



## Country profile

### Latvia

**Last profile update:** September 2019 by Baiba Tjarve

This profile was prepared and updated by **Baiba Tjarve** (Latvian Academy of Culture).

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# Latvia<sup>1</sup>

<b>1. Cultural policy system</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Objectives, main features and background	4
1.2 Domestic governance system	6
1.3 Cultural institutions	10
1.4 International cooperation	13
<b>2. Current cultural affairs</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1 Key developments	17
2.2 Cultural rights and ethics	17
2.3 Role of artists and cultural professionals	18
2.4 Digital policy and developments	19
2.5 Cultural diversity	21
2.6 Culture and social inclusion	25
2.7 Societal impacts of arts	27
2.8 Cultural sustainability	28
2.9 Other main cultural policy issues	28
<b>3. Cultural and creative sectors</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1 Heritage	29
3.2 Archives and libraries	30
3.3 Performing arts	31
3.4 Visual arts and crafts	31
3.5 Cultural arts and creative industries	32
<b>4. Law and legislation</b>	<b>37</b>
4.1 General legislation	37
4.2 Legislation on culture	41

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<b>5. Arts and cultural education</b>	<b>46</b>
5.1 Policy and institutional overview	46
5.2 Arts in schools	48
5.3 Higher arts and cultural education	48
5.4 Out-of-school arts and cultural education	49
5.5 Vocational and professional training	49
<b>6. Cultural participation and consumption</b>	<b>51</b>
6.1 Policies and programmes	51
6.2 Trends and figures in cultural participation	52
6.3 Trends and figures in household expenditure	54
6.4 Culture and civil society	56
<b>7. Financing and support</b>	<b>57</b>
7.1 Public funding	57
7.2 Support programmes	62
7.3 Private funding	63
<b>Additional sources</b>	<b>64</b>

# **1. Cultural policy system**

## **1.1 Objectives, main features and background**

### **Objectives**

*The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* have set the following vision:

Latvia – a country with a rich and nourished heritage, a vibrant and diverse cultural life, creative people, creative industries with high export potential, and improving the quality of life for everyone.

To reach this vision, the following priorities have been outlined:

- preservation and development of cultural capital involving community members in cultural processes;
- a creative life-long learning and cultural education system oriented towards labour employment;
- cultural and creative industries with high export potential; and
- creative territories and accessibility of cultural services.

### **Main features**

*The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014 – 2020* use the broad definition of culture that corresponds with the conclusions of the *World Conference on Cultural Policies* (Mexico 1982), the *World Commission on Culture and Development Report* (1995), and the *Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development in Stockholm* (1998). The definition is: "Within a wider sense, aggregate, form and type of all achievements of people and mankind, which pervades any human activity and existence. Culture incorporates socially recognised values, tolerance, external and internal orientation, beliefs, creative spirit and interests of individuals and the society. The language, folklore, customs, rituals, traditions, knowledge and education process, diversity and interest regarding other cultures, as well as contemporary product of creative work are the basis for preservation and development of culture. In a more narrow sense, culture is art, architectural, music, literature expressions and other creative expressions."

The cultural policy document stresses that the development of the society and the state, as well as the quality of life depends on diversity and richness of culture, its accessibility and participation of creative individuals.

Despite the all-embracing definition, the Ministry of Culture mainly takes responsibility for the particular art fields, such as copyright, architecture, libraries, museums, music, fine art, folk art, theatre, literature and books, film arts, cultural education, and the protection of monuments and archives. In recent years, there is a tendency to look at culture in a broader context (development, economy etc.). Moreover, the Ministry of Culture is also responsible for media policy and integration and society (though each area having its own separate policies). At the end of 1990s, the concept of cultural industries appeared first in the studies commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and the concept has been also included in *The Main Cultural Policy Postulates of Latvia* (1995). Later – the

*Cultural Policy Guidelines 2006-2015* declared creative industries as a horizontal dimension that enlarges the scope of art, culture and cultural heritage sectors.

Perception of culture as part of broader development processes, including its role in regional development was also influenced by the necessity to develop new arguments for inclusion culture in international funding schemes, EU Structural Funds being one of the most significant in this respect.

A new mid-term cultural policy document "Creative Latvia" has been elaborated for the period 2014-2020 that corresponds to the main planning documents at national and EU level.

The Latvian cultural policy model is centralised around the Ministry of Culture, which is the main institution formulating and co-ordinating state cultural policy. However, there have been some changes towards decentralisation and involvement of non-governmental organisations and the civil society in the cultural field. The Ministry of Culture has signed several agreements with non-governmental organisations (e.g. The New Theatre Institute of Latvia, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art), delegating a number of specific functions. There are advisory boards or councils in most cultural sectors, which include culture operators, experts and representatives of other ministries, municipalities and non-governmental organisations, who actively participate in the policymaking process.

The economic crisis (2008-2010) has provoked new developments concerning the governance of cultural institutions. On the one hand, decentralisation processes have been speeded up. The Ministry of Culture is willing to hand over responsibility for amateur art, cultural education and some professional art institutions to municipalities. On the other hand, within the state administration there is a tendency towards centralisation e.g., several state agencies that were operating as arm's length bodies (National Film Centre, The State Authority on Museums) have been either integrated into the structure of the Ministry of Culture or transformed into budget institutions losing their autonomy.

The establishment of the State Culture Capital Foundation, which started operating as an arm's length body in 1998, was a major milestone in Latvian cultural policy and changed funding patterns in the cultural sector. The financing of cultural projects, which had previously been the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture was delegated to the Foundation. The budget for most of the national cultural institutions is distributed as subsidies from the Ministry of Culture.

## **Background**

During the 20th century, Latvia experienced several drastic metamorphoses. These include the creation of an independent state in 1918, two consecutive occupations during the Second World War and the regaining of independence in 1990.

During the first half of the 1990s, Latvia went through a transition period from a totalitarian to a democratic society that brought forth crucial social, political, and economic changes. These changes resulted in the introduction of democratic processes, administrative reforms, liberalisation of the economy and introduction of a free market, stabilisation of the new political and economic institutions through privatisation of cultural enterprises, decentralisation of cultural processes and introduction of new legislation.

Latvia became a member of UNESCO in 1991, joined the *European Cultural Convention* of the Council of Europe in 1992 and became a signatory to the *Berne Convention* in 1995. *The Memorandum of Co-operation* between Latvia and UNESCO was signed in 1998.

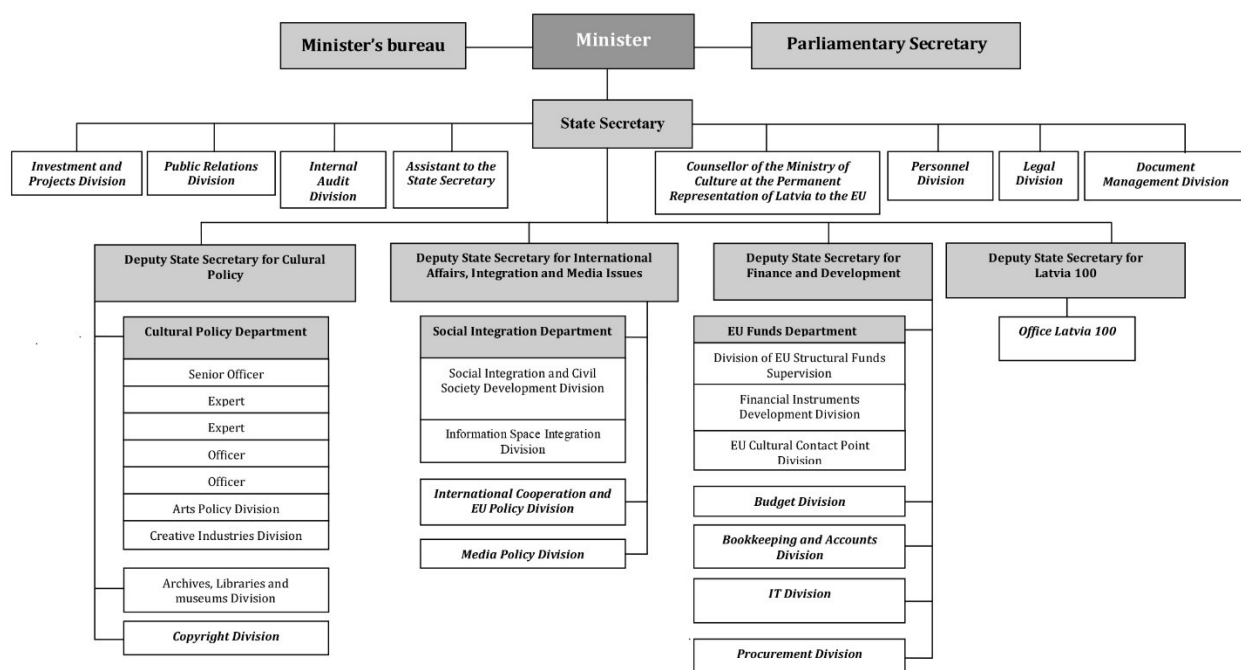
Latvia submitted its application on accession to the European Union in 1995. This marked the beginning of considerable work to implement the necessary procedures and laws as part of the accession process. In 2004, Latvia became a member state of the EU.

The first cultural policy document *The Main Cultural Policy Postulates of Latvia* (1995) outlined the most important tasks of state cultural policy for the first 10 years after regaining Latvian independence, i.e. not to interfere with the regulation of creative process, simultaneously ensuring favourable conditions and necessary resources for the development of cultural process and cultivation of creative initiative.

## 1.2 Domestic governance system

### 1.2.1 Organisational organigram

Organisational structure of the Ministry of Culture (2018)



### 1.2.2 National authorities

The institutions that set the general policy guidelines, legislation and budget of the Republic of Latvia are: the Saeima (Parliament, 100 members voted every four years) and the Cabinet of Ministers (highest executive body of the country, formed by a Prime Minister invited by the State President). In 2019, there were 13 Ministries and 13 Ministers respectively in Latvia. As a result of reorganisation,

one ministry in 2011 has been closed down: the functions of the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government have been taken over by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Welfare.

Cultural policy in Latvia is the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, which organises and coordinates state culture policy, social integration policy and media policy. In addition, the Ministry is responsible for the development of cultural education in the country, including vocational education (music and art schools) and higher education in the field of art, culture and music.

The Ministry co-operates with municipalities and with non-governmental bodies, such as consultative councils, creative unions, foundations etc. The Ministry of Culture and municipalities share responsibility for co-operation programmes and financing in the cultural field in Latvia. The Ministry of Culture plays the most important role in the development of cultural policy and financing national art and culture institutions, and particularly taking responsibility about professional art.

The Ministry of Culture has the following areas of responsibility: copyrights and neighbouring rights, libraries, museums, music, fine art, folk art and intangible cultural heritage, theatre, literature, film art, cultural education, protection of monuments, archives, architecture, design, creative industries and dance. Since 2011, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for integration and the representative of the Ministry is included in the Council of the Social Integration Foundation. In 2015, the Ministry of Culture has established the Media Policy Unit undertaking the development of the media policy. The Ministry of Culture is also responsible for the operation of institutions and organisations in each of the respective sectors.

The Ministry has numerous subordinate institutions that implement cultural policy in certain sectors, such as: The National Archives of Latvia; the National cultural heritage administration; The National Film Centre of Latvia; The National Centre for Culture of Latvia; The Centre for Culture Information Systems.

The Ministry of Culture is directly financing a majority of national institutions in the field of culture, arts and cultural education. Meanwhile, cultural projects are funded by the State Culture Capital Foundation.

The establishment of the State Culture Capital Foundation, which started operating as an arm's length body in 1998, was a major milestone in Latvian cultural policy and completely changed funding patterns in the cultural sector. The financing of cultural projects which had previously been the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture was delegated to the CCF.

The projects submitted for funding to the CCF are evaluated by expert bodies, which report to the Council of the CCF. These bodies also monitor how the allocated grants are utilised. There are seven experts in each of nine cultural sectors, who are replaced every 2 years. The experts are nominated by governmental and non-governmental cultural organisations (5 experts) and the Minister of Culture (2 experts).

The goal of the CCF is to provide financial support and promote balanced development of creative work in all sectors of culture and art and to encourage the preservation of cultural heritage. It also

facilitates the development of international relations and promotes Latvian art and culture worldwide. Until 2003, the CCF was financed from the excise tax imposed on alcohol (3%) and tobacco products (3%), as well as gambling and lottery tax. In 2003, the government decided to change how the CCF is funded and since 2004, it is funded directly by the Ministry of Culture. It is planned to return to the previous funding model from 2022 onwards.

The CCF announces project competitions several times a year in nine fields – literature; music and dance; theatre; cinematography; visual arts and photography; cultural heritage; traditional culture; design and architecture; and interdisciplinary projects.

There also is a *Travel Grant Support Programme* that enables individuals and groups to participate in short-term scientific, creative and study programmes abroad. *The Lifelong Scholarship Programme* of the CCF supports outstanding individuals in the cultural field.

### **Councils and advisory boards**

The National Board of Culture is the most important advisory body to the Ministry of Culture. Its aim is to enhance balanced development of different cultural sectors.

In relation to policymaking and implementation, the Ministry of Culture must consult with non-governmental organisations to improve social dialogue. It carries out this role via boards and working groups; the boards have consultative functions and the working groups are created to solve specific tasks during the specified period of time.

Advisory councils to the Ministry of Culture include the Council of Literature and Publishing (since 2003); Latvian Music Council (2002); National Council of Theatres (2000); Latvian Film Council (2004); Visual Arts Council (2001); National Council of Museums (1998); National Library Council (1998); National Architecture Council (2009); the Council of Archives (2011), Dance Council (2013) and the Council of Digital Cultural Heritage. In addition, there are councils operating in the fields of national identity and integration (established in 2012), Roma integration (2012), integration of third country nationals (2013) and a committee of representatives of the minority NGOs. The Ministry of Economics established the Design Council in 2008, which currently operates at the Ministry of Culture. The Consultative Council for Creative Industries was established in 2011 (and re-established in 2014), but ceased to exist.

The Ministry of Culture is consulting with the associations of cultural operators on a regular basis. This dialogue intensified during the period of the economic crisis, and since then cultural operators have established several umbrella organisations. The *Time for Culture* association (2010), the *Association of Contemporary Culture NGOs* (2007) and the *Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia* established the *Culture Alliance* in 2009. In 2012, they signed a Memorandum with the Ministry of Culture about regular cooperation in cultural policy development and monitoring. This initiative was a unique model of direct participation by the non-governmental sector in public cultural policy development. Currently, three representatives of the *Culture Alliance* have been included in the National Board of Culture.



### 1.2.3 Regional authorities

According to its Constitution (*Satversme*) Latvia is a unitary state, made up of four regions (Vidzeme, Latgale, Kurzeme and Zemgale), which are not administrative territories. Therefore, in Latvia there is no administrative division similar to federal states in the EU.

According to the *Regional Development Law* (2002) 5 administrative units, one per each of 5 Planning regions, have been established. The Planning regions ensure the planning and co-ordination of regional development and co-operation between local government and other state administrative institutions. The Planning regions have taken over the coordination functions in the field of culture, thus substituting 28 regional cultural experts previously employed by the Ministry of Culture and executing the task of state cultural policy planning on a regional level. In this respect, the Ministry of Culture is collaborating with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

### 1.2.4 Local authorities

At the end of 2008, the regional reform was finally adopted by the Parliament. Previously, Latvia had numerous small municipalities operating on two territorial levels of local administration. In 2008, there were 525 local governments operating at local or first territorial level (including 52 towns and 7 cities; 36 amalgamated local municipalities; 430 parishes), and 26 counties operating at regional or second territorial level. The aim of the reform that started 1992 was to reduce the number of administrative levels and to increase the capacity of local administrative units.

Since July 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, there are 110 local governments (counties) and 9 republican cities, instead of more than 500 administrative units.

By the end of the 2019, a new reform is to be presented to the Parliament with an aim to reduce the number of administrative units and to enable 36 municipalities to provide all necessary autonomous functions.

*The Law on Local Governments* (1994) defines the division of labour and responsibilities between the state and local authorities in providing services, including those in the cultural field. Section 15 of the *Law on Local Governments* defines the autonomous functions of local governments including the following: "to maintain culture and facilitate the safeguarding of traditional cultural values and the development of creative folk activity (organisational and financial assistance to cultural institutions and events, support for the preservation of cultural monuments, and others)".

Decentralisation in the field of culture is connected to the long and complicated process of regional administrative reform that was completed in 2009. Gradually, municipalities are developing their own cultural policies and are becoming more independent regarding the content and character of cultural life in the regions.

### 1.2.5 Main non-governmental actors

See chapter 1.2.2. about the role of the non-governmental actors in the policy development and distribution of the funding.

The Ministry of Culture has signed several agreements with non-governmental organisations (e.g. The New Theatre Institute of Latvia, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art), delegating a number of specific functions.

### **1.2.6 Transversal co-operation**

The Ministry of Culture in Latvia is responsible for art and heritage as well as for art education including higher education in cultural field. Other ministries are responsible for certain cultural institutions such as the Latvian War Museum, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence or the Museum of Nature, which is responsible to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

The Ministry of Culture works together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on issues related to international cultural co-operation and with the Ministry of Justice on issues related to copyright legislation. It shares responsibility for cultural education with the Ministry of Education and Science.

The Ministry of Culture is cooperating with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and the administration units of the Planning Regions that are partly coordinating cultural policy on a regional level.

The Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of the Economics and the Ministry of Education and Science are responsible for the development of the creative industries. The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of the Economy concerning the development of design policy.

In 2010, the Ministry of Culture took over responsibility for integration from the Ministry of Justice.

## **1.3 Cultural institutions**

### **1.3.1 Overview of cultural institutions**

The most significant national cultural institutions are subordinated to the Ministry of Culture: 8 museums, 2 libraries, 3 higher education institutions and numerous secondary vocational culture education schools. Apart from that, the Ministry is a shareholder of the state capital companies (mainly theatres and orchestras).

A significant number of public cultural institutions is owned and run by municipalities, creating a dense network of public libraries, cultural (community) centres, music and visual arts schools.

The Cabinet Regulations "Procedure by which direct administration conclude and publish collaboration contracts, as well as allocate financing of the state budget to private persons for carrying out tasks of public administration and monitor the use of granted financing" was adopted in 2014. According to the State Administration Structure Law and these regulations, public authorities may authorise private institutions to perform tasks of public administration, by concluding a delegation contract or collaboration agreement. The total number of delegation and collaboration contracts had already exceeded 30. A part of these agreements is signed with associations and NGOs working in the contemporary culture and arts field.

### 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		Private sector	
		Number (2018)	Trend last 4 years (comparison to 2014)  (In %)	Number (2018)	Trend last 4 years (comparison to 2014)  (In %)
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	Cultural heritage sites (recognised)	8 984*	+2%		
	Archaeological sites	NA		NA	
<b>Museums</b>	Museum institutions**	115*	+3%		
<b>Archives</b>	Archive institutions	1/11****	0	-	-
<b>Visual arts</b>	Public art galleries / exhibition halls	NA		NA	
<b>Performing arts</b>	Scenic and stable spaces for theatre***	8	0	NA	
	Concert houses	NA		NA	
	Theatre companies	NA		NA	
	Dance and ballet companies	1	0	NA	
	Symphonic orchestras	2	0	NA	
<b>Libraries</b>	Libraries	789	-3%	NA	
<b>Audiovisual</b>	Cinemas	20*	+33%		
	Broadcasting organisations***	2	0	104	NA
<b>Interdisciplinary</b>	Socio-cultural centres / cultural houses	556	-1%	NA	
<b>Other (please explain)</b>	Art, music and dance schools on elementary school level	154	NA	5	NA

	Art, music, design and dance schools on secondary school level	22	NA	2	NA
	Circus	1	0	NA	

Source(s): Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia; Annual Report of the Ministry of Culture, 2018; study on trends in cultural education, 2018

Notes:

NA – Not available

\* No distinction between public and private

\*\* Accredited

\*\*\* Public theatre venues, include also companies

\*\*\* Public Radio and TV

\*\*\*\* 1 archive with 11 branches

### 1.3.3 Public cultural institutions: trends and strategies

See also chapter 1.3.1.

The *Law on Cultural Institutions* has been in effect since 1998. It defines the types of Latvian cultural institutions (state, local government, private), their legal status, commercial activities, and funding sources.

In 2004/2005, there was an ongoing major reform of the legal status of all state museums. In accordance with the *Law on Public Agencies*, museums were reorganised into state agencies to provide them with more financial and administrative independence.

In 2009, the government requested all the Ministries to decrease the number of state agencies by 50%, with the aim of reducing administrative expenditure. The Ministry of Culture had the largest number of state agencies under its supervision (including museums) – 17. As a result of the reform, several museums were consolidated; some state agencies previously operating at arm's length lost their autonomy (e.g. National Film Centre, The State Authority on Museums are to be transformed into budget institutions or incorporated into the structure of the Ministry).

In 2014, the Ministry of Culture launched the consolidation process of the vocational culture education schools (in the framework of the general reform of the vocational schools in the country).

In 2019, 13 educational institutions, 2 libraries, 8 museums, and 1 public foundation were subordinated to the Ministry of Culture.

In 2005, the legal status of the six state-founded theatres, the Circus of Riga and three important state music institutions was changed into state capital companies. In 2019, the Ministry of Culture was the holder of capital shares in 15 institutions (capital companies).

NGOs, foundations and artist associations established in the 1990s, have already initiated collaboration between organisations in certain professional art sectors, e.g. visual arts, music, and theatre, resulting in combined funding sources from public, local government, and the private sector.

In 2008, a private sponsor in collaboration with the Latvian National Museum of Art launched a prize in visual arts named after the famous Latvian painter Vilhelms Purvītis.

The management of cultural heritage sites often is carried out involving private owners.

The poorly developed public and private partnership, and the underdeveloped patronage traditions are two of the main weaknesses of the cultural sector identified in *the Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 Creative Latvia* adopted in 2014. It is intended to develop them in the framework of the implementation of the guidelines defining the attraction of private capital as one of the fundamental preconditions for the development of the cultural sector (in terms of public private partnership, patronage and other solutions to raise private capital).

## **1.4 International cooperation**

### **1.4.1 Public actors and cultural diplomacy**

The main institutional structures involved in the processes of international cultural co-operation are The Ministry of Culture, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Latvian Institute.

**The Ministry of Culture** in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomatic services, and different public institutions carries out international cultural cooperation.

The cultural policy document *Creative Latvia 2014-2020* sets the following priorities in the field of international cooperation:

- to secure international cooperation and competitiveness in the cultural and cultural heritage sectors; and
- to establish a positive image of Latvia with the help of cultural diplomacy.

Latvia takes active participation in international organisations and networks, such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ICOMOS, ICCROM, ICOM, NEMO etc. Artistic mobility is also mentioned in cultural policy documents as one of the important aspects of international collaboration and it is secured with mobility grants from the State Culture Capital Foundation and participation in the Nordic-Baltic Mobility programme.

The Ministry of Culture has signed intergovernmental and inter-ministerial agreements and programmes with approximately 30 countries to encourage cultural exchange and co-operation between professionals working in the field of culture.

The Ministry of Culture has signed agreements with several non-governmental organisations (The Music Information Centre, The New Theatre Institute of Latvia, The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art etc.), delegating to these institutions the organisation of Latvia's representation at big international events such as the Venice Biennial of Art, Venice Biennial of Architecture, San Paulo Biennial of Art, MIDEM, Frankfurt Book Fair etc.

The Ministry of Culture has also developed large bilateral cooperation programmes – representative festivals: "L'étonnante Lettonie" (Latvian Cultural Days in France, 2005), "En Printemps Français"

(French Cultural Days in Latvia, 2007), German Cultural Month (2008), Latvian Cultural Season in Russia (2007-2008) and a Russian Cultural Season in Latvia (2008).

In 2014-2015, the priority of international cultural policy was Latvian culture as part of European cultural diversity. It was implemented through two major projects: *Riga as European Cultural Capital in 2014* and cultural programme in the framework of *Latvia as President of the European Union* in 2015.

In 2018, Latvia celebrated its centenary, a wide range of celebration events and festivities are implemented through the years 2017-2021, including international events and public diplomacy activities.

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs** sets foreign policy priorities in its Annual Report (see the website of the Ministry). Culture is an integral part of foreign policy.

**The Latvian Institute** in accordance with the statutes carries out the following functions:

- participates in the creation of politics of Latvia's identity and coordinates the implementation of it;
- creates network of partners (governmental and non-governmental institutions, private partners, experts and others) that cooperates with the Institute in Latvia promoting activities;
- organises Latvia promoting activities abroad and in Latvia.

Since the beginning of the 1990-ies, international cooperation is becoming stronger and more diverse and very fruitful contacts have been established with the Baltic and Nordic countries, as well as with several cultural representations of foreign countries (the British Council, the Danish Culture Institute, the Cultural Centre of France, the Goethe Institute, The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office, etc.). There are more than 30 embassies and several foreign cultural centres situated in Riga that are significantly enriching the cultural life of the country.

Municipalities have their own international culture cooperation activities mainly as part of cooperation agreements with partner cities or towns. International festivals play an increasing role in internationalisation of cultural life in cities.

Public financial support for international cooperation is available at the Ministry of Culture and the State Culture Capital Foundation. The Ministry of Culture finances some international cultural projects and supports the participation of Latvian cultural institutions and professionals in international organisations and programmes. Apart from these activities, the Ministry of Culture also secures co-financing for the projects supported by the EU programmes, thus supporting implementation of large projects in digitalisation of cultural resources, improvement of the cultural infrastructure, education, creative industries and cultural co-operation projects submitted by Latvian cultural operators to the EU programme "Creative Europe" etc.

Since 2009, the Baltic States are contributing partners to a *Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme for Culture*. The Baltic States co-finance the programme according to their GDP per capita.

In 2018, the ministries of three Baltic States decided to establish the *Baltic Culture Fund*.

Other international cooperation projects are covered by different support schemes from the State Culture Capital Foundation on a competition basis. The Foundation supports the organisation of international projects as well as running the *Travel Grant Support Programme* that enables individuals and groups to participate in short-term scientific, creative and study programmes abroad.

#### **1.4.2 European / international actors and programmes**

Latvia became a member of UNESCO in 1991, and joined the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe in 1992. In 1995, Latvia became a signatory to the Berne Convention. The Memorandum of Co-operation between Latvia and UNESCO was signed in 1998. In 2004, Latvia became a member state of the EU.

In 2007, Latvia ratified the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The responsible body for the implementation and monitoring of the convention is the Ministry of Culture.

Cooperation within the Baltic Sea region is awarded special attention. VASAB - Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea – is an intergovernmental multilateral co-operation of 10 countries of the Baltic Sea Region in spatial planning and development. It is guided by the Conference of Ministers responsible for spatial planning and development and steered by the Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region (CSPD/BSR), composed of representatives of respective ministries and regional authorities (Germany, Russia).

The European Commission adopted a Communication on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009. This is the first time that a comprehensive Strategy, covering several Community policies, is targeted on a "macro-region". The Baltic Sea Region Programme funded projects that contribute to the implementation of the Strategy.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States is an overall political forum for regional inter-governmental cooperation. It includes an initiative in the cultural field – Ars Baltica that is an international cultural network (established in 1991).

The co-operation of three Baltic States constitutes the following institutional frameworks – the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers. The parliamentary co-operation takes place within the Baltic Assembly, but all matters related to practical co-operation are being dealt within the format of the Baltic Council of Ministers. Some cultural initiatives take place within this official cooperation format (e.g. annual prize of the Baltic Assembly <http://www.baltasam.org/>).

The programme of cultural cooperation between the Culture Ministries of the three Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia) are regularly renewed in accordance with the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Culture between the Ministry of Cultures of three Baltic States (1994). The current programme is designed for the period 2019-2022 and proposes to continue such long-term joint projects as *Baltic Museology Summer School* and international chamber orchestra of three Baltic States *Kremerata Baltica*, and to foster collaboration with *Baltic Film and Media School*, *Baltic Drama Forum*, *Baltic Dance Platform*, *Baltic Architects' Unions Association* etc.

### 1.4.3 NGO's and direct professional cooperation

Considerable international cultural co-operation is also undertaken in the non-governmental sector in Latvia. Individuals and organisations co-operate through networks, co-operation projects as well as through personal contacts.

During the last decades, a dozen non-governmental organisations have developed notable competence in international co-operation, being active in international networking, fundraising, collaboration and co-productions. In addition, large cultural organisations of a national significance have got involved in international cultural co-operation thanks to resourceful staff and participation in European networks.

Film institutions develop multilateral international cooperation, especially valuing partnership among Baltic countries. For example, in 2015 the Baltic film institutions - the Estonian Film Institute, the Latvian National Film Centre, and the Lithuanian Film Centre - signed an agreement to boost film co-productions and to organise joint events. For example in August, 2019 the Baltic Film Days took place to strengthen cooperation in cinema between the three Baltic States and to raise the audience's knowledge of films by their neighbours.

The Baltic Sea Forum for documentaries took place for the first time in 1997 in Denmark; initially it was a Danish initiative for the Baltic countries, Poland and the western part of Russia. It continued to be a Danish initiative until 2001. At the beginning of this "second phase", the Baltic Sea Forum was a travelling event through the Baltic countries, but since 2005, it always takes place in Riga.

Baltic Museology School (BMS) is organised in cooperation with the Ministries of Culture of all three Baltic countries. The BMS is a long-term Baltic States collaborative project in the further education of museum professionals, which runs a week-long educational programme annually focusing on one aspect of museum work and linking museum theory with practice.

The Latvian Literature platform was established in order to promote the recognition of Latvian literature and its distribution abroad, to ensure international cooperation among publishers, literary agents, writers, translators, and organizations working in the fields of literature and publishing. The *Latvian Literature* platform was created through a partnership of the three largest literary institutions in Latvia: the International Writers and Translators House, the Latvian Writers Union, and the Latvian Publishers Association. The International Writers and Translators House is in charge of the management and development of the *Latvian Literature* platform, as well as Latvia's participation in the *London Book Fair* – where Latvia was one of the Market Focus countries in 2018 – and other book fairs (Leipzig, Bologna, Frankfurt).

Numerous non-governmental organisations operating in the field of contemporary arts carry out international cooperation projects demonstrating outstanding managerial and conceptual capacities. Of particular note are The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (<http://www.lcca.lv/>), the New Theatre Institute of Latvia (<http://www.theatre.lv/>) and the new media centre RIXC (<http://www.rixc.lv/>). International festivals of different scales are important in the cultural life of Latvia.



## **2. Current cultural affairs**

### **2.1 Key developments**

The preparation of the centennial celebration of the Republic of Latvia started in 2014; it is celebrated from 2017 to 2021. Since 2014, there have been series of public discussions with various target audiences and this laid the foundation for cooperation with the local authorities, institutions, organisations, and with broad society in and outside Latvia. The celebration covers all sectors – culture, education, economy, as well as environment, sports, welfare, health, defence, agriculture and other sectors. It marks the major events in every sector, and thereby reflects the events of the past hundred years.

The concert hall *Latvia* in Ventspils (which also houses the Ventspils Music School) and the concert hall *Great Amber* (which also houses the Liepaja Symphonic Orchestra and the Emils Melngailis' Music Secondary School) opened in respectively 2019 and the autumn of 2015. These concert halls are the epicentres of important art, music, and other creative events and were built using the European Regional Development Fund fundraised by the Ministry of Culture. In line with the concert hall Latgale Embassy *Gors* in Rezekne and Vidzeme concert hall *Cesis*, the *Great Amber* and *Latvia* are suitable for diversified professional cultural services, and for amateur art and interest education activities.

In 2015, the Ministry of Culture has established the Media Policy Unit which undertakes the development of the media policy.

### **2.2 Cultural rights and ethics**

Cultural rights are stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, *Chapter 8, 113*: "The State shall recognise the freedom of scientific research, artistic, and other creative activity and shall protect copyright and patent rights." *114* states: "Persons belonging to ethnic minorities have the right to preserve and develop their language and their ethnic and cultural identity."

*The Law on Free Development of National and Ethnic Groups and their Rights on Culture Autonomy* (1991) defines that there are autochthonous inhabitants Līvi and national and ethnic groups. This law guarantees rights to cultural autonomy.

In 2005 the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (Council of Europe, 1995) was ratified specifying the interpretation of the concept 'national minorities'. Since the term 'national minorities' is not defined in the Convention, the Saeima agreed that under the Convention this term "refers to those citizens of Latvia who differ from Latvians in terms of culture, religion or language, who have been traditionally living in Latvia for generations, who consider themselves as belonging to the state of Latvia and the Latvian community, and who would like to preserve and develop their culture, religion and language".

When defining the notion of 'national minorities', Latvia relied on definitions by the states parties to the Convention, adding an important element – unless specific exceptions are prescribed by the law, "persons who are not citizens of Latvia or another State but who permanently and legally reside in the

Republic of Latvia, who do not belong to a national minority within the meaning of the Convention as defined in the declaration submitted by Latvia, but who identify themselves with a national minority that meets the definition contained in the declaration, enjoy the rights prescribed in the Convention”.

Upon ratifying the Convention, the Saeima also adopted two declarations stating that Latvia regards as binding paragraph two of Article 10 and paragraph three of Article 11 of the Convention governing the spheres of use of certain minority languages, provided they do not contradict the *Satversme* (Constitution of Latvia) and other laws and regulations effective in the Republic of Latvia and governing the use of the official language.

In addition, the main national planning documents recognize culture, cultural heritage, and rights to participate in cultural activities and develop creativity as the basic values.

Since 2007, the Ombudsman institution is in charge of protection of the rights of Latvian inhabitants.

See also chapter 4.1.1.

## **2.3 Role of artists and cultural professionals**

In general, artists in Latvia have artistic freedom to express their views, on the condition that they respect statutory rules (see chapter 2.2. about cultural rights). In public debate, artists admit financial conditions and self-censorship as prevailing limitations.

Remuneration of artists and cultural workers has always been a topic in public debate and public policy discourse.

The government proved its willingness to increase salaries in the cultural sector by signing the Memorandum (2005) that guaranteed an increase in the average salary in state cultural institutions until 2010. In 2009, due to the economic crisis, salaries in public administration decreased by 11%, while salaries in the public cultural sector decreased by 35% (both compared to 2008). Since then, the gap between salaries in public administration and public cultural sector has gradually decreased (in 2018, average salary in public administration was 1 032 EUR and 912 EUR in public cultural sector).

In particular, individual and freelance cultural workers have difficult working conditions. The study on the *Status of Creative Persons in Latvia in 2012* (Latvian Academy of Culture, 2013) indicates that 18% of the respondents are self-employed; while 25% are employed illegally (for 61% low remuneration is the reason for not paying taxes).

The Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia initiated the debate and the development of legislation concerning social security of freelance artists. A public debate took place in 2012. As a follow up, the Ministry of Culture established a working group. In 2015, the drafting of the *Law on the Status of Creative Persons and Professional Creative Organizations* was completed. The Law has been in force since 2018. The aim of the law is to provide support to creative persons who due to the specific employment nature do not receive regular income or are experiencing temporary loss of capacity to work (long-term unemployment or illness). Assistance is provided directly to so-called freelance artists or creative persons who are not employed by an employer, but receive a payment based on the author contract. The law will be applicable to about 4000 persons in 28 creative organisations. Support is

administered by the Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia in cooperation with the State Culture Capital Foundation.

## **2.4 Digital policy and developments**

In 2003 the state agency Culture Information Systems was established under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. The Agency has initiated intense work to stimulate the use of new technologies, especially in museums, archives and libraries.

Since then, significant projects have been developed in the field of digitalisation of memory institutions and developing other services in cultural field. Many of these projects have been co-financed by the EU Structural Funds. The following activities feature important developments in the field:

### Municipal public library development project

In order to hasten the development process of Latvian libraries, a huge project in the field of IT and culture was started in 2006. Within the framework of the *Global Libraries Initiative* of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Republic of Latvia has received a grant of USD 16.2 million to provide about 800 Latvian public libraries with broadband Internet connections, to build a Wi-Fi network for library users, to provide 4 000 computers to meet an anticipated high demand, and to offer basic computer training for library librarians. *Microsoft Latvia* has donated the software. For the first time, significant technical investments were made in the *Latvian Library for the Blind* and its regional branches have been equipped with computers for blind people.

As the result of the project, public libraries have become social and information centres as well. The study on *Latvian public libraries and the internet* (2013, available in Latvian [here](#)) suggests that 17% of respondents use libraries for printing, scanning, copying documents and 15% use the internet on computers at libraries.

### Unified Archival Information System

The aim is to launch an integrated system for all the archives in Latvia, making them freely available to society.

### National Museum Holdings Joint Catalogue

This is an integrated technical infrastructure unifying museums in Latvia: it is a catalogue of holdings of all accredited museums (state, local, autonomous and private museums) of Latvia. Overall, there are more than 5.9 million items in Latvian museums. Only about 5% of them are exposed in the permanent and temporary exhibitions. The remaining 95% of them will be available with the help of the Joint Catalogue. The project is implemented with the support of the European Regional Development Fund.

### Latvian culture mapping project

The *Culture Mapping Project* began in 2005. It is a complex database of cultural infrastructure and services all over Latvia. Since 2010, the statistical data on cultural institutions are collected through this website, although public accessibility of statistics is still provided by the [Central Statistical Bureau](#).

#### Cross Border E-archive

The aim of this 2012-2014 project (with the financial assistance of the Estonia - Latvia - Russia Cross Border Cooperation Programme within European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007 - 2013) was to create a digital environment to access 19th century documents from the archives of Estonia, Latvia and Russia.

#### Other initiatives

There are other initiatives in the field of digitalisation, such as technical administration of the library information system - Aleph500 and the State Integrate Library Information System. The National Film Centre in collaboration with the state agency Cultural Information Systems has made Latvian films available free of charge in all public libraries all around Latvia. With the support of EU structural funds, the archives of public radio and TV are to be digitalised and made available through the network of public libraries. During the years 2009-2011, an integrated information management system was elaborated to unify information about cultural institutions.

In addition, the project "Creating a Multilingual Corps and Machine Translation Infrastructure to ensure the availability of e-services" has been launched with the support of ERAF and in cooperation with the Centre for Cultural Information Systems and the language technology company *Tilde*. Technology currently provides automatic translation for Latvian, English and Russian languages, providing high security for personal data. The service is available on the [www.hugo.lv](http://www.hugo.lv) website.

Many new technology projects and culture related internet portals are supported by the State Culture Capital Foundation.

#### Cultural developments and digitalisation

Digitalisation has left a significant impact on production models in several sectors (for example the audiovisual and publishing sector). In addition, digitalisation has changed management practices, such as online ticketing systems, mobile apps or audio guides. Development of artistic products, especially in museum exhibitions, have also benefited from digital advancements. However, the most significant impact of digitalisation is on communication models and the interaction with audiences in Latvia.

Access to internet was available in 82% of households in Latvia in 2018, according to the information provided by the Central Statistical Bureau. A culture consumption study of 2018 (Latvian Academy of Culture, [available](#) in Latvian) suggests that the computer and internet is one of the most popular leisure time activities among Latvian population (as mentioned by 44% of the respondents). Meanwhile, only 22% of the respondents use internet to look for information related to cultural activities, 14% are followers of social network profiles and 9% check websites of the cultural institutions. This may indicate that cultural operators do not sufficiently use opportunities offered by digital technologies.

The same study informs about digital cultural consumption patterns in Latvia in 2018. In total, 62% of respondents use internet for digital cultural consumption. The most popular activities include watching films online (34%), listening to music online (32%), buying tickets online for cultural events (23%), searching information about cultural events (22%), watching cultural broadcasts (19%). (See also the study *Digital cultural heritage market research*, "Corporate Consulting", 2017, [available](#) in Latvian.)

## **2.5 Cultural diversity**

### **2.5.1 National / international intercultural dialogue**

General awareness of the topic of intercultural dialogue in Latvia is limited. Although Latvian society is shaped by a wide variety of cultures (about 150 different nationalities live in Latvia), there is a lack of understanding and knowledge between groups, which may stimulate further collective prejudices and stereotypes.

Cultural rights of national minorities are supported by the Constitution (see chapter 2.2.). In 2005, the Parliament ratified the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* of the Council of Europe. The Ministry of Culture provides some financial assistance to cultural minority associations.

Meanwhile, in cultural policy documents, interculturalism is mainly understood as transnational collaboration, participation in networking and international co-operation instead of developing intercultural dialogue within the country. Although public policy documents include the principles of intercultural dialogue and stress the need for a dialogue, understanding and diversity on a political level, mainstream discourse supports the idea that the state has to strengthen national identity through policy measures. Integration is based on the official language (Latvian) that is stipulated in several documents, including the *Official Language Law* (2000) and the *Electronic Mass Media Law* (2010). Latvian language courses are organised by several public institutions, namely Latvian Language Agency being the most important operator in this respect. Other stakeholders are the Society Integration Foundation and the State Employment Agency of Latvia.

Since 2011, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for integration. In 2011, *Guidelines of National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy* were adopted.

Through research, publications and debate, part of the public and media discourse promotes interculturalism as a future strategy for the development in Latvia. A major debate concerns bilingual education. In 2004, an important change was that more lessons were taught in the Latvian language at Russian schools, which provoked opposition in the Russian speaking community. In 2018, the Parliament amended the *Education Law* (1998) and the *General Education Law* (1999) introducing Latvian language as the only instruction language in the secondary schools in Latvia.

At present, the national policy towards intercultural dialogue and promotion of tolerance is being implemented by various state and local authorities and NGOs active in the field of human rights and diversity. (See also <http://www.integration.lv/en>)

## 2.5.2 Education

Diversity education is not a particular focus of culture and arts education. See chapter 2.5.1. about bilingual education in Latvia.

## 2.5.3 Media pluralism and content diversity

### Policy and legislation

The new *Electronic Mass Media Law* was adopted in 2010. The previous *Law on Radio and Television* (1995) was outdated and not in accordance with the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive. This law has been heavily debated both in society and in the Parliament. Only its revised version was enforced by the President. The law has been criticised because it does not ensure political and economic independence of public media, and transparency in administering public media. In 2018, new amendments went into force. The main aim of the amendments was to defend national information space from disinformation. Moreover, public media will be withdrawn from the advertising market from 2021 onwards.

In addition, the law stipulates the requirements for the use of the official language (Latvian) and distribution of European audio-visual works in media: the national and regional electronic mass media shall ensure that in the programmes produced by them, at least 65% of all broadcasts are in the official language (except for the commercials). Moreover, the national and regional electronic mass media shall ensure that in the television programmes produced by them, at least 40% of the transmission time of European audiovisual works is reserved for audiovisual works in the official language (except for news, sports events, games, and commercials).

Anti-trust measures to prevent media concentration are stipulated by the *Competition Law* (in force since 2002) and the *Electronic Mass Media Law* (2010). The *Electronic Mass Media Law* stipulates that abuse of a dominant position of an electronic mass medium is prohibited (exceeding 35% of the particular market share is considered dominant). The purpose of the *Competition Law* is to protect, maintain and develop free, fair and equal competition in the interests of the public in all economic sectors by restricting market concentration.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the development and coordination of the national media policy to promote freedom of expression in Latvia.

The Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Latvian National Media Policy Guidelines and their Implementation Plan in November 2016. The Guidelines focus on the following aspects:

- diversity of media environment,
- quality and accountability of the media environment,
- education and training of media professionals,
- development of media literacy,
- resilience of the media environment.

## TV and Radio

There is one public TV organisation (Latvian Television) and one public radio station (Latvian Radio) that are supervised by the National Electronic Mass Media Council ([NEPLP](#)). A number of commercial (private) TV companies and commercial radio companies operate in Latvia. Cable TV and transnational satellite TV companies function as well.

In 2013, a decision to develop public service broadcasting in Latvia (merging public broadcasters Latvian Television and Latvian Radio) has been taken by the National Electronic Mass Media Council. It is outlined as a strategic aim also in the *National Development Strategy of the Electronic Mass Media 2018-2022*. Since 2013, Latvia's united news portal [lsm.lv](#) is operating; it is a unified news portal of Latvia's public television and radio services in Latvian, English and Russian languages.

[Latvian Television](#) is the state capital company. About 60% of its financing comes from the national budget, while the rest must be earned by the television station itself through its activities and the sale of advertising. This is a regularly debated issue, as commercial TV companies argue it to be an unfair situation and they are even accusing public TV of price dumping in the advertisement market (public media will be withdrawn from the advertising market from 2021).

An annual contract between the public broadcasting companies and the National Electronic Mass Media Council stipulates the public remit. According to the annual report, cultural and religious programmes made 4% of total broadcasted hours in 2018.

[Latvian Radio](#) is the state capital company. It has 5 programmes and several artistic structural units (Latvian Radiotheatre, Latvian Radiochoir and children vocal ensemble).

## Printed media

Several factors have aggravated the situation of printed media during the last decade. Firstly, economic crisis 2008-2010 has left an impact on consumption patterns. Many long-time subscribers are giving up their newspaper and magazine subscriptions, as well as choosing not to buy press from a news-stand. In 2011, 72% of the Latvian population read newspapers at least once a week, compared to only 60% in 2013. Secondly, advertising revenues across all media have dropped with 46% in 2009 (if compared to 2008) reaching a drop of 57% in newspapers (see more detailed data of the [Latvian Advertising Association](#); see also the website of [TNS Latvia](#)). Thirdly, internet usage has continued to grow. In 2008, 57% of individuals used the internet regularly (at least once a week) and in 2018, the number of internet users has grown to 81% (source: [Central Statistical Bureau](#)). Fourthly, the changes in VAT increased the costs of the printed media (see chapter 4.1.4).

The combination of a dramatic drop in revenues and aggravated changes in media consumption habits has led to deep transformations in the print media market, the most shattering event in 2009 being the departure of the *Bonnier Group*, a major foreign investor and the owner of the main daily *Diena* and its businesses (*Dienas Mediji*) – a printing house, several regional newspapers, a newspaper distribution company and a magazine division. In 2010, the largest Russian daily "Telegraf" changed ownership too.

The influence of oligarchs and consequent self-censorship of journalists have been widely discussed.

In addition, the situation with the printed cultural press has been complicated. In 2011, the only cultural weekly "Kultūras Forums" ceased to exist. However, at the end of 2011, the Ministry of Culture announced a competition and assigned a public subsidy for publishing cultural content in dailies. Because of a significant decrease of the budget of the State Culture Capital Foundation, many of the cultural magazines discontinued their publications in 2010 or 2011. Some of them are to be continued in electronic format.

The State Culture Capital Foundation has been the main supporter of cultural broadcasts and cultural publications in the printed media in Latvia. The State Regional Development Agency has a support programme for regional and local media. The Society Integration Foundation distributes grants to support different media projects in Latvian language.

See also the studies of *The Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism Re:Baltica; Media Literacy of the Inhabitants of Latvia - A quantitative study, 2017; Research on the Media Literacy of Children and Adolescents Aged 9-16 in Latvia (2017).*

#### **2.5.4 Language**

The *Official Language Law* (2000) names Latvian as the official state language.

Special status is given to the Livonian language spoken by the original inhabitants of Latvia to keep it from dying out. The population census of 2011, carried out by the Central Statistics Bureau, shows that the population in Latvia consists of more than 160 nationalities. The prevailing spoken languages are Latvian and Russian.

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the general management of the implementation of the policy of the state language. Major tasks of the Ministry are to develop the state language policy with the objective to strengthen the status of the Latvian language and ensure sustainable development of the language; and to organise the implementation of the state language policy, including provision for learning the state language, availability of international documents in the state language, by means of coordination of the implementation of the state language policy and encouraging multilingualism of the citizens of Latvia.

Since 1996, a state programme for learning Latvian has been in effect and is carried out with governmental and donor funding. Since 2009, the Latvian Language Agency (supervised by Minister of Education and Science) implements the state language policy, which is formulated in the *Guidelines of the State Language Policy for 2015 – 2020*.

The *Official Language Law* determines that information in posters, banners, signs etc. have to be in Latvian. Where other languages are used, the text in the state language must be given priority placement and cannot be smaller than the text in other languages. See chapter 2.5.1. about the requirements of the use of the official language in the media according to the *Electronic Mass Media Law* (2010).

#### **2.5.5 Gender**

The topic of gender equality is not a major topic for political discussion. In line with international and European legal documents, gender equality is guaranteed in the legislation of Latvia in all spheres of



life. Most important of these legal norms is *Article 91 of the Constitution* stating "All human beings in Latvia shall be equal before the law and the courts. Human rights shall be realised without discrimination of any kind." The most important sectorial laws containing new norms promoting gender equality came into force in 2002, namely, the *Labour Law*.

More specifically, norms of equal pay, equal access to employment, vocational training and promotion, working conditions, parental leave, burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex, protection of pregnant workers, protection against harassment and sexual harassment, and non-discrimination based on gender are part of these documents. In line with general political and legislative processes in the European Union, an increasing number of national laws are amended to include clauses of equal treatment due to gender. Likewise, laws to regulate provision of goods and services and insurance provided by private insurance companies are amended in order to prevent gender-based discrimination.

Women are very actively involved in cultural processes, both on national and local level. The majority of employees in the cultural sector and cultural administrators are women. *Eurostat* data on employment in 2014 suggests that cultural employment of females has been 4.3% of total employment, which ranks Latvia in the sixth place in Europe following Luxembourg, Iceland, Estonia, Finland and Sweden.

The Ministry of Welfare is the responsible institution for the development of gender equality policy in the government. The *Council of Gender Equality* (under the direction of the Welfare Minister) was established in 2002 to encourage, protect, and resolve problems of gender inequality at the governmental level. In 2010, a new *Committee of Gender Equality* was established instead of the Council. Its main functions include coordination of all the stakeholders, such as ministries, NGOs, social partners, municipalities. The *Plan for the Promotion of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men for 2018-2020* (adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers in 2018) aims to implement efficient and well-considered national policy for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

#### **2.5.6 Disability**

The Ministry of Welfare is the responsible institution for the development of policy for persons with disability. The policy is in line with the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* of the United Nations and its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014 – 2020* refer to the Convention as well, though cultural policy does not provide elaborate measures or any specific strategies to support people with disabilities as professionals in the cultural labour market.

### **2.6 Culture and social inclusion**

The rights of ethnic minorities are recognised on a cultural policy level (see chapter 2.2.); other cultural minority groups based on common interests such as gender or sexual orientation are not on the agenda of cultural policy.

Native inhabitants of Latvia are Latvians. Only one ethnic minority is recognised as an autochthonous minority: the Livonians or Livs that were the indigenous inhabitants of Livonia, a large part of what is today north-western Latvia and south-western Estonia. Only a small group of them have declared officially they are Livonians: there were 8 Livonians living in Latvia in 2019 (Inhabitants Register of Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, 2019). The other minorities living in Latvia have general cultural rights (freedom of artistic expression) and the rights of ethnic minorities ("to preserve and develop their language and their ethnic and cultural identity") recognised by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia (1922, c. 8).

However, the ethnic representation is not homogeneous. Latvians constitute less than 2/3 of the inhabitants. According to data of year 2018, 25% of the population of Latvia are Russians, but the Russian speaking population is approximately 1/3 of total population in Latvia, because a majority of Belarusians and Ukrainians also have Russian as their mother tongue. Since 2000, the proportion of the population speaking in Russian has decreased – by about 4,4%, while at the same time by about 4,5% the proportion of Latvians increased (Central Statistical Bureau, 2019).

In 2013, the *Advisory Board for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals* was established at the Ministry of Culture, in order to promote discussion and cooperation between the institutions in the field of integration of third-country nationals. The Advisory Board also facilitates the participation and involvement of non-governmental organisations by representing them in developing the state policy in the field of integration of society. In Latvia, the number of third-country nationals is not large (approximately 3.7% of the population in 2017). According to data of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, in 2017, the largest third-country nationals' communities are Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Uzbekistan and Chinese.

The vision of a national culture policy aims at active participation and inclusion in cultural activities of the most part of the society. Concerning ethnic minorities, Latvia has chosen the 'social cohesion approach' – a strategy aimed at integrating immigrants and having them learn the language and traditions of the host country. Since 2011, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for integration (in 2009-2010 it was the Ministry of Justice).

*The Guidelines for Social Integration Policy* have been in the development phase for several years and experienced many alterations and editions. Finally, the Ministry of Culture elaborated a new proposal and, after public debates in 2011, the Cabinet of Ministers has endorsed *the National Identity, Civil Society and Community Integration Guidelines 2012-2018*. *The Guidelines* have been criticised because of their excessive focus on Latvians and identity issues. Guidelines include also some of the national Roma integration policy measures.

The main cultural policy instruments concerning the rights of ethnic minorities are legal and financial instruments.

The main laws providing civic and cultural rights to national minorities are: the *Constitution of the Republic of Latvia* (1922) and the *Law on Free Development and Rights of Cultural Autonomy of National and Ethnic Groups* (1991), which aim to ensure the rights in accordance with the international norms for cultural autonomy and cultural self-governance of national and ethnic minority groups.

In 2005, Latvia adopted a *Law* to ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, and in 2007 a *Law* to ratify the *UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions*.

The main financial instrument is direct subsidies to cultural and other institutions of ethnic minorities.

The Ministry of Culture regularly supports the *Association of National Culture Societies of I. Kozakēviča*, which unites more than 20 organisations of ethnic minorities, called national culture associations or unions. These subsidies are mainly intended to maintain the ethnic identity of diverse nationalities, and for the most part to preserve traditional culture (folk groups, dance, festivities etc.).

As to public institutions, public support is allocated to the mainstream cultural organisations of the ethnic minorities, such as theatres producing and presenting performances in the Russian language. The Ministry of Culture supports the Mikhail Chekhov Riga Russian theatre, and the Russian language productions at the Daugavpils City Theatre and the Latvian Puppet Theatre. For the most part, cultural diversity is supported by the allocation of public support to the organisations of ethnic minorities. There are no programmes or financial support schemes that would encourage other cultural institutions to carry out audience development activities or cultural programmes to address cultural diversity and achieve more diverse audiences. The staff of Latvian cultural institutions tends not to be culturally diverse.

Some mainstream organisations pursue cultural diversity at least in the language sphere, offering educational programmes. All minority groups and organisations are eligible to apply for grants to the State Cultural Capital Foundation and the Latvian Society Integration Foundation.

## **2.7 Societal impacts of arts**

Disparities in the quality of life, as well as the quality and quantity of the economic and social infrastructure in large cities, their vicinities and in other territories of the county, considerably increase.

*The Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030* ([Latvia 2030](#), available also in [English](#)) maps out the spatial development perspective, setting as one of the objectives to create equal life and work conditions for all inhabitants regardless of the place of residence by facilitating entrepreneurship in regions, developing transport and communications infrastructure and public services.

*The National Development Plan of Latvia for 2014-2020* includes a priority "Growth for Regions" aiming to create preconditions for sustainable and balanced economic development in the cities and regions of Latvia and to provide for the smart and efficient management of the available resources, the use of opportunities for territorial development and the minimisation of threats. The priorities includes also the strategic objective of "Sustainable Management of Natural and Cultural Capital" and proposes the definition of a "basket of services" that contains the prospective assortment of public services (including cultural services) based on the level of settlement (infrastructure and services). The planning document in the field of culture *Creative Latvia 2014-2020* is harmonised with the priorities of the *National Development Plan of Latvia 2014-2020* and *The Sustainable Development Strategy of*

*Latvia until 2030*. As one of four priorities, it promotes the development of creative territories and the accessibility of cultural services.

### **Support to cultural initiatives and organisations in the regions**

- Since 2006, there are support programmes for cultural projects in four regions. Since 2007, the money has been allocated by the State Culture Capital Foundation to regional representatives that announce a local open call. Therefore, the decision-making and distribution of money have been decentralised.
- The Ministry of Culture has signed agreements with several city councils concerning the distribution of professional arts activities in the regions.
- The annual contracts between the Ministry of Culture and national art institutions (theatres, orchestras) stipulate a certain share of performances that has to be presented outside permanent venues of the institutions.
- Since 2011, the National Film Centre has supported projects of film distribution in the regions.
- Since 2012, the State Culture Capital Foundation has established a funding programme that supports distribution of professional art events in the regions.
- There are other measures to financially support municipal institutions and activities, such as public library network, amateur art activities, cultural heritage and museums.

## **2.8 Cultural sustainability**

Cultural sustainability appears in the public policy discourse. For example, *The Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030* ([Latvia 2030](#), available also in [English](#)) is based on the concept of 'capitals', integrating sustainable development principles, culture heritage and creativity, the ability to cooperate and to something jointly being part of these principles.

An evident example is the programme of Latvia's centenary stating that sustainability of the state is dependent on the participation of individuals and communities in the development of national identity, consolidation of the society and related activities. The programme was designed by Latvian citizens and many activities directly involve individuals too.

Cultural sustainability is also manifested in some of the cultural activities, mainly in international cultural projects. There are not a lot of other programmes aimed at facilitating cultural sustainability.

## **2.9 Other main cultural policy issues**

See chapter 2.1.

### 3. Cultural and creative sectors

#### 3.1 Heritage

Recent debate on cultural heritage has broadened the current heritage concept. Together with the cultural monument protection branch, libraries, archives, museums and intangible cultural heritage, cultural heritage is now recognised as an important resource for the development of the knowledge society and for cultural tourism. Apart from that, the Ministry of Culture supervises the digitalisation projects and the implementation of programmes and conventions of the UNESCO.

There are two state authorities implementing cultural policy in these fields: the National Cultural Heritage Administration (responsible for the protection of cultural heritage) and the Latvian National Centre for Culture (implements national cultural policies in the field of intangible cultural heritage and its associated fields of amateur arts, and in culture education).

Because of structural reform, the State Authority on Museums has been integrated into the structure of the Ministry of Culture. The mission of the Centre of Culture Information Systems is to develop IT tools in order to safeguard and distribute the cultural heritage of archives, libraries and museums. The Centre is responsible for digitalisation projects in cultural heritage institutions, many of them implemented with the assistance of the EU Structural Funds.

Municipalities are directly responsible for funding and administering municipal museums, cultural heritage objects and intangible heritage, notably folk art.

The museum sector in Latvia consists of state, municipal, autonomous, and private museums that are regulated by the Law of Museums. It is a decentralised system. A state founded museum can be supervised by the Ministry of Culture or by another ministry depending on the profile of the museum. Municipal museums are founded and managed by municipalities. Autonomous museums are founded and managed by commercial enterprises or by a derived legal person governed by public law (e.g. universities). Only those private museums that are accredited by the state are addressed in the state strategy for the museum sector. There is a significant number of non-accredited private museums in Latvia, but their operations are not specifically regulated.

Private operators are involved in the field mainly as owners of cultural heritage objects and private museums.

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is the *Development Strategy for Digital Cultural Heritage; Museum Strategy; Safeguarding and Development Strategy for Intangible Cultural Heritage; Strategy for Protection of Cultural Monuments 2015-2020; and Programme "Heritage – 2018"*.

The Ministry of Culture's budget for heritage protection increased significantly until 2009. A special programme *Heritage 2018* was approved and is being implemented since 2006. The aim of the programme is to restore and modernise all of the over 100 architecture heritage objects in state property up to the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Latvia: the first phase was 2006 – 2009, when 25 objects were restored (14 in Riga and 11 in the regions). However, in 2009, due to the economic crisis, the funding for the implementation of the programme was reduced. In the recent years, the

situation has improved. For example, the new Museum of Art "Riga Bourse" was reopened in 2011, the main building of Latvian National Museum of Art was opened in 2016, the reconstruction of Rundale Palace was completed in 2014 mainly supported by private donations. Several art nouveau and wooden architecture buildings have been reconstructed with support of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism during the period of 2009-2014.

There are also a few special heritage protection and development programmes regularly supported by the Culture Capital Foundation. Another important financial source for development of the cultural heritage is the EU Structural Funds. Significant financial resources have been invested in digitalisation projects (see 2.4.).

In the field of intangible cultural heritage, an important player is UNESCO and the UNESCO National Commission. In 2008, the Baltic Song and Dance celebrations were inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2009, *the Suiti cultural space* was included in the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

In recent years, there are two popular annual events that make tangible and intangible cultural heritage accessible to everybody: during the European Heritage Days Latvian historic and cultural sites are opened to the public, while the project "Find Your Master Craftsman" (that takes place in the framework of European Artistic Crafts Days) encourages people to learn traditional crafts.

See Research report 'The Survey of Inhabitants of Baltic Countries on the Song and Dance Celebration'; Research Report 'Relations between museums and society': Summary in English.

See also chapter 4.2.2. about legislation.

## **3.2 Archives and libraries**

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there are the *Strategy for the Archives 2015-2020* (Management of documents and archives. National documentary heritage) and the *Library Strategy*.

The main institution responsible for the policy development is the Ministry of Culture (department of Archives, Libraries and Museums). Latvian National Archive (after reorganisation in 2011, 18 state archive institutions were merged) implements the policy in the document and archive management field. In the library sector, the *Latvian Library Council* is a consultative body and – in addition -- several professional non-governmental organisations operate as well.

Altogether, there are 1597 libraries in Latvia (in 2018, Central Statistical Bureau). The National Library of Latvia has a special mandate being a centre of theoretical research and practical analyses of the activities of Latvian libraries. The Library operates as the centre of Latvia's Interlibrary Loan system, provides library and information services to the *Saeima* (parliament), and is implementing library-sector standardisation. From its very beginning, it has been responsible for Latvia's national bibliography.

There is a dense network of 789 municipal public libraries all over Latvia (see chapter 1.3). Public libraries play a special role in the life of local communities, not only providing books, but also being a

social cohesion centre, providing access to Internet, supporting creative activities and fostering entrepreneurship of individuals.

The Latvian Library for the Blind has 7 branches. Another large network are the libraries of education institutions.

The most significant developments in the field have been digitalisation of libraries (see chapter 2.4 about digitalisation projects of public libraries) and the construction of the Latvian National Library (2008-2014).

See also chapters 4.2.2 and 4.2.5 about legislation.

### **3.3 Performing arts**

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is the *Strategy of Theatre Sector*, the *Strategy for Dance Sector* and the *Strategy for Music Sector*.

In all performing arts sectors there are public institutions (state or municipal capital companies) and private companies (usually non-governmental, non-for profit sector). The most powerful and financially viable institutions are the public ones. They also reach a great part of the audiences as they deliver regular performances in large permanent venues. There are 7 state theatres, 1 circus, 2 municipal theatres, 6 state concert organisations (including the National Opera and Ballet). State institutions receive public subsidy from the Ministry of Culture; though ticket sales, other own income and fundraised money constitute a significant part of their budget (for some of the companies more than 50%). The non-governmental sector has a special role in providing an artistic mission or targeting such audiences, which usually are not in the focus of public performing art institutions. There are contemporary and experimental theatre and dance companies, international festival organisations, organisations providing educational activities etc. To some of the non-governmental organisations the Ministry of Culture delegates certain functions for three-year period, combined with a grant. Otherwise, non-governmental organisations get only short-term grants from the State Culture Capital Foundation or other funding sources.

In recent years, four new concert halls have been built outside the capital city Riga (with public funding and support from the EU structural funds): in Rēzekne (opened in 2013); in Cēsis (in 2014), in Liepāja (in 2015), in Ventspils (in 2019). They operate as municipal capital companies. The main aim is to foster the distribution of professional art in the regions, in particular focusing on professional music. In addition, many other cultural buildings have been reconstructed during the last decade all over the country. Culture consumption studies (2014; 2016; 2018) suggest that there is an increase in regional cultural activity: more and more people attend cultural activities in the region (in 2014 – 43% of respondents; in 2016 and 2018 – 57% of respondents took part in at least one cultural activity in the region per year). These data might indicate the positive impact of regional cultural activity of the residents.

See also chapter 4.2.3 about legislation.

### 3.4 Visual arts and crafts

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is *the Visual Arts Strategy*. The *Strategy* covers traditional visual art sectors, crafts (applied arts) and photography, but also the venues of visual art (art galleries and commercial galleries). It is also stressed that the interdisciplinarity of contemporary visual art is growing, therefore the *Strategy* includes installations, electronic art (video, sound, multimedia), performing art elements, and art history and theory.

Visual art exhibitions are curated and exposed in different venues: the Latvian National Museum of Art; the exhibition hall of the Latvian National Library and the Art Academy of Latvia; and private galleries (both commercial and non-for profit). Outside the capital city Riga, there are few venues (usually as part of a museum) for visual art exhibitions (Cēsis, Jūrmala, Madona). Exhibitions are provided also by the Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre. There are limited possibilities for exhibiting contemporary visual art. The non-governmental sector plays the most significant role here; these organisations also implement international cooperation projects, educational activities and research of contemporary art practices (Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art; Kim? Contemporary Art Center; Culture and Arts Project NOASS; RIXC Centre for New Media Culture; Centre for Art Management and Information).

Visual art heritage is exposed in museums (there are about 30 art museums) and in the Joint Catalogue of the National Holdings of Museums.

Apart from public subsidies (state and municipal), the State Culture Capital Foundation provides short term grants for artistic projects, including mobility of the artists. In the visual art sector there are also several private sponsors. The closure of the ABLV bank in 2018 was a shattering event for the contemporary visual art scene in Latvia.

### 3.5 Cultural arts and creative industries

#### 3.5.1 General developments

##### Definition of cultural and creative industries

In the various planning documents, different and distinct definitions of the cultural and creative industries have been used. The breakdown – culture, cultural industries, and creative industries – is the most common. *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014 – 2020 Creative Latvia* included the following definitions:

Cultural industries – industries that produce and distribute goods and services, which have the cultural value irrespective to the commercial value they may have.

Creative industries are based on individual or collective creativity, skills and talents and, by creating and using intellectual property can bring prosperity and create jobs. They create, develop, and produce products and services that have value in economic development.

In the above mentioned document and in other documents, various sectors are defined as cultural and creative industries (the most often – museums, libraries, archives, cultural monuments, intangible



cultural heritage, digital cultural heritage, cultural education, literature and publishing, music, theatre, dance, visual arts, films, architecture and design), however, their definition is not related to any economic activity classification, consequently statistical and economic analysis of these sectors is challenged.

## Policy

In 2004–2005, the Ministry of Culture took a more active position on the development of the culture and creative industries. After introducing creative industry issues in the national cultural policy guidelines, the Ministry of Culture encouraged the inclusion of creative industry matters in all key policy planning documents in Latvia, such as the *National Development Plan 2007–2013*, the *National Development Plan 2014–2020*, the *National Lisbon Programme 2005–2008 of Latvia* and the *National Strategic Reference Framework document 2007–2013*. The cultural policy guidelines *Creative Latvia 2014–2020* sets the development of creative and cultural industries as one of four priorities.

## Studies and trends

There are several significant research papers concerning the culture and creative industries in Latvia: *The Economic Contributions of Copyright-based Industries in Latvia* (WIPO, Robert G. Picard and Timo E. Toivonen, 2005); *Design for Latvia* (by Mollerup Designlab A/S, Denmark, 2004); and *Creative Industries in Latvia* (by the research institute BICEPS of the Economic School of Riga, 2007); *Demand and Potential for institutionalising interdisciplinary design, higher education programme in Latvia* (Stockholm School of Economics, 2007); *Creative Industry Research. Update of Statistics* (BICEPS, 2008); *Architecture in Latvia: Statistical characteristics* (Excolo Latvia Ltd, 2014); *Methodology To Determine The Design Influence On The Latvian Economy* (Excolo Latvia Ltd, 2014); *Study on the Breakdown of the Financing Cultural Sectors Provided by the State Culture Capital Foundation* (Analitisko petījumu un stratēģiju laboratorija Ltd, 2014).

The latest in-detail study on creative industries study was published in 2013: *The Performance of the Creative Industries Sector of Latvia and Preconditions for its Targeted Development* (summary in English; report in Latvian). The main conclusions presented in the study are as follows:

- Although the share of creative industries and related industries in the economy of Latvia has not changed significantly over the period from 2008 to 2011, major changes occurred within the creative industries sector itself – a significant increase in the number of enterprises, while there was a significant drop in the number of employees, as well as in the total amount of turnover.
- So far the creative industries are developing more in the capital city Riga; in the rest of the territory of Latvia the development centres of creative industries are not strong enough to promote the sector to the polycentric growth.
- Quality, professionalism and competence, and low prices – these are three competitive advantages most frequently identified among creative industries entrepreneurs.
- IT programmers, IT experts, project managers, designers, marketing experts, architects and wood crafters are those professions for which demand in the next five years could grow in the job market.

- Availability of a skilled and professional workforce is one of the important obstacles for development of the creative industries, which could become more acute in the upcoming five years. This applies particularly to the IT sector experts.
- Software, internet portals, other entertainment and recreational activities and work of artists are those creative industries spheres, which show substantial growth in turnover. Consequently, growth takes place mostly in the area of services (especially in IT and internet spheres).
- Architectural services, work of advertising agencies, publishing magazines and periodicals, placing advertisements in the mass media and publishing newspapers are those creative industries spheres that showed the biggest decrease in turnover.
- So far representatives of creative industries have not been active in export markets; most enterprises were focused exclusively on the internal market.

### **Support for culture and creative industries and main actors**

The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of the Economy, the Ministry of Science and Education and the Ministry of Finance in providing support to the creative industries. The consultative *Design Board* was established at the Ministry of Culture (2006). In 2011, a Consultative Council of Creative Industries at the Ministry of Culture has been established and renewed its work in 2014.

There are certain indirect measures for support of the culture and creative industries. A reduced VAT rate (of 12%, while the regular VAT rate is 21%) is applied to the press and publishing of books. VAT is not imposed on theatre and circus performances, concerts and events organised by cultural institutions. See also chapter 4.1.4.

As to direct incentives from the state budget, financial support is available from several sources:

The State Cultural Capital Foundation regularly supports the culture industries (Literature, Music and Dance, Theatrical arts, Film arts, Visual arts, Cultural Heritage, Traditional Culture, Design and Architecture, Interdisciplinary) in its project competitions and special target programmes.

The Cultural Monuments Research, Conservation and Restoration Programme of the National cultural heritage administration provides support for emergency conservation, restoration of cultural monuments, as well as for research of cultural monuments.

The support of the National Film Centre is granted to promote the development of the film industry of Latvia, which covers the creation of films of Latvia, distribution of films of Latvia and foreign films, the preservation, protection, accessibility and popularisation of film heritage.

The different types of funding for cultural projects are also available in local municipalities – the majority of Latvian municipalities announce annual open calls for projects (they can be either specific for cultural sector, or intersectoral), where it is possible to receive a small amount of financing (most often not more than EUR 1000 ) for cultural activities or events.

A larger amount of support is available in the capital city. One example is the grant programme of Riga City Council (*Take off*) aiming to support innovative small and medium enterprises. There is also Creative Industry Incubator in Riga (structural unit of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia).

In the film sector, there are two support schemes for international co-productions. *Latvian Co-Financing Fund* (support programme for international film productions in operation since 2013) and *Riga Film Fund* (Riga City Council co-financing programme for international film productions in Riga, in operation since 2010).

The authors of the study *The Performance of the Creative Industries Sector of Latvia and Preconditions for its Targeted Development* (2013) conclude that the availability of financial support has a significant impact on the development of the creative industries – enterprises that have received financial support more frequently express the willingness to increase the number of employees, as well as to expand business, and more often introduce new products. Moreover, the reduction of corporate income tax, adjustment of vocational training programmes to the needs of employers and enhanced cooperation with the educational institutions are part of the state support "kit", which entrepreneurs evaluate as the most effective.

### **Main challenges for SMEs**

Cultural industries are still a rather new concept that is not fully conceived either by the public sector or the commercial sector. Therefore, some cultural industry companies (even if not profit oriented) fail to receive public support earmarked for culture, while others do not match up to the criteria required by the Latvian Investment and Development Agency or the EU Structural Funds. Small and medium sized enterprises operating in the cultural industry sector, and cultural NGOs, face problems in applying to the EU Structural Funds for various reasons: legal status, requested minimum funding level is too high, and limited possibilities to get pre-funding and co-funding.

The study *The Performance of the Creative Industries Sector of Latvia and Preconditions for its Targeted Development* (2013) identify the main obstacles as:

- entrepreneurs rather often identify low demand as a key obstacle for business development;
- the availability of financial resources can be identified as an unequivocally interpreted obstacle of business – an equally large number of entrepreneurs are influenced by the lack of current assets, as well as the restrictive high tax burden. Consequently, at least partly, growth opportunities for the creative industries are limited due to the lack of access by entrepreneurs to financial resources;
- the lack of employees is the third most frequently mentioned obstacle for development of business; and
- commercialisation of ideas is most often indicated by industry experts and entrepreneurs as a problematic aspect for the development of business. While the creative industries sector has plenty of ideas for creative work, there are not enough skills to commercialise them. Partly, the issue should be associated with the education system, where creativity is separated from the market economy, and it is considered a "thing" for sale.

According to data of the study *The Performance of the Creative Industries Sector of Latvia and Preconditions for its Targeted Development* (2013) in the period from 2008 to 2012, the share of creative industries and related industries in the economy of Latvia was approximately 10% of the total number of enterprises and employees about 5% of total turnover and exports.

During this period, the number of creative industry enterprises increased with 35%, and related industries with about 7%. A particularly significant increase is observed for 2011 (+17%), which could be largely linked to the introduction of the micro tax.

The total amount of turnover in the creative industries during this period dropped by 18% and in related industries by 16%. Exports of creative industries increased by 18%, but the relative indicator of the average export volume per enterprise in the sector dropped by 15%.

Unfortunately, more recent data are not available, because regular statistics on cultural and creative industries are not collected.

### **3.5.2 Books and press**

See chapter 2.5.3 about press.

See chapter 3.5.1 about general developments in cultural and creative industries.

See chapter 4.1.4 about tax laws.

### **3.5.3 Audiovisual and interactive media**

See chapter 3.5.1 about general developments in cultural and creative industries and support schemes for film industry.

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is *the National Film Centre and Film Sector Strategy*. Some of the contemporary art forms are part of visual art sector in Latvia (see chapter 3.4), while TV and radio are part of media policy (see chapter 2.5.3).

The Ministry of Culture develops policies in all above-mentioned fields. The National Film Centre implements the national policy in the cinema and film industry and administers the funds from the State budget intended for film industry.

In recent years, Latvian film industry has been progressively developing as well as successfully recovering from financial hardships, caused by the financial crisis in 2008 – 2009. The state funding for local industry has raised significantly from 2012 to 2018 (EUR 1,5 million in 2012; EUR 9,8 million in 2017; EUR 4,9 million in 2018). In addition, the number of films has doubled (24 in 2012 and 41 in 2017) and the number of cinema admissions has increased from 103 040 in 2012 to 194 083 in 2017.

### **3.5.4 Music**

See also chapter 3.3.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the music sector. In the *Strategy for Music Sector* (as part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"*), there is a strategic priority focusing on music as a part of culture and creative industries. Still, for most of the activities mentioned in this document it is planned that the Ministry of Economics and the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia will be in charge and financially support the activities. Some activities are funded by the State Culture Capital Foundation.

### **3.5.5 Design and creative services**

See chapter 3.5.1 about the general developments in cultural and creative industries.

Most of the design sectors are the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture. The Latvian Design Council is an advisory body of the Ministry of Culture, including representatives from different sectors and public institutions (cultural sector, commercial sector, education etc.).

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is *Design Strategy of Latvia*. The *Strategy* positions design as a strategic tool for economic growth, wellbeing of individuals and communities, and for the development of cultural identity and the brand of the country.

### **3.5.6 Cultural and creative tourism**

The Ministry of Economics is the leading institution in the tourism sector responsible for the development and implementation of tourism policy. The state policy for tourism development is implemented by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia supervised by the Ministry. The main task of the Agency is the branding of Latvia as an attractive tourism destination on an international level.

The *Guidelines for the Tourism Development of Latvia 2014-2020* defines four strategic types of tourism: 1) meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) tourism; 2) medical tourism; 3) nature tourism, and 4) culture tourism and creative industries.

A number of measures are envisaged to support development of each type of tourism, including culture tourism and creative industries: renovation of cultural and nature heritage objects, support for cultural operators (e.g. museums); and the establishment of creative industry centres.

## **4. Law and legislation**

### **4.1 General legislation**

#### **4.1.1 Constitution**

The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, *Chapter 8, 113* states: "The State shall recognise the freedom of scientific research, artistic, and other creative activity and shall protect copyright and patent rights." and *114* states: "Persons belonging to ethnic minorities have the right to preserve and develop their language and their ethnic and cultural identity."

In 2014, amendments were adopted. In the introduction of the Constitution it is said that "Since ancient times, the identity of Latvia in the European cultural space has been shaped by Latvian and Liv traditions, Latvian folk wisdom, the Latvian language, universal human and Christian values. Loyalty to Latvia, the Latvian language as the only official language, freedom, equality, solidarity, justice, honesty, work ethic and family are the foundations of a cohesive society. Each individual takes

care of oneself, one's relatives and the common good of society by acting responsibly toward other people, future generations, the environment and nature."

#### **4.1.2 Allocation of public funds**

The Law on Budget and Financial Management (1994) determines the procedures for the formulation, approval and implementation of the state budget and local government budgets, and responsibilities in the budget process. *The Law on the State Budget* is adopted every year, defining the distribution of the state budget and transfers to local government budgets.

The Law on the State Culture Capital Foundation (2003, came into force in 2004) defines the legal status of the State Culture Capital Foundation (CCF) as a public foundation, the establishment and the procedures for the accumulation, management and utilisation of its resources. The law was first adopted in 1997, determining that the budget of the CCF was to be supplemented from a 3% alcohol and tobacco excise tax. In 2003, a new *Law on the CCF* was adopted, which changed its legal status to a public foundation and changed the source of its funding. It was decided that the CCF would be part of the budget of the Ministry of Culture.

After many years of public debate in 2018, amendments were adopted deciding that from the year 2022 onwards the budget of the CCF is formed from the 3% alcohol excise tax; 2% tobacco excise tax; 1,37% lotteries tax; and 2,21% gambling tax.

#### **4.1.3 Social security frameworks**

The social protection of artists in Latvia is regulated by general legislation, the Labour Law (2002) and the Law on State Social Insurance (adopted in 1997, in force from 1998).

There were no special provisions for self-employed artists to have access to the social security system. Many artists work in other fields to earn a living, for example in education, mass media, or advertising. After public debate, the Law on the Status of Creative Persons and Professional Creative Organisations was adopted in 2017 (into force from 2018). The aim of the law is to provide support to creative persons who due to the specific employment nature do not receive regular income or are experiencing temporary loss of capacity to work (long-term unemployment or illness). Assistance is provided directly to so-called freelance artists or creative persons who are not employed by an employer, but receive a payment based on the author contract. The law will be applicable to about 4000 persons in 28 creative organisations. Support is administered by the Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia in cooperation with the State Culture Capital Foundation. See also 2.3.

In 2004, a Law on the Service Pension of State and Local Government Professional Orchestra, Choir, Concert Organisation, Theatre and Circus Artists was adopted (into force from 2005). The purpose of this Law is to ensure the right to a service pension for state and local government professional orchestra, choir, concert organisation, theatre and circus artists in light of the fact that working in these professions over a period of time is connected with the loss of one's professional skills before reaching the pension age, and to lay down the procedures for the granting, calculation and payment of the service pension.

#### 4.1.4 Tax laws

The Law on Value Added Tax (2012; entry into force from 2013) stipulates a standard VAT rate of 21%. A reduced rate of VAT at 12% shall be applied to the supply of school literature and original literature issued in the form of printed publication or electronic publication (literary works – fiction, children's literature, scientific and popular science literature, reference literature, religious literature, literary memoirs – and their translation), except supply of the abovementioned literature online. The reduced tax rate is also applied to supply of newspapers, magazines, newsletters and other periodical publications in the form of printed publication or electronic publication (except for the supply of the abovementioned periodical publications) which are issued at least once in three months and one-off circulation that exceed 100 copies. Reduced rate of tax shall be applied to accommodation services in tourist accommodation sites as well.

VAT is not imposed on the following cultural services: theatre and circus performances, concerts, events intended for children, events of amateur art groups and events intended for charity purposes, visits to State recognised museums, libraries, exhibitions, zoological gardens and botanical gardens including cultural and cultural education measures organised by such institutions, services of provision of public access to and use of the information present in the library collection; the royalty received by the author for his work and use thereof, as well as the consideration received by the performer and phonogram producer for the subject of related rights and use thereof (Article 52).

There have been several changes in the law in recent years due to the economic crisis. At the end of 2009, the Parliament endorsed a national macro-economic stabilisation plan proposing an increase in VAT from 18% to 21%; in 2011 VAT was increased to 22%, and in 2013 was reduced to 21%. The reduced VAT rate was increased from 5% to 10% in 2009 and from 10% to 12% in 2011.

The Micro-enterprise Tax Law was introduced in 2010, small enterprises (also in the field of creative and culture industries) may benefit from this tax.

The Law on Personal Income Tax (adopted in 1993, came into force in 1994) determines income tax levels. The tax is imposed on income acquired by a natural person. A progressive personal income tax is introduced, the lowest rate being 20% (it is also imposed on the income generated from authors' royalties).

Cabinet Regulation Number 899 on *Procedures for the Application of the Norms of the Law On Personal Income Tax* (by the *Law on Personal Income Tax*) stipulates that a taxpayer has the right to deduct from the amount of author's fees (royalty) the expenditures of the author of scientific, literary and artistic works, discoveries, inventions and industrial models related to the creation, publication, performance or other utilisation of the works (25-50% depending on the type of the author's work).

Law on State Social Insurance (adopted in 1997, in force from 1998) determines the status of self-employed people, who earn their income by individual work (includes those who receive royalties – copyright or neighbouring rights remuneration). In 2019, the total rate of social insurance payable is 35.09%: 24.09% by the employer and 11% by the employee. Social insurance payments for self-employed persons and those receiving authors' fees are minimum 5%.

The Law on Enterprise Income Tax (2017; came into force in 2018) stipulates that the tax is 20% of taxable income. The tax shall not be imposed on state or municipality funded institutions and on associations or foundations having no purpose to make profit. Article 12 defines tax relief for donors.

The Public Benefit Organisation Law (2004) defines public benefit activity: it is an activity that provides a significant benefit to society or a part thereof, especially if it is directed towards charitable activities, protection of civil rights and human rights, development of civil society, education, science, culture and promotion of health and disease prophylaxis, support for sports, environmental protection, provision of assistance in cases of catastrophes and extraordinary situations, and raising the social welfare of society, especially for low-income and socially disadvantaged person groups.

#### **4.1.5 Labour laws**

Employment legal relationships are governed by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the norms of international law which are binding on the Republic of Latvia, the Labour Law (2002) and other laws and regulations, as well as by collective agreements and working procedure regulations. The Labour Law respects the principle of equal rights.

Law on State Social Insurance (adopted in 1997, in force from 1998). See chapter 4.1.4.

Labour Protection Law (2001, came into force in 2002)

Law on Trade Unions (2014) defines that a trade union is a voluntary association of persons that has been established to represent and protect labour, economic, social and professional rights and interests of employees. Moreover, it says that the number of persons who establish a trade union of an undertaking cannot be less than 15 or less than one fourth of the total number of the persons employed at the undertaking.

#### **4.1.6 Copyright provisions**

The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia states that "The State shall recognise the freedom of scientific research, artistic and other creative activity, and shall protect copyright and patent rights".

The Copyright Law was adopted in 2000 and replaces the law that was adopted in 1993 *On Copyright and Neighbouring Rights* and it is fully harmonised with the EU *acquis communautaire*.

Law on Collective Management of Copyright was adopted in 2017. The purpose of the Law is to create legal preconditions for efficient performance of collective management of copyright and related rights.

The Criminal Law (adopted in 1998, came into force in 1999) in section 148 defines the applicable sentence for the infringement of Copyright and Neighbouring Rights. Also, the Latvian Administrative Violations Code section 155.8, sets the fines for unlawful acts in copyright and neighbouring rights.

The Law on Film (2010) defines the distribution and protection of audiovisual heritage.

Latvia is a member of several international treaties and the regulatory enactments of Latvia encompass legal provisions arising from the EU directives. (For a complete list, see the Ministry of Culture website.)



#### **4.1.7 Data protection laws**

The Data State Inspectorate is responsible for the implementation of the data protection legislation:

- Electronic Documents Law (2002, came into force in 2003)
- Personal Data Processing Law (2018)

The terms specified in Article 4 of the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (hereinafter - the Data Regulation) are used in the Law.

#### **4.1.8 Language laws**

Official Language Law (1999; came into force in 2000), see also chapter 2.5.4.

See chapter 2.5.4 about language provision in the Electronic Mass Media Law (2010).

#### **4.1.9 Other areas of general legislation**

The Law on Local Governments (1994) defines the division of labour and responsibilities between the state and local authorities in providing services, including those in the cultural field. Section 15 of the Law on Local Governments defines the autonomous functions of local governments including the following: "to maintain culture and facilitate the preservation of traditional cultural values and the development of creative folk activity (organisational and financial assistance to cultural institutions and events, support for the preservation of cultural monuments, and others)."

The Law on Voluntary Work was adopted in 2015 and came into force in 2016. Its purpose is to encourage society members to take part in voluntary work.

### **4.2 Legislation on culture**

#### **4.2.1 General legislation on culture**

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for most of the legal cultural competence in Latvia. There are legal provisions for cultural organisations defined in special laws, which subordinate the respective cultural branches to the Ministry of Culture even if the organisations are established and administered by the municipalities.

Latvia has introduced numerous laws in the cultural sector, both setting out cultural policy frameworks in general and in concrete sectors. Moreover, there are laws, which define the operation of a particular institution: establishing the operations, governing structures and procedures for financing a cultural institution.

The purpose of the Law on Cultural Institutions (1998) is to define the types of culture institutions in Latvia, sources of funding for these institutions and their economic activities, and state guarantees for

the functioning of culture institutions. It sets out general cultural policy frameworks. General settings are defined also in the laws concerning particular art fields, such as *the Law on Libraries* and *the Law on Museums*. In 2010, *the Law on Film* was adopted. A new *Law on Archives* came into force in 2011. It was followed by a major reform in the administration of public archives.

The draft *Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage* has been elaborated in 2015 by the Ministry of Culture and was adopted in 2016.

**Table 2: List of cultural legislation, Latvia**

<b>Title of the Act</b>	<b>Year of adoption (came into force)</b>
<i>Law on Press and Other Mass Media</i>	1990 (1991)
<i>Law on Free Development of National and Ethnic Groups and their Rights on Culture Autonomy</i>	1991 (1991)
<i>Law on the Protection of Cultural Monuments</i>	1992 (1992)
<i>Law on the National Library of Latvia</i>	1992 (1993)
<i>Law on Cultural Institutions</i>	1998 (1998)
<i>Law on Libraries</i>	1998 (1998)
<i>Official Language Law</i>	1999 (2000)
<i>Copyright Law</i>	2000 (2000)
<i>Law on Latvian National Opera and Ballet</i>	2002 (2002)
<i>Law on the Preservation and Protection of Riga's Historical Centre</i>	2003 (2003)
<i>Law on the Realisation of the National Library</i>	2003 (2003)
<i>Law on the State Cultural Capital Foundation</i>	2003 (2004)
<i>Law on the Service Pension of State and Local Government Professional Orchestras, Choirs, Concert Organisations, Theatre and Circus Artists and the Allowance for Creative Work of Ballet Artists</i>	2004 (2005)
<i>Law on Museums</i>	2005 (2006)
<i>Law on the Dome Church and Monastery Ensemble</i>	2005 (2005)
<i>Law on the Song and Dance Celebration</i>	2005 (2005)
<i>Legal Deposit Law</i>	2006 (2006)

<i>Law on the Museum of Occupation of Latvia</i>	2006 (2006)
<i>Electronic Mass Media Law</i>	2010 (2010)
<i>Law on Archives</i>	2010 (2011)
<i>Law on Film</i>	2010 (2010)
<i>Intangible Cultural Heritage Law</i>	2016 (2016)
<i>Law on Financing Preservation of Sacral Heritage</i>	2017 (2018)
<i>Law on Collective Management of Copyright</i>	2017 (2017)
<i>Law on the Status of Creative Persons and Professional Creative Organisations</i>	2017 (2018)

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

<b>Title of the Act</b>	<b>Came into force</b>
<i>European Cultural Convention (Council of Europe, 1954)</i>	1992
<i>Convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, 1967)</i>	1993
<i>Berne Convention (WIPO, 1886)</i>	1995
<i>Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Council of Europe, 1950)</i>	1997
<i>Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972)</i>	1997
<i>Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms Against Unauthorized Duplication of Their Phonograms of October 29, 1971 (UNESCO)</i>	1997
<i>ROME CONVENTION, 1961 International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations (UNESCO)</i>	1998
<i>Memorandum of Cooperation between the Republic of Latvia and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)</i>	1999

<i>Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials (UNESCO, 1950)</i>	2001
<i>Geneva WIPO Copyright Treaty (WIPO, 1996)</i>	2002
<i>WIPO Performances And Phonograms Treaty (WIPO, 1996)</i>	2002
<i>Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Council of Europe, 1985)</i>	2003
<i>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Council of Europe, 1992)</i>	2004
<i>Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (UNESCO, 1954)</i>	2004
<i>Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Council of Europe, 1995)</i>	2005 (see 2.2. about the interpretation of the Convention)
<i>Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Council of Europe, 2005)</i>	2006
<i>Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003)</i>	2006
<i>Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005)</i>	2007
<i>European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000)</i>	2007
<i>Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970 (UNESCO)</i>	2018
<i>UNIDROIT Convention of 24 June 1995 on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (UNIDROIT, 1995)</i>	2018
<i>Council of Europe Convention on Cinematographic Co-production (revised) (Council of Europe, 2017)</i>	2019

#### 4.2.2 Legislation on culture and natural heritage

The cultural monuments are preserved by the following laws: *Law on the Protection of Cultural Monuments* (1992); *Law on Dome Church and Monastery Ensemble* (2005); and *Law on Financing Preservation of Sacral Heritage* (adopted in 2017, came into force in 2018).

The Law on Museums passed by the Saeima (Parliament) in 2005 (came into force in 2006), defines tasks and functions of public and state accredited museums and marks them as institutions that serve society and its development. This Law applies to public museums, as well as accredited private museums.

In 1998, a *Law on Museums* was adopted for the first time to define the basic principles of the operation of museums and launch new structural changes in the museum sector (accreditation of museums, governance etc.). In 2018, amendments were adopted harmonising the definition of the 'museum' with the definition adopted by the International Council of Museums: "A museum is a permanent institution which is accessible to the public and serves the society and its development and which acquires, stores, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and the environment in order to promote research, education of the public, and to provide emotional pleasure to the public, and the activities of which in implementation of the functions of a museum are not orientated towards earning profit."

In 2006, the *Law on the Museum of Occupation of Latvia* was adopted.

The Law on Archives (adopted in 2010, came into force in 2011) introduced structural changes in the sector when, after reorganisation, 18 state archive institutions were merged into one.

In the field of intangible cultural heritage, there are two significant laws. The Law on the Song and Dance Celebration (2005) aims to preserve, develop and pass on to future generations the tradition of the Song and Dance Celebration, a unique tradition that is common for all three Baltic countries. In 2003, UNESCO proclaimed the tradition and symbolism of the Song and Dance Celebration in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity.

In 2016, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law was adopted. It defines the basic concepts and creates an institutionally organisational system to provide the environment and conditions necessary for targeted support to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, as well as to initiate a public dialogue. With this Law, the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage was established.

#### **4.2.3 Legislation on performance and celebration**

Several laws on cultural institutions of a national significance have been elaborated. The Law on Latvian National Opera and Ballet (2002) prescribes the legal status, activity, procedures for financing and supervision of the State limited liability company "Latvian National Opera".

Law on the Service Pension of State and Local Government Professional Orchestra, Choir, Concert Organisation, Theatre and Circus Artists (2004, came into force in 2005). See chapter 4.1.3.

See chapter 4.2.2 about the Law on the Song and Dance Celebration (2005).

#### **4.2.4 Legislation on visual arts and crafts**

There are no specific laws for visual and applied arts.

#### **4.2.5 Legislation on books and press**

The purpose of the *Law on Libraries* (1998) is to specify public relationships in the field of libraries, in order to ensure the operation of libraries and to facilitate the preservation and development of Latvia's cultural heritage. This law applies to all libraries, which directly or indirectly receive funds from the State budget and local government budgets or State budget or local governments budgets, as well as to registered private libraries.

The *Law on the National Library of Latvia* was adopted in 1992 and came into force in 1993. The National Library of Latvia is a public universal academic library, which serves the intellectual development of the whole nation. The Law states that the National Library of Latvia shall be the State cultural institution of national significance under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. The National Library of Latvia is keeper of all printed publications of the Republic of Latvia, creator of national bibliographic resources and the development centre of the State library system. For the purpose of the construction of the new building of the National Library, a special law was adopted in 2003 (*Law on the Realisation of the National Library*).

The *Legal Deposit Law* (2006) ensures the permanent preservation, processing and public use of the national cultural heritage – all the printed publications, unconventional or “grey literature”, electronic publications and online publications of Latvia.

#### **4.2.6 Legislation on audiovisual and interactive media**

The *Law on Film* was adopted in 2010 and sets out general administrative regulations, such as registration of film producers, classification, protection of audiovisual heritage etc. It also sets general guidelines for public funding distribution.

The new *Electronic Mass Media Law* was adopted in 2010. The previous *Law on Radio and Television* (1995) was outdated and not in accordance with the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

#### **4.2.7 Legislation on design and creative service**

There are no specific laws for design and creative services.

### **5. Arts and cultural education**

#### **5.1 Policy and institutional overview**

The responsibility for arts and cultural education is shared between the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Culture.

The *Ministry of Education and Science* is responsible for the development and coordination of the implementation of education, research, sports and state language policies. It is also responsible for youth policy.

The Ministry of Education and Science develops education and youth policies and sets out education standards. It is responsible for the curriculum at general schools, which includes lessons in visual arts and music. Currently, a major reform of the curriculum ("School 2030") aims to implement inclusive education approach and to develop competency-based curriculum.

The National Centre for Education is a public administration institution directly subordinated to the Minister of Education and Science. Apart from its main functions aimed at curriculum development, it has two arts and culture education related tasks:

- to coordinate the interest-related education system and implement support activities for development of learners' personalities and talents;
- to organise the Latvian School Youth Song and Dance Celebration.

Interest related education is provided by various operators, usually by Children and Youth Centres, general schools and vocational schools (for the most part they are municipal institutions).

The Ministry of Education and Science supervises education institutions on all levels. These institutions (e.g. vocational schools and universities) also provide some programmes in the field of arts and culture.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for art and cultural heritage education in Latvia. Since 2011, the state agency Latvian National Centre for Culture is responsible for education policy in culture and the cultural industries.

Latvia has a well-developed vocational cultural education system with visual art, music and dance schools on elementary school level, and design, art, music and dance schools on secondary level. Reorganisation of these schools has been subject to major debate during the last decade. Students may continue their artistic education on higher education level in one of three institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Culture: Latvian Academy of Culture, Art Academy of Latvia or Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music. This three level education system provides education for professional artists, musicians, dancers, cultural operators and teachers.

Important actors are also municipal cultural centres taking part in organising amateur art activities, mainly linked to the development of the tradition of the Song and Dance Celebration.

As part of *The Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"* there is *The Strategy for Culture Education 2014-2020*. It addresses the vocational cultural education system on elementary and secondary school level, as well as artistic education on higher education level.

The pilot project of the programme "Latvian School Bag" initiated by the Ministry of Culture took place in eight schools from three municipalities in different regions of Latvia during September – December 2016. In November – December 2017, the pilot project took place in three other municipalities. In September 2018, the project started officially in all education establishments across the country, being a gift to the Latvian society in centenary of the state of Latvia. (See chapter 5.2 for more information.)

The budget for cultural education was cut significantly during the economic crises. In comparison to the year 2008, state subsidies for cultural education in 2011 have been reduced by about 40%.

Notwithstanding the sharp reduction in public funding, the subsidies for cultural education still make up a significant share in the budget of the Ministry of Culture (about one third of the total budget of the Ministry). The majority of subsidies go to the vocational cultural education schools, while about 20% is used for higher education.

## **5.2 Arts in schools**

The curricula and requirements are set by the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. At primary school level, both visual art and music lessons are included in the curriculum. It also includes development of creative skills. There are two music lessons per week until 7<sup>th</sup> grade and one music lesson per week after. Until 5<sup>th</sup> grade, there are two visual arts lessons per week and 1 lesson per week after.

At secondary school level, a pupil can choose between lessons in visual arts or music and both subjects are mainly directed at theoretical knowledge. There has been a discussion between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Science about including more art and culture subjects in the curricula (e.g. obligatory singing in choir), however, without major success.

Currently, a major reform of the curriculum ("School 2030") aims to implement inclusive education approach and to develop competency-based curriculum. It is planned to launch the new system on primary education level during 2019/2020 and to continue with reforms on elementary and secondary levels during 2020/2021.

"Latvian School Bag", an initiative of the Ministry of Culture, started in September 2018. The system provides the opportunity for pupils to experience a variety of activities and events of historical heritage, professional art and culture within the educational framework while access is guaranteed by the state.

The conceptual framework of the project is based on four pillars: 1) promoting citizenship, a sense of belonging to the state and national identity; 2) improving quality of education in the 21st century; 3) raise cultural awareness and expression competence; and 4) decreasing the social inequalities.

Implementation includes visiting (thereby providing access to) cultural events and processes, inviting artists, creative professionals etc. to schools, promoting cooperation among education and culture specialists and developing local involvement and ownership. Funding of the State Culture Capital Foundation for arts institutions to develop new cultural offer has been available from 2017 onwards. The State transfers EUR 14 to municipalities for each pupil per school year. The schools decide where to go and how to spend the available budget.

## **5.3 Higher arts and cultural education**

Higher education is available at 19 higher education establishments: 12 state-founded and 7 private universities in the fields of culture and creative industries (design, art, audiovisual media, architecture, music, culture, dance, art pedagogy, art therapy and cultural management). The following higher education establishments are under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture: Latvian Academy of



Culture, Jazeps Vitols Latvian Academy of Music, Latvian Academy of Art and the Latvian Culture College. In 2011, the Latvian Culture College changed its legal status and is now incorporated in the Latvian Academy of Culture, aiming to integrate and coordinate the academic curricula of both institutions in the future.

Following state independence in 1990, a number of changes took place in the organisation and curricula of art schools and universities – e.g. new programmes on the history of culture, traditional culture and folklore, theatre science, theatre and film directors, arts management, museology, etc. have been developed.

## **5.4 Out-of-school arts and cultural education**

See chapter 5.1 about institutions involved in out-of-school arts and cultural education.

A network of municipal cultural centres takes an active part in organising out-of-school activities (556 cultural centres in 2018, according to the data of Central Statistical Bureau). It is also a place where rehearsals and concerts often take place. The most significant out-of-school activities are choirs and folk-dance groups, as these are included in the Latvian Youth School and Dance Celebration that takes place every fifth year in Riga. The best choirs, dance groups, folk ensembles etc. are selected to take part in this event. In 2015, 38 000 children took part in the celebration.

There is an established cultural and artistic offer for children and youth: theatres, museums and concert organisations offer special programs, there is a variety of reading promotion activities, the joint project of the National Film Centre and the National Centre for Education "Film School" helps to include Latvian films in the education process and the *Cultural Canon* calls to explore the cultural and art events, personalities and their achievements.

The programme "Latvian School Bag" (see chapter 5.2) has helped to develop new projects for the youth in cultural institutions (with the support of the State Culture Capital Foundation).

## **5.5 Vocational and professional training**

See chapter 5.1 for an institutional overview of vocational and professional training in Latvia.

The vocational orientation level of cultural education (on elementary education level) is geographically the most accessible from all levels of arts and culture education. Almost every municipality has one or more arts and culture education institutions. Altogether, in 2018 there were 210 locations on which arts and culture education was provided (159 vocational orientation education institutions and their branches). A network of music and visual art schools (and a few dance schools) forms the first level in arts and culture education pyramid in Latvia. These schools are co-financed by municipalities (for the most part), the state (paying salaries for teachers) and parents of pupils.

Vocational secondary education in arts and culture is available in 13 municipalities and is provided by 24 education institutions. Three of these schools are established by municipalities, ten by the Ministry of Culture, nine by the Ministry of Education and two are private establishments. The role of the

Ministry of Culture is to provide a continuity in vocational arts and culture education, which leads to a third level after secondary education – higher art education institutions that provide education to professional musicians, dancers, visual artists etc.

One of the priorities set by the cultural policy guidelines *Creative Latvia 2014-2020* is to develop long-life learning and cultural education that responds to the needs of employers. The planning document suggests reorganising the existing cultural education system on secondary level, consolidating schools and establishing eight professional cultural education centres of competence. Funding of EU Structural funds will be invested in these centres and the process of reorganisation started in 2015.

Commissioned by the Latvian National Centre for Culture two comprehensive studies on vocational education in Latvia were carried out in 2017-2018. Both projects together can be considered the most extensive and in-depth account of vocational arts and culture education in Latvia.

Key conclusions of the first phase project:

- Labour market of cultural and creative industries is fragmented; it is composed of diverse subsectors that differ in terms of scope, product type, as well as labour and capital intensity.
- State and municipal institutions are key employers only in some of these subsectors.
- Individual initiative plays an important role in cultural and creative industries labour market; professionals can produce new creative products that in turn might open up new markets, create jobs, and even result in whole new fields of expertise, later to become a formally recognised occupation.
- Most professionals are involved in more than one subsector, and may be active on both local and international, levels.
- It is a common practice in many subsectors to combine various forms of employment in multiple local, national, and international legal entities, but the current official data-gathering and classification system does not provide enough information to properly assess the scope of the use of this model of employment.
- Arts and culture education system can prepare specialists, but it takes an employment offer (including the salary level) commensurate with the expertise of graduates for them to meet the needs of employers.
- These peculiarities of cultural and creative industries labour market makes it impossible to utilise forecasting approaches used in other more traditional sectors of economy.

The second research project “Arts and Culture Education in Latvia: Accessibility, Demand, Quality” builds on these important findings. It analyses three levels of arts and cultural education system – vocational orientation, vocational secondary, and the higher. The study aims to contribute to the further development of arts and culture education programmes and to serve as a basis for planning the state budget allocations for these, in line with labour market demands and culture development tendencies.

The introductory section of the report specifies the definition of arts and culture education in Latvian national legislation, describes the legal framework of this field, its institutional system and funding structure. The report is structured according to three levels of arts and culture education system. Five themes are addressed in analysis of each level – accessibility, demand, continuity, quality, and relatedness to the labour market. This is a novel and until now unpractised way to analyse arts and culture education in Latvia. The report covers data on those state accredited institutions of arts and culture education that receive funding from or have been established by the Ministry of Culture of Latvia.

Both studies are available in Latvian:

“On implementation of vocational orientation, vocational secondary and higher education programs of art and culture education and on correspondence of the number of specialists to the needs of cultural and creative industries sector” (Latvian Academy of Culture, 2017).

“Arts and Culture Education in Latvia: Accessibility, Demand, Quality” (The Laboratory of Strategies and Analytical Studies, Ltd, 2018).

## **6. Cultural participation and consumption**

### **6.1 Policies and programmes**

Participation in cultural life as an important indicator for the quality of life, has been discussed in the cultural policy guidelines *Creative Latvia 2014-2020*. The idea of a minimum standard of cultural services appropriate to a specific level of administrative territorial classification is raised.

The State Culture Capital Foundation Support distributes grants for the participation in cultural life through its project competitions and programmes. Several cities have membership cards or discount cards that offer discounts for cultural events.

Most of the museums have a free entrance day or hours each week. Museums do not require an entrance fee for children under 7 years old and for other disadvantaged groups of society (children from large families, disabled persons etc.). Since 2001, Latvian museums also participate in the international museum action *Nuit des Musées*. Each year, the number of participating museums, other cultural organisations and the audience increases.

The digitalisation of libraries has been a significant contribution to the accessibility of cultural services in regions.

During the last decades, the number of films produced in Latvia increased. Recently, several projects have been developed in order to promote distribution of national films throughout the country. The National Film Centre of Latvia organises or financially supports several film distribution projects, such as “Film Marathon”, “Films for everyone and everywhere in Latvia” and “Cultural Spot”. In collaboration with the state agency “Cultural Information Systems”, the digital platform *filmas.lv* is developed. It provides a film catalogue, offering films to be watched at home or at public libraries all over Latvia.

Moreover, a project “Film education at schools” has been developed to encourage teachers include Latvian films in learning process.

There are long traditions of *Art Days* and *Poetry Days* in Latvia – these include series of public events throughout Latvia, which attract large audiences.

## 6.2 Trends and figures in cultural participation

Since 1990, there has been a drastic decline in the number of people participating in cultural life; consumption of culture and arts activities decreased in all fields. There is a certain correlation between the decrease in the number of infrastructures and the consumption of and participation in cultural activities, for example: as the cinema infrastructure collapsed, the number of cinema audiences was sharply reduced.

Data show a general stabilisation and improvement in participation levels starting from the late 1990s. In 2007-2008, the highest attendance rate at cultural events occurred. A decline started again along with the economic crisis in 2009.

Culture consumption and participation studies are carried out every second year (the list of the studies is available [here](#)). The latest study was carried out in 2018<sup>2</sup> and offers conclusions based on the quantitative representative survey of permanent residents of Latvia (n=1040, age group 15-74), focus group discussions (n=6), quantitative electronic survey of cultural operators and event organisers (n=651).

The most popular activities of the Latvian population in 2018 are the celebration of community or city festival (69%); watching cultural broadcasts on TV (53%); visiting cultural activities at the local community centre (52%); and visiting heritage sites (52%). About half of the population has been reading books (48%), visited museums (46%), attended performances of the local collectives in their city or municipality (46%) and popular music concerts (46%).

In general, it is observed that cultural activity of the population during the period 2008-2018 has decreased. Most significantly the decrease of those, who watch cultural TV broadcasts on TV (-22%), read books (-17%), attend libraries (-7%). Increase is observed in the visits of amusement parks (+8%), community festivals (+7%), popular music concerts (+6%) and theatres (+5%).

In 2018, less active socio-demographic groups regarding cultural consumption are: 65-74 year olds, people with a lower income, those having only secondary education, Russian speaking and those who live alone. Rural residents are just as active as urban residents when it comes to cultural consumption, although their patterns differ: rural residents have limited access to professional art events.

About 10% of all respondents take active part in amateur arts, while 28% is active in other cultural activities (filming, making photos, crafts, playing music instrument etc.). Altogether, 55% of the residents are active in different social activities (participate in joint work, donate, do sports etc.) and one third of the residents does not take part in any of such activities.

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<sup>2</sup> Kultūras patēriņa un līdzdalības ietekmes pētījums (Latvijas Kultūras akadēmija, SKDS, Culturelab, 2018).

**Table 4: People who participated in or attended a certain cultural activity during the last 12 months in Latvia at least once during the year (in % of the population, in 2010, 2014, 2018)**

	2010	2014	2018
<b>Activities heavily subsidised by the state</b>			
Theatre	36	40	42
Opera (and ballet) performances	12	18	14
Zarzuela	-	-	-
Dance	-	-	-
Concerts of classic music (and contemporary music)	-	-	18
Libraries	41	36	34
Museums	38	54	46
Monuments (cultural sites)	-	-	52
Cultural centres	-	-	52
<b>Activities without large public subsidies*</b>			
Cinema	35	29	29
To read books not related to the profession or studies	67	55	48
<i>In paper format (Usually use)</i>			
<i>In digital format or on the Internet (Usually use)</i>			7,3
<i>Directly on the Internet (Usually use)</i>			-
To listen to music (Usually listen)			47
<i>Directly on the Internet</i>			31,8
To read periodic publications (and books) (Usually read)			41
<i>Directly on the Internet</i>			-
To watch videos (Usually watch)			-
<i>Directly on the Internet</i>			-
To watch television (and films and videos) (Usually watch)			72
<i>Directly on the Internet</i>			-

To listen to the radio (Usually watch)			30
<i>Directly on the Internet</i>			-
To play videogames (Usually play)			-
To use computer (and internet) for entertainment or leisure (Usually use)			44
Internet for entertainment or leisure (Usually use)			-

Source(s): Culture consumption and participation studies:

Kultūras patēriņš 2010 (Stratēģiskās analīzes komisija, 2011); Latvijas iedzīvotāju Kultūras patēriņš un līdzdalība Kultūras aktivitātēs 2007-2014: pētījumu dati un statistika (Culturelab, 2014); Kultūras patēriņa un līdzdalības ietekmes pētījums (Latvijas Kultūras akadēmija, SKDS, Culturelab, 2018)

\*Due to different formulations, it is not possible to compare data

**Table 5: People who have carried out artistic activities in Latvia in the last 12 months by type of activity, in % of total population, period 2008; 2014; 2018**

	2008	2014	2018
Writing	2,3	3	2
Painting or drawing	-	-	-
Other visual arts (including painting, drawing)	4,1	4	4
Photography (and filming)	-	18	13
Making videos (creative work on computer)	6,5	3	3
Designing web pages	-	-	-
Drama	1,3	2	2
Dance and ballet (folk dance)	2,8	3	2
Playing an instrument	4,1	5	4
Singing in a choir	4	5	5

Source(s): Culture consumption and participation studies:

Kultūras patēriņa pētījums 2008 (Analītisko pētījumu un stratēģiju laboratorija, 2009); Latvijas iedzīvotāju Kultūras patēriņš un līdzdalība Kultūras aktivitātēs 2007-2014: pētījumu dati un statistika (Culturelab, 2014); Kultūras patēriņa un līdzdalības ietekmes pētījums (Latvijas Kultūras akadēmija, SKDS, Culturelab, 2018).

### 6.3 Trends and figures in household expenditure

Statistical data (Central Statistical Bureau) show that in 2016 household consumption expenditure for recreation and culture made up 7.6% of total household expenditures. Over the last twenty years, the proportion of expenditure for recreation and culture has increased by more than 3% (in 1996, it was

4.1%). In 2016, average expenditure per household member for recreation and culture was EUR 303.18 per year – it has significantly increased over the last ten years (EUR 197.45 in 2006). Expenditure of rural area population for recreation and culture is lower (EUR 229.72 euro per year in 2016) than those living in the urban areas (EUR 337.92).

The Study “Baltic International Bank Latvian Barometer No. 112” states that 32% of Latvian residents do not spend money on culture (in 2015, 45% did not spend money on culture). 17% of Latvian residents spend on average not more than EUR 7 a month on cultural activities; 17% of residents spend between EUR 15 to 28 per month on culture.

**Table 6: Household cultural expenditure by expenditure purpose, 2006; 2016**

*(Household consumption expenditure average per household member per year (euro))*

Items (Field/Domain)	Household expenditure (in million EUR and percentages)			
	2006	%	2016	%
<b>I. Books and Press</b>	<b>34.92</b>		<b>38.27</b>	
Books	7.04		8.46	
Press	7.94		20.18	
<b>II. Cultural Services</b>	<b>37.55</b>		<b>47.78</b>	
Cinema, theatre and others	7.84		20.11	
Museums, libraries, parks and similar	0.77		4.18	
Photographic services and other	-		1.43	
<b>III. Audiovisual equipment and accessories</b>	<b>53</b>		<b>29.25</b>	
Support for recording image, sound and data	-		11.71	
Audiovisual equipment and accessories	-		1.91	
Musical instruments	-		-	
<b>IV. Subscriptions of television, information processing</b>				
Rental and subscriptions of radio and television	15.41		22.05	

<i>Subscriptions of radio and television</i>	-		-	
<i>Rental of cultural equipment and accessories</i>	-		-	
Information Processing and Internet	-		13.45	
<i>Material for information processing</i>	-		-	
<i>Mobile devices</i>	-		-	
<i>Mobile and Internet services</i>	-		-	
<b>TOTAL</b>				

Source(s): Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

## 6.4 Culture and civil society

Traditional and amateur art is linked to municipal community centres (cultural centres) located throughout Latvia. The cultural policy guidelines *Creative Latvia 2014-2020* recognise the important role of participation in the arts and the role of community centres, which is the basic level of cultural provision in each (even a very small) municipality.

Cultural centres are the main support base for cultural processes outside of Riga. The major tasks for cultural centres are as follows: to maintain infrastructure in order to accommodate amateur art activities; to secure availability of professional art in the regions; and to sustain intangible cultural heritage.

The number of cultural centres, similar to the number of other cultural institutions, has been sharply reduced during the transition period in the 1990s. The number of cultural centres has decreased from 891 in 1990 to 556 in 2018 (Central Statistical Bureau), still making a dense network of cultural venues throughout the country. The great majority of the centres is situated outside Riga, providing the basis for cultural activities and cultural participation. A similar network is also created by the municipal public libraries (789 in 2018 according to the data of the Central Statistical Bureau) – institutions that also provide a space for public interaction and communication.

During the last years, numerous cultural centres all over Latvia have been reconstructed and their infrastructure improved, taking advantage of different support schemes, often EU Structural Funds. According to the information of the Ministry of Culture up to 2009, 74% of the cultural centres in Latvia have been reconstructed.

In 2018, cultural centres hosted 66 200 participants in 3 448 amateur art groups, while in other premises only 431 amateur art groups (with 10 700 participants) carried out their activities.



Folk art, or its contemporary interpretation, is the basic activity for a great majority of amateur art groups (especially dance and folk ensembles). Choir singing is another significant aspect of the amateur art sector. Once every 5 years, the best amateur choirs and dance groups are selected to take part in the Nationwide Latvian Song and Dance Celebration, which is among the most important cultural events in the country. Along with similar celebrations in Estonia and Lithuania, it is included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. The last festival took place in the summer of 2018, gathering about 43 000 participants.

Municipalities own and manage cultural centres. The Latvian National Centre for Culture (under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture) has a coordinating role in regard to the policy development in the fields of intangible cultural heritage, folk art and amateur arts, as well as it is supervising and organising the Nationwide Latvian Song and Dance Celebration. It is also organising different events, festivities, and training seminars involving amateur art groups all over the country. To keep the tradition of the Song and Dance Celebration alive and maintain its quality, culture centres and amateur arts groups were partly supported by the state. In 2007 and in 2008, the Ministry of Culture assigned direct support to the salaries of 264 leaders of amateur art groups. In 2009, these subsidies were cancelled due to the economic crisis. Recently, these subsidies are being renewed. Municipalities are responsible for the infrastructure and activities taking place in cultural houses.

## **7. Financing and support**

### **7.1 Public funding**

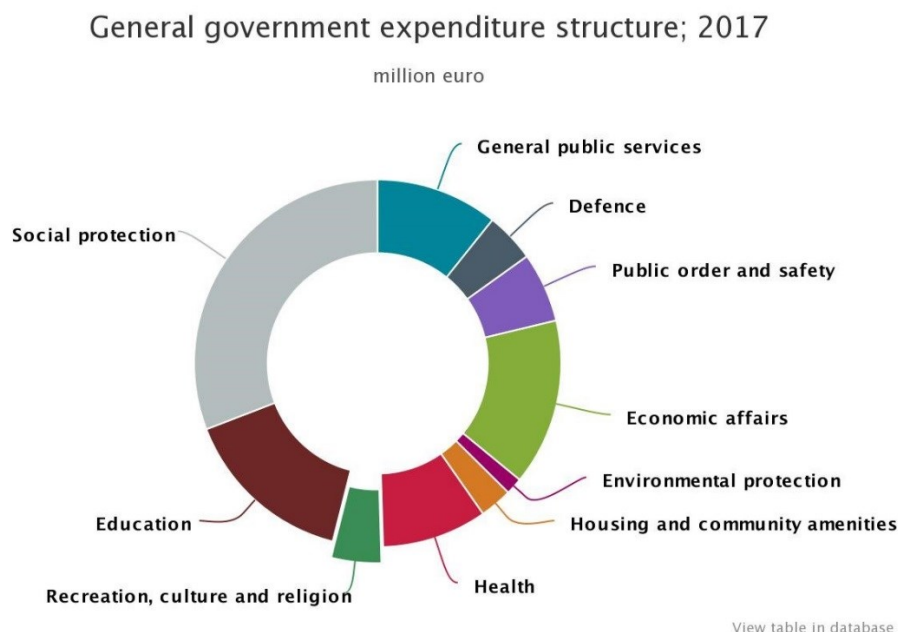
Latvia's economy experienced a GDP growth of more than 10% per year during 2006–2007, but entered a severe recession in 2008 as a result of an unsustainable current account deficit and large debt exposure. Triggered by the collapse of the second largest bank, GDP plunged by almost 18% in 2009 and the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, and other international donors provided substantial financial assistance to Latvia as part of an agreement to defend the currency's peg to the Euro in exchange for the government's commitment to stringent austerity measures. During the crisis, GDP decreased by a quarter, the external debt almost doubled, the number of employed people decreased by 16% and the real wages of employed people decreased by about 12%. The IMF / EU programme successfully concluded in December 2011. As indicated in the report of the Ministry of Economics on the development of the national economics of Latvia in 2015, since the end of 2010 the economic downturn in Latvia has been stopped and the growth resumed.

In 2018, GDP at current prices increased to EUR 29.5 million, compared to constant prices of EUR 23.9 million in 2010. The growth rate of the economy amounted to 4.8% in comparison to the previous year. Owing to economic growth, as compared to the previous lowest point recorded in 2010, in 2017 there was a significant increase in GDP per capita – by 44.8% (at constant prices).

The Euro was introduced in Latvia on 1 January 2014.

In 2017, general government expenditure for recreation, culture and religion was 4.4%.

**Figure 1: General government expenditure structure, 2017**

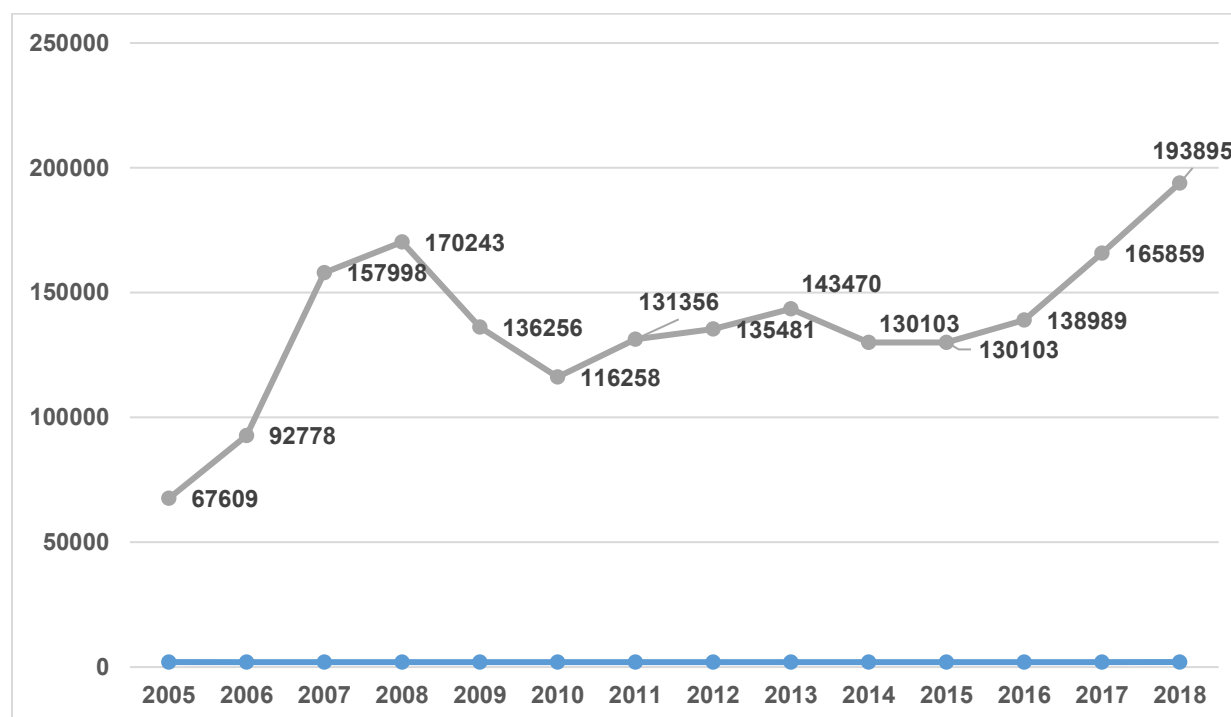


Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

In 2009, there was a dramatic drop in public financing for culture. It was followed by an even deeper crisis in 2010 when the budget of the Ministry of Culture was reduced by 32% if compared to 2008 (expenditure of general government for recreation, culture and religion – by 34%). The majority of cultural operators were concerned with the critical reduction of the budget for the State Culture Capital Foundation – the grant-giving body to secure the diversity of cultural activities all over Latvia. In 2010, its budget was reduced to 3 million euro which was 72% less than in 2008.

In 2011, the budget of the Ministry of Culture was increased due to the additional funding for the construction of the National Library of Latvia. A significant construction project – the building of the Latvian National Library was started in 2008 and finished in 2014. Over the last three years (2016-2018), the budget of the Ministry of Culture has increased significantly.

**Figure 2: Expenditure of the Ministry of Culture, including earmarked subsidies, thousands euro, 2005-2018**



Source: Annual reports of the Ministry of Culture

### 7.1.1 Indicators

Public total culture expenditure in 2017 was EUR 301.7 million. It corresponds to EUR 155.97 per capita and 1.1% of gross domestic product. After the decline in 2008-2010, total expenditure on culture in the public sector has increased. During the last years, expenditure for cultural services in the total public expenditure is about 3%, its share in GDP has not changed substantially and over the last ten years it is 1% -1.2% of GDP.

**Table 7: Expenditure of General Government for cultural services, 2007-2017**

	Total expenditure	Per capita	% of total expenditure	% of gross domestic product
2007	241 200 000	109.20	3.2	1.1
2008	278 200 000	126.93	3.1	1.1
2009	219 800 000	101.63	2.7	1.2
2010	198 300 000	93.52	2.5	1.1

2011	201 300 000	97.03	2.5	1
2012	238 700 000	116.73	3	1.1
2013	269 700 000	133.26	3.1	1.2
2014	283 100 000	141.45	3.1	1.2
2015	270 900 000	137.59	2.9	1.1
2016	243 700 000	124.97	2.6	1
2017	301 700 000	155.97	3	1.1

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2014-2019

### 7.1.2 Expenditure on government level

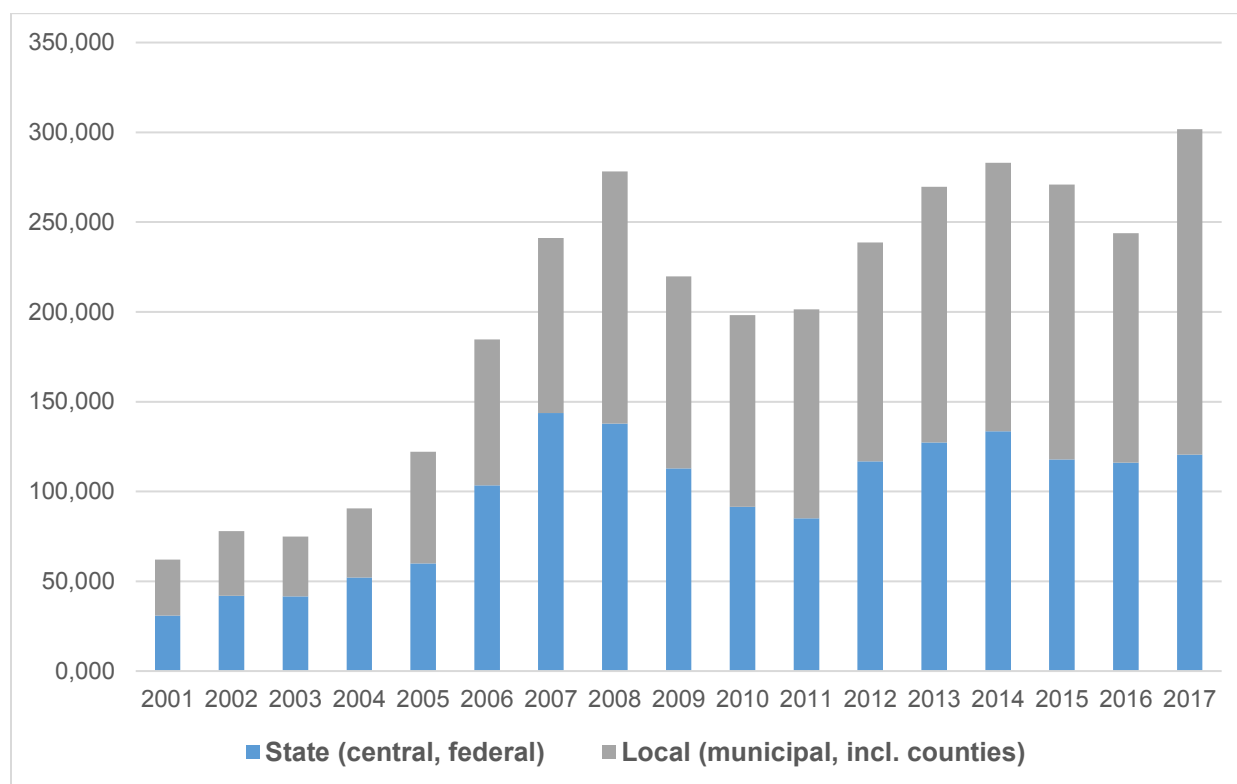
In general, there is a tendency to delegate more cultural functions to municipalities. The spending on both levels has significantly increased over the years. Estimates show that the share of municipal expenditure for culture has increased: in 2001, the expenditure of municipalities amounted to 50% of the total public expenditure, while in 2017 the share of local spending for culture increased to 60%.

**Table 8: Public cultural expenditure by level of government, 2017**

Level of government	Total expenditure in euro (million)	% share of total
State (central, federal)	120.453	40
Regional (provincial, Länder, etc.)	-	-
Local (municipal, incl. counties)	181.214	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>301.667</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2019

**Figure 3. Public cultural expenditure by level of government, 2001-2017**



Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2019

### 7.1.3 Expenditure per sector

There is no detailed information available about the cultural expenditure by sector.

Information of the Ministry of Finance on 2018 show that the budget of the Ministry of Culture is categorised as follows: 1. Governance and policy planning (1.8%); 2. Development of cultural space (32.1%) - including finances for arts, literature, film, as well as funding of the State Culture Capital Foundation and the programme of Latvia's Centenary; 3. Safeguarding of culture (35.8%) including support for culture heritage and libraries; 4. Society integration activities (2.2%) and 5. Cultural education (28.1%) that includes support for vocational culture schools and three higher education establishments.

## **7.2 Support programmes**

### **7.2.1 Strategies, programmes and other forms of support**

The financing of creative activities has substantially improved since 1998, when the Culture Capital Foundation was established (see chapter 1.2.2).

Members of the creative industries are entitled to receive a certain share of their royalties resulting from the creation, publishing, performance or other artistic activities tax-free; the share of which varies depending on the artwork.

The Law on the Status of Creative Persons and Professional Creative Organisations was adopted in 2017 (into force from 2018). The aim of the law is to provide support to creative persons who due to the specific employment nature do not receive regular income or are experiencing temporary loss of capacity to work (long-term unemployment or illness). Assistance is provided directly to so-called freelance artists or creative persons who are not employed by an employer, but receive a payment on the basis of the author contract. The law will be applicable to about 4000 persons in 28 creative organisations. Support is administered by the Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia in cooperation with the State Culture Capital Foundation. (See chapter 4.1.3 on social security frameworks.)

### **7.2.2 Artist's funds**

The State Cultural Capital Foundation supports the creative work of artists by providing “creative scholarships”, “educational grants” and their Creative Travel Support Programme. This programme supports applications for trips where the applicant as a participant takes part in the short-term scientific, creative work or training programmes, in conferences, festivals and competitions related to culture field, if a personal invitation or accreditation have been received. Educational and creative scholarships are granted for obtaining education and raising professional growth, for implementation of innovative and research projects, as well as for development of international relations promoting Latvian culture and art worldwide. Creative scholarships are exempt from tax.

See also chapter 4.1.3 on social security frameworks.

### **7.2.3 Grants, awards, scholarships**

The following grants are available to Latvian artists:

- the State Cultural Capital Foundation gives project grants in 8 different branches (see also chapter 1.2.2), also to individual artists; it also assigns lifetime grants to outstanding culture and art people for lifetime contribution to the development of culture and arts. The lifetime grant is paid each month in addition to the pension and other income and are not taxed.
- at municipal level, support for professional artistic development is modest, yet provides some support for both individual and joint projects. However, gradually more and more regional and city municipalities announce regular project competitions and give support to different spheres of professional artistic activity (e.g. Riga, Ventspils, Cesis, Liepaja etc.);

- There are several artists' residences: International Writers' and Translators' House in Ventspils; Rucka Artist Residency in Cēsis; The Residency and workshop centre SERDE in Aizpute announcing grants for artists (depending on their funding possibilities);
- scholarships are provided by banks or other institutions. Several private foundations support artists, musicians or writers and award their own grants and prizes;
- since 2009, Baltic countries participate in the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme in the field of Culture.

There are regular awards in nearly every art sector:

- In 2014, the Excellence Award in Culture was introduced. The goal of the award is to express national appreciation for outstanding international achievements in the culture field. A maximum of three prizes in culture may be granted annually, with a value of EUR 7000 euro large per award (after tax payments).
- There are annual awards -- initiated by the unions of the respective branches and partly financed by the State Cultural Capital Foundation and private sponsors -- in almost all the cultural branches, for example: the Grand Music Award, the National Film Festival, the Award for Achievements in Professional Theatre, the *Purviša Balva* (a prize in visual arts), Literature Award, Cultural Heritage Award, The Folklore Award, Book Publishers Award and Architecture Award. In 2005, a new award (Adwards) was established by the Latvian Art Directors Club. Some of these awards include a cash prize.

#### **7.2.4 Support to professional artists'**

The creative unions in Latvia, such as the Union of Artists and the Union of Writers, receive some direct financial support from the Ministry of Culture. Artists may receive project grants in the competitions of the State Culture Capital Foundation, including individual grants for developing an artistic project (e.g. writing a book). The Foundation also assigns life-long grants for outstanding, older generation artists.

See chapter 4.1.3 about the *Law on the Status of Creative Persons and Professional Creative Organisations* and support to creative persons.

### **7.3 Private funding**

Precise and specific data about private sector funding for culture are not available, but a substantial part of the financing of the culture field is made by patronage. The biggest cultural patron is the Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation. Important patrons in the culture field until recent were also the ABLV Charitable Foundation, ALFOR Ltd., Rietumu Bank and Olainfarm Ltd. The closure of the ABLV bank in 2018 was a shattering event for the contemporary visual art scene in Latvia, as the sector relied heavily on this patron. Since 2017, Olainfarm Ltd is suffering from a conflict between the owners.

## **Additional sources**

### **Legislation**

Laws and translations:

<http://likumi.lv/>

Planning documents:

<http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/>

### **Planning documents available in English**

Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia 2030: <http://www.varam.gov.lv/lat/pol/ppd/?doc=13857>  
or <http://www.pkc.gov.lv/latvija2030>

National Development Plan 2014-2020:

<http://www.pkc.gov.lv/en/national-development-planning> (available in English and Russian)

### **Cultural research and statistics**

Ministry of Culture

<https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/kultura/kultura-timekli/informativi-materiali/petijumi>

Central Statistics Bureau of Latvia

<http://www.csb.gov.lv>

Digital Culture Map of Latvia

<https://kulturasdati.lv>

Latvian Academy of Culture

<https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/>

Culturelab / cultural policy

<https://culturelab.com/petijumi/>