities of the society;
- Development of the generic and key competences of the students as critical subjects and active and relevant participants in social life;
- Infrastructure of the educational system;
- Human resources capacities;
- Autonomy of the educational institutions, especially universities, as well as the subjects of the educational process, etc.

8.3.3 Intercultural education

The educational process, as well as intercultural education, is administered by the Ministry of Education and educational policy making bodies. The principal objectives of the intercultural education programmes are focused on intercultural / interethnic understanding and equality, religious tolerance and multilingualism, etc.

Religious values are a topical issue, especially religious education that will be introduced for the first time in elementary schools in 2008. However, religious education will be voluntary and children can choose between two subjects: religious education or history of religion. It will be the first time since the Second World War that religious education will be part of the education process. The religious communities (Orthodox, Islamic etc.) were in favour of this initiative. There was (and still is) a kind of public debate about this development, regarding the way it should be organised, who should be allowed to teach etc. Religious symbols were also a relevant issue, but only few years ago. The main effect of such issues has been a growing awareness of the need for ICD.

On the other hand, after the introduction of religious education in elementary schools in 2008, the Constitutional Court in 2009, acting on a citizen's submission, ruled against religious education in elementary schools. So the Ministry of Education and Science has to find other means / way for this matter in the future.

8.3.4 Higher arts education and professional training

In order to make up for a deficiency of artists and experts in the field of culture, the Ministry of Culture awards scholarships for post-graduate professional development of young and talented artists, for regular academic education, as well as for studies abroad in fields where there is a lack of possibilities to undertake the same programmes in the FYR of Macedonia.

8.3.5 Basic out-of school arts and cultural education (music schools, heritage, etc.)

See chapter 8.3.4.

8.4 Amateur arts, cultural associations and civil initiatives

8.4.1 Amateur arts and folk culture

Amateur arts have always played an important role in the cultural life of the country. Amateurism is mainly developed through the formation of clubs in the field of music, theatre, film, literature, folklore, fine arts, etc. The Ministry of Culture provides modest financial support for some of their activities.

The Cinema Union is comprised of 19 amateur film clubs from several towns. Since 1996, it has been a legitimate member of the International Union of Amateur Film whose head office is in the Netherlands. During the period 1956 and 2000, it is estimated that 1 353 amateur films have been made in the country.

According to the latest data (2017), there are 8 amateur theatres, with 138 active members. In 2017, they organized 99 performances attended by 19 287 visitors (in 2010, there were 67 performances, attended by 9 262 visitors).

Until December 2000, 15 amateur clubs were designated the status of national cultural institution which meant that the Ministry of Culture provided salaries for approximately thirty employees. Since the beginning of 2001, these clubs have been receiving funds only for programme activities.

8.4.2 Cultural houses and community cultural clubs

The primary mission of cultural houses and cultural centres is to conduct activities in the field of culture and to facilitate cultural life on the local level. In addition to professional programmes, amateurism is a special target of these institutions, through the establishment of amateur clubs in the field of music, theatre, film, literature, folklore, fine arts, etc.

Some of these cultural houses did function on a satisfactory level, performing continuous and varied activities, while there were some whose existence was noticeable only in the payrolls of the Ministry of Culture. Until the 1990s, there were around 50 cultural houses located throughout the country.

According to the *Government's Decision on the Network of National Institutions in the Field of Culture* (December 2003), cultural houses have become local institutions financed by the local government. Very few of them, located in Bitola, Prilep, Strumica, Stip etc., were transformed into cultural centres, thus unifying several institutions into one including professional theatres, libraries, art galleries etc.

8.4.3 Associations of citizens, advocacy groups, NGOs, and advisory panels

In June 2012, as an opposition to the former government's cultural policy and its uncritical cultural practices, 14 organisations and NGOs promoted the Association "Core" as a new platform of the independent cultural scene of that time. Throughout its work the Association insisted on transparency of the Ministry of Culture and its annual public competitions, seeking participation of independent cultural representatives in the decision process, etc. Since its establishment the "Core" Association represented the essence of the independent cultural scene, constantly promoting the need for democratisation and decentralisation of culture, proving that the independent cultural and artistic scene was vital but underestimated in Macedonian culture. They also strongly opposed some of the Ministry's projects publicly, especially the National Strategy 2013-2017, etc.

In 2015, the "Core" Association announced an initiative for establishing the first (hybrid) cultural institution based on public - civil partnership. This initiative wants to redefine economic, political, cultural and other needs in the sector, as well as redefining the functions and the structure inherent to the change of the political discourse. The initiative expresses the need of a place, a focus where urban life will freely express itself, a place that will create autonomous, self-organized content that will articulate the new intellectual, critical and creative capital.

9. Sources and links

9.1 Key documents on cultural policy

- Council of Europe, CDCULT: *Cultural Policy in "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"- Experts' Report*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, CDCULT, 2003.
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- Državen zavod za statistika na RM: *Statistički godišnik na Republika Makedonija, 2001*. Skopje: Državen zavod za statistika na RM.
- State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia: *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Macedonia*. Skopje, 2001.
- Magdalena Dikovska: *Normativno reguliranje na kulturata (zbirka propisi)*. Skopje: Direkcija za kultura i umetnost, 1998.
- Magdalena Dikovska: *Normative regulation of culture (collection of regulations)*. Skopje: Culture and Arts Board, 1998.
- Zlatko Teodosievski: *Država - kultura, Naucno-kulturni sredbi "Deset dena Krusevska Republika"*. Krusevo, 1998.
- Zlatko Teodosievski: *State – Culture*. Scientific and Cultural Meeting "Ten days of the Republic of Krusevo", Krusevo, 1998

9.2 Key organisations and portals

Cultural policy making bodies

- Ministry of Culture
<http://www.kultura.gov.mk>

Cultural research and statistics

- State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia
<http://www.stat.gov.mk>

Culture / arts portals

- Culture in the Republic of Macedonia
<http://www.culture.in.mk>