

Country Profile

Croatia

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1. Cultural policy system

1.1. Objectives, main features and background

Objectives:

In more than two decades, the general objectives of Croatian cultural policy have included the pursuance of values such as: cultural pluralism (aesthetic and multi-ethnic), creative autonomy, the increase and diversification of sources for financing of culture, polycentric cultural development, and encouraging cultural participation and co-operation between the public and the private sector. These principles have been put into practice in the following way:

- Diversification by encouraging cultural creativity and innovation; tolerance and inclusion of cultural minority groups, and by financing activities of various cultural interests - from high culture, ethnic cultures, independent culture etc;
- Support for creativity through fiscal measures such as paying social, health and retirement benefits for registered freelance artists, and support for participation by funding amateur artists' associations.

These cultural policy objectives have not changed significantly in recent years. Such cultural policy orientation is in line with the main European cultural policy principles such as the promotion of identity and diversity, support for creativity, participation in cultural life, and respect for cultural rights.

Main features:

The cultural policy system in Croatia is a version of a centralised model where the state is primarily the architect of cultural policy and the Ministry of Culture and Media is the basis of the funding system at the national level. Cultural councils are consultative bodies to the Minister, and the Ministry is in charge of distributing the grants. Arm's length bodies such as the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, which is in charge of audiovisual activities, and the Foundation 'Kultura nova', which is dedicated to civil society organisations in the arts and culture, supplement this centralised model.

The main features of the cultural policy are oriented to:

- Fostering artistic and cultural creativity;
- Supporting cultural heritage programmes;
- Supporting the programmes of cultural autonomy of national minorities;
- Supporting artistic production through providing social security measures for freelance artists;
- Promoting international cultural cooperation and exchange, funding exchange programmes and artistic residencies, giving support for European cultural cooperation projects, and signing new bilateral cultural cooperation programmes;
- Supporting the enhancement of media pluralism and content diversity through special funding for public, commercial and non-profit media;
- Fostering access to culture and cultural participation, especially for children and young people either through discounts for access to cultural institutions, or through specific support programmes;

- Safeguarding the local cultural infrastructure through support for digitalisation of arthouse, small and regional cinemas;
- Encouraging the development of cultural entrepreneurship;
- Fostering contemporary artistic and cultural production through support for civil society organisations in contemporary culture and the arts.

Decentralisation has been an important subject in Croatian cultural policy and practice throughout the years, and is still an open issue of debate in the cultural sector. However, much is needed to further these attempts as there are many regional differences that contribute to unequal regional cultural development. It should be noted that despite its' centralisation model features, the legislative framework gives cities an important role in creating local cultural policies and autonomy in the management of the local cultural sector, thus making local level of funding also important for the cultural sector in Croatia, where the City of Zagreb plays an important role (see chapters 1.2.4. and 7.1.2).

In the recent decade, since Croatia joined the European Union in 2013, one can note the introduction of more entrepreneurial cultural policy discourse that highlighted cultural and creative industries as important foci. In addition, there has been more emphasis on the need for cultural institutions and organisations to orient themselves in search of additional funding through a project-based approach, highlighting EU funding as an important source. This has been highlighted throughout the pandemic and (post)pandemic period and in regards to the post-2020 earthquakes situation.

Background:

After the Second World War, Croatia became a constituent republic of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, which inherited the ex-Yugoslav kingdom and that in 1963 was renamed to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Its cultural policy was designed to accomplish the mission of building up socialist culture. The inherited cultural infrastructure (museums, theatres, libraries, etc.) was reconstructed and reorganised in compliance with the new social system.

In the mid-1950s the self-management system was introduced. Cultural and other public domains (education, media, health, etc.) were decentralised and regulated on the level of the six constituent republics. The 1960's and 1970's were a time when cultural professionalism and creativity were emphasised as a reflection of the country's multi-ethnic character. Western influences, mainly reflected in modernisation, and the global openness of the country (the policy of non-alignment) brought various cultural influences. Ideological control over culture loosened, followed by political liberalisation and greater autonomy of the republics in the federation. The self-management system in culture and other public fields established a quasi-market economy. Instead of grants from the budget, special funds were created and their allocation was decided by bodies composed of providers and recipients of services. The overall political and economic crisis in the mid-1980's reflected the fact that this new system was mismanaged and non-functional. It became increasingly embroiled in the main political clash between federal centralists and republican co-federalists. These political clashes led to war in 1990 and to the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

In the 1990s, the cultural policy of independent Croatia was politically and administratively centralised and incorporated in everyday life with special emphasis on national traditions. It was designed to foster a sense of national cohesion, especially at the beginning of the period when the country was drawn into war. Cultural

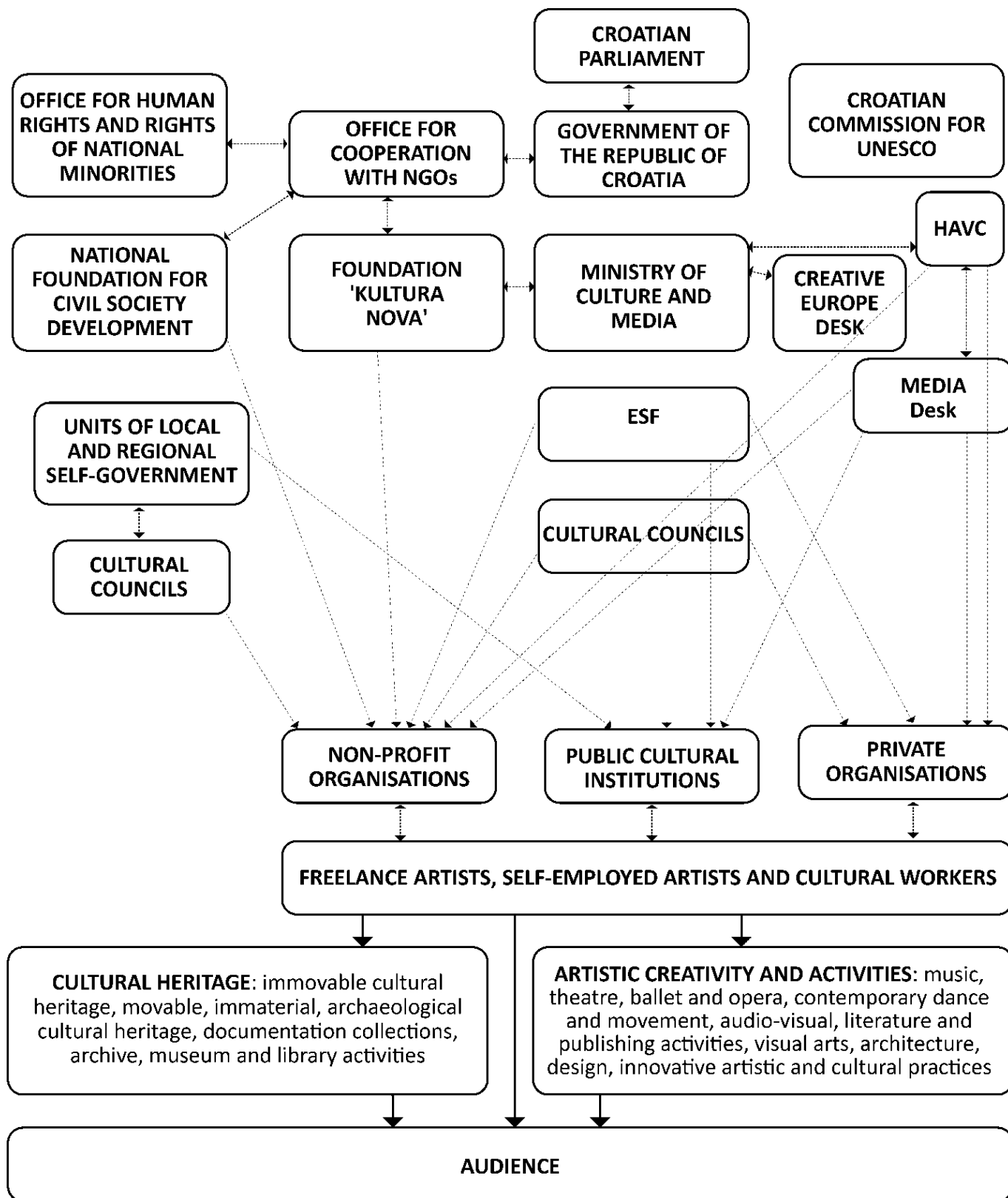
planning and funding gave priority to activities of "national interest" in culture and left all other activities to the emerging market and to NGOs.

Since 2000, when the new centre-left coalition government was elected, there has been a broader implementation of cultural policy with a particular stress on pluralist cultural orientations. A more balanced approach to tradition and a new evaluation of the national and the multicultural components has been undertaken, together with steps towards further decentralisation and direct co-operation with NGOs. The first national cultural development strategy was created and adopted in Parliament, but it was not followed through by the next nor following governments.

In the following period, although there were changes between the centre-right and centre-left political coalitions in power, in principal there have not been any major shifts in the structuring of the overall cultural system. Culture has remained a marginal cultural policy, while the cultural budget has remained less than 1% of the overall state budget throughout the years.

1.2. Domestic governance system

1.2.1. ORGANISATIONAL ORGANIGRAM



Source: Žuvela (2022: 32).

1.2.2. NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

Decision-making and the implementation of cultural policy involve procedures and interactions between the Ministry of Culture and Media, the Government and the Parliament, on the one hand, and consultative cultural councils, local government and self-government, cultural institutions, NGOs, and individual artists and their associations, on the other.

The Ministry of Culture and Media drafts laws and other important documents which the government passes on to the Parliamentary Committee for Education, Science and Culture, and/or Parliamentary Committee for Information, Informatisation and Media. When cleared, they undergo parliamentary discussion and enactment. The Ministry of Culture and Media plays a part in drafting the budget and decides on the allocation of budgetary funds to various cultural fields, and it has responsibility for media policy issues.

Cultural Councils have been firstly established in 2001 by the Law on Culture Councils (NN 53/01, NN 48/04, NN 44/09, NN 68/13) as consultative bodies to the Minister of Culture with a mandate of: e.g. proposing goals for cultural policy and measures for achieving them, offering professional assistance to the Minister of Culture, working out a long-term national cultural programme, and giving opinions on the distribution of grants. In 2022, the new *Law on Cultural Councils and Financing of Public Needs in Culture* (NN 83/2022) has been adopted, and with it a minor change in the fields of cultural councils on the national level has been introduced: cultural councils on the national level exist in the following fields: books and publishing, dramatic and dance arts, music and music-related performing arts, visual arts, international cultural cooperation, amateur arts and culture, and interdisciplinary and new artistic and cultural practices. Specific laws provide for the establishment of four other councils (cultural assets, archives, museums and libraries).

Besides existing cultural councils, there are other councils and committees established by the government having direct and indirect impact on the formulation of cultural policies, such as the government committees for national minorities, youth, gender equality, civil society and others. The internal cooperation between different councils and committees is rather low.

The Ministry of Culture and Media regularly co-operates with other ministries to bring general and related laws into harmony with cultural legislation such as: the protection of cultural heritage (with the Ministry of the Interior), conservation and protection of historical town centres (with the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets), drafting media legislation and regulating audio and audiovisual media services and electronic publications (with the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure), and in appointing cultural attachés or organising cultural events abroad (with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs).

Some important areas of culture, however, do not fall fully under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Media, such as arts education, research and minority cultural groups. The Ministry of Science and Education takes the lead role for arts education and there is a shared responsibility for research in cultural matters between the two Ministries. The Ministry of Culture and Media and the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities share responsibility for ethnic minority cultural groups. Prospects for closer inter-ministerial co-operation are hindered by the strict sectoral division of activities.

The Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) is an independent regulatory body that promotes public interest and media pluralism, encourages media literacy, creates conditions for the production of quality Croatian audiovisual content and ensures equal conditions for media development and media freedom.

The Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) is an arms-length body which is responsible for the production, financing, promotion and distribution of audiovisual activities.

The Kultura Nova Foundation is dedicated to the promotion and development of civil society organisations in the field of contemporary culture and arts. The funding for this arms-length body is obtained partly through the

Lottery fund, donations and other sources according to the *Law on the Kultura Nova Foundation*.

There is no single law regulating the division of jurisdictions. Specific laws regulate different fields and prescribe whether the local and regional authorities or the state are responsible for establishing and financing institutions in that particular field (see chapters 1.2.3 and 1.2.4).

There has not been a significant change in the architecture of the system in the recent years.

1.2.3. REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Croatia is divided into 21 regional government units: 20 counties (*županija*) and the City of Zagreb that has a special status of performing competencies of both city and county, and has a significant role in performing state administrative tasks in its territory. The *Law on the Areas of Counties, Towns and Municipalities in the Republic of Croatia* establishes the administrative structure of the Republic of Croatia for the purposes of classifying those activities to be financed from the different budgets at particular levels. In their self-governmental remit, counties have tasks of regional importance, among which is also 'the establishment and development of the network of educational, medical, social welfare, and cultural institutions'. However, it can be said that the regional authorities play a minor role in the governance structure of cultural policy in Croatia that is reflected in the financial input. Public cultural expenditure on the county level has remained rather low in the last decade, amounting to approximately 4-5% on a yearly level, according to the data by [Ministry of Culture and Media \(2021\)](#). As shown in this report, for 2021 there is a regional difference in public cultural expenditure within the counties, for example: Primorsko-goranska county (9.05%), Dubrovnik-Neretva county (7.14%), Brod-Posavina county (6.03%) and Osijek-Baranja county (5.21%), while in Koprivnica-Križevci county it is only 1.46% (see chapter 7.1).

While the previous laws offered a possibility for local government to introduce cultural councils on a local and regional level, the 2007 *Law on Cultural Councils* made this mandatory for all counties and cities with more than 30 000 inhabitants. The intention of the legislator was to contribute to the process of decentralisation, but the effects of this change have not been fully assessed. For example, according to the latest data available from the [Ministry of Culture and Media \(2021\)](#), gathered through the questionnaire of the units of the local and regional self-government, the percentage of the established cultural councils in the counties does not go over 18%. The data referred to the implementation of the old law, and has been used as an argumentation of the necessity of the changes in the Law. It is to be seen whether there will be changes with the implementation of the new *Law on Cultural Councils and Financing of Public Needs in Culture* from 2022, which brings instruments for follow up on the local cultural council implementation.

1.2.4. LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local government is enshrined in the Constitution (Art. 133-138) and municipalities and towns in their self-governmental remit have the task of addressing citizens' needs, which includes culture. The legislative framework regulating the field of culture at the local level gives cities an important role in creating local cultural policies and autonomy in the management of the local cultural sector. This is especially relevant taking into account the public cultural institutions of which the local self-government units are the founders. City budgets are important sources of public funding for the local cultural sector although there are large regional and city differences, not only in the total amount earmarked for culture but also in the percentage of cultural

expenditure dedicated to the cultural and creative sectors. Here one also has to stress the central role that the capital city of Zagreb has, not only in relation to (cultural) budget matters, but in the scope of cultural infrastructure situated in the city founded either by the state or of which the city is the founder (see chapter 7.1.2).

As a part of their responsibilities, cities and municipalities finance programmes in local community cultural centres that for some smaller cities are the only venues for arts and culture. The network of community cultural centres is fully decentralised and the level of their involvement in cultural life (as well as their ability to organise and/or host cultural and artistic programmes) varies greatly from one city to the other. In the last couple of years there are initiatives for the transformation of community cultural centres and there are steps towards usage of EU funds for such a change (The European Social Fund (ESF) in particular). In particular, the Open ESF Call 'Culture in the Centre – Support to the Civil-Public Partnership Development in Culture' was one of such measures that resulted in 34 projects executed in the period 2018-2020 (see chapter 2.7). However, as the shows, local authorities were occasional partners (6%) in the projects rather than the main project beneficiaries (14%), and the domination of partners and beneficiaries were from the capital city of Zagreb (19.15% and 26.47% respectively).

The *Law on Institutions* is important for local cultural policies as it establishes the responsibilities of founders in the management and financing of cultural institutions. Local cultural policies, and especially the activities of particular institutions are led by specific sectoral legislation relating to particular types of activities e.g. archives, libraries, museums, theatres or music and performing arts, audio-visual activities, and the protection and promotion of cultural assets. Decentralisation has been a much-debated topic in the past twenty years, so the introduction of *Law on Cultural Councils* (2001, amended in 2004, 2009 and 2013) was very important for local cultural policies as it included the responsibility to establish cultural councils at city and country levels (decentralisation of the decision-making process). In 2022, the new umbrella *Law on Cultural Councils and Financing of Public Needs in Culture* (NN 83/2022) has been adopted (see chapter 4.1.2), which lowered the threshold for the establishment of cultural councils - counties and cities with more than 10 000 inhabitants, but also other municipalities and cities if they deem it necessary.

Until recently, cultural strategies on the local level were scarcely adopted; the only exception was the "Istrian Cultural Strategy" of Istra County that was adopted in Poreč in 2009. However, in the last decade, selected cities have adopted them (e.g. Rijeka, Zadar, Varaždin, Osijek, Dubrovnik). This mainly can be attributed to the preparation of these cities for application to the European Capital of Culture programme that obliges cities to have such strategies. With the adoption of the *Law on Strategic Planning and Management of Development of the Republic of Croatia* (NN 123/2017) this situation is gradually changing as the Law brought about the obligation of strategic planning for all governing levels and sectors involved, all of which is connected to the allocation of the EU funding.

Another important instrument for local cultural policies are the provisions of the *Law on the Preservation of Cultural Assets* (1999, amended 2003, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021 and 2022) that is regulating the distribution of funds collected through the Monument Annuity Fund that ensures that a certain percentage of funds is distributed by the local government in the city / municipality where the annuity has been collected.

1.2.5. MAIN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

The cultural NGO sector has grown dynamically in the last more than twenty years. Such growth resulted in the establishment of an "independent cultural sector" and contributed to the separation of "institutional" (government subsidised) and "independent" culture (that at the start of the 2000's was subsidised mostly by foreign sources) (see also chapter 7.3). The number of cultural associations has been increasing continually in the last two decades, although in the last couple of years this increase has been slowing down. For example, according to data from the Government Office for Associations in February 2001 there were a total of 18 981 associations; 2 174 of which were in the cultural field. Ten years later, this number has more than doubled: in October 2011 the total number of associations was 44 463, while the number of cultural associations was 6 552 (Web Database Registry: <http://195.29.186.154/RegistarUdruga/>). Now, more than a decade later, this number continued to grow and is 9 664 cultural-related associations out of a total of 52 724 associations in Croatia (according to the [Registry of Associations](#)).

In the last more than a decade, civil society organisations in arts and culture have been influencing cultural policy-making from the bottom up, thus resulting in policy innovations on the local and on the national level. An example of such an innovation at the local level is the establishment of the first civil-public partnership institution established in 2008 and is financed primarily by the City of Zagreb, entitled POGON – Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth. On the national level, an example of the result of lobbying is the establishment of the Kultura nova Foundation which is dedicated mainly to the development of the independent cultural scene. The Ministry of Culture proposed the *Law on the Kultura nova Foundation*, passed by the Parliament in July 2011, with the Foundation fully operating since December 2012 (see chapter 6.4).

Cultural industries are an important part of the cultural policy system and are protecting their role and influencing cultural policy through their sector-specific professional associations, organisations and ad hoc networks (see chapter 3.5).

1.2.6. TRANSVERSAL CO-OPERATION

The Ministry of Culture and Media regularly co-operates with other ministries to bring general and related laws into harmony with cultural legislation. They also co-operate in fields in which the competencies of various ministries are involved, such as the protection of cultural heritage (with the Ministry of the Interior), conservation and protection of historical town centres (with the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets), drafting media legislation and regulating audio and audiovisual media services and electronic publications (with the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure), and in appointing cultural attachés or organising cultural events abroad (with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs). From 2008-2012, together with the then Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts, the Ministry of Culture ran a programme to support SME's in the field of culture and creative industries entitled 'Entrepreneurship in culture', although since 2013 the Ministry of Culture and Media is now the only supporter (see chapter 3.5).

Some important areas of culture, however, do not fall fully under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Media, such as arts education, research and minority cultural groups. For example, while the Ministry of Science and Education takes the lead role for arts education, there is a shared responsibility for research on cultural matters between these two Ministries. The Ministry of Culture and Media and the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities share responsibility for ethnic minority cultural groups.

Prospects for closer inter-ministerial co-operation are hindered by the strict sectoral division of activities while the most important links are financial and economic, i.e. the budget and economic growth. There are a number of trans-sectoral strategies which contribute to better coordination between different ministries and various levels of government. Co-operation between national, regional and municipal levels of government continues to be a very important segment of cultural policy, particularly when it comes to investment projects in renewing old institutions or building and setting up new cultural institutions such as libraries, archives, museums and theatres. In the recent years the transversal cooperation has been strengthened with the development of the programmes and projects through the [National Plan of Recovery and Resilience](#) (2021-2026), as well as out of necessity after the 2020 earthquakes in Zagreb and Sisak-Petrijnja surroundings (e.g. rebuilding of cultural infrastructure).

1.3. Cultural institutions

1.3.1. OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Cultural institutions in Croatia are mostly public – they are founded mainly by the state and towns, and more rarely by counties or wealthier municipalities. Relevant law for cultural institutions is the Law on Managing Cultural Institutions (NN 96/01; NN 98/19), while the umbrella law also relating to their work is the Law on Institutions (NN 127/19). If an institution is founded and managing proscribed by a special law (e.g. Croatian Audiovisual Centre), the Law on Managing Cultural Institutions does not apply to said institution but the relevant founding law. The status and number of state-owned institutions has remained almost unchanged throughout the years. The legislation in force prescribes that every decision to close an institution must be approved by the Ministry of Culture and Media; a provision to preserve the existing level of cultural infrastructure. There is no detailed data that would give us a precise information whether there are many changes in the cultural infrastructure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data in the Table 1 shows us a complex picture of the changes that occurred in the researched period.

The number of private cultural institutions is very low, whether they are of non-profit or commercial nature. An interesting example of a hybrid cultural institution is POGON – Centre for Independent Culture and Youth, Zagreb, which is based on a new model of public-civil partnership. Pogon's founders are the Alliance Operation City and the City of Zagreb which is the main funder of the institution. In collaboration with the network of NGOs and the Kultura Nova Foundation, the Ministry of Culture and Media has applied to the European Social Fund with the project for the development of socio-cultural centres in several Croatian cities inspired partly by the example of POGON (see chapter 2.7).

Several private commercial initiatives in the cultural infrastructure can be mentioned such as "Museum of Broken Relationships", a permanent exhibition that opened in October 2010 in Zagreb and received a number of international awards. The latter still functions at the same location. Two other private initiatives are Lauba - the House of Contemporary Art and Culture in Zagreb and the Batana Eco Museum in Rovinj. An interesting local community initiative was the opening of a museum of local shipbuilding heritage in the municipality of Tisno, in Betina.

1.3.2. DATA ON SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Table 1: Cultural institutions, by sector and domain

Domain	Cultural institutions (subdomains)	Public sector Number (year)	Number (year)
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage sites (recognised)	6 019 ¹ (2020)	6446 ² (2022)
Museums	Museums and museum collections	222 (2015)	165 ⁶ (2021)
Archives	Archive institutions	19 (2017)	19 ⁵ (2020)
Visual arts	Galleries	30 ³ (2018)	38 ⁶ (2021)
Performing arts	Professional theatres	95 (2016/2017)	80 ⁴ (2020/2021)
	Professional children's theatres and amateur theatres	30 (2016/2017)	43 ⁴ (2020/2021)
	Professional orchestras, ensembles and choirs (including symphonic orchestras)	46 (2016/2017)	30 ⁴ (2020/2021)
	Libraries	Libraries	1768 (2016)
Audiovisual	Cinemas	71 (2017)	75 ⁴ (2020)
	Radio stations	147 (2017)	121 ⁷ (2021)
	Television stations	27 (2017)	26 ⁷ (2021)

Sources: If not otherwise noted, data presented is from the Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2018 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2019a).

¹ Permanently protected cultural assets on 31.12.2020 (Website Registry of Cultural Assets of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Culture). Note: the website did not include data on movable cultural assets).

³ Data from Culture and Arts 2018, Statistical reports. Zagreb: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2020a).

⁴ Data from Culture and Arts 2020, Statistical reports. Zagreb. Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022e).

⁵ Data from Archives in 2020, First release. Zagreb. [Croatian Bureau of Statistics \(2021\)](#)

⁶ Data from Museums, Galleries and Collections, 2021, First release. Zagreb. [Croatian Bureau of Statistics \(2021\)](#)

⁷ Data from Radio and Television Broadcasting, 2021, First release. Zagreb. [Croatian Bureau of Statistics \(2022\)](#)

1.3.3. PUBLIC CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS: TRENDS AND STRATEGIES

Public cultural institutions are usually founded by the state, towns, more rarely by counties, and sometimes by the wealthier municipalities. Although the financing of public cultural institutions is not put into question, it still remains insufficient for all of the institutions' activities, and it has to be said that in the last decade there has been an impetus that the public cultural institutions should introduce more market approach to their finances. Emphasis has been placed on the availability of funding from the European Union through different programmes, and public cultural institutions are applying to these funds with different levels of success and through different types of programmes (e.g. IPA, Creative Europe, ESF). Their success depends on their field of work as well as the internal capacities of the institutions to manage and implement EU-type project applications

and programmes. However, in 2022, the Ministry of Culture and Media announced that through the Operational Program Competitiveness and Cohesion renovation of the basic cultural infrastructure will be financed in the following period. The total funding announced amounts to 80 million euros, from which energy renovation, digitization and adaptation of buildings to the needs of people with disabilities will be financed.

There was a significant increase in the number of cultural festivals and manifestations in the last three decades. In addition, there is a number of large international cultural events that have a long tradition such as: more than 70 years' old Dubrovnik Summer Festival; Animafest – festival of animation (established over 50 years ago as a biennale, and since 2005 is functioning as an annual event); Šibenik International Children's Festival that celebrated its 62nd anniversary in 2022; Vinkovci Autumn Folklore Event established in 1974; Dance Week Festival since 1984, Music Biennale since 1961, Pula Film Festival that will celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2023, etc. A number of these traditional events established themselves as public cultural institutions.

Partnerships between public cultural institutions and private ones (among which the most common is the cooperation of public cultural institutions with non-governmental cultural organisations or other actors from civil society) is primarily project-based and it mainly depends on the organisations' current interests and budgeting opportunities. Such cooperation can be established through domestic projects but also through international (mainly European-based and EU funded) programmes and networks.

As elaborated in chapter 2.1, in 2020 Zagreb and Sisak-Moslavina county were hit by strong earthquakes that damaged the cultural infrastructure including many public cultural institutions. The restoration of individually protected buildings and buildings within the cultural and historical units of Zagreb, Sisak, Petrinja (and a total of 9 counties that suffered in the earthquake) are still under way. According to the [Ministry of Culture and Media](#), by 2022, with the funds of the EU Solidarity Fund through the Ministry of Culture and Media, 295 structural renovation projects worth over 4.5 billion HRK have being implemented out of which 15 have been completed and more than HRK 900 million have been withdrawn so far.

1.4. International cooperation

1.4.1. PUBLIC ACTORS AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

International cultural co-operation has been continuously listed among cultural and cultural development priorities. The Directorate for International Cultural Relations and European Affairs has two Sectors – the Sector for International Cultural Relations and European Affairs and the Sector for EU Programmes and Projects, which are composed of five Services – The Service for Preparation, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of EU Programmes and Projects, The Service for Development and Coordination of EU Programmes and Projects, The Service for Creative Europe, The Service for UNESCO, and The Service for Bilateral and Multilateral Cultural Cooperation.

The government established the Cultural Council for International Relations and European Integration following the provisions of the *Law on Cultural Councils* in 2004, while in 2013 this Council changed its name to the Council for International Cultural Cooperation that stayed the same with the 2022 implementation of the new Law. The aim of this Council is to better coordinate and plan international cultural cooperation activities. In addition to its consultative role in the distribution of grants, the Cultural Council for International Relations also has the task of suggesting improvements in the coordination of planning and participation in international exchanges.

According to the [data](#) by the Ministry of Culture and Media, in 2022 (December data) the Ministry co-financed projects in the amount of 7 290 854 HRK (967 662 EUR). Taking into account the still relevant COVID-19 pandemic in 2022, it is not surprising that this amount is lower than the pre-pandemic data. For example, in 2019 the Ministry co-financed 820 programmes with a total of 10 679 856 HRK (1 423 980 EUR) for the support of different type of programmes in international cultural cooperation and exchange (from archives, interdisciplinary projects, performing arts, books, libraries, new media etc). This has been the continuation of a trend in financing that has been evident in almost a decade- e.g. in the planned budget for 2016, the allocation of the Ministry of Culture for international cultural cooperation was 10 652 222 HRK (approx. 1 420 296 EUR), while in 2015 it amounted to 11 188 000 HRK (approx. 1 491 733 EUR).

The government continues signing bilateral agreements and programmes of cultural cooperation; according to the website of the Ministry currently there are 51 bilateral agreements and 27 bilateral programmes signed. It is important to stress that the majority of projects financially supported by the Ministry of Culture and Media are not based on the traditional form of "government to government cooperation" but on direct contacts between artists and arts and cultural organisations.

In September 2013, the Croatian Parliament passed the new *Law on the Establishment of the Hrvatska kuća Foundation* (Croatia House) with the aim to create an institution working on the promotion of Croatian culture abroad. The Foundation was established in 2014, and it opened its first call for proposals in June 2014, which resulted in the first 24 projects being accepted for funding in 2014-2015, while for the period 2016-2017 the Foundation supported 22 projects. During 2016, the government opened up public discussion on the dissolution of the Foundation, but the status of the Foundation even now is still not clear.

The Ministry of Culture and Media (on the national level) and larger cities (on the local level) are major founders of international cultural cooperation projects and initiatives. The Ministry of Culture and Media cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs which is responsible for coordination of work of cultural attachés. Croatian embassies are still the focal points for the promotion of Croatian culture. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs publishes a Public Call for projects of cultural promotion, public diplomacy and international recognition of the Republic of Croatia that are then executed jointly by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and diplomatic missions. In 2020 this call supported 93 programmes with a total amount of 3 766 000 HRK (499 834 EUR), while in 2022 this [support](#) has been increased to 95 programmes in the total amount of 643 688 EUR.

The Ministry of Culture and Media operates all major instruments used in international cultural relations including state guarantees, bilateral agreements and programmes, as well as sector-specific agreements such as co-production agreements.

Cultural agencies and institutes (such as the Austrian Cultural Forum, British Council, L'Institut français, Goethe Institute, Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italian Institute for Culture, Aula Cervantes, Hungarian Cultural Institute-Institute Liszt, Instituto Camões, Wallonie-Bruxelles International – WBI, and Institute Yunus Emre) support cultural cooperation between respective countries and Croatia according to their mandate. EUNIC Cluster Croatia - a network of European cultural institutes operating in Croatia - was founded in 2007 and is a member of the European Union National Institutes for Culture-EUNIC.

1.4.2. EUROPEAN / INTERNATIONAL ACTORS AND PROGRAMMES

Since its independence, Croatia has been a member of the Council of Europe, and has participated in its numerous activities and projects.

The country became a full member of the EU in July 2013. However, it had participated in EU programmes earlier, as in June 2007, the Memorandum of Understanding with European Communities was signed, which made Croatia a full member of the EU Culture 2007-2013 programme. The Cultural Contact Point (CCP) Department (now Creative Europe Service) has been established and hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Media. Also, in 2008, the Memorandum of Understanding with European Communities on the Croatian participation in the MEDIA 2007 Programme was signed and Croatia has established a Media Desk within the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (see chapter 3.2), that is now called Creative Europe Desk – MEDIA Sub-programme. By devising a special Rulebook, the Ministry of Culture and Media supports Croatian cultural organisations through co-financing projects supported by the EU programme Creative Europe – Sub-programme Culture. The total yearly support for organisations) in 2022 amounts approx. to 226 666 EUR.

Strengthening cultural cooperation with other countries of the European Union is one of the priorities of international cultural cooperation. Such cooperation is based on existing links between artists and arts managers; bilateral and regional programmes of cooperation; cooperation within the framework of international organisations such as UNESCO or the Council of Europe; cooperation within regional organisations such as the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe (the Charter, signed in Copenhagen on 31 March 2005), the network of ministers responsible for cultural heritage sponsored by UNESCO, the Danubian Region, the Alps Adriatic Working Community, the Central European Initiative, the Quadrilateral Initiative, Adrian-Ionian Initiative, etc. The projects include post-war reconstruction, the return of stolen cultural assets, support for mobility, and cooperation in the field of policy-making, cultural itineraries, networking among youth, etc.

Croatia is an active member of UNESCO and participates in a number of projects initiated and supported by this organisation. The Ministry of Culture and Media is responsible for the implementation of the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and regularly publishes the Quadrennial Periodic Report (QPR). In accordance with the international agreement signed between UNESCO and the Republic of Croatia, the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology was founded in Zadar in 2007 with the aim to enhance cooperation in preservation and promotion of the underwater cultural heritage of Croatia, South East Europe and the Mediterranean. The Service for UNESCO at the Ministry of Culture and Media coordinates the work of the National Commission for UNESCO; cooperates with responsible ministries in implementing normative instruments, regularly manages calls for the UNESCO Participation programme, provides stipends for Women in Science, and is the focal point of the UNESCO 2005 Convention etc.

The Ministry of Culture and Media actively participates in the work of different international networks such as the Forum of Slavic Cultures, International Federation of Arts Councils and Agencies (IFACCA)(e.g. the Ministry of Culture organised the 17th Europe Chapter Meeting of IFACCA in 2019), and others.

1.4.3. NGO'S AND DIRECT PROFESSIONAL COOPERATION

Many cultural NGOs as well as professional associations of artists and cultural workers participate in numerous

international projects, different types of professional cooperation and are members of international professional organisations and/or international cultural networks. The interest of cultural operators and artists in participating in various international networks continues to be ever growing and more visible. E.g. several Croatian theatres are members of the European Theatre Convention. Croatian artists participated in platforms and networks supported by the Culture and the Creative Europe programmes. Croatian cultural institutions, NGOs, experts and centres / sections (Croatian national committee of ICOM, Croatian sections of AICA, UNIMA, ASSITEJ, IDEA, DACI, C.I.O.F.F., Croatian centre for PEN, ITI etc.) are active participants of international NGOs in the field of culture and the arts.

Some important multilateral co-operation projects, coordinated or supported by the Ministry of Culture and Media, include:

- the Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe (RPSEE), a joint activity of the Council of Europe and Southeastern European governments that as a component included "Ljubljana Process II – Rehabilitating our Common Heritage", supported by the European Commission and the Council of Europe.
- Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok: Research, Reconstruction, Revitalisation (Ministry of Culture and Media / Council of Europe Development Bank);
- cooperation within the Adriatic Ionian Basin (Project on Cultural Routes);
- cooperation within the Alps-Adriatic Working Community;
- participation in the TRADUKI Network – European Network for the Promotion of Literature and Books; and
- participation in the Roberto Cimetta Fund dedicated to the mobility of artists and cultural managers.

While it is still difficult to obtain extra-budgetary funds for cultural cooperation projects and networking in Croatia, financial support is mostly provided by the Ministry of Culture and Media and local communities.

2. Current cultural affairs

2.1. Key developments

Like in other countries around the globe, the year 2022 proved still be very challenging for the artistic and cultural sector in Croatia and thus for cultural policy making as well. In order to grapple with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, during 2020 and 2021 the government created a number of different types of [measures](#) to assist the cultural sector through the Crisis fund that amounted to approximately 6 300 000 EUR. Debates in the cultural sector concentrated around whether these measures were adequate, or were timely, and whether they could have been made in a more sustainable manner.

The difficult circumstances brought about by the coronavirus were exacerbated by two strong earthquakes in 2020 – one in country's capital Zagreb and other in Sisak-Moslavina county. As a large number of cultural institutions, cultural organisations and companies are located in Zagreb, and especially in Zagreb city centre, the earthquake has taken a toll on the cultural infrastructure. Cultural objects, offices of cultural organisations and ateliers were left severely damaged, while others have been completely destroyed. The assessment of the damage is continuously updated and the Ministry of Culture and is working together with the cities of Zagreb, Sisak and Petrinja, conservation departments, counties involved and other relevant bodies in developing appropriate models for renovation, securing funding for restoration and providing that all conservation measures are under way. The renovation is progressing rather slowly but a number of projects have been finalised and the funding has been secured for additional ones (see chapter 1.3.3).

The year 2020 brought about parliamentary elections that led to another term of the centre-right government coalition led by the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica – HDZ). This resulted in the continuation of the cultural policy priorities of the Ministry of Culture, which changed its name to the Ministry of Culture and Media in order to reflect the existing responsibilities of the Ministry and to highlight increasing focus on the media sector. Thus, there were no major changes in cultural policy priorities in relation to the former mandate that has put focus on enhancing cultural creativity and support of independent artists (see chapter 2.3 and 4.1.3); entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries (see chapter 3.5); development of the audiovisual sector (see chapter 3.5.3); development of (digitalisation of) the heritage sector (see chapters 2.4 and 3.1); supporting the independent cultural sector (see chapters 6.4 and 2.3); and supporting audience development and participation in culture (see chapter 6), while also working on updating the cultural legislation (see chapter 4.2). The debates related to the drafts of the new law on independent artists, electronic media, authors' rights and the critique of the continuous lowering of funding for independent media and lowering of the working standards of journalists (see chapter 2.5.3). These priorities have continued to be relevant in 2022, in the year that was still marked by struggling with the consequences of the pandemic and the 2020 earthquakes. The year has been marked by the lively discussions on: the key legislative changes in the financing of public needs in culture and cultural councils; the discussions on the draft of the new theatre law and the need for the amendments of the coefficients related to the retirement funds of freelance artists. Comments and critique from the cultural community were related to lack of participatory process in the drafting of the laws, and that some of the policy instruments introduced are oriented towards more centralisation. In addition, in 2022 major changes have been announced with opening of the public discussion on the future National Plan of Culture and Media (2022-2027), which should be adopted in the following year. The Ministry also announced a number of calls for projects that will be opened in 2023 and funded through the National Plan of Recovery and Resilience

(2021-2026), which will be dedicated to cultural and creative sectors, overall cultural infrastructure, digitalisation of cultural heritage and fact checking in media.

2.2. Cultural rights and ethics

Cultural rights are enshrined in the Constitution (see chapter 4.1.1) and are implicitly constituent to the national cultural policy framework (1.1). This is evident from the sector-specific policies related to the right to artistic work (see chapter 2.3); freedom of expression (see chapter 2.5.3); the right to cultural heritage (see chapter 3.1); protection of intellectual and material benefits accruing from cultural production (see chapter 4.1.6); the right to equally accessible and available cultural, library, information and leisure services (see chapters 3.2. and 3.5); the right to choose one's own culture as well as to respect culture, its autonomy and identity (see chapters 2.5.4 and 2.6). Discussions around culture-related rights issues in general are scarce and this topic as an explicit policy issue has not been widely debated.

Issues related to cultural rights are mainly viewed focusing on the cultural rights of national minorities. There are 22 officially organised minorities in Croatia: Albanians, Austrians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Poles, Roma, Romanians, Russians, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Slovenians, Serbs, Turks, Ukrainians, and Vlachs. All minorities receive state support through the Government Office for Human Rights and National Minorities. The total population of Croatia in 2021 was 3 871 833 million, which is a significant drop since the last census executed in 2011. Compared to the 2011 Census, the number of inhabitants decreased by 413 056 persons or 9.64%. According to the 2021 census, the share of Croats in the national structure of the population is 91.63%, Serbs 3.20%, Bosniaks 0.62%, Roma 0.46%, Italians 0.36% and Albanians 0.36%, while the share of other members of national minorities is individually less than 0.30%. The share of people who declared regionally is 0.33%, and the number of people who did not want to declare is 0.58%. The political and legal framework defining the position of national minorities is derived from the Constitution (1990, rev. 2001, 2010, 2014) and the *Constitutional Law on Rights of National Minorities* (2002, rev. 2010, 2011). Minorities have elected their representatives in the Parliament through a special electoral unit, and currently there are 8 representatives elected according to the rules of relative majority.

Minority cultural activities are predominantly traditional, e.g., preserving language, nurturing folk traditions, music and art, organising exhibitions, acting and reciting groups. The cultural activities of the Jewish and Italian minorities are widely spread and their participation in the cultural life of Croatia is more general. The Serb minority's cultural activities are visible and observed as specific, while cultural visibility of other minorities is limited.

The Ministry of Culture and Media supports various programmes through the distribution of grants in art and cultural fields. All national minorities have designated reference libraries that are distributed over the country: Beli Manastir City Library (Hungarian); Daruvar Public Library (Czech); "Ivan Goran Kovačić" Karlovac City Library (Slovenian); Pula City Library (Italian); Našice Public Library (Slovak); "Bogdan Ogrizović" Library, Zagreb (Albanian); Libraries of the City of Zagreb (Ruthenian and Ukrainian); City and University Library Osijek (Austrian), "Prosvjeta" Serbian Cultural Association (Serbian) and "Vlado Gotovac" Public Library Sisak (Bosniak). The Ministry also provides support for the establishment of the "Prosvjeta" Serbian Cultural Association and the Jewish communities in Zagreb. In 2020 the 'Kali Sara' Central Library of Roma was opened in Zagreb, which is the only such type of library in Europe. In 2011 the Slovakian Cultural Centre was established in Našice (the focal city of the Slovakian minority in Croatia), according to the reciprocity principle similar to the cultural centre of the

Croatian minority which is already established in Slovakia.

2.3. Role of artists and cultural professionals

The main measure related to supporting artistic production is defined through providing the social security measures for freelance artists. In comparison with other workers they have the right to retirement and disability insurance and to health insurance according to relevant legislation (see chapter 4.1.3). The status of independent artist entitled to support from the budget remains one of the burning issues in Croatia where an overall reform of the system is needed. This has continued to be a hot issue of discussion and the changes in the legislation were announced several times in the last couple of years but are still not agreed between the professional community and the legislator. During 2022, as a result of discussions on the retirement coefficients in the Parliament, the issue of the (need of the increase) coefficient for retirement benefits of freelance artists has been put to the focus of the debate by the professional community. The Ministry noted that this problem needs to be dealt with within the overall legislative package, such as the new Law on the Artistic Activities that was debated in 2019 and that, according to the Ministry, will be put into public discussion again during 2023.

Research data shows that the position of artists as well as other cultural workers is still rather precarious in Croatia, whether we are talking about those working in cultural industries or those working in civil society organisations in arts and culture (Primorac et al 2020). The situation differs from subsector to subsector, but the fragility of the professional life of artists and cultural workers due to the project-to-project type of work has proven to be a crucial problem (Primorac, 2021a). The Ministry of Culture and Media has tried to bridge this problem in the last couple of years by introducing additional measures in the form of special calls oriented to supporting the work of writers, translators, visual artists and dancers (see chapter 7.2.2). In addition, within the Programme for Cultural Entrepreneurship (now: Programme for Cultural and Creative Industries) it provides support for stimulating employment in this sector (see chapter 3.5). The Kultura nova Foundation, dedicated to civil society organisations in culture and arts, provides support for organisations and their workers and also has special measures that support artistic research. The Foundation has also executed research on the position of workers in its sector in 2016 that showed the precarious working conditions, which was the stimulus for some of their, above mentioned, policy measures (Barada et al, 2016). Further research has shown that their precarious situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic (Primorac, 2021b), although the whole cultural sector has showed rather resilient to the crisis (Vidović (ed), 2021).

The union of workers employed in the cultural sector (HSDK) covers workers in cultural institutions and the Ministry of Culture and Media, while including freelance artists as well. However, there is a division between them and workers in cultural industries and civil society organisations in arts and culture that do not have unionised representation. Selected sector-specific professional associations cover some labour- rights related issues but this is still not enough to create an adequate framework for enhancing a better social situation for artists and cultural professionals. New actors and initiatives have emerged in the last couple of years that explicitly advocate around the issues of social and economic rights of artists and cultural workers (see chapter 4.1.5), but there is still a lot work to be done.

The mobility of artists and cultural professionals around the world is encouraged through the financing of international cultural cooperation throughout the years (see chapter 1.4). During the last decade through different private initiatives and international projects a number of residencies have been developed within the country for foreign and domestic artists and cultural workers as well.

2.4. Digital policy and developments

The changes in the field of digitalisation are swift and the number of users of new technologies is growing rapidly, but these developments are not followed by equally swift responses in cultural policies. Croatia does not have an official strategic document for the development of digital transformation of the cultural and creative sectors and the official initiatives related to strategies and programmes for digitalisation were mainly focused on its technical aspects. However, digitalisation issues are regularly included in the strategic plans of the Ministry of Culture and Media, but in a fragmented manner focusing on specific cases in a particular period. For example, in the Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2020 (Ministry of Culture, 2017a), focus was placed on completing a national project for the digitalisation of independent cinemas (arthouse, small and regional cinemas) so as to enable easier and wider distribution of audio-visual content. This project has been finalised in cooperation with the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC), an arm's length body dedicated for support and promotion of Croatian audio-visual sector. The Ministry of Culture co-financed 60% of the equipment cost in larger cities and 70% of the cost in smaller ones. The cinema owners and the local and city self-governments covered the remaining costs. This proved to be a good practice example on a European scale, with more than 100 cinema theatres that were digitised in Croatia by 2020. Within the book sector the National Reading Support Strategy 2017 – 2022 (Ministry of Culture, 2017b) was elaborated but e-books are only marginally mentioned. Legislative changes have been made with the updated laws on museums, libraries and archives that were adopted in 2018 and 2019. For the first time they mention the new digital context that affects the work of heritage institutions. Harmonisation of national legislation with EU Directives regarding copyright, as well as the audiovisual media services that have an impact on digital culture, has been made through the new Law on Electronic Media (NN 111/21) and Law on Copyright and related Rights (NN 111/21) both adopted in 2021.

In the area of cultural heritage, the first digitisation initiative that the (then) Ministry of Culture initiated was the Croatian Cultural Heritage Project (2007-2012). This was a national programme for digitisation of archival, library and museum materials which also contributed to the creation of a central platform for cultural heritage that was developed in 2008 (www.kultura.hr) and closed in 2011. The national aggregator for cultural heritage was launched only in 2014 with an aim to allow heritage institutions to send digital content to the Europeana platform. The Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media plays the role of coordinator for the national aggregator which presents an obstacle to the equal participation of Croatia in EU projects related to aggregation and withdrawal of EU funds. This results in a small number of institutions that have been using the national aggregator as shown by the analysis of the current state of digitisation of cultural heritage in the Republic of Croatia (Ernst & Young, 2018). This report was the basis for the preparation of the project 'e-Culture – Digitalisation of cultural heritage' that started in 2020. The project is an activity envisaged as a part of the draft National Plan for the Digitisation of Cultural Heritage 2020-2025, prepared in 2019 by the Ministry of Culture and Media. The funds for the implementation of the e-Culture project have been secured from both the European Fund for Regional Development (85%) and from the state budget (15%), in the total amount of 41 994 473 HRK (approx. 5 599 263 EUR). Partner organisations in the project are the Croatian State Archives, the National and University Library, the Museum for Arts and Crafts and Croatian Radio Television. The project is coordinated by

the Council of the project 'Croatian Cultural Heritage' presided by the Minister of Culture and Media herself. Since the beginning of the project, the partners have worked on the establishment of a central system for storage, access, aggregation and search of cultural heritage materials as well as on the development of e-services; work is also being done on the development of standards and models for the management and functioning of the central system (for example, Guidelines for the digitization of materials have been developed); procurement of equipment and services has been executed; and work on the strengthening of the capacities of the Ministry, project partners and institutions from the heritage community have been done (e.g. workshops, lectures and study visits).

However, support for the digitalisation in cultural institutions is not adequate and is hindering further development. In the 2022 Call for support for the digitalisation of museum, library and archival programmes, 85 programmes were submitted, programmes were approved in the total amount of 565 295 HRK (75 027 EUR). Priority was given to programmes that are oriented on the availability, protection, presentation and promotion of materials, as well as on the development of new services and products. A number of institutions are working in parallel on different digitalisation projects; in order to bridge these problems. Since 2010, the National and University Library in Zagreb organises yearly 'The Festival of Digitalisation Projects'. It gathers experts in the field of development and management of digital collections, building up the systems of digital libraries, digitalisation of different types of data and usage and promotion of digital cultural and scientific heritage. The Kultura nova Foundation also offers support for the digitalisation of the archives of civil society organisations in contemporary arts and culture in order to preserve the records of the work of these active but fragile organisations. The Croatian Audiovisual Centre also offers support for digitalisation of selected audiovisual works through its public call for complimentary activities. However, the burning issue of a decaying audiovisual heritage and the lack of an adequate strategy for its digitalisation, which is connected to the yet unresolved position of Croatian Cinematheque and the status of authors' rights for films produced in the Yugoslav period, remains an open but urgent problem for the audiovisual community.

As of 2022 the Council for Interdisciplinary and New Artistic and Cultural Practices at the Ministry of Culture and Media assesses the applications for public needs in culture in the area connected to digital culture. In 2020, as a result of the needs of the sector due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Culture and Media also opened a call for digital adaptation of the existing cultural programmes and the creation of new cultural and educational content for the digital sphere. The call was repeated in 2021 as well.

ICT companies are giving support to cultural activities through sponsorships and donations that are mainly in-kind. However, neither side is doing this according to any government programme, but according to available regulations concerning taxes on sponsorship and donations and on a case-by-case basis (see also 7.3).

2.5. Cultural and social diversity

2.5.1. NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Promotion of intercultural dialogue is present within the agenda of cultural, media, educational and social policies. However, there are no explicitly formulated policies for the promotion of intercultural dialogue nor is there a special fund or support scheme. It is important to note that due to recent Croatian history and the consequences of the Homeland war, the issue of integration and re-integration of minorities, coexistence, as well as resettlement of refugees and displaced persons have been continuously high on the list of political

priorities, but still remain an open issue. Until 2022 Croatia was not a country receiving any substantial number of immigrants other than those from neighbouring countries. This is why the issue of intercultural dialogue within the country remained largely an issue of social integration and creating equal opportunities for all minorities. The recent migrant crisis opened up issues of the changing of the asylum and migration policies but no specific measures especially relating to intercultural dialogue have been made. However, with the new *Law on Foreigners* from 2020 and the changes in regulation on foreign workers from the quota system to the market test system, the number of foreign workers in Croatia has doubled from 2021 to 2022. This opened dialogue on the questions of new minorities, integration and co-existence and thus on the new perspectives on the issues of intercultural dialogue.

There are a number of NGOs and initiatives, both on national and regional levels, focusing on issues of intercultural dialogue. Examples of good practice that continue each year include:

- BEJAHAD – Jewish cultural scene – a project that has been taking place for more than ten years. The programme consists of a week-long series of cultural programmes, activities and debates where, every year, the Jewish community invites one of the other minority groups from the region as well as a Jewish community from one of the European countries to cooperate in the organisation of this programme.
- Literary seminar "The Days of Vladan Desnica" named after a famous Croatian writer of Serbian nationality. The seminar promotes intercultural dialogue through debates about literature and broader topics.
- Since 2006, "Days of Serbian Culture" organised by the Serbian Cultural Association "Prosvjeta" present contemporary Serbian culture during a week-long festival in Zagreb.
- Days of Italian Culture and Language in Rijeka.
- World Day of the Romani language.

Other examples of good practice that dealt with the issues of intercultural dialogue in the last decade:

- Croatia actively contributed in the process of writing the White Book of Intercultural Dialogue of the Council of Europe;
- The National Foundation for Civil Society Development is the coordinator of the Anna Lindh Foundation - ALF (projects promoting dialogue between cultures of the Euro-Mediterranean region) through the Croatian Network for Cooperation in the Mediterranean.
- Intercultural dialogue is widely promoted through a number of EU supported cultural and educational projects, mainly carried out by NGOs. Such projects are multinational and directly devoted to intercultural dialogue, communication and related multicultural competencies. Their aim is to support cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue through different activities (theatre, music events, exhibitions, festivals, etc.).
- Research projects dealing with cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are executed through the regular work of institutions in higher education and research system (e.g. Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies);
- For the last 27 years 'Matica iseljenika' organizes yearly event entitled 'Forum of Croatian Minorities' that opens dialogue of all the representatives of national minority organisations, researchers and policy stakeholders;
- Support is also given for cross-border co-operation projects, both by the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Science and Education. Initiatives are usually carried out by NGOs which apply for government funding. Co-operation programmes include joint education programmes, co-operation in promoting common heritage, student camps etc.

- Selected NGOs have created programmes that relate to integration of migrants and welcoming refugees (e.g. Taste of Home/Okusidoma; Are you Syrious?).

The question of religious communities in Croatia is regulated through the *Law on the Legal Position of Religious Communities* (NN 83/02, 73/13), and the Ministry of Administration holds the Registry of the Religious Communities. According to the online Registry in 2022 there are 53 registered religious communities in Croatia.

The government of the Republic of Croatia takes steps to support all activities that promote dialogue between different faith groups. Eight agreements have been signed that regulate issues of joint interest with 19 religious communities. The international agreement with the Holy See regulates issues with the Catholic Church in Croatia, while other agreements were signed with: the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia; the Islamic religious community in Croatia; the Evangelic Church in Croatia; the Reformed Christian (Calvinist) Church in Croatia; the Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia, which additionally represents the Christ Pentecostal Church in Croatia and The Union of Christ Pentecostal Churches in Croatia; the Adventist Church in Croatia, which represents the Reformed movement of the Seventh-day Adventists; the Union of Baptist Churches in Croatia, which represent the Church of Christ; the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Croatia; the Croatian Old Catholic Church; the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Croatia; Coordination of Jewish Communities in Croatia; Bet Israel Jewish Faith Community; the Union of Churches 'Word of Life'; the Church of the Full Gospel (CCE); and Protestant Reformed Christian Church.

Croatia has a large Diaspora around the world from North and South America, Australia and New Zealand to Western European countries particularly Germany, Switzerland and Austria. An independent organisation / institution the "Croatian Heritage Foundation" (Matica iseljenika) established by the government in 1990 by a special *Law on the Croatian Heritage Foundation* (HMI), and funded through the Ministry of Culture and Media, supports and coordinates cultural programmes for Croatians abroad. The Ministry of Culture and Media also supports special radio programmes aimed at the Croatian Diaspora, as well as satellite programmes on Croatian Radio Television. The importance of the Croatian diaspora in policy orientation can be seen from the data that from 2016 till 2022 the budget of the Central State Office for Croats Abroad has been quadrupled in the said period.

2.5.2. DIVERSITY EDUCATION

Diversity education is implicitly part of general school curricula in Croatia and is mainly administered by the educational policy making bodies at the national level. Intercultural education is taken as an important element of school curricula in those areas which were occupied during the Homeland war and where there is a special need to build an inclusive education system. However, there are still divisions in these territories and the implementation of the minority educational programmes result in divided classrooms and pupils of Croatian and Serbian nationalities in cities such as Vukovar. Although this is an implementation of the national minority rights regulations (see chapter 2.5.4), everyday life presents obstacles for developing diversity education programmes. Initiatives that put focus on building multicultural and intercultural educational models have not had much success. One example is the experimental Intercultural School that was built with the support of the Kingdom of Norway and which was supposed to start with its programme in the city of Vukovar in the school year 2018/2019, but has not open its doors to pupils not even in 2021 when it became the COVID infirmary. The government of Croatia had to return the money invested by the partners from Norway.

NGOs play an important part in developing programmes related to intercultural education, building awareness on the importance of diversity education and tolerance whether in the format of workshops, seminars, festivals of different types of educational programmes. One can mention organisations such as the Centre for Peace Studies and the GOOD initiative that have been raising these issues and especially advocating for the development of the civic education curricula that includes implementation of diversity education.

2.5.3. MEDIA PLURALISM AND CONTENT DIVERSITY

There has been much debate about media legislation, media pluralism and diversity in Croatia during the past twenty years that reflects the transformation of media and media policies. As a consequence, media laws have been changed and amended several times in this period while the new amendments are also in preparation (see chapter 2.4 and 4.2.6). The current government announced within their previous mandate that a new media strategy will be created and that the new media laws will be changed accordingly, but although selected changes have occurred in the legislation field, the critique from professional associations continues. The announced National Plan for the Development of Culture and Media should tackle these issues, and the overall report on the state of the media sector has been produced

In the last couple of years, the number of media organisations and their ownership structure stabilised. According to the Registry data available on the website of the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM), in 2022 there were 31 TV channels (eleven with national concessions, four of them publicly owned), 154 radio stations, twenty-one media-on-demand service providers, 211 satellite/Internet audio-visual providers and 512 non-profit audio-visual and/or radio programme providers. The high increase of electronic publications can be attributed to the implementation of the registration of the electronic publications and its necessity for further funding provisions. According to the [web data](#) of the Croatian Post and Electronic Communications Agency (HAKOM), there were 91 providers of access to Internet services in fixed network and 14 in mobile network operating in Croatia in 2022.

Diversity and plurality of the media are particularly promoted by the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity of Electronic Media, established by the *Law of Electronic Media* provisions that included the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMS Directive) solutions. The fund is administered by the Council for Electronic Media (VEM), and financed by 3% of Croatian Radio Television licence fees. It supports production and broadcasting of public interest programmes in local and regional radio and television channels, which serve local communities and sometimes use local dialects in broadcasting (e.g. in the Istria region). This support goes to the promotion of the production and broadcasting of electronic media content of public interest on local and regional levels, which is important for the right of citizens to public information, the rights of national minorities, promotion of cultural creativity, and development of education, science and the arts. Support from the Fund is used to promote the production and release of audio-visual and radio programmes of public interest of television broadcasters and/or radio broadcasters at local and regional level, of non-profit television, radio broadcasters and non-profit electronic publications (digital news/internet portals), as well as employment of highly qualified professionals of those broadcasters.

Although Croatian legislation includes regulations on quotas and responsibility of broadcasters and media owners with regard to the diversity of contents, systematic monitoring is restricted and therefore it is difficult to assess the extent to which the provisions of different laws are respected. The Council for Electronic Media ensures monitoring in relation to programme obligations through direct and indirect measures. According to latest available report by AEM and VEM, in 2021, it issued 24 measures to TV, radio and electronic publications in

the form of warnings, penalties, and revocations of concessions.

Media production in the arts, humanities, cultural history and identity is mostly broadcast on the PBS Croatian Television First and Third Channel and Croatian Radio Third Channel (the latter completely devoted to culture). The HT1 channel has also complemented its news broadcasting by devoting 3-5 minutes to cultural information. While the daily press covers social / political events extensively, the amount of published information on cultural life has been continually diminishing. The number of specialised bi-monthly magazines that write extensively about art and culture has reduced, and reporting on cultural life has shifted mainly to selected cultural portals dedicated to different cultural fields. However, with the cuts to funding in the non-profit media, the cultural media portals are also in a precarious situation. In 2020, in order to tackle the issue of supporting the quality journalistic work in general, the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) has opened the public call for journalistic works in electronic publications, among which cultural media portals can apply. Regarding cultural journals, according to data from March 2022, the Ministry of Culture and Media supported the publication of 66 programmes of local, regional or national (printed and online) cultural journals with 3 133 000 HRK (415 848 EUR) which is a continuous decrease as in 2019 it amounted to 3 722 000 HRK (496 266 EUR) while in 2016 it was 4 988 000 HRK (approx. 665 066 EUR) (Primorac and Obuljen Koržinek 2017).

In order to tackle the issue of disinformation and fake news, the Agency of Electronic Media together with the Ministry of Culture and Media has prepared a public call during 2022 on the establishment of a system for verifying the accuracy of information as part of the measure "Establishment of the verification of media facts and the system of public publication of data". The call is developed and funded through the National Plan of Recovery and Resilience with the available funding of 5 972 526 EUR. The [study](#) for the preparation of the Call has been made in 2022, and Call will be executed at the beginning of 2023.

The debates in the last few years included discussions on the new *Law on Electronic Media* that was adopted in 2021, the issue of working conditions of journalists (in print, TV and electronic media), the quality of broadcast content in public and commercial media, and the issue of lowering of financing for non-profit (electronic) media. Especially problematic issue is the rise in SLAPP (Strategic lawsuits against public participation) lawsuits against journalists in the last couple of years: according to data by Croatian Journalists' Association in April 2021 there were 924 active SLAPP cases (HND, 2021). After pressures from the professional community, the Ministry was prompted to establish a working group on this issue in 2022. This issue is reflected in the results from the data collection of the Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM), which are comparable to the 2020 edition of the MPM. In relation to the assessment of the risks to media pluralism, Croatia scores a medium risk for all the categories: Basic Protection (43 percent), Market Plurality (65 percent), Political Independence (63 percent), and Social Inclusiveness (62 percent) (Bilić et al., 2022). The authors conclude how the main risks to media pluralism in Croatia have been consistent over the years and have not been dealt with by strategic thinking, or new legislation and that such an approach further deteriorates media pluralism. The authors also note that the new *Law on Electronic Media* (NN 111/21) brought many technical changes, but none targeting detected systemic deficiencies. "Tackling all issues detected by the MPM requires coordinated and sustained communication of the Ministry of Culture and Media with all involved actors (i.e. main regulator(s), journalists' association and trade union, industry associations, non-profit media, academic and policy experts, the general public, etc.)" Bilić et al. (2022: 24) conclude.

2.5.4. LANGUAGE

The official language is Croatian. Laws passed in May 2000 regulate the status of minority languages and alphabets and their official use on the local level (*Law on the Use of Language and Script of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia*, NN 51/00). The laws also offer the possibility of education programmes (primary and secondary school level) in minority languages (*Law on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities*, NN 51/00, NN 56/00). Such programmes have been established for Czech, Hungarian, German, Serbian and Italian minorities. The first preregistered primary schools in the Serbian language were opened in 2002. The laws are implemented in areas where language groups are concentrated, e.g. the use of the Serbian language and Cyrillic alphabet in East Slavonia, of the Italian language in Istria, etc. These laws were received favourably by the ethnic minority groups. However, in 2013 the implementation of the double-script (Latin-Cyrillic) plaques on the official buildings in Vukovar and some other cities caused protests by the Croatian representatives of war veteran communities, and they are still in dispute. In addition, the implementation of education in minority languages in the same area that implies separated classrooms for Serbian and Croatian children is also put into question (see chapter 2.5.2) especially taking into account that Serbian and Croatian are mutually understandable. The discussions on the implementation of different models of education are in a process that would follow the rights acquired by law but also take into account the local situation.

In line with the *Law on Croatian Radio-Television* and the *Law on Electronic Media*, Croatian Radio-Television has special and regular news programmes in several minority languages. Local radio stations also have special programmes in minority languages.

The school curricula include supplements in minority languages (language, literature, history, art and music); there are optional programmes for mother tongue learning at various summer schools.

Apart from these supplementary minority language classes in schools, language pluralism is not widely debated due to the low numbers of linguistic minorities in Croatia, and the fact that Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian are mutually understandable.

A lot of attention has been paid to promotion of the Croatian language and culture abroad; teaching of the Croatian language and literature for Croatians in the Diaspora is supported through programmes of financing by the Ministry of Science and Education in 20 countries around the world. In some countries the classes are organised as a part of regular educational curricula, while in some countries it is organised as extracurricular activity in the auspices of Croatian Diaspora community activities. The Ministry of Science and Education also organises and finances the [network](#) of 34 Readers in the Croatian Language and Literature exchange positions in different higher education institutions in 25 countries around the world, as well as co-finances three centres for Croatian Studies in Australia, United Kingdom and Canada. The Ministry also partially supports around 40 independent reader positions that are outside its' jurisdiction. Foreign students of Croatian gain scholarships at 'Croaticum' study programmes at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, as well as through a yearly Croatian Seminar for Foreign Slavic Studies Students or the '[Zagreb School of Slavic Studies](#)' at the Inter University Centre (IUC) in Dubrovnik, which celebrated its' 50th anniversary in 2022.

2.5.5. GENDER

Gender issues are systematically monitored and adequate policies are designed by the government and

parliament bodies for the promotion of gender equality: the Governmental Office for Gender Equality, the Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament, and the State Ombudsperson for Gender Equality. However, the programmes and initiatives in this field in the cultural and creative sectors are rare and are not part of an overall policy in this field.

One of the first such initial initiatives was a round table on gender inequality in the audiovisual sector organised by the Governmental Office for Gender Equality in July 2008 entitled 'Visibility of women in Croatian cinematography' that resulted in policy recommendations for the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC). It can be said that some of these recommendations later on contributed to changes in decision making and also to a publication of a booklet promoting women workers in the industry entitled 'Cinderellas, Queens and Godmothers of Croatian Film 2012/2013' prepared by HAVC (2013) and financed by the European Women's Audiovisual Network (EWA), and a brochure 'Women in Croatian Film 2015/2016' (HAVC 2016). The cooperation with EWA continued and in 2016 resulted in the study "Where are the women directors in European films? Gender equality report on female directors (2006-2013) with best practice and policy recommendations", that was executed in Croatia and other six European countries and showed further gender inequalities in the film industry. In 2019, the Croatian Film Directors Guild international conference, entitled 'Women in Film Industry', was organised in Zagreb. As a continuation of actions in this field, the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) has commissioned a study on this topic that was still in preparation at the time of the writing of this report.

The project 'Women in Media' by the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) started as part of the activities of the working group 'Women and Gender' by MNRA, of which AEM is a member. The aim of the project is to build awareness on the position of women in Croatian society, achieve better understanding of both the media and the general public on the representation of women in media as well to provide better visibility of women in media and contribute to diminishing stereotypes. As part of this project AEM published 'The Recommendations on better news coverage of women's sport in electronic media', 'The Media Codex-Recommendations on News Coverage on femicide and violence against women' and other relevant research publications. An important part of the project is the web portal '[Žene i mediji](#)' (Women and Media) that was established in 2019, which publishes news on the events and research as well as different inputs from the partner organisations.

Selected initiatives are emerging also from professional associations and non-governmental organisations and portals. For example [Prostor plus](#), an NGO from Rijeka, published results of research on the position of women artists in the city of Rijeka and its surroundings in 2018 that illustrated their precarious position. The independent portal '[Vox feminae](#)' should also be mentioned for their coverage of (issues related to) women artists and cultural workers.

In February 2020, The Art Pavilion in Zagreb opened its season with the exhibition 'Zagreb, the City of Female Artists / Works of Croatian female artists from the late 19th to the 21st Century'. This was the first exhibition since the independence of the Republic of Croatia devoted solely to the work of women artists that encompasses such a long period and that includes works in all media forms- from classic painting and sculpture to contemporary forms of artistic expression. Due to severe earthquake damage the Art Pavilion in Zagreb has been closed since 22nd of March 2020.

The reflection of the #metoo movement in the ex-Yu region through #nisamtrazila (I didn't ask for it) in 2021 had its' repercussions in the art world in Croatia as well; the Academy of Dramatic Arts at the University of Zagreb has established its' first working group on sexual harassment charges. The issue was debated at other higher

education institutions, and the dialogue has been opened between the University bodies, the State Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and the State Attorney on further steps in the process.

During 2022, selected actions by ad hoc platforms and professional associations have been made to remedy the situation, e.g. the Croatian Writers' Association has started with a series of round tables that tackled position of women in book and media sector as well as in other sectors more broadly.

2.5.6. DISABILITY

The last available report that paid special emphasis to cultural life of persons with disabilities was created in 2014. As stressed in the report of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities in 2014, despite a number of examples of rich and diverse cultural expression of many children and persons with disabilities, their artistic endeavours are not sufficiently supported in general nor are their activities sufficiently present in the media. Specific strategies to support people with disabilities as professionals in the cultural labour market are lacking as well as general policies related to this sector. Although the state finances and supports the cultural programmes and projects run by the DPO (Disabled People's Organisation) and some institutions, the funding is still insufficient. DPO made significant efforts in making cultural activities from local to national level more accessible to persons with disabilities. However, participation of persons with disabilities in cultural events is still severely restricted due to inaccessibility of premises and lack of support in the way of accessible transport and assistance. Accessibility is just one example in a series of problems that persons with disabilities face if they decide to take part in a cultural or sports event or in accessing or creating media content (lack of adaptation of (cultural or audiovisual) materials for particular disabilities etc.). Compiling information in this field is complicated as data from a survey by the Disability Ombudswoman executed in 2014 shows. Of 148 art organisations and theatres surveyed to investigate accessibility of cultural activities they offer to persons with physical and sensory impairment, responses were received from only 24 theatres and 24 art organisations: only 7 of them noted they were accessible, while 10 reported partial accessibility (Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, 2014: 56).

In order to tackle some of the issues related to the Ombudsperson's assessment, in 2020 the Ministry of Culture and Media, in cooperation with the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities, published a pilot Call for programmes that enable access and availability of cultural content for persons with disabilities and children and youth with developmental difficulties. Within this pilot programme, 26 programmes were supported with a total amount of 1 564 438 HRK (208 591 EUR) as the [data from the Ministry shows](#). The aim of the legislator was to assess the implementation of this pilot programme in order to adjust it to the needs of the sector so as to make it a part of regular Calls by the Ministry of Culture and Media. The programme continued in 2021 and 2022 as well; in 2021 it supported 25 projects for financing in the total amount of 1 743 300 HRK (231 381 EUR), while in 2022 the number of programmes and funding increased: 33 projects were supported in the amount of 1 993 600 HRK (264 596 EUR). The proposed projects are programs covering wide areas of culture and art with grants from 20 000 to 150 000 HRK. The projects proposed for financing are inclusive for persons with disabilities, i.e. oriented towards participation in cultural and artistic activities, with an emphasis on children and youth with developmental disabilities, who often have limited access to culture and art.

The 2021 Report of the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities stresses further inaccessibility of the current cultural infrastructure for the persons with disabilities, which is especially evident for cultural heritage buildings. The lack of access to and adaptation of cultural content for persons with disabilities is also still evident

(OPD, 2021). Thus, the 2021 Report by Ombudsperson recommends that local and regional self-government units plan to make cultural facilities in their areas (especially those they founded and manage) accessible by applying the principles of universal design in the physical, communication and information sense so that such spaces (and events that are organized in them) are more accessible to people with disabilities as well as to all other possible visitors ((OPD, 2021: 288). It is to be seen how the funding from the National Programme of Recovery and Resilience (2021-2026) allocated for adaptation of cultural heritage buildings to persons with disabilities will be implemented in the near future.

As an example of a theatre company led by people with disabilities one can mention the theatre 'Novi život/New Life' as one of the oldest theatres of who are blind in the world. It is led by the association of people who are blind and visually impaired, New Life, in Zagreb.

2.6. Culture and social inclusion

Social inclusion is recognised as an important issue within the strategic plans of the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry was appointed as an Intermediate Body Level 1 within the Croatian European Structural and Investment Funds Management and Control System for the 2014-2020 programming period for the Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources (OPEHR) 2014-2020. Within this Programme, the Ministry of Culture and Media was responsible for two specific objectives under two priority axes. Priority axis 2 deals with Social inclusion with its Investment priority 9.i - Active inclusion, with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability, and Specific objective 9.i.1 - Combating poverty and social exclusion by promoting labour market and social integration of vulnerable groups, and combating any form of discrimination. Since culture and media create a high quality platform for the social integration of various marginalised groups, such as youth and the elderly, as well as for the expansion of intercultural programmes that target different minorities, the activities include support to community media, organisation of workshops, seminars, training, plays, various interactive events, production of media content etc., aimed at improving accessibility to arts and culture, promoting participation of vulnerable groups in the media and increasing their visibility, developing creativity, enabling active and healthy aging, encouraging active involvement in the community and strengthening the participation of artists, cultural workers and other relevant experts in their work with vulnerable groups.

After the open Call "Arts and Culture for Youth", in 2017 the Ministry of Culture and Media supported six projects with a sum of 2 968 221 HRK (395 762 EUR) while through the second Call in 2018 provided support for 11 projects with a total funding of 7.5 million HRK (1 million EUR). The description of the projects funded through the programme is available [here](#). The main aim of the programme was overcoming the limitations of youth access to cultural and artistic content and activities and encouraging young people to actively participate in the cultural life of their communities. The general objective of the Call was to improve the social inclusion of young people in the Republic of Croatia, especially disadvantaged young people, through their greater participation in cultural and artistic activities and content.

Another axis of social inclusion instruments within this programme is a Call focusing on social inclusion and improving the quality of life of people over the age of 54 through improving their access to cultural and artistic activities. On 23rd May 2017, the Ministry of Culture and Media published an open (temporary) call for project proposals for the programme "Arts and Culture 54+". The Call was closed on 24th July 2017 and 40 projects were selected with a total funding of 20 million HRK (2 666 666 EUR).

In addition, the ESF funding is also programmed for the development of social inclusion through the community media: on 15th of April 2019 the initial Call for project proposals for the programme "Media for the community - supporting social inclusion through media" was published and on 31st of July 2019 the results were presented to the public: 13 projects were supported with a total funding of 15 000 000 HRK (2 000 000 EUR).

The new opportunities in this field are opened by the new EU programmes such as Competitiveness and Cohesion and Efficient Human Resources (2021-2027), whose priorities also include social inclusion as an important aspect, while an important mechanism is also the National Plan of Recovery and Resilience through which a number of different Calls for projects will be opened in 2023.

Social inclusion is also relevant to the programmes related to the cultural projects of national minorities. The Ministry of Culture and Media supports programmes proposed by national minorities based on their artistic or cultural excellence. These follow the usual procedure and criteria applied to the selection of all proposals. However, there is a special fund for supporting activities and projects by national minorities, administered by the Government's Council for National Minorities, which includes also cultural projects in the fields of arts and heritage, media, events and festivals as well as various projects promoting education, social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. Special provisions referring to education and cultural activities of the Roma people have been adopted through the National Programme for the Support of Roma and programmes such as the [National Plan for Roma Inclusion 2021-2027](#) that connects to the previous [National Strategy for Roma Inclusion 2013-2020](#). Several bilateral agreements on cooperation in the field of culture and education include references to the cultural needs of national minorities and the activities of their respective associations and institutions.

2.7. Societal impact of arts

The issue of social cohesion is primarily dealt with in the context of ensuring that all social groups, including all minorities, have equal access to public services such as education, social security, health protection, media, culture etc. As they develop, NGOs and other civil society organisations invest increasing efforts in the promotion of social cohesion, by supporting or organising festivals, exhibitions, cultural events etc. mostly at the local level. The National Foundation for the Promotion of Civil Society supported a number of NGOs and their programmes targeted at the promotion of social cohesion. The existing network of community cultural centres (*pučka otvorena učilišta, domovi kulture, centri za kulturu*) assists in bringing cultural programmes and projects closer to vulnerable communities and helps to balance the often unequal cultural offer which is mostly concentrated in larger urban centres. During the last ten years, different initiatives have served to further improve existing cultural centres and develop new models oriented to opening of new types of socio-cultural centres based on participatory governance. From one-off projects such as a two-year project "[Approaches to Participatory Governance of Cultural Institutions](#)" (2016 - 2018) implemented by the Kultura Nova Foundation with the support of the UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity.

to the open calls such as 'Culture in the Centre – Support to the civil-public partnership development in culture' initiated by the Ministry of Culture and Media within the framework of Efficient Human Resources Operational Programme and supported by the European Social Fund. The Kultura Nova Foundation was actively involved in the programming stage of the project and participated in the Working group – advisory body of experts formed by the Ministry of Culture involved in co-creating the Open Call. The Call was closed in 2018 and 34 projects were selected and supported with a total funding of 50 million HRK (6 666 666 EUR) (see more under chapter 1.2.4).

2.8. Cultural sustainability

The "Strategy of Cultural Development – Croatia in the 21st Century", drawn up in co-operation between the Ministry of Culture and a team of independent experts and accepted in the Croatian Parliament in early 2002, gave a detailed presentation of these goals and the necessary instruments to achieve them. One of the key goals of the Cultural Development Strategy has been the democratisation of culture, intended to increase active participation in culture and to popularise art and culture in schools and through the media. However, since then no action plans were made in order to implement the adopted strategy. The Cultural Development Strategy (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić (eds) 2001) defines culture as follows: "All forms of intellectual and artistic expression of symbolic social identity, belonging, behaviour and customs, and such industrial products, including the media, produced for spending leisure and shaping people's attitudes".

A new national cultural development plan is currently in preparation by the Ministry of Culture and Media that needs to be in line with the overall National Development Strategy 2030, which was presented by the government in 2020. The draft of the plan was put into public discussion before the presentation of the analysis of the cultural sector entitled 'Review of the Cultural Development and Cultural Policies in the Republic of Croatia' that has been in preparation since 2019 (Matanovac-Vučković et al (eds), 2022). It addresses the issue of cultural sustainability as a core concept in the elaboration of development of Croatian cultural policy in the global context. The report on the media sector and the report on the cultural and creative industries before and after COVID-19 have also been also prepared and presented by the Ministry as the background documents for the future National Plan. It is to be seen how the final version of the Plan that is planned for 2023 will address the issue of cultural sustainability.

2.9. Other main cultural policy issues

3. Cultural and creative sectors

3.1. Heritage

The *Law on the Preservation of Cultural Assets* (NN 69/99, NN 151/03; NN 157/03, Amend., NN 87/09, NN 88/10, NN 61/11, NN 25/12, NN 136/12, NN 157/13, NN 152/14, NN 44/17, NN 90/18, NN 32/20, NN 62/20) states that every monument must have an owner and that licences will be granted for restoration and conservation work. The change of status application of this Law is continuously monitored and improved. The number of well-presented and well-managed archaeological sites has been growing. The Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture and Media is responsible for the upholding and updating of the Registry of Cultural Assets together with its web portal and GIS enhanced search engine, available as a Geoportal: <https://geoportal.kulturnadobra.hr/>. According to the Law, the Croatian Council for Cultural Assets is the body responsible for monitoring and improving of cultural assets in Croatia. Cultural assets are registered according to three categories: cultural assets of national importance; preventively protected cultural assets and protected cultural assets.

Special provisions in the Law are made with regard to immaterial cultural heritage. On the initiative and in agreement with the Croatian Commission for UNESCO in 2002, a special Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage was established. Croatia ratified the Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2007, and the Ministry was established as a central body for its enforcement. According to the web [Registry of Cultural Assets](#) the list of protected intangible cultural goods currently contains 206 units, twenty-one of which were included in the UNESCO list of protected intangible cultural goods.

The Ministry of Culture and Media has developed a network of 19 local conservation departments that are spread all over the country. Due to a large number of national cultural institutions situated in Zagreb, and especially in the context of the still relevant 2020 post-earthquake reconstruction, it is important to mention the role of the City of Zagreb's City Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation. The Croatian Conservation Institute is an important heritage institution founded in 1997 by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on a Merger of Public Institutions in the Field of Conservation and Restoration owned by the Republic of Croatia: the Institute for Restoration of Works of Art (founded in 1948) and the Conservation Institute of Croatia (founded in 1966). The main activity of the Croatian Conservation Institute is conservation and restoration of immovable cultural goods (architectural heritage, wall paintings and mosaics, stone sculptures and stucco), movable cultural goods (easel paintings, wooden polychrome sculptures, furniture, art on paper, artworks of leather, textile or metal), archaeological heritage, and other objects of cultural, historical or technical significance.

[The Strategy of Protection, Conservation and Sustainable Economic Utilisation of Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Croatia \(2011-2015\)](#) was adopted in July 2011. The Strategy determined aims, measures and activities in order to ensure sustainable management of cultural heritage. The overall approach to cultural heritage is planned to be addressed in the National Plan for the Development of Culture and Media that is in preparation (see chapter 2.8) and that will join together all the now separate sector-specific documents. In 2019 the Ministry of Culture and Media published the Recommendations for the Application of Energy Efficiency Measures on Architectural Heritage that was coordinated with the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning in order to improve the cross-sectoral approach to the common theme. In addition, one of the

important strategic plans that was prepared in 2019 by the Ministry of Culture and Media is the National Plan for the Digitisation of Cultural Heritage 2020-2025 (see chapter 2.4).

In the last decade, a number of new or reconstructed museums have been opened and one can say that the number of such institutions is high; according to the Registry of Public and Private Museums, available at the website of [Museum Documentation Centre](#) there are 168 such institutions in Croatia. While investment in cultural infrastructure was seen by many as very positive, there is also some criticism expressed that there is no adequate investment in modernisation and strengthening of the capacities of existing museums. The orientation towards developing of projects for EU funds has started, and there are visible results available. One can mention several heritage projects financed from the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion have been finalised, such as the integrated development programme in Virovitica (total funding: 81 439 871 HRK-approx.10 858 649 EUR), CivitasSacra integrated programme on cultural heritage of Šibenik cathedral and palace Galbiani (funding in the amount of 36 380 859 HRK - approx. 4 850 781 EUR), Infocentre of industrial heritage – Holand house (29 282 809 HRK - approx. 3 904 374 EUR) etc. Much is expected from the announced calls for funding of cultural infrastructure, energy efficiency of heritage buildings, which will be available through the projects supported through the National Plan of Recovery and Resilience (see chapter 1.2).

Taking into account the Zagreb and Sisak-Moslavina County 2020 earthquakes of great magnitude that have caused major damage to cultural heritage buildings (see chapter 2.1), much work and funding will be needed in order to restore and renovate the destroyed monuments and other buildings with cultural purpose. (See links to ICOM reports on the initial situation in [Zagreb](#) and [Sisak-Moslavina County](#)). In 2022 through the Ministry of Culture and Media and with the funds of the EU Solidarity Fund 295 structural renovation projects worth over 4.5 billion HRK are being implemented. Currently 15 have been finalized and more than 900 million HRK have been withdrawn so far, while hundred additional buildings are being renovated with national funds.

3.2. Archives and libraries

Policy instruments that financially support archive and library activities are based on the yearly public calls for public needs in culture; measures for the support of library activities (development of projects, programmes and promotions) and for the support of programme activities in the archive sector. The Croatian Library Council and Croatian Archive Council are advisory bodies to the ministry responsible for cultural affairs that perform professional and other activities related to library and archives in accordance with the provisions of the *Law on Libraries and Library Activity* and the *Law on Archival Materials and Archives*.

The *Law on Archival Materials and Archives* from 2018 defines the conversion from analogue to digital archival material and it creates the legal preconditions for the creation, transmission and storage of material that is created as original digital archival material. This implies preconditions for the digitisation of the overall archive service and it is a key novelty in relation to the old *Law on Archival Material and Archives* that was adopted back in 1997. [The National Plan for the Development of Archival Activities \(2020-2025\)](#) adopted in 2019 creates preconditions for the construction of a modern archival sector in Croatia and enables the transformation of the archival service into a modern public service and the full availability and use of archival material and data on it, regardless of the form in which the material was created or the place where it is stored. At the same time, as the main strategic document in the field of archiving, it should serve as a basis for planning a comprehensive financial perspective for the next decade and the preparation and implementation of EU projects. A significant part of these activities is already planned by the Cultural Heritage Digitisation Project - eCulture, which is being

implemented with the finances mainly provided from EU funds (see chapters 2.4 and 3.1).

The number of archives remains rather steady during the years; according to the Archive Registry available at the web site of the Ministry of Culture and Media, in addition to the Croatian State Archive currently there are 17 state archives, as well as an additional archival institution – Memorial-Documentation Centre on the Homeland War.

The above-mentioned Cultural Heritage Digitisation Project also takes into account the library system as a part of its plans and activities (see chapter 2.4). One also has to mention the adoption of the National Strategy for Promotion of Reading (2017-2022) in 2017 that is currently being implemented, which is focusing on better access to books, development of reading and literacy activities, taking libraries as an integral part of planned activities. The year 2021 was proclaimed by the Government as 'The Year of Reading', and a number of activities and projects have been executed in that period. However, no assessment has been made on the projects implemented.

3.3. Performing arts

There is no specific national strategy for performing arts in Croatia. The instruments related to this sector are based on the yearly public calls for public needs in culture through three streams of financing: funding for professional theatres, funding for amateur theatre activities and funding for programmes in contemporary dance and movement. The Cultural Council for Theatre and Performing Arts is a consultative body to the Minister of Culture and Media in connection to performing arts activities. A special measure for encouraging Croatian drama and theatre creativity is the 'Marin Držić' Award given by the Ministry of Culture and Media (see chapter 7.2.3). The new pilot Call introduced in the 2022 is the Call for the Contemporary Dance Creativity with the aim of providing additional support to dance artists in their further professional development 'and additionally strengthening the quality and vitality of the field of contemporary dance creativity'. The Ministry provided support for 36 projects in the amount of 1 322 400 HRK (179 808 EUR) and has announced its' further development of the programme. Another newly introduced programme is the Consortium of Croatian National Theatres - K-HNK whose aim is the decentralisation of the theatre production from national theatres in Zagreb, Rijeka, Split, Osijek and Varaždin. The budget for these activities in 2023 was 699 114 HRK (92 788 EUR), while the proposal for 2023 amounted to 3 903 487 HRK (518 081 EUR).

In 2019, the debates within the sector were concentrated on the Draft of the new *Law on Artistic Activities* that would have an impact on performing artists and thus the performing arts sector in general. After a number of comments from the professional community, the draft Law was halted, but the discussions on its implications continued in the following years. The Ministry announced that it will put the new draft of the Law in the public discussion in 2023. Further debates in 2022 were related to the draft of the new *Law on Theatres* that was in public discussion during summer of 2022 and that opened a number of issues related to the status of the theatre workers, the changes in the appointment procedures of theatre directors, which caused dynamic debates in professional community. The Law went through the first reading in the Parliament and the Ministry announced that it plans that the new *Law on Theatres* will be put into force during 2023, at the time of the finalisation this report.

Furthermore, during 2020-2022 period the focus of the discussions in the performing arts sector were also concentrated around the impact of the Zagreb earthquake on the theatre buildings and the assessment of the

financial and social repercussions of the damages, the impact of COVID-19 on the (lives of artists and workers in the) performing arts, functioning of the private theatre companies and the applicability of the online environment for the performing arts sector.

3.4. Visual arts and crafts

There is no specific national strategy for visual arts and crafts in Croatia. The instruments related to this sector on the national level are based on the yearly public calls for public needs in culture through three major measures of financing: the first measure is dedicated to projects and programmes related to the promotion of contemporary visual creativity, promotion and protection of freedom of visual action, support for artistic events, preservation of national artistic heritage and cultural diversity, and encouragement of the development and promotion of visual arts; while the second measure relates to monographs in the visual arts. The third measure was developed as a pilot programme in 2018 to give support to the creation, production and distribution of works in the visual arts. This measure continued in the following years, and in 2022 the total amount of support for 234 programs was 2 692 000 HRK (357 290 EUR). The Cultural Council for Visual Arts is a consultative body to the Minister of Culture and Media in connection to visual arts activities.

In the period of 2020-2022 discussions continued to be related to the impact of COVID-19 on the livelihoods of visual artists and the visual arts infrastructure with special focus on the consequences of the Zagreb earthquake on the key institutions and cultural infrastructure in general.

[Croatian Chamber for Trade and Crafts](#) (*Hrvatska obrtnička komora-HOK*) is an independent professional business organization of tradesmen and craftsmen, founded with the aim of promoting, coordinating and representing the joint interests of tradesmanship and craftsmanship. Within its' purview it also deals with traditional and artistic crafts in Croatia.

3.5. Cultural arts and creative industries

3.5.1. GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS

There is no overall legal framework to specifically promote and develop the cultural and creative industries. The legal provisions that affect cultural industries refer to specific cultural sectors (book production, music, audio-visual products, etc.) and to economic sectors, e.g., micro and small-medium sized enterprises, activities of transnational media corporations in Croatia, etc. Thus, they are administratively identified within the established cultural creativity areas like music, film, audio-visual, etc. and supported through regular public calls and subsidies of the Ministry of Culture and Media at the national level and through similar calls of cities and counties at the local level. However, selected calls dedicated to the 'cultural and creative industries' have been developed throughout the years. In October 2008 the first attempt to support the cultural industries as a specialised field of cultural production was launched by the (then) Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the former Ministry of Economy, Labour and Enterprise. The competition for funds to cover the costs of technological equipment, administrative and office expenses etc. was opened and over 450 cultural entrepreneurs applied to the call. In 2013 this model was partially changed and the Ministry of Culture was responsible for part of the project, while the Ministry of Enterprise developed a special line devoted to SMEs in creative industries as a part of the call, newly titled "Entrepreneurship Impulse" that distributed 3 million HRK

(approx. 400 000 EUR). In 2014 the Ministry of Culture distributed 1 526 900 HRK (approx. 200 000 EUR), while the Ministry of Enterprise and Crafts did not announce the new calls for creative industries' projects, but did open a Pilot Project for contemporary design and artistic and traditional projects in the amount of 500 000 HRK (approx. 67 000 EUR). The Ministry of Culture and Media continued with the Programme with increased funds, which is now titled 'Entrepreneurship in Cultural and Creative Industries'. The following table shows the number of supported projects and the amount of funding since the inception of the programme in 2008.

Table 2 – Number of projects and amount of funding (2008-2022) 'Entrepreneurship in Culture/Entrepreneurship in Cultural and Creative Industries' programme

Year	Number of supported programs	Amount of funding HRK/EUR
2008	70	2 000 000 HRK (approx. 280 000 EUR)
2009	108	4 000 000 HRK (approx. 560 000 EUR)
2010	136	4 000 000 HRK (approx. 560 000 EUR)
2011	128	4 000 000 HRK (approx. 560 000 EUR)
2012	90	4 000 000 HRK (approx. 560 000 EUR)
2013	39	1 649 880 HRK (approx. 219 984 EUR)
2014	44	1 526 900 HRK (approx. 203 586 EUR)
2015	60	1 854 096 HRK (approx. 247 212 EUR)
2016	60	1 817 577 HRK (approx. 242 343 EUR)
2017	107	8 000 000 HRK (approx. 1 066 666 EUR)
2018	119	8 000 000 HRK (approx. 1 066 666 EUR)
2019	127	8 000 000 HRK (approx. 1 066 666 EUR)
2020	139	8 497 150 HRK (approx. 1 127 765 EUR)
2021	171	11 133 250 HRK (approx. 1 477 636 EUR)
2022	152	5 102 200 HRK (approx. 677 178 EUR)

Source: Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia.

It has to be noted that during the pandemic in 2020, as one of the crisis measures, a Loan Guarantee Program (loan approval using state guarantees) for entrepreneurs active in the field of culture and creative industries entrepreneurs has been developed while the largest investment in this field is developed as a part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Within this Plan, the Ministry of Culture and Media is body responsible for the implementation of the investment 'to strengthen capacity, increase competitiveness and adapt the operations of the cultural and creative industries on the digital single market', for which 250 million HRK (33 180 702 EUR) in grants have been secured. During 2022 the Ministry opened public discussions on the type of measures needed and the implementation of the programme is expected for 2023.

Thus, the government, and in some cases local and regional authorities, subsidise book production, music production and the recording and film industries (see chapter 7). During the last two decades, several innovations have been introduced, such as bursaries for writers and translators, fixed book price regulations in the form of an agreement between publishers and relevant ministries, and the implementation of public lending rights for authors (see chapter 3.5.2). Legislation regarding audiovisual activities was put into force in 2007 and 2011, which established the Croatian Audiovisual Centre as an arm's length body with changes in legislation in 2018. A cash rebate system for filming in Croatia has been heralded as one of the measures to support the cultural and creative industries, while further measures regarding videogames support and streamers' input to

local audiovisual production were introduced (see chapter 3.5.3).

Some sectors such as publishing or film and music distribution and production are almost entirely privatised and have generated funds from a variety of sources including public funding and sponsorship but also direct investment and their own income. The products of domestic cultural industries are mostly distributed and consumed in the domestic market with the exception of pop-music and soap-operas, which are successfully exported throughout the region of South East Europe. Films also find their way to international audiences (mainly through festivals) and the works of selected authors are translated and distributed internationally. Liberalisation of the audio-visual market, and the presence of private broadcasters on the Croatian market, has contributed to an increase in domestic audio-visual production. However, there is ample space for development of independent audio-visual productions, not only in relation to private broadcasters but also in the important role of Croatian Radio Television as a public broadcaster and AV (co)producer. The previous research showed that the cultural and creative industries consist mainly of micro-enterprises, mostly employing people with a higher education, that is, self-employed people that are employed through non-typical forms of employment. The authors showed that the cultural and creative industries in Croatia are competitive and more resilient to recession than other economic sectors, but are also weakened by long-term recession (Rašić Bakarić et al, 2015: 178-179).

The recent study by The Institute of Economics (2022) showed that until the beginning of the pandemic the cultural and creative industries in Croatia recorded continuous growth with a share of 3.1% in domestic GDP in 2019, while in 2020 their decline was 8.4% in 2020, which is also the most pronounced decline in the comparison with all other sectors. The sub-sector of music and performing arts proved to be the most affected by the pandemic with the drop in revenue of 40.8%, followed by film sector with 35.9%, arts -23.6%, photography -22.5%, advertising and marketing communication -15.3% and publishing with 11.4%. The decline in business income was recorded in all activities of the cultural and creative industries sector. However, the subsectors of computer programs, games and new media, architecture and museums, libraries and cultural heritage proved to be the most resistant to the crisis caused by the pandemic.

It has to be highlighted that public funding remains the main source of financing of the cultural and creative industries in Croatia, which has become even more evident in the crisis caused by COVID-19 in 2020. As in other countries globally, Croatian cultural and creative industries have been seriously hit by the crisis on the level of production, distribution and consumption. What is more, the Zagreb earthquake in March 2020 has exacerbated this situation, as a number of exhibition and concert halls, clubs, ateliers, and offices have been damaged by the earthquake. [A number of measures](#) by the government have been developed to try to tackle different levels of problems caused by the pandemic and the earthquake. As the research data noted above has shown that Croatian CCI has shown resilience in previous recessions, the current situation tests these notions, and it also opened discussions in the cultural community on the need for the development of a more sustainable approach to financing of culture in general.

3.5.2. BOOKS AND PRESS

The policy instruments for the book industry are engrained within the yearly public calls of the Ministry of Culture and Media, which are oriented to supporting programmes and projects in book production, distribution and consumption. The Ministry also opens yearly public calls oriented to enhancing literary creativity in the forms of stipends for writers, translators as well as financial stimulation in the form of grants for authors of lauded published works in literature as well as translation grants of Croatian authors by foreign publishers. It also secures funding so that the public lending rights for authors (including writers, translators and illustrations) can be met on a yearly basis, which are enforced through the HDS-ZAMP service since 2015 (see chapter 7.2.2.)

The main strategic document in this field is the National Strategy for Promotion of Reading (2017-2022) that was adopted in November 2017. The three key strategic goals were: (1) establishing an effective social framework to support reading; (2) developing reading literacy and encouraging readers to read actively and critically and (3) increasing the availability of books and other reading materials. The Strategy is being implemented through its adjacent [Action Plan \(2017-2022\)](#), which is supported through the work and financing of the Ministry of Culture and Media, Ministry of Science and Education but also through additional planned funding through projects financed by the European Social Fund (ESF). In 2021, the results of the ESF call 'Through Reading to Social Inclusion' were announced 12 projects were selected and supported in the amount of 35 000 000 HRK (4 645 298 EUR) among which a large part of funding was dedicated to the support of the bibliobuses (mobile bus libraries) network. However, there are critiques from the cultural sector on the inadequately developed measures and slow implementation of the Strategy, while the new strategic focus will be developed through the new overall National Plan for the Development of Culture and Media that is in preparation (see 2.1). The new model of funding for the People's libraries is in preparation for implementation in 2023 as well as the new campaign 'Read to Me' dedicated to supporting reading in small children.

During 2021-2022 the main discussions in the sector were related to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has made to the sector and whether the measures that were introduced have been sufficient. Following the epidemiological measures, libraries and bookstores remained opened throughout most of the pandemic, while a number of publishers, as well as bookstores, have enhanced their online web stores. By the end of 2022, most of the festivals and manifestations have shifted to offline editions - the biggest publishing fair Interliber also that had record attendance. However, in 2022, together with consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the book industry in Croatia has also had to struggle with the global shortage of paper as well as the impact of the war in Ukraine.

3.5.3. AUDIOVISUAL AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

The first [National Programme of the Development of Audio-visual Activities \(2010-2014\)](#) was adopted by the Croatian Audiovisual Council of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre and approved by the (then) Ministry of Culture in October 2010. In 2012, the results of the first two years of the implementation of the Strategic Programme were presented: positive changes occurred in four of the five strategic goals – audiovisual legislation, increased number of produced films, increased number of viewers of Croatian films, and an increase in digitalisation of independent cinemas and audiovisual (heritage) content. The second [National Programme of the Development of Audio-visual Activities \(2017-2021\)](#) was adopted and then approved in 2017. The new strategic programme followed in the steps of the former programme, while focusing on four strategic goals: providing material conditions for the further development of the overall audio-visual industry as an economic force, while ensuring

the creative growth of Croatian cinema as an artistic expression; encouraging film literacy and audience development; preservation of audio-visual heritage and promotion of public accessibility of culturally valuable domestic and world audio-visual heritage; and positioning Croatia in the processes of formation of the European digital single market. The new strategic programme is being developed as part of the overall National Plan for the Development of Culture and Media that is currently in preparation and should be adopted in 2023.

There are no specific strategic or policy documents in relation to the interactive media industry. However, in 2018, with the adoption of the new *Law on Audiovisual Activities*, video games were introduced within the remit of the Law and HAVC as the centre for its' implementation. Already during the public discussion on the draft Law this caused a stir in the audiovisual community in relation to: the expanded remit of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, the prerequisite of the introduction of different administrative procedures related to video games and the need for augmented funding for the overall audiovisual industry if video games are introduced within the Law. However, in 2021 and 2022, the first calls were opened and the funding for the production of videogames and development of videogame projects has been distributed. In 2021 2 production projects were supported (total 275 000 HRK) and six projects in development (320 000 HRK in total), while in 2022 three production projects have been supported (605 000 HRK – approx..80 297 EUR), and ten development projects (895 000 HRK – approx..118 786). The video games industry is a nascent, small but growing sector that has been developing through projects such as [incubator PISMO](#), [EDU4GAMES](#), and through the Croatian Game Developers Association (CGDA).

With the changes to the Book of Regulations of the Film Production Incentive Programme increased the cash rebate from 20% to 25% of production costs incurred in Croatia and an additional 5% to those that are filming in regions of Areas of Special State Concern (*Područja posebne državne skrbi-PPDS*), this opened discussions on the implications of the Film Production Incentive Programme for the overall audiovisual industry and on the feasibility of opening up a film studio in Croatia, for which the Croatian Audiovisual Centre commissioned a feasibility study finalised in 2020. Filming in Croatia programme celebrated ten years in 2022 and since the start of the program, a total of 109 projects have been filmed through which production consumption spent in Croatia exceeded 1.6 billion HRK, i.e. 213.3 million euros. In 2022, 14 projects were filmed, that incurred 337 million HRK spent in Croatia. The discussions on the possible model of the partnership for the film studio were ongoing in 2022 as well, while a number of debates were stirred by the changes in the *Law on Electronic Media* from 2021 that introduced obligation for operators to provide 10 % of annual gross revenue for works of Croatian independent producers. In addition, media service providers on-demand (*'streamers'*), which are targeting Croatia, were introduced the obligation to contribute 2% of annual gross revenue for the implementation of the national program for the audio-visual activities and to directly invest 2% – either into production or purchase of audio-visual works of Croatian independent producers. The novelty introduced during pandemic 2020 was the public call by HAVC for the microbudget films whose total funding should not exceed 1mil.HRK (132 723 EUR).

The Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) is an independent regulatory body whose mission is to promote public interest and media pluralism, justify public trust through professional and transparent activities, encourage media literacy, create conditions for the production of quality Croatian audio-visual content and ensure that equal conditions for media development and media freedom are met. Within the [Strategic Plan of AEM \(2017-2020\)](#) that is based on six strategic goals, three are related to the promotion of the audiovisual and interactive media industry: to proactively influence future amendments to the *Law on Electronic Media* and participate in the creation of a new media strategy of the Republic of Croatia; to create conditions for the

production of quality Croatian media content; and to continue activities to develop and advocate for media literacy. This has been visible through discussions related to the Fund for the Promotion of Media Pluralism (see chapter 4.2.6), a yearly Public Call for Development of Media Literacy Programmes and a website for the project 'Medijska pismenost' (Media literacy). In 2020 the new measure was introduced by the Agency through a Call for the Support of Quality Journalism financing journalistic work published in electronic publications (see more chapter 2.5.3). It is expected that the new strategic framework for electronic media will be developed through the National Plan for the Development of the Culture and Media that is currently in preparation (see 2.1).

3.5.4. MUSIC

There is no specific strategy to promote the music industry in Croatia but there are several policy instruments oriented towards developing music creativity and music production in general. These instruments are present through the yearly calls for public needs in culture published by the Ministry of Culture and Media where the support for production and distribution of (primarily) classical music is offered, while additional minor support for rock music is available as well. In the last couple of years, a number of initiatives have been active that advocated for more support to be given to the new types of popular musical offer (e.g. the initiatives of the Association of Concert Promoters), while a number of public discussions have stressed the importance of recognising the music industry as a cultural industry within public policy as well (e.g. during the MAKK conference and similar events).

It can be said that the music sector in Croatia has a good organisational backbone through the work of several professional associations, notably Croatian Composer's Society and its' Service for the Protection of Authors Rights' (HDS ZAMP) (see chapter 4.1.6). This has been especially evident in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic hitting the music sector very hard through the cancellation of a number of concerts and events, closing down of cafes and bars that impact on the collecting rights measures and thus authors' themselves. As the report by the Institute of Economics (2022) showed the music sector (together with performing arts) showed to be the most affected by the pandemic with the drop in the revenue of 40.8% (see chapter 3.5). However, this resulted in a number of coordinated efforts between different authors associations that have issued appeals for help for the music industry (from the Croatian Composer's Society, the Croatian Musicians' Union, the Croatian Association of Featured Musicians, the Croatian Association of Orchestral and Chamber Musicians, and the Croatian Performers' Rights Collecting Society). Recent changes have included the increase of the percentage of Croatian music that the radio broadcasters have to emote during the total emitting time.

3.5.5. DESIGN AND CREATIVE SERVICES

There are no specific policies that promote the design and creative services in Croatia.

Within the public call for 'Entrepreneurship in Cultural and Creative Industries' published yearly by the Ministry of Culture and Media, workers in these fields as well are eligible to apply for support for their projects (chapter 3.5.1). The announced future calls for support of cultural and creative sectors that will be funded through the National Plan of Recovery and Resilience announced for 2023 will also include the design and creative services.

There were several initiatives for creating the strategy of design, but so far there are no further steps in this regard. The first initiative occurred more than ten years ago when the draft of the National Strategy for Design (2007-2011) was created by a Croatian Designers Association on the initiative of the (then) Ministry of

Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management. However, the government never adopted the finalised strategy. Five years later, the initiative came again from the Croatian Cluster of Creative and Cultural Industries (HKKKI), but with no further actions.

The Croatian Designers Association is the professional organisation of designers in Croatia that is very active nationally and internationally in different projects related to the development of professional standards of design and advocating for a strategic approach to the field. In 2023 the Association will celebrate its' 40 year anniversary.

Similarly, the Croatian Chamber of Architects, together with the Association of Croatian Architects, initiated the creation of the document for architectural policy on several occasions. Guidelines for the development of Croatian architectural policy were promoted from developments at various initiatives: at the 1st Congress of Croatian Architects in 2004, then at the 2nd Congress of Croatian Architects in 2007, and as a part of the 3rd Congress of Croatian Architects ApolitikA 2013, held in 2010. After the 3rd congress, the work on defining and drafting the document began and after it was finalised as "Architectural Policies of the Republic of Croatia 2013-2020, ApolitikA, National Guidelines for Excellence and Culture of Construction" and it was promoted in 2012. This resulted in the signing of a joint statement between several ministries and professional architectural associations, but with no further actions in this field.

In regards to other creative services one should also mention the role of the Croatian Association of Communications Agencies (HURA) as a professional association that also organises Days of Communications, a national advertising festival featuring industry competitions (Effie, IdejaX, and Young Lions), as well as HURA's HOWtoWOW marketing academy, BalCannes regional marketing agency showcase and numerous other projects.

3.5.6. CULTURAL AND CREATIVE TOURISM

The concept of cultural tourism is not novel for the Croatian tourism industry as the first Strategy of Cultural Tourism was adopted in 2003 by the Ministry of Tourism. At that time, cultural tourism was not recognised as an independent tourism product and many efforts have been made in order to further explain the concept to the different stakeholders. In the following decade many changes have occurred in the development of cultural tourism in Croatia and additional efforts have been made on the national level either through the work of the Ministry of Tourism and Croatian Tourist Board, or further on the local level through the work of local governments, and also through the work of private and civil society initiatives. In 2013, with the adoption of the 'Strategy of Tourism until 2020' cultural tourism has been identified as an important field of the present and future tourism offer in Croatia, with creative tourism as one of its specific products. Following the adoption of the Strategy, the Ministry of Tourism initiated also the preparation of an 'Action Plan on Cultural Tourism' that was finalised in 2015 by the Institute for Tourism. Although many efforts have been made in this field, there is still ample space for further strategic development of this sector. Different programmes of the European Union have been used by local governments and local communities in order to renovate cultural heritage monuments and revitalise certain towns and regions through the cultural tourism offer (see chapter 3.1). The new 'Strategy of Sustainable Tourism until 2030' has been developed during 2022 and adopted in December the same year, where cultural tourism is taken as one of the important touristic 'products' where cultural heritage is taken as an important resource.

4. Law and legislation

4.1. General legislation

4.1.1. CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (adopted in 1990, amended in 2001, 2010 and 2014) guarantees the freedom of scientific, cultural and artistic creativity and prescribes that the state is obliged to stimulate and help their development (Article 69). It guarantees freedom of thought and expression, freedom of the media, freedom of speech and public activities, and prohibits censorship (Article 38). The Constitution also guarantees the right to a healthy life and environment and requires government bodies and legal entities to pay attention to the protection of human health, nature and the human environment. The sea and other natural resources and items of special cultural, historic, economic or ecological significance enjoy special protection by the state (Articles 69 and 52).

In addition, in addition to comprising a number of articles concerning culture directly, the Constitution contains some provisions with indirect relevance. Above all, this refers to norms defining the competence of various governmental bodies and the scope of local autonomy (Article 2, paragraph 2).

4.1.2. ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Until 2022, the general laws regulating the financing of culture included the *Law on Financing Public Needs in Culture* (1990 amended in 1993, and 2009) and the *Law on Cultural Councils* (2001, amended in 2004, 2009, and 2013). However, in 2022 the new umbrella *Law on Cultural Councils and Public Needs in Culture* (NN 03/2023) has been adopted with the aim of adapting the laws to the current changes in the cultural field and adding functionality to the overall system of financing. The *Law on the Areas of Counties, Towns and Municipalities in the Republic of Croatia* (2006, amended in 2007, 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2015) established the administrative structure of the Republic of Croatia for the purposes of classifying those activities to be financed from the different budgets at particular levels.

Cultural councils are consultative bodies but the Minister has the discretion to accept or reject their proposals and make the final decision on financing of particular projects or programmes.

With regard to compulsory public tendering, cultural institutions have to follow the general rules about public procurement.

4.1.3. SOCIAL SECURITY FRAMEWORKS

The legislation has acknowledged the special status of freelance artists in comparison with other workers. They have the right to retirement and disability insurance and to health insurance. Contributions are paid from the state budget (see also chapter 4.3). The Croatian Freelance Artists Association (HZSU) encourages and promotes creative work and public activity in culture and the arts, and it represents freelance artists' common interests, so as to help them achieve their goals and to protect their rights. A freelance artist becomes a member of the Association on the basis of his or her creative work and so can apply to have his or her contributions paid from

the National Budget, as long as he or she meets the criteria laid down in the Regulations about the procedures and conditions for the recognition of the rights of artists to have their retirement, disability and medical insurance paid out of the national budget of the Republic of Croatia. Applications by the artists are considered by the Expert Commission, and decisions are subsequently confirmed by the Minister of Culture. When the Expert Commission has made a favourable decision, the Croatian Association of Freelance Artists registers the freelance artist with the Croatian Institute for Retirement Insurance and the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance according to an artist's place of residence. There are 29 arts associations which appoint their members to the expert commissions (list available at:

<http://hr.hzsus.hr/Struktura-WEB-a/Glavna-navigacija/Umjetnicke-udruge>).

In 2022 a lot of discussion revolved around the need for the change of the coefficient for the payment of mandatory contributions of freelance artists. In 2009, the coefficient for freelance artists was reduced from 1.2 to 0.8 as one of anti-recession measures and the introduction of a special tax on salaries, pensions and other receipts. The government promised that after the abolition of the said tax, the base for the payment of contributions by independent artists will again be recalculated according to coefficient 1.2. However, this has not occurred for 13 years and it is very visible on the level of the received retirement of the freelance artists. The Croatian Freelance Association lobbied that the coefficient should not only be returned but be raised to 1.8, which is the coefficient level of equivalent employees in cultural institutions. The Ministry of Culture and Media noted that this issue will be discussed within the overall change of the legislature in the field through the new Law on the Artistic Activities that is planned for 2023.

According to the data provided by the Ministry and the Croatian Freelance Artists' Association (HZSU), through the implementation of the measure approx. 1 200-1 300 freelance artists are supported on a yearly basis. The fund for this measure is approx. 35million HRK (approx.4.6 million EUR).

4.1.4. TAX LAWS

The tax status of legal and physical persons in the cultural system is defined by the general and special tax laws as well as numerous rules and regulations that prescribe the procedures and manner of taxation. The application of tax regulations is also linked to specific laws in the field of culture and cultural and artistic activities (e.g. the *Law on Museums*, the *Law on Theatres*, the *Law on Associations*, the *Law on Institutions, Foundations*). The *Law on the Rights of Freelance Artists and Encouraging Cultural Creativity* determines the rights of freelance artists, establishment and operation of artistic organisations and measures to encourage cultural and artistic creativity (see chapter 2.3 and 4.1.3.).

Freelance artists have the right to receive specific tax benefits. Donations of less than 20 000 HRK a year are not taxed (approximately 2 740 EUR). Compensation for per diems and travel expenses is not considered part of income for tax purposes. In 2020, a reduced tax rate of 13 percent was introduced for services and related authors' rights of writers, composers and artists (the tax rate until 2020 was 25 percent).

Value Added Tax prescribes a number of exemptions from the VAT system. Institutions that perform cultural activities, legal entities with public authority, or artistic organisations exercise such exemptions if they perform their activities in accordance with special regulations. In addition to the exemptions related to cultural services, exemptions are also envisaged for related deliveries of goods. The regular VAT rate in Croatia is 25%. The VAT tax rate on books (and since changes in the *Law on VAT* in 2020 including e-books), cinema tickets, and daily

newspapers that have valid media statutes are taxed at 5% while those that do not have statute obligations it is 13%. With 2022 Tax law changes concert tickets, tickets for cultural and sport events are also taxed at 5%. For cinema tickets, the taxation differs in connection to who provides the service: if a cinema ticket is sold by a cinema, the rate of 5% is applied, if it is by an institution or legal entity in culture that has a right to exemption of VAT then a rate of 0% is applied. If another type of institution is showing films, then the regular rate of VAT is applied to tickets. A similar situation refers to concert tickets where another rate of VAT is applied as noted above.

Non-profit legal entities in Croatia, including ones in the cultural sector that do not perform any economic activity are not obliged to pay profit tax nor are they obliged to fiscalisation, which is a considerable advantage in comparison to those taxpayers who are obliged to pay profit tax.

Donations made for cultural purposes to associations and other legal entities engaged in cultural activities are not taxed. Donations of up to 2% of the donor's total annual income are recognised as such by law, while donations exceeding this sum must have a certificate issued by the Ministry of Culture and Media. Thus, although legal incentives exist to encourage private support for culture, it can still be considered marginal compared to the funding provided by the public sector.

4.1.5. LABOUR LAWS

There is no specific legislation regulating labour relations for the cultural field. There is also no systematic monitoring of trends regarding cultural employment. The Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Croatia produces annual reports based on a very narrow definition of culture (see chapter 4.2.3) and contributes to the Eurostat cultural statistics according to their rules and regulations.

There is a unified system of salaries for those working in the public sector, including those employed in state-established cultural institutions and those working in the city or municipal cultural institutions. The Union of workers employed in the cultural sector (HSDK) includes workers in cultural institutions, the Ministry of Culture and Media, etc., and includes freelance artists as well. The rights of the cultural workers working in cultural institutions are covered through the Basic Collective Agreement for public service workers, Branch Collective Agreement for Workers in Cultural Institutions Paid from the Budget as well as through the Agreement on the Salary Calculation Base. The Croatian Union of Workers in Culture (HSDK) represents workers from cultural institutions and freelance artists in collective agreement negotiations with the Government. The Branch Collective Agreement for employees working in the cultural institutions paid from the state budget was signed in 2018 between the Government and HSDK.

There is a need to clarify the different position and rights of those who are employed in institutions vis-à-vis self-employed or freelance artists and cultural workers. It can be expected that this issue will be put on the agenda in the future by the old and new sector-specific professional associations (see 4.1.3). The relatively new Union of Screenwriters (SPID) was established in 2015 and immediately opened the topic of authors' rights as labour rights. Another initiative relating to creative workers is the establishment of the Association of Independent Professionals in October 2014 that is based around authors involved in co-working practices, freelancing and similar. In addition, new stakeholders have emerged during 2019-2020 that explicitly target issues of unionisation, social and economic rights of artists and other cultural workers while putting pressure on legislators in this field (e.g. Platform ZA KRUH (For bread), Kulturnjaci initiative, Dosta je rezova!). The most

recent initiative is coming from the Union of Journalists, who in 2022 have started discussions about unionisation of self-employed and freelancers in audiovisual and media sector.

4.1.6. COPYRIGHT PROVISIONS

The new *Law on Authors Rights and Related Rights* has been adopted in October 2021 (NN 111/2021) and in the formal sense the Law harmonizes national regulations with [Directive 2019/790](#) on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market and with [Directive 2019/789](#) on the exercise of copyright and related rights applicable to certain online transmissions of broadcasting organisations and retransmissions of television and radio programmes.

The Croatian model follows the *droit d'auteur* tradition. Both in theoretical deliberations and in legal texts, it follows the continental European tradition on the protection of moral rights which has been incorporated in the texts of the Law 2003 and in 2021. The new 2021 Law introduces a number of changes so as to achieve more effective protection of creators of creative, cultural and media content on the Internet, while exceptions and limitations of copyright and related rights are adapted to the digital and cross-border environment. Measures are introduced to facilitate licensing for the use of works protected by copyright and related rights in order to ensure wider access to contents. Cross-border distribution of television and radio programs is also facilitated, while the use of author's works and related rights in digital and online teaching, scientific research, and by institutions for the protection of cultural heritage is facilitated. The law also ensures a more favourable position of cultural, creative and media industries in relation to internet platforms in terms of fairer distribution of income from the use of copyrighted works and other protected content on these platforms.

According to Croatian legislation, authors and performers have exclusive rights for public performance while the owners of secondary rights (i.e. phonogram producers) have the right of remuneration for secondary use.

Associations registered as collective rights management associations are the:

- Croatian Composers' Society, Collecting Society (ZAMP-HDS);
- Croatian Performers' Rights Collecting Society (HUZIP);
- Protection, Collection and Distribution of Phonogram Producers' Rights Society (ZAPRAF);
- Croatian Film Directors Guild (DHFR);
- Society for Protection of Publishers Rights (ZANA);
- Croatian Association of Writers (DHK);
- Society for Protection of Journalists' Authors' Rights (DZNAP); and
- Croatian Association for Protection of Artistic Works "ARS CROATICA".

Regarding individual rights' management – the Croatian Authors' Agency Centre for Intellectual Ownership Ltd. (HAA) is a legal successor of the Croatian Authors' Agency that had been in charge of authors' rights and their legal successors for over 55 years, representing them and promoting the importance of copyright.

[The State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Croatia](#) (SIPO/DZIV) is the State administration body with responsibilities in the field of protection of intellectual property rights. The Office carries out procedures for granting industrial property rights (patents, trademarks, industrial designs, etc) and performs the accompanying professional and legislative activity, which also include copyright and related rights.

Many issues still remain unresolved regarding the audiovisual works from the Yugoslav period, and this has especially been a pertinent issue in regards to protection of audiovisual heritage. Additionally, many issues connected to rights of screenwriters need to be dealt with that will be addressed by the Screenwriters' Guild, which was established in 2016.

The Croatian Composers' Society, Collecting Society (ZAMP-HDS), has signed contracts with YouTube (for remunerating authors from advertisements shown before or after clips of their music) with Google for licensing music of Croatian authors in Google Media Player Service, Deezer, Spotify, Netflix, Apple Music and TikTok.

4.1.7. DATA PROTECTION LAWS

Personal Data is protected according to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Article 37 (Official Gazette, No. 85/10): "Everyone shall be guaranteed the safety and secrecy of personal data. Without consent from the person concerned, personal data may be collected, processed and used only under conditions specified by law. Protection of data and supervision of the work of information systems in the Republic shall be regulated by law."

The *Law on the Protection of Personal Data* was in force from 2003 (NN 103/2003) with amendments in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2012 (NN 118/06, NN 41/08, NN 130/11, NN 106/12) until 2018. In line with the transposition of the Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation-GDPR), the new *Law on the Implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation* (Official Gazette, No. 44/2018) was enacted on 25th May 2018 to ensure full implementation of the GDPR in Croatia.

It should be noted that as a Member State of the Council of Europe, the Republic of Croatia has accepted provisions of Convention 108 (Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data). On the 14th of April 2005 the Croatian Parliament ratified Convention 108 (Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data and Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to automatic Processing of Personal Data regarding supervisory authorities and trans-border data flows) (Official Gazette, No. 04/05). [The Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency](#) (AZOP) is an independent public supervisory authority in the Republic of Croatia established in 2004 by the *Law on Personal Data Protection*, and has responsibility for monitoring the application of the GDPR and the *Law on the Implementation of the GDPR*, in order to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons in relation to processing and to facilitate the free flow of personal data within the EU.

4.1.8. LANGUAGE LAWS

The Croatian Constitution determines the use of language in the public sphere. According to the *Law on Croatian Radio-Television* (2010, amended 2012, 2017, 2022), the HRT (Croatian Radio-Television) fosters the use of the Croatian language and Latin alphabet in radio and television programmes and promotes creativity in the dialects of the Croatian language. Similar provisions bind all other radio and television activities. The use of the Croatian language is not obligatory when addressing the members of national minorities, according to the *Constitutional Law on Rights of National Minorities* (2002, amended 2010 and 2011).

The *Law on the Use of Language and Script of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia* and the *Law on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities* were enacted in 2000.

The *Law on Electronic Media* established the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity of Electronic

Media that is implemented by the Agency for Electronic Media (AEM). The Fund supports programmes that are also oriented to safeguarding of the Croatian language (up to 30%) but also supports programmes dedicated to safeguarding languages of national minorities and/or are produced entirely in the language of persons belonging to a national minority (up to 30%), as stipulated in the Rulebook of the Fund.

4.1.9. OTHER AREAS OF GENERAL LEGISLATION

General laws and regulations that influence culture and cultural policy are numerous and include the *Institutions' Law, Associations' Law, Tax and Custom Regulations, Law on Foundations and Funds, Anti-trust Laws, Law on the Implementation of the State Budget, Law on Fiscalisation in Cash Transactions*, etc. They also include laws that regulate the organisation and work of public administration bodies and units of local administration and self-government, which are very pertinent in regards to decentralisation of culture. Collective agreements in the state and public sector also have to be taken into account as well as the sectoral specific agreements and other related regulations. It has to be noted that there is a tendency of frequent change in regulations and inadequate implementation of said regulations.

4.2. Legislation on culture

4.2.1. GENERAL LEGISLATION ON CULTURE

Since acquiring independence in 1990, new laws in the field of culture were passed and many have gone through several stages of revision and amendment.

Cultural institutions are registered legal and physical entities that may be private or public. The most important and the largest cultural institutions have been set up as public institutions.

There is no unified law on culture. The most important specific laws and regulations that completely or predominantly relate to culture and media are:

- *Law on Managing Cultural Institutions* (NN 96/01; NN 98/19);
- *Law on Culture Councils and the Financing of Public Needs in Culture* (NN 83/22);
- *Law on the Rights of Freelance Artists and Encouraging Cultural Creativity* (NN 43/96 and 44/96);
- *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* (NN 111/21);
- *Museums Law* (NN 61/18, NN 98/19); *Law on Museums of Ivan Meštrović* (NN 76/07); *Law on Jasenovac Memorial Site* (NN 15/90, NN 28/90; NN 22/01);
- *Law on Archive Material and Archives* (NN 61/18, NN 98/19); *Law on Croatian Memorial-Documentation Centre of the Homeland War* (NN 178/04);
- *Law on Theatres* (NN 23/23);
- *Law on Audiovisual Activities* (NN 61/18);
- *Law on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Assets* (NN 69/99, NN 151/03; NN 157/03 Amendm., NN 87/09, NN 88/10, NN 61/11, NN 25/12, NN 136/12, NN 157/13, NN 152/14, NN 44/17, NN 90/18, NN 32/20, NN 62/20, NN 117/21);
- *Law on Library Activity and Libraries* (NN 17/19, NN 98/19);
- *Law on Croatian Radio-Television* (NN 137/10, NN 76/12, NN 46/17, NN 73/17 - Corrigendum, NN 94/18 –Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia);

- *Law on Croatian News Agency* (NN 96/01);
- *Law on Media* (NN 59/04, NN 84/11; NN 81/13);
- *Law on Electronic Media* (NN 111/21);
- *Law on Kultura nova Foundation* (NN 90/11).

In the last couple of years, major changes have been made in the sectors of:

- Electronic media, copyright and related rights (new laws adopted in 2021) whose changes were related mainly to the transposition of the EU Directives to the Croatian legislature;
- Theatre law;
- General financing of public needs in culture and the functioning of cultural councils.

During 2022, small amendments to most of the laws was made due to Croatia's entering the eurozone on 1st of January 2023, thus the price of different fines and similar had to be converted to euros.

*Table 3: International legal instruments implemented by Croatia in the cultural field**

Title of the act	Year of adoption
Universal Copyright Convention, with Appendix Declaration relating to Article XVII and Resolution concerning Article XI. Geneva, 6 September 1952.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention. The Hague, 14 May 1954.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The Hague, 14 May 1954.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Convention against Discrimination in Education. Paris, 14 December 1960.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Paris, 14 November 1970.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Universal Copyright Convention as revised on 24 July 1971, with Appendix Declaration relating to Article XVII and Resolution concerning Article XI. Paris, 24 July 1971.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Paris, 16 November 1972.	Date of deposit: 06/07/1992 Notification of succession
Agreement for Facilitating the International Circulation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific and Cultural character with Protocol of Signature and model form of certificate provided for in Article IV of the above-mentioned Agreement. Beirut, 10 December 1948.	Date of deposit: 26/07/1993 Notification of succession
Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials, with Annexes A to E and Protocol annexed. Florence, 17 June 1950.	Date of deposit: 26/07/1993 Notification of succession
Convention relating to the Distribution of Programme-Carrying Signals Transmitted by Satellite. Brussels, 21 May 1974.	Date of deposit: 26/07/1993 Notification of succession
Protocol to the Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials, with Annexes A to H. Nairobi, 26 November 1976.	Date of deposit: 26/07/1993 Notification of succession
European Cultural Convention	1999 (NN-MU 1/99)

Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms against Unauthorised Duplication of their Phonograms. Geneva, 29 October 1971.	Date of deposit: 20/01/2000 Accession
International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations. Rome, 26 October 1961.	Date of deposit: 20/04/2000 Ratification
European Convention on Transfrontier Television	Ratification: 2001 Entry into Force: 2002
European Landscape Convention	Ratification: 2003 Entry into Force: 2004
European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production	Ratification: 2004 Entry into force: 2004
European Agreement on the Protection of Television Broadcasts	Ratification: 2004 Entry into force: 2004
Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. Paris, 2 November 2001.	Date of deposit: 01/12/2004 Ratification
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Paris, 17 October 2003.	Date of deposit: 28/07/2005 Ratification
Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The Hague, 26 March 1999.	Date of deposit: 08/02/2006 Ratification
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Paris, 20 October 2005	Date of deposit: 31/08/2006 Ratification
Law on the Confirmation of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the European Community and the Republic of Croatia on the Participation of the Republic of Croatia in the Culture Programme (2007 to 2013)	2007 (NN-MU 7/07)
Law on the Confirmation of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the European Community and the Republic of Croatia on the Participation of the Republic of Croatia in the Community Programme MEDIA 2007 (2007 – 2013)	2008 NN 3/2008-49
Faro Convention	Ratification: 2007 Entry into force: 2011
European Convention for the Protection of the Audiovisual Heritage	Ratification: 2007 Entry into Force: 2008
European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production (revised)	Ratification: 2018 Entry into force: 2019
Protocol amending the European Landscape Convention	Ratification: 2018 Entry into force: 1/07/2021
Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data	Ratification: 18/12/2019

*Data gathered by the author of this report from the websites of UNESCO, Council of Europe and the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia.

4.2.2. LEGISLATION ON CULTURE AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Cultural property may be publicly or privately owned and may be exported only in exceptional cases. The most important obligations are care and maintenance of the property and public accessibility, with the right, under certain conditions, to receive compensation from the budget for some maintenance costs. The owners of cultural property enjoy tax and duty benefits.

The *Law on the Protection of Cultural Assets*, 1999 introduced the obligation of paying a "monument annuity" in case a cultural asset is used in a printed work, for promotion, or when an income or profit is made from an economic activity performed in an immovable cultural asset. This Law was amended in 2003 aiming to improve the system of collecting and distributing funds collected from monument taxes. The 2009 amendments brought changes in regulation of concessions and jurisdictions, while the subsequent changes reflect EU regulations

regarding the trafficking and return of cultural goods. The amendments made in 2011 relate to the establishment of the Committee for Complaints and its jurisdiction, and 2012 amendments were related to classification categories of those eligible for monument annuity tax. Additional amendments in 2012 and 2014 relate to the regulations and jurisdictions on movement of cultural assets within the European Union. The 2018 amendments brought about the harmonisation of the *Law on the Protection of Cultural Assets* with the *Law on Museums* and the *Law on Libraries* as well as the changes in: the definition of the cultural assets inscribed in the List of World Heritage or in the List of Endangered World Heritage; the method of determining the boundaries for the cultural landscape and underwater archaeological sites; the provisions on public announcement of registration, change and deletion of a cultural property; separation of underground cultural assets of archaeological significance and other archaeological sites and mining facilities of interest to the Republic of Croatia from the cadastral parcels located above them; regulation of the use of the legal right of first refusal on cultural goods, simplification of the procedure for obtaining a permit to perform activities on the protection and preservation of cultural property.

In June 2018 the new *Law on Archival Materials and Archives* was adopted. Unlike the old Law that has been in force since 1997, the new Law allows for the transformation from a classic to a digital archive. In accordance with the obligation established by the new *Law on Archival Materials and Archives*, a National Plan for the Development of Archival Activities for the 2020-2025 period was adopted in 2019 (see chapter 3.2). In 2019, the new *Law on Libraries and Library Activity* was adopted and it replaced the former Law that was in force since 1997. The new Law regulates library activities, establishment and termination of libraries, organisation and management of libraries, types of libraries, work of the National and University Library in Zagreb and the library system of the Republic of Croatia and other issues of importance for the performance of library activities.

From 2004 until 2011, the preservation of nature was the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Media, after which it changed to the remit of the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection. Responsibility under the current government lies with the Ministry of the Economy and Sustainable Development.

4.2.3. LEGISLATION ON PERFORMANCE AND CELEBRATION

The *Law on Theatres* was passed in the Croatian Parliament in spring 2006 and came into force on 1 January 2007. This Law brought some reforms to the rules and criteria for funding theatres and theatre groups, as well as managing public theatres, including four national theatres. The Law established theatre councils as the bodies responsible for monitoring the programme and business plans of theatres. The 2013 changes to the *Law on Theatres* introduced changes in the election procedures of the commissary of the Croatian National Theatre, and on the election and tasks of its Theatre Council. Against public and expert opinion which considers that Croatia already has too many national theatres (four), the Law provided the status of national theatre to the municipal theatre in Varaždin. Only several months after the changes which provoked heated discussions, the Law was changed again (January 2014). In 2022, the draft of the new Law on Theatres and Theatre activities was put into public discussion, and caused again debates in the professional community. The main critique was oriented towards the procedures of appointment of the theatre directors and management councils, the role of theatre councils and the status of theatre workers. The draft of the new Law passed the first reading in the Parliament in October 2022, and the final version of the Law is awaited to be adopted during the finalisation of this report at the beginning of 2023.

The Ministry of Culture and Media holds a register of theatres, while special rulebooks regulate festivals of

national importance such as Split Summer Festival, Dubrovnik Summer Festival, Varaždin Baroque Evenings, Osor Musical Evenings, Šibenik International Children's Festival and Zagreb International Folklore Festival. Regarding the music sector, regulations are mainly addressed within the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* (see chapters 4.1.6. and 3.5.4). There is no specific legislation related to street arts or circus.

4.2.4. LEGISLATION ON VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

There is no specific legislation in the field of visual art. The *Law on Crafts* regulates craft activities in general, under which traditional and artistic craft activities are subsumed (Article 7).

Relevant issues can be found within the *Law on Audiovisual Activities* (see chapter 4.2.6) and the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* (see chapter 4.1.6). The status of freelance visual and applied artists is covered within the *Law on the Rights of Freelance Artists and Encouraging Cultural Creativity* (see chapter 4.1.3 and chapter 4.1.5) and relevant regulations.

4.2.5. LEGISLATION ON BOOKS AND PRESS

In 2019, the new *Law on Libraries and Library Activity* was adopted as the main legal source for librarianship. Library activities defined in this Law include acquisition, collection, classification, maintenance, setting professional technical methods, access to books and other library materials, the conduct of bibliographic information and documentation services. Libraries may be autonomous or components of other legal entities; they can be public or privately owned and are normally organised as institutions. Before being permitted to operate as a library, an institution must meet certain professional standards, including employing the required number of specialised trained staff, etc.

The *Law on Media* (2004, amended in 2011 and 2013) regulates the print media.

The *Agreement on Fixed Book Prices* was signed in 2007 between the representatives of the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, and the Croatian Chamber of Commerce – Community of Publishers and Bookstores. The *Law on Libraries* includes legal deposit provisions (compulsory library copies) laying down regular, free and prompt delivery of nine copies of all print and non-print publications, i.e. book and non-book material, as well as audiovisual and electronic material. Publishers and manufacturers of audiovisual and electronic publications are entities that are bound by legal deposit legislation, i.e. legal entities and natural persons publishing or manufacturing materials for the public, whether these materials are intended for sale or free distribution. At the expense of the depositor, legal deposit copies have to be submitted to the National and University Library in Zagreb, which is responsible for the collecting and distributing of legal deposit copies. Information on online publications has to be submitted using the Online Publication Registration Form, available at the website of the Library.

4.2.6. LEGISLATION ON AUDIOVISUAL AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

Following the necessity of transposition of the EU legal framework, in 2021 the new Law on Electronic Media was adopted by the Parliament. The main changes were related to the transparency in media ownership, more precisely regulating of publishers' obligations, and better protect competition and regulating issues specific to video-sharing, on demand platforms and electronic publications. It also regulates commercial television and radio broadcasting and its provisions regarding content also apply to the public service broadcaster, HRT

(Croatian Radio-Television), which is regulated by the *Law on Croatian Radio-Television* adopted in 2010, amended in 2012 and 2017.

The Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) established in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Electronic Media is managed by the Council for Electronic Media (VEM), is an independent regulatory body that awards licences to radio and television broadcasters, and it deals with registration of online portals (electronic publications) and funding for them. The Fund for the Promotion of Diversity and Pluralism of Electronic Media created by the new *Law on Electronic Media* obliges the HRT (Croatian Radio-Television) to contribute 3% of revenues generated from licence fees to the Fund. This support goes to the promotion of the production and broadcasting of electronic media content of public interest on local and regional levels, which is important for the right of citizens to public information, the rights of national minorities, promotion of cultural creativity, and development of education, science and art (see more chapter 2.5.3).

The *Law on Audiovisual Activities* (adopted in 2007, amended in 2011) regulated the performing, organising and funding of audiovisual activities as fundamental components of contemporary culture. It established a public institution - Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) – which is responsible for the production, financing, promotion and distribution of audiovisual activities. The Law also introduced a new system for financing audiovisual activities, where funds are secured from the state budget as well as from the percentage of annual gross income gained from the performing of audiovisual activities by Croatian TV, television broadcasters at the national and regional level, as well as cable service providers and operators in fixed and mobile telecommunication networks and Internet service providers. The 2011 amendments were specifically designed to introduce financial incentives in the form of a 20% cash rebate for production costs incurred in Croatia for feature films, documentaries, animation and TV drama. These amendments marked a first step towards realisation of strategic goals outlined in the four-year National Programme for the Development of Audiovisual Activities (2010-2014), adopted by the Audiovisual Council of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre and approved by the Ministry of Culture in October 2010. In October 2012, the representatives of HAVC presented the results of the first two years of the implementation of the Strategic Programme, and outlined the positive changes in four of five strategic goals – positive changes in audiovisual legislation, increased number of films produced, increased number of viewers of Croatian films, and an increase in digitalisation of independent cinemas and audiovisual (heritage) content. The National Programme for the Development of Audiovisual Activities (2017-2021) was adopted in 2017. The new national programme on audiovisual activities is developed within the framework of the overall National Plan for the Development of Culture and Media that is currently in preparation by the Ministry of Culture and Media (see 2.1).

In 2018 the new *Law on Audiovisual Activities* was adopted, which introduced selected changes in procedures related to potential conflict of interest and introducing video games within the remit of the Law and HAVC as the centre. Following the Law, the changes to the Book of Regulations of the Film Production Incentive Programme for investment in audio-visual production in Croatia was put into force. The changes in the cash rebate system for foreign film productions increased the cash rebate system from 20% to 25% of production costs incurred in Croatia and an additional 5% to those that are filming in regions with below average development, that is, in Areas of Special State Concern (Područja posebne državne skrbi-PPDS). The changes also included the introduction of the support for videogames, the introduction of the obligations for HAVC regarding holding registries of producers, distributors and filming registration. The new Law on Electronic Media brought also changes for the AV community in regards to obligation for operators and media service providers on-demand ('streamers'), to contribute to the local production (see more 3.5.3).

Croatia signed a Memorandum on the MEDIA 2007 programme (2007-2013) which was ratified in March 2008 by the Croatian Parliament. A Media Desk was set-up within the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, which is now Creative Europe Desk – MEDIA sub-programme (see chapter 3.5.3).

Croatia is a member of Eurimages since 2003, is a signatory of the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production (2004) and is a signatory of the European Convention for the Protection of Audiovisual Heritage (2007) (see chapter 4.2.1). Since 2009 HAVC is a member of European Film Promotion (EFP), where it actively contributes to EFP initiatives and programmes; in 2013 a number of Croatian professionals participated in several EFP programmes. In September 2014 during the Venice Film Festival an agreement on co-productions was signed between representatives of audiovisual centres from Slovenia, Croatia, and the Friuli Venezia Giulia region. The RE-ACT (Regional Audiovisual Cooperation and Training) initiative aims to structure the current cooperation between these three funds on a formal level, and to develop film education and networking between these regions. Croatia is the successor country of the former SFRY and, accordingly, the bilateral co-production agreements that the former country signed with France, Germany and Canada are still in force. Croatia is also a signatory to the bilateral co-production agreement with Italy, which entered into force on April 10, 2018.

4.2.7. LEGISLATION ON DESIGN AND CREATIVE SERVICES

Relevant issues (especially related to authors' rights, industrial design, patents, marks etc) can be found within the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* (see chapter 4.1.6). The status of freelance artists (including fashion, textile, and graphic design) is covered within the *Law on the Rights of Freelance Artists and Encouraging Cultural Creativity* (see chapter 4.1.3 and chapter 4.1.5) and relevant regulations.

Legislation relating to architectural services and regarding urban planning is within the competence of the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets. Key challenges with regard to cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets refers to the need to ensure respect for cultural heritage protection provisions in the context of development projects. This was especially relevant within the process of legalisation of illegally constructed buildings and sites in the last couple of years. While it is understandable that the government decided to launch this process and finally legalised buildings constructed decades ago that never obtained all of the necessary permits, at the same time there is a concern that in this process protection of cultural heritage and in particular respect for archaeological sites and zones might be endangered. The 2020 Zagreb and Sisak-Moslavina county earthquakes again opened these issues within the debates on the *Law on the Reconstruction of the City of Zagreb and Sisak-Moslavina County*.

5. Arts and cultural education

5.1. Policy and institutional overview

The Ministry of Science and Education is the main body responsible for arts and cultural education and training in Croatia. It cooperates with the Ministry of Culture and Media on specific programmes and measures in this field. The Agency for Electronic Media and The Croatian Audiovisual Centre also develop and cooperate on programmes related to media and film literacy. The Agency for Teachers and Education is the body responsible also for professional development in this field and is a partner of the above-mentioned institutions in different programmes for schools.

Special arts education is carried out in primary and secondary schools of applied arts and design, music and dance schools. When attending primary music and or ballet schools, the pupils are obliged to concurrently attend regular primary school. According to the latest available data from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022a), in 2020/2021 there were 131 dance and music primary schools with a total of 18 568 pupils and 2 559 teachers. In the same school year there were 53 secondary arts schools with a total number of 4 617 pupils and 2 040 teachers (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022b).

At the university level arts education is carried in music, drama and fine arts academies whose number has remained stable throughout the years. In there were 6 art academies in Croatia – at the University of Zagreb - Academy of Dramatic Arts, Academy of Fine Arts, Academy of Music; at the University of Osijek - Arts Academy, and Academy of Dramatic Arts; Arts Academy in Split, and Academy of Applied Arts in Rijeka. The total number of students enrolled in academies in 2021/2022 was 2 748, with 941 academic staff, which shows an increase in the number of staff and an increase in the number of students in comparison to the previous four years according to the latest available data from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022c). Programmes in cultural management were mainly covered through private education, as in Zagreb School of Management's programme, and 'Baltazar Krčelić' School in Zaprrešić. However, since the 2018 merger of the Academy of Arts in Osijek and the Department of Cultural Studies of the University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer in Osijek into Academy of Arts and Culture, the Academy offers Undergraduate courses in culture, media and management and Graduate courses in management of cultural and creative industries.

Arts and cultural education in Croatia has not been adequately addressed in cultural or educational policies and it has neither been defined nor sufficiently mapped as research by Žuvela (2016) notes. The programmes are developed sporadically by the particular cultural organisations and institutions but not as a part of overall strategic planning in this domain. The Programme "Backpack (full) of Culture / Ruksak (pun) kulture" was developed as a supplementary measure since 2012 by the Ministry of Culture and Media and in association with the Ministry of Science and Education, and brings artists and cultural events directly to kindergartens, primary and high schools. This measure can be seen as a step in the direction of arts and culture education policies, bridging also the policies for enhancing cultural participation (see chapter 6.1). However, it is a complementary measure while a more systemic approach is needed in this direction.

5.2. Arts in schools

According to the National plan for primary schools, arts education is part of obligatory curricula during all eight years of primary school – 35 hours per year (special double hour sessions); music education is obligatory during all eight years of primary school – also 35 hours per year. Looking at the total number of hours of arts education, according to selected research data, this puts Croatia among European countries with the lowest number of hours dedicated to this field (Levačić, 2017), which prompts questions on the need for change in the curriculum related to the arts.

General, linguistic and classical secondary schools (*gimnazija*) have one hour per week of music education, and one hour of arts education throughout the four years of education, while natural science-mathematics secondary schools have one hour per week during the first two years of education. Special natural science schools have two hours of music education per week during the fourth year and two hours of artistic education per week during the third year of study. This creates significant differences in arts and cultural education between pupils of different types of schools and potential for their unequal experience in the cultural and artistic sector and creation of cultural habits. Special arts education is carried out at national level in schools of applied arts and design, music and dance schools that have particular curricula according to their specialisation. There are private arts schools that are open to the public and which have to have a programme according to the national regulations in this field.

In the last couple of years, a number of initiatives of high school teachers in the arts highlighted the low number of hours of arts education in the curriculum (e.g. activities of art teachers within NGO OPA). In addition, The Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) and The Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) stressed the need for development of more adequate media and film literacy programmes for both primary, but even more for secondary students and their teachers as well. Some changes have occurred in a fragmented manner - AEM has developed its project/website 'Media Literacy' while HAVC slowly develops and support the film literacy programmes (see chapters 3.5.3 and 5.4).

In 2013 the new programme "Backpack (full) of Culture / Ruksak (pun) kulture" was established with the aim of bringing artists and cultural events directly to kindergartens, primary and high schools as a part of additional activities. The proposed programmes should be in line with the national curricula for the suggested subjects, to complement the missing artistic and cultural content in the existing curricula. [The internal evaluation](#) showed that such programmes were necessary for kindergartens, primary and high schools, where the arts and cultural education programmes are not adequately present. The evaluation showed that this is especially relevant for those educational institutions that are in the areas with inadequate traffic and digital connectivity (e.g. the islands, mountain regions etc.) (Ministry of Culture, 2020). In 2018, a special pilot programme for the islands called 'The Island Backpack' was created that resulted in the execution of 43 programmes and workshops on a number of Croatian islands where more than 600 children participated, while another pilot project for children of the Croatian diaspora was also tested in selected countries (Ministry of Culture 2020) (see more details chapter 6.1).

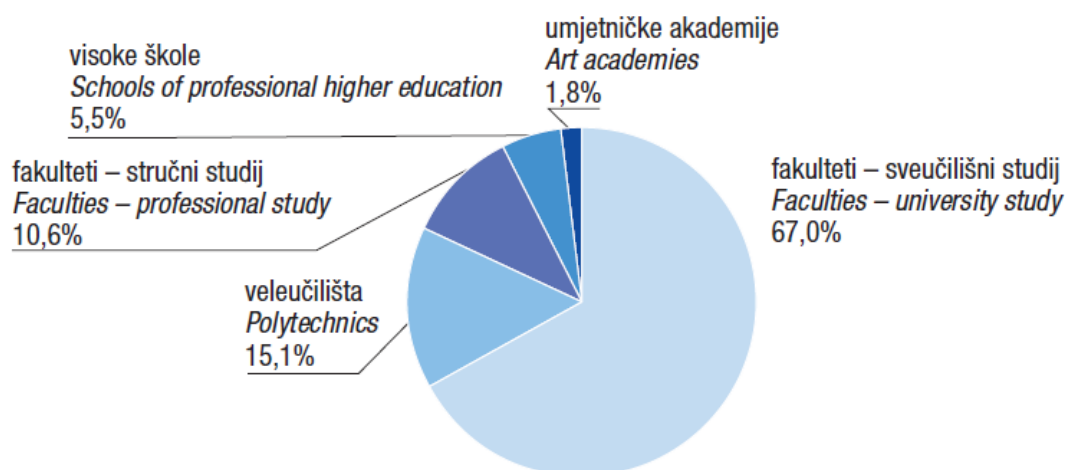
5.3. Higher arts and cultural education

The Bologna process brought a number of changes to the higher education system in Croatia that had an impact on arts education. A number of new art schools and art academies have been established; however, no research data on the impact of the changes is available. The number of arts academies (music, drama and fine arts) remains steady in the last decade, amounting to 6 art academies in four different cities in Croatia. At the University of Zagreb - Academy of Dramatic Arts, Academy of Fine Arts, and Academy of Music; at the University of Osijek - Academy of Arts and Culture; Arts Academy at the University of Split, and Academy of Applied Arts at the University of Rijeka.

According to the latest available data by the Central Bureau of Statistics, Figure 1 shows the percentage of students who graduate from art academies in comparison to other institutions of higher education in 2021.

Figure 1: Students who graduated from university study or completed professional study, by type of institution, 2017

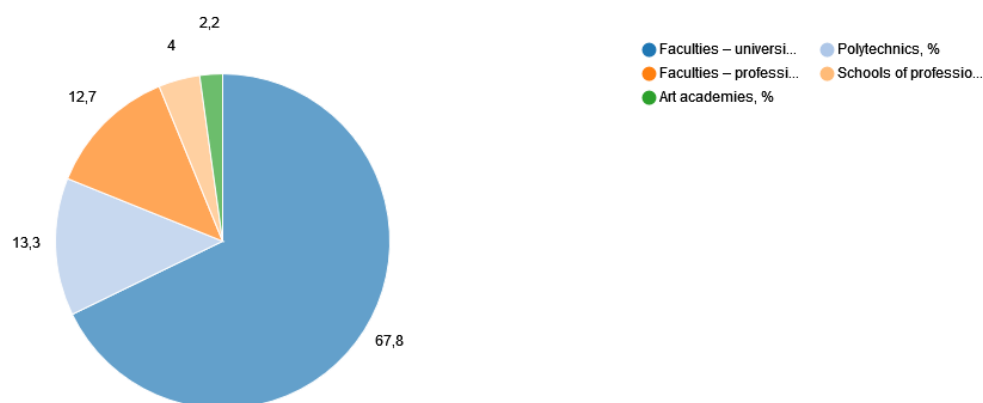
STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED FROM INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION, 2017



Source: Statistical Yearbook 2018, (Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2019a: 493).

Figure 2: Students who graduated from university study or completed professional study, by type of institution, 2021

G-1 STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITY STUDY OR COMPLETED PROFESSIONAL STUDY, BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION, 2021



Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics

In comparison to 2017, the number shows an increase, as in 2017 there was 1,8% of students that graduated from the arts academies in Croatia, while in 2021 this percentage amounted to 2.2% as shown in the Figure 2.

Training and education programmes focused on heritage, culture and creativity in general are to be found through different programmes developed at other faculties in universities around Croatia – e.g. programmes in history of arts, museology, archaeology, literature, library science, cultural studies at faculties of humanities and social sciences at universities in Dubrovnik, Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Split, Zadar, Zagreb; design and architecture at the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb, fashion and textile design at the Faculty of Textile and Technology in Zagreb etc. Arts education programmes are specialised for those students that are studying to become art teachers in high schools, but no specific arts or culture education has been developed more generally.

5.4. Out-of-school arts and cultural education

Cities and municipalities finance programmes of local community cultural centres and public educational centres, which are the only venues for art and culture in many smaller cities. The network of these community cultural centres is fully decentralised and the level of their involvement in cultural life as well as their ability to organise and/or host cultural and artistic programmes varies greatly from one city to the other depending on their development level. The biggest network of community cultural centres exists in the City of Zagreb. New initiatives have been made to revitalise these centres, especially with the help of EU funds (see chapter 2.6).

The Ministry of Culture and Media and the cities financially support theatres for children, youth and puppet theatres, registered either as public institutions or private companies. Most of these theatres also have studios for young actors. A number of NGOs develop cultural education programmes for children and pupils, which are developed as a part of their regular programmes.

An important role in promoting participation in music for the younger population is played by the 'Jeunesses Musicales Croatia' (HGM), a member of the 'Jeunesses Musicales International'. One of their programmes is

'cultural card', which facilitates young people (aged 14 to 30) to have discounts in theatres, museums, concerts etc. 'Music in the Neighbourhoods' is another programme that HGM runs in cooperation with the City of Zagreb, with the aim of introducing classical music to primary school children.

Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) continually supports programmes of [film literacy](#) that mainly consist of out-of-school activities while also being partner in the '[Media literacy](#)' project of Agency for Electronic Media (AEM) and UNICEF.

5.5. Vocational and professional training

A special two-week intensive summer programme in media culture "Dr. Ante Peterlić" has been organised by the Croatian Film Club's Association since 1999. It is oriented primarily to teachers at primary and secondary level, teachers in amateur audio-visual associations, but also to university lecturers and artists. The programme has been recognised by the Ministry of Science and Education as a programme of professional training in media culture for teachers and professors.

Through the public calls for international cultural cooperation, The Ministry of Culture and Media provides funding to cover the costs of travel at different professional training residencies and programmes abroad for artists and cultural workers. The Croatian Audiovisual Centre also provides support for travel to professional training and workshops for audiovisual workers through their yearly public call for complimentary activities. It also provides funding for such programmes to be organised in Croatia.

6. Cultural participation and consumption

6.1. Policies and programmes

Both public and private cultural consumption as well as cultural participation are not continuously monitored nor systematically promoted by the Ministry of Culture and Media or local communities. In most cases cultural organisations themselves promote their programmes and invest in reaching an ever wider audience. There are very few surveys and statistical information or analysis that could result in designing policies to link participation in cultural life to the broader issues of citizen participation. The absence of this kind of information affects the quality of decision-making, especially aimed at decreasing the existing disproportions in the level of cultural development throughout Croatia. However, selected research data indicates a strong correlation between both indexes of cultural consumption and several indicators of socioeconomic status, education level, gender and residential status in Croatia (Tonković et al. 2017). Research shows that there are significant differences in various Croatian regions: the wider Zagreb metropolitan area, Rijeka and Gorski Kotar are the only regions with an above average cultural consumption index. Thus, cultural consumption is strongly related to the overall development of an area (Tonković et al. 2017). This has also been corroborated in the research on cultural capital and cultural taste of Croatian youth in the cities on the Adriatic coast (Tonković et al 2020). It also has to be added that in Croatia, policies regarding access to culture remain mostly implicit and revolve around traditional models connected to instruments dating back to socialism; while on the other selected cultural organisations develop instruments for fostering it where European projects have an influence (Primorac et al 2017). Recently presented data on the cultural consumption and participation in culture point to conclusion that in Croatia, the level of participation in culture is lower than European average, and especially in comparison to 'more developed countries' as Tonković (2022: 251) concludes. She also notes that Croatia 'belongs to those countries in which the differences in level of cultural consumption and participation are very stark so that we can even speak about forms of social exclusion. Therefore, it would be beneficial to envisage active measures of cultural policy for development of cultural participation and consumption of citizens from less developed regions and rural regions as well as among fragile groups such as retired persons and persons of lower socioeconomic status' (Tonković, 2022: 251).

There are no strategies on the national level or on local levels in relation to cultural participation and consumption, but there are several programmes that are oriented towards enhancing cultural participation (see also chapters 5.1. and 5.2). One example started in 2012, when the Ministry of Culture, in association with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, started a pilot programme "Backpack (full) of Culture / Ruksak (pun) kulture", with the aim of bringing artists and cultural events directly to kindergartens, primary and high schools. The pilot programme was successful, and in October 2013 the Ministry of Culture issued a public call for expression of interest for artists, arts organisations and cultural NGOs to participate in this programme. The Ministry of Culture and Media provides financing for the selected programmes, while the Ministry of Science and Education was responsible for providing the network of schools that hosted the selected programmes. The Programme was oriented to children and youth from 3-18 years of age, while the artistic range of the programmes was diverse – from performing arts, fine arts, film, cultural heritage to literature, and in particular programmes oriented to the promotion of reading. In 2019 the number of submitted and accepted applications rose (184 and 66 respectively), and 6 369 children participated in the programme. Thus, the implementation of the programme resulted in a high number of quality artistic programmes distributed to a large number of pupils and students throughout Croatia, contributing to the decentralisation of culture and providing better access to

culture for children and youth. Additionally, in 2018, a special pilot programme for the islands called 'The Island Backpack' was created that resulted in the execution of 43 programmes and workshops on a number of Croatian islands where more than 600 children participated. The programme 'Backpack (full) of Culture' continues on a yearly basis and in 2022 the Ministry supported 71 different programmes - 13 music programs, 12 theatre programs, 11 visual arts programs, 9 museum and cultural heritage programs, 7 film programs, also 7 dance programs, 5 book and 3 interdisciplinary programs, and finally 4 art academy programs were co-financed. After being tested as a pilot programme in 2017, in 2019 the Ministry of Culture and Media developed a permanent public Call for programmes in Audience Development. The aim of the programme is to create long-term processes that will raise the level of active audience participation in culture and art, make them more accessible, while also recognizing the diversity of audience needs, and their social and economic experiences. In 2022 it received 555 applications, out of which 93 programs were approved in the following categories: theatre (15 programs); film (13 programs); dance (11 programs); book (12 programs); music (13 programs); visual arts (9 programs); museums and cultural heritage (8 programs); interdisciplinary programs (12 programs). The total available funding for the programme in 2022 was 2 177 484 HRK (289 002 EUR). This is slight increase in the number of programmes and funding in comparison to 2020 when the 87 programs were supported with 2mil of kuna (265 446 EUR) funding provided. In addition, The National Strategy for Promotion of Reading is been implemented (see chapter 3.5.2) to focus on better access to books, development of reading and literacy activities etc. In 2019 the network of mobile libraries 'Bibliobus' celebrated fifty years in operation in the Republic of Croatia. This led to establishing the 9th of June as a Day of Croatian Bibliobuses in order to highlight the importance that mobile libraries have for the cultural life throughout the country as many towns still do not have local libraries. 12 counties do not yet have bibliobuses and mobile libraries currently provide services in only 9 counties and a number of these bibliobuses need to be renewed or replaced due to wear-and-tear. The Ministry informed that 12 new bibliobuses are being purchased through the European Social Fund project in the total amount of 35million kuna (4 645 298 EUR).

Enhancing cultural participation in audiovisual activities is provided by the National Audiovisual Programme for digitalisation of cinemas throughout Croatia (see chapter 2.4). An additional feature of the measure was the establishment of the new Croatian Network of Independent Cinemas - 'Kino mreža' in 2014, which has grown to more than fifty members. However, the number of specialised cinématèques is minimal - 'Kino "Tuškanac"' and Kino "Kinoteka" in Zagreb, Kinoteka "Zlatna vrata" in Split and Art kino Croatia in Rijeka offer film programmes with special focus on audiovisual heritage. The first cinema specialised for documentary films in the region of South-eastern Europe opened in Zagreb in June 2009 - Dokukino, but currently it is based only as a programme in various different venues. New programmes in this area are being developed through funding from the EU programmes that encourage cultural participation of older populations and youth (see chapter 2.6).

Special categories of the population (school children, people with disabilities and senior citizens) pay only 50% of the full ticket price for some events. Rebates for university students are also available from selected theatres, museums, etc. There are also reduced cards or tickets available such as the "Zagreb ticket" or "Dubrovnik card" which can be used to buy cheaper tickets for various cultural events, but which are primarily oriented towards tourists.

6.2. Trends and figures in cultural participation

A total of 140 theatres operated from 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. A number of professional theatres have permanent venues at their disposal, either in-house or located somewhere else. Therefore, along with 80

professional theatres, there were 12 operating permanent venues. In addition, there were 27 professional children's theatres out of which 7 puppet theatres. A total of 33 amateurs' theatres operated in the 2021/2022 season (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022d).

As noted by the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022d), after an extremely difficult 2020/2021 theatre season due to the epidemiological measures introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19, a better season for performing arts followed in terms of the number of plays performed and the number of visitors. Professional theatres for all ages performed 41% more plays in Croatia and abroad, and had 116% more visitors than in the previous season. 'A total of 9 243 plays were performed, which is 73% more than in the previous season. The plays in the Republic of Croatia and abroad were attended by 1 149 037 visitors, which is an increase of 160% compared to the 2020/2021 season. A total of 1 311 titles were performed in all theatres. Out of that, 830 titles, or 63%, were created by domestic authors' (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022d).

There is also a noticeable recovery of the concert season for professional ensembles, orchestras and choirs: compared to the 2020/2021 season, the number of performed concerts increased by 31% and their attendance by 181%. A total of 573 concerts, performances and festivities were performed, which were attended by 151 698 visitors. It has to be noted that in the 2021/2022 season, 33 professional orchestras and ensembles operated, out of which 6 were symphony and large orchestras, 6 chamber orchestras and 21 chamber ensembles. The professional choir performed 24 concerts, that is, two concerts more than in the previous season. They were attended by 7 650 visitors, that is, 226% more than in the 2020/2021 season. Taking also the attendance to the shows of LADO – National Folk Dance Ensemble of Croatia, this amounted to more than 208 thousands visitors to professional orchestras, ensembles and choirs shows. The Table 4 shows also that in 2021 the situation still differs within subsectors and that the pandemic has taken its toll in that year still.

Table 4: Attendance data for specific cultural fields (in thousands), 1983-2021

Year	Professional theatres*	Cinemas	Museums and museum collections	Professional children's theatres*	Professional orchestras, ensembles and choirs*
1983	1 101	21 324	N/A	N/A	N/A
1994	643	4 562	580	N/A	N/A
1997	705	3 233	1 129	N/A	N/A
2000	658	2 743	1 073	N/A	N/A
2002	879	2 766	1 074	426	279
2003	1 024	2 343	1 268	429	286
2004	1 043	2 976	N/A	436	374
2005	952	2 174	N/A	374	409
2006	941	2 669	1 674	370	378
2007	959	2 483	N/A	419	443
2008	1 067	3 283	N/A	404	318
2009	1 033	3 524	2 191	379	323
2010	1 184	3 355	N/A	387	320
2011	1 261	3 558	N/A	399	290
2012	1 211	4 064	2 284	399	294
2013	1 161	4 156	N/A	569	332
2014	1 374	4 079	N/A	386	356
2015	1 245	4 347	2 710	477	270
2016	1 690	4 532	N/A	487	317
2017	1 540	4 814	N/A	555	380
2018	1 435	4 859	2 912	570	469

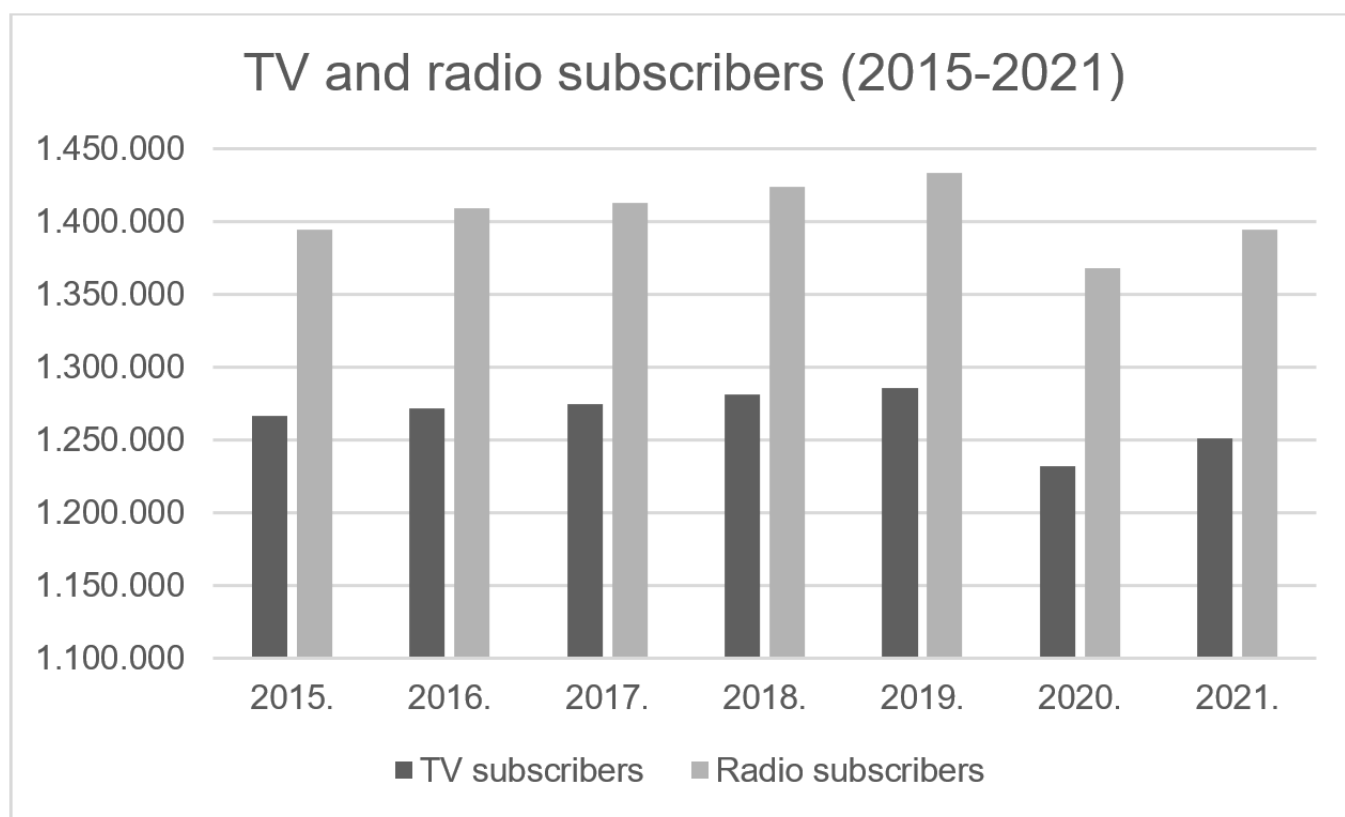
2019	1 485	5 026	N/A	557	297
2020	917	1 503	N/A	394	175
2021	729	2 466	1 320	354	208

Source: Republic of Croatia – Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Yearbooks for noted years and from ‘First Releases’ of ‘Cinematography’, ‘Artistic production and live performances’ and ‘Museums, galleries and collections’ (see also Sources and links).

Note: Table is compiled from four different Tables (Culture and Arts, Museums and Museum Collections, Professional Children's Theatres, and Professional Orchestras, Ensembles and Choirs) given in the section "Culture, Arts and Sport" in all yearbooks and ‘First release’ data collections(see also Sources and links).

* The data provided concerns seasons not years, thus data for 2002 reflects the season 2001/2002.

Figure 3: Television and radio subscribers in Croatia (2015-2021).



Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022) Culture. Statistics in Line.

There have not been any representative surveys taken in recent years on receptive or on active participation. In addition, there are no special surveys monitoring the participation of national minority groups or immigrant groups in cultural life or specific research on the composition of audiences at multicultural or other type of festivals.

6.3. Trends and figures in household expenditure

According to the data of the the personal expenditure for "Recreation and Culture" in December 2022 represented 5.27% of the total household expenditure. This data shows a further decrease during the last decade, as in comparison to e.g.2017 when it represented 5.5%, while in 2014 it represented 6% of total household expenditure. In 2011, it represented 5.3%, in 2010 it was 5.6%, and it in 2009 it amounted to 5.99% (see sources in Compendium 2020 report, Primorac (2020)).

Data available by Eurostat (as presented in Tonković (2022)) shows the structure of the personal expenditure in culture of Croatia in comparison with the EU28 average as it can be seen from the Table 5. It shows similarities in the categories of personal expenditure in books and magazines and attendance of cultural content, but large disparities in the percentage of personal expenditure in TV subscriptions, equipment and artistic expression. In order to understand these disparities one should include the data on the purchasing power parities (PPP). According to Tonković (2022: 248), when one compares the data on cultural expenditure with the purchasing power standards, one can notice that Croatia belongs to countries with below average levels of expenditure and purchasing power, which makes it most similar to Slovakia and Poland, and below EU28 average in 2015, when the last comparative data by Eurostat was collected.

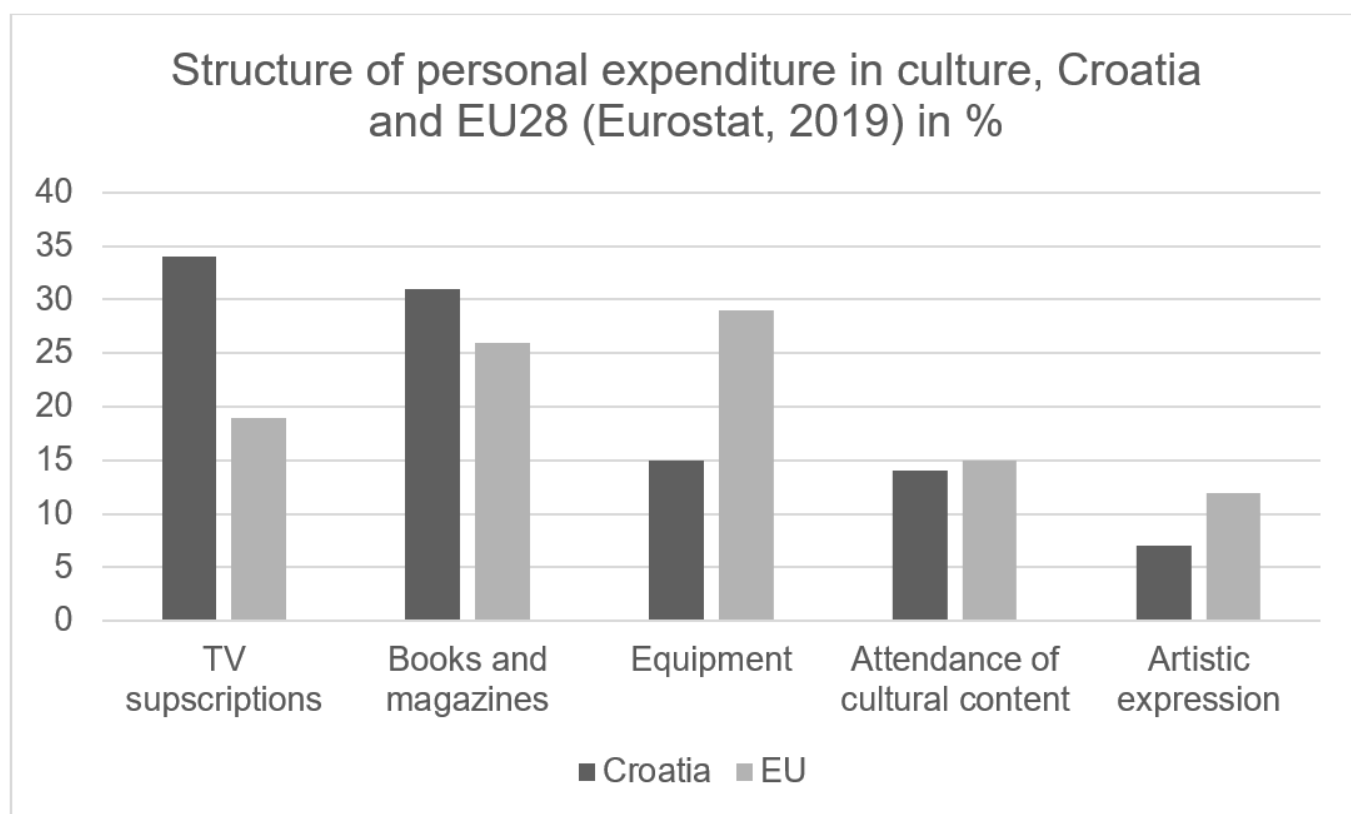


Table 5: Structure of personal expenditure in Culture, Croatia and EU28 comparison, data by Eurostat (2019) as presented in Tonković (2022: 249).

In continuation, we present the latest data available by Croatian Bureau of Statistics on the distribution of consumption expenditures for 'recreation and culture' in 2019 according to the detailed subcategories.

Table 6: Distribution of consumption expenditures, 2019, per 10 000

Expenditure group	Imputed rent included	Imputed rent excluded
9. RECREATION AND CULTURE (TOTAL)	426	532
9.1. Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment	48	60
9.1.1. Equipment for receiving, recording and reproduction of sound and picture	(23)	(36)
9.1.2. Photographic and cinematographic equipment and optical instruments	-	-
9.1.3. Information processing equipment	20	25
9.1.4. Recording media	-	-
9.1.5. Repair of audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment	-	-
9.2. Other durables for recreation and culture	-	-
9.3. Other recreational equipment, gardens and pets	103	129
9.3.1. Games, toys, hobbies	(14)	(18)
9.3.2. Equipment for sport, camping and open-air recreation	(8)	(10)
9.3.3. Gardens, plants and flowers	37	46
9.3.4. Pets, pet foods and related products	33	42
9.3.5. Veterinary and other services	(10)	(13)
9.4. Recreational and cultural services	180	225
9.4.1. Recreational and sporting services	(46)	(57)
9.4.2. Cultural services	123	154
9.4.3. Games of chance	(11)	(14)
9.5. Newspapers, books and stationery	60	75
9.5.1. Books	32	40
9.5.2. Newspapers and magazines	16	19
9.5.3. Miscellaneous printed matter	(0)	(0)
9.5.4. Stationery and drawing materials	12	15
9.6. Package holidays	(28)	(35)

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Results of Households Budget Survey, 2019. Statistical Reports. Zagreb: Croatian Bureau of Statistics.

6.4. Culture and civil society

The relationship between culture and civil society in Croatia has to be viewed on several levels: the first refers to the infrastructure of cultural and educational centres throughout the country and its changing role; the second is related to the long tradition of amateur arts and folk culture; the third refers to the impact that civil society organisations in contemporary arts and culture have (including the role of professional cultural organisations), and finally the role that the Kultura nova Foundation has in their development and the development of civil society in culture in general.

Community (cultural and educational) centres are mostly established by local authorities or run by NGOs on the

local (city or municipal) level. There are a growing number of such centres (especially in small cities) involved in different aspects of cultural life, from traditional amateur arts activities to new media. A Network of the open community learning centres (*Zajednica pučkih otvorenih učilišta / Association of Community Centres*) consists of community cultural and educational centres offering educational programmes for children, youth or adults and cultural programmes. All of these centres are mostly funded by local authorities but there is no data available on the state level that would give some indication of their penetration, impact and overall budgets. In small towns, these centres are very important as sometimes they are the only host of cultural activities. Unfortunately, no new overall data on these centres exists, and the latest data published by the Central Bureau of Statistics relates to 2008/2009. In that season there were 217 institutions that belonged either to public open universities, houses of culture, cultural centres or to similar types of organisations, and they are spread evenly around the country (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012: 505). In the last couple of years, the role of these centres and the sustainability of their financing are under question, thus creating a number of initiatives for their redefinition (see chapter 2.7). The latest data by the Ministry of Culture and Media shows that in 2021 there are 57 houses of culture and cultural centres in Croatia, while the data for the public open universities are not available within this survey, nor within the latest review of this field (Perišić, 2022).

One of the main characteristics of cultural life in Croatia is a diversified landscape of amateur cultural activities that usually take place in halls and in schools; considered to be the most evenly distributed form of cultural infrastructure in the country. Although the Ministry of Culture and Media considers that local authorities should take responsibility for amateur activities, it nevertheless provides funding for their activities. The reasons for the Ministry's support are: there are hardly any other cultural activities in small towns / villages; the difficult financial situation in many local communities; protection of valuable forms of traditional heritage; and stimulation of awareness about the importance of culture for the identity and revitalisation of towns and regions. The Croatian Culture Assembly (*Hrvatski sabor kulture*) has its roots in the hundred-year-old tradition of amateur cultural and artistic activities and its mission is oriented to the support and development of amateur cultural and artistic activities. It unites 11 county associations, and it comprises of 1 040 NGOs with 2 366 different performing groups (drama, painting and drawing, literary, dance, ethno, majorette groups, orchestras, vocal and choir groups) with more than 80 000 members. It is a member of CISM, AITA, AMATEO, etc. In 2018 and 2019, Croatian Culture Assembly received the yearly support of 700 000 HRK (92 905 EUR), while the support for the activities in cultural and artistic amateurism through the yearly public calls of the Ministry of Culture and Media was around 6.2million kuna (822 881 EUR) (Jelavić, 2022: 232).

The *Law on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Assets* (Article 9), under immaterial cultural heritage, stipulates the special status of folk activities. Two examples of a long tradition of activities in folk and traditional culture have to be mentioned, together with one research institution:

- The [National Folk Dance Ensemble of Croatia "Lado"](#) was founded in 1949 in Zagreb as a professional national ensemble, with the aim of researching, artistically interpreting and presenting on stage the rich tradition of Croatian music and dance; and
- The International Folklore Festival Zagreb that celebrated over 50 years of continuous activities.
- The [Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Culture](#) is a scientific institution that among its other activities regularly publishes research on folklore and traditional culture in Croatia.

The Kultura nova Foundation was established by The *Law on the Kultura nova Foundation* in 2011 with the purpose of promoting and developing civil society in the Republic of Croatia in the fields of contemporary arts

and culture. The foundation is in full operation since December 2012. Since then it has supported a number of organisations and programmes through programme areas dedicated to the support for organisations, conception and preparation of new projects, development of cooperation platforms in the Republic of Croatia and development of cooperation platforms in Southeastern Europe. The funding for the Kultura nova Foundation is obtained partly through the Lottery Fund, donations and other sources according to the Law. The Foundation is very active in different activities related to the redefinition of existing cultural centres and building of new types of socio-cultural centres based on participatory governance – see chapter 2.7 for more information. [Clubture Network](#) is an important actor on the national, regional and international independent cultural scene and was a key lobbyist for the establishment of the Kultura nova Foundation. Established in 2002 as a platform of exchange, it continually develops programmes that are based on direct collaboration among independent cultural organisations (associations, artistic organisations and informal initiatives). is also an important factor as it provides support for NGOs in arts and culture as a part of support of the overall civil society sector in Croatia.

7. Financing and support

7.1. Public funding

7.1.1. INDICATORS

According to data gathered from the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia (2022), the aggregated indicators for culture in 2021 were the following:

Indicator 1: Public culture expenditure at all levels of government was 3 121 212 588 HRK (414 256 100 EUR).

Indicator 2: N/A

Indicator 3: The share of cultural expenditure of the total public expenditure in 2021 was 1,47%, while in the previous year it amounted to 1,61%.

Taking into account the data previously provided by the Ministry and available in Compendium reports, the third indicator on the share of cultural expenditure of the total public expenditure showed an increase in the period from 2014-2019, from 1.31% in 2014 to 1.82% in 2019. (Source: Ministry of Culture and Media, Strategic Planning and Analytics Sector, Directorate for Cultural and Artistic Development). However, during the pandemic years, the share of the cultural expenditure in the total public expenditure lowered further on – from 1.82% in 2019, to 1.61% in 2020 and 1,47 in 2021.

7.1.2. EXPENDITURE ON GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Indicators presented in the previous chapter corroborate previously presented data available in the Compendium 2016 report (Primorac and Obuljen Koržinek 2017) that showed how data on the share of public cultural expenditure by level of government had not changed significantly since 2000. From 1999-2010, the share of expenditure of the Ministry of Culture increased (from 38% to 43%), but since 2011, it showed a fall in the percentage of funding (41% in 2011 to 35% in 2014). Looking at the data for 2019, the share of the state level funding increased again to 42% from 35% in 2014, as presented in Compendium 2020 report (Primorac, 2020), although one has to take into account that since 2018 cultural expenditure at the state level is reduced by the amount that the City of Zagreb is financing the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb. In addition, the Compendium 2016 report (Primorac and Obuljen Koržinek 2017) showed that the funding by municipalities and towns showed an increase in the period 2011-2014, while the allocation of the City of Zagreb stagnated in 2013 and 2014. It can be highlighted that the data shows that the local level funding is important for the cultural sector in Croatia, where the City of Zagreb plays an important role. In comparison to 2020, the change can be only observed in relation to the percentages of share of funding of counties and city of Zagreb, where the share of funding of counties lowered from 4% to 3%, and the City of Zagreb has risen from 15% to 16%.

Table 6: Public cultural expenditure by level of government, 2021.

Level of government	Total expenditure in HRK	Total expenditure in EUR*	% share of total
State level ^{1 2}	1 318 428 260	174.985.501	42%
Regional and local level	1 802 784 329	239.270.599	58%

Counties	94 116 153	12.491.360	3%
City of Zagreb	506 575 770	67.234.158	16%
Cities	1 015 181 566	134.737.749	33%
Municipalities	186 910 840	24.807.332	6%
TOTAL	3 121 212 589	414.256.100	100%

Source: Ministry of Culture and Media, Strategic Planning and Analytics Sector, Directorate for Cultural and Artistic Development.

Notes:

¹Cultural expenditure at the state level refers to the budget of the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia.

²Cultural expenditure at the state level is reduced by the amount that the City of Zagreb is financing the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb (since 2018).

7.1.3. EXPENDITURE PER SECTOR

Table 7: Direct state cultural expenditure and transfers (central level): by sector, 2022, in 1 000 of HRK

Field/Domain/Sub-domain	TOTAL in 1 000 (HRK)	In 1 000 (EUR)	in %
I. Cultural Heritage	547 061	72 607	40.11
<i>Cultural heritage protection, preservation etc</i>	274 129	36 383	20.10
<i>Museums</i>	174 445	23 153	12.79
<i>Archives</i>	98 487	13 071	7.22
II. Performing Arts	155 064	20 580	11.37
III. Audiovisual and Multimedia	185 091	24 565	13.57
IV. Interdisciplinary	476 785	63 280	34.95
TOTAL	1 364 001	181 034	100.0

Source: Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, Strategic Planning and Analytics Sector, Directorate for Cultural and Artistic Development.

7.2. Support programmes

7.2.1. STRATEGIES, PROGRAMMES AND OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT

On the state level, cultural creativity is supported - both directly and indirectly:

- Support from the budget through annual public calls in all fields of culture (theatre, film, publishing, music etc.) that encompass all the basic cultural activities (creativity, reproduction, transmission etc.) as well as supplementary cultural activities (support for cultural management education, information technology support etc.) as well as cultural infrastructure;
- direct support for cultural institutions;
- grants that directly support artistic creativity (e.g. writing, visual arts);
- payment of retirement and health contributions for independent artists; and
- ad hoc support from the Ministry's reserve of budgetary funds for projects that have already ensured some of the above-mentioned types of support, or have appeared as new projects outside the competition procedure.

A similar type of support is provided on the local level: that is, through yearly public calls for public needs in culture of different towns and counties, which are also oriented to support all the types of cultural activities in all fields of culture, as well as through direct support for cultural institutions that are in the remit of the local administrations. The level of support varies substantially from city to city.

Support for audio-visual activities is provided through yearly public calls published by the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) dedicated to supporting film production, co-production activities, and complimentary activities (festivals, publications and other cinema-related activities), including support for film artists/workers.

In 2020 special measures were created to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts and cultural sector. They included measures from those related to the postponement of contracted programmes of public needs in culture and the conditions of payment for approved programmes in special circumstances; suspension of plans to revise freelance artists' payment of contributions for pension and health insurance from the state budget for a period of six months, to the creation of a special fund for independent professionals who do not have a regulated status, are not in the register of taxpayers, that do not pay contributions or have not acquired the right to pay contributions from the state budget. The latter measure was created in order to complement the measure for job preservation implemented by the Croatian Employment Bureau that did not include these professions. In 2020, this measure entailed support for 1 642 independent artists and independent professionals in the amount of 15 815 000 HRK (2 099 011 EUR) while in 2021 this support covered 1 591 artists in the amount of 12 728 000 HRK (1 689 295 EUR). The second package of measures included also the additional support for production of debut fiction features and fiction features that could not be completed due to the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy in 2020 in the amount of 5mil kuna (666 666 EUR). This was also supplemented by the support for additional filming expenses due to exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g.in 2020 this amounted to 1 460 852 HRK (194 780 EUR) while in 2021 it was 3647 968 HRK (486 395 EUR) (HAVC, 2021). The loan guarantee programme for entrepreneurs (SMEs) active in the field of culture and creative industries, and adjustments to the regular Call for submitting programmes of public needs in culture to meet the needs of the sector. The third package of measures by the government included the public call for partial compensation of performance costs in theatre, dance and music (classical and jazz music); the public call for digital adjustment programmes and the creation of new cultural and educational content to admit applicants across all cultural disciplines (audiovisual production, performing arts, literature and translation, visual arts), which in 2020 amounted to 8 189 193 HRK (1 086 892 EUR), while in 2021 it was 7 935 000 HRK (1 053 155 EUR). The Croatian Musicians Union has published a Call for proposals for concert programmes under the Agreement with the Ministry (in 2020 the funding was five while in 2021 it amounted to 7 mil.kuna). The total list with a description of the measures in English is available at the [website of the Ministry](#).

7.2.2. ARTIST'S FUNDS

The Ministry of Culture and Media publishes yearly calls for the direct support for literary creativity in the form of stipends and it provides funding for grants as financial stimulation for lauded works of literature. It also secures funding so that the public lending rights for authors (writers, illustrators and translators) can be met on a yearly basis. The public lending rights for writers, illustrators and translators' remuneration is managed though the HDS-ZAMP service on the basis of the data provided by the National and University Library (NSK). After being a pilot project In 2018 the project for supporting visual arts creativity was established, and since then it provides grants for visual artists on a yearly basis, while the new measure for dancers has been established (see chapter 3.3). In the field of music, guest recitals held in smaller communities are additionally financed - the resources are

allocated to musicians through a general annual competition. Around 200 recitals are financed in this way every year, and each guest recital must include at least one work by a living Croatian composer.

HDS-ZAMP (Croatian Composers' Society, Collecting Society) provides support through the Fund for Independent Music Projects that aims to enable a richer offer of cultural (primarily musical) content for Croatian citizens; and to provide additional funding for Croatian composers and other music professionals to get backing for their artistic projects. The measure is developed through five different contests: BTL Contest - Support for projects of popular music funded through a blank tape levy fund; 'Tradicional' Contest - support for traditional music events and music creation through funds from the fees collected for traditional music; International Contest - Supporting activities of Croatian composers and music publishers, members of HDS, on the international music scene or in the market; "Rudolf and Margita Matz" Fund - stimulation of the creation of young composers from the funds of Rudolf and Margita Matz; and the ElectroCro Contest - Support of music events, projects and music creation in the area of electronic club music, and since 2021 the new measure 'Contemporanea' for festivals of contemporary classical music was introduced. Around 100 projects are funded yearly in different music areas, from electro to traditional music genres.

7.2.3. GRANTS, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS

Every year the Ministry of Culture and Media organises special competitions to support artistic creativity. A special prize (*Marin Držić Prize*) to stimulate contemporary playwriting is awarded through a public competition. In addition to a monetary prize, the Croatian national theatre stages the premiere of the prize-winning play. There is also a national prize to support modern Croatian composers to write music, but in this case the prize-winning works are not given their first public performance.

The "Vladimir Nazor" Prize, the most important national award established in 1991, is a monetary grant given every year for achievements of special value in all fields of culture as well as to artists for their life's work. Although it is a state prize given by the Ministry of Culture and Media, the decisions about the winners are taken by independently chosen experts and renowned artists from the different fields represented. The Ministry of Culture and Media also gives awards for the protection of heritage, "Vicko Andrić", and the protection of nature, "Ivo Horvat", and the award "Ico Velikanović" for literary translations.

The central professional art and culture associations (in the field of literature, theatre, film etc.) also give a number of awards. These awards evaluate artistic achievements, and can be given in recognition of the work of an individual, group or institution.

Special institutions or cultural events and festivals give prizes. There are numerous examples such as the "Orlando" Award for the best performance at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, the "Golden Arena" Award at the Pula Film Festival and many others.

The President of the Republic of Croatia awards the Medal of the Republic of Croatia for special achievements in the cultural field - "Red Danice hrvatske - Marko Marulić".

The total number of awards and prizes in the cultural sector is large. For example, 31 major awards are granted in the field of professional music. Nevertheless, only some of them are monetary. Some of these are public awards while some are granted by professional associations. Finally, companies such as publishing houses also give prizes in the form of financial support, usually in literature (i.e. VBZ award, T-portal award, and similar).

The Ministry of Culture and Media does not grant educational scholarships. The Ministry of Science and Education is responsible for granting scholarships.

The website on Croatian culture Culturenet.hr provides updated information on current major cultural awards and bursaries, and offers a database on past events and other relevant information.

7.2.4. SUPPORT TO PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS' ASSOCIATIONS OR UNIONS

The Ministry of Culture and Media provides support for the activities of artists' associations or unions in the form of grants and subsidies for their regular activities. The Ministry also approves grants for individual members of these associations or unions to spend time at special artists' centres and various other forms of cooperation (within Croatia and internationally).

The support for professional associations in the audio-visual field is provided through the yearly calls for complimentary activities published by the Croatian Audiovisual Centre.

There have not been significant changes in recent years.

7.3. Private funding

It is hard to assess the level of sponsorship support and donations as there is no systematic evaluation on this type of support in Croatia. The Ministry of Culture and Media only has information on the decisions and certificates issued concerning tax relief for companies that requested these certificates (see chapter 4.1.4). However, no information on the amount of these sponsorships or donations is available.

It has to be noted that in a number of cases the support for artistic and cultural events is provided through compensation in goods and services rather than monetary support (see chapter 1.3.3).

There are no studies or surveys regarding private funding for culture and thus there are no clear indicators in this area.

Expert Authors

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Primorac collaborated on a number of research projects in Croatia and abroad (e.g. Jean Monnet project CULPOL, 'Access to culture. Policy analysis' by the EU Program Culture, COST Network 'Dynamics of Virtual Work', FP7 project MEDIADDEM, cultural policy expertise for the European Parliament, a short term consultancy in cultural policy issues for the World Bank). Since 2008 she is a co-author of the Croatian country profile for the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends. Since 2015, she is the member of the Presidency of the Croatian Sociological Association (HSD) and a member of the editorial board of *Revija za sociologiju/Sociological Review*.

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In 2001, the Croatian profile was first prepared by a research team including Sanjin Dragojević, Pavle Schramadei and Nina Obuljen, headed by Vjeran Katunarić. Since 2003, revisions and updates have been prepared by Nina Obuljen. In November 2008, Jaka Primorac and Nada Švob-Đokić joined the team. In 2016, the profile was updated by Obuljen and Primorac.