

**THE UNITING
POWER OF ARTS
AND
NEEDS OF THE
CULTURAL FIELD
DURING
THE PANDEMIC**

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This policy text has been drafted within the scope of cultural policy studies conducted by Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts.



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1- BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN THE CULTURAL FIELD DURING THE PANDEMIC

All the nations in the world have been going through extraordinary times due to coronavirus being declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. **Struggling to adapt themselves to the abrupt changes in their ways of living and working, people in all parts of the world seek to anticipate the long-term effects of the current crisis.**

Culture and arts have proved to be one of the great uniting and healing powers for the public in the struggle against the current global crisis. In these difficult times, people call for the powers of art more than ever, as witnessed in Italy, one of the hardest hit centres of the outbreak, where people under quarantine have built solidarity by singing together from their balconies. It must be for the same reason that videos of these moments have become viral on social media. There are also numerous studies which have established the strong link between cultural participation and well-being.¹

Appearing “more like a beginning of a completely different way of life than a temporary disruption,”² the current crisis poses a serious challenge for the field of culture and arts, one of the main features of which is to bring people together. From theatres to movie halls, museums to publishing houses, independent artists and designers, many people and institutions involved in production and circulation of the arts have been forced to delay or cancel their activities. They now make effort to develop new and creative ways of meeting their audience on digital platforms.

The culture and arts scene has been able to swiftly respond to the new conditions under which staying home has become our major responsibility. The various archives made available online by art institutions or the concerts performed on social media have offered people the sense of hope and unity they need. **As people tend to spend 7 hours of their day on the internet, and 3 hours on social media on average,³ the artistic activities offered on digital platforms enable children, the youth, and adults to spend quality time and empower their sense of well-being.** Expanding the boundaries of “the arts”, public engagement approaches in the arts, encompassing creative forms of self-expression of the individual and different modes of engagement⁴ have apparently become much more valuable.

1 <https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/no-sustainability-without-culture-and-the-arts/>

2 <https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/03/17/905264/coronavirus-pandemic-social-distancing-18-months/>

3 Media Landscape in Turkey, March 2020, OMD Turkey

4 https://www.iksv.org/i/content/228_1_public-engagement-2017.pdf

1- BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN THE CULTURAL FIELD DURING THE PANDEMIC

Against the current that leads countries to close their borders, cultural and artistic activities as well as creativity still stand as the indispensable ground of intercultural communication and interaction. The United Nations and the World Health Organisation have already announced that **creativity is one of the best instruments for consciousness raising in the struggle against the coronavirus.**⁵ Many artists and curators employ the power of artistic expression to support the society in coping with the current crisis.^{6, 7, 8} while designers transform their workshops in creative ways to contribute to the provision of urgent needs.^{9, 10}

At a time when billions of people are physically isolated from each other and much more vulnerable to be overwhelmed by growing anxiety and uncertainty, UNESCO underlines the necessity of taking immediate short and long-term measures to support artists and cultural institutions who all seek to preserve the vitalising power of cultural life, to bring people together, and to provide them not only comfort but also inspiration and hope.¹¹

The report by KREKSA¹² indicates that **15 thousand 394 enterprises** active in the cultural industry in 2017 generated **52 thousand 80 jobs**, with a **turnover of 14 billion 600 million TL** and a **value-added of 3 billion 600 million TL**. These figures attest to the pressing need for targeted measures not only for preserving the contribution of the cultural field to the national economy but also for the sustainability of the cultural field for both individuals and society.

The already vulnerable situation of the field due to its reliance on limited resources demands the urgent support of national and local governments, private sector actors, and individual donors in cooperation with the civil society. As the Third Sector Foundation of Turkey explains,¹³ it is essential that all the non-governmental organisations and foundations working in the field benefit from the current or future aids to other sectors. Effective cooperation with civil society must not be disregarded.

5 <https://www.talenthouse.com/i/united-nations-global-call-out-to-creatives-help-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19>

6 <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/mar/30/hans-ulrich-obrist-uk-public-art-project>

7 <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/artists-for-humans-coronavirus-relief-1202682724/>

8 <https://hyperallergic.com/553399/artists-decorate-hospital-icu>

9 https://www.instagram.com/covidicin_hayalbilim

10 <https://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/healthcare-architecture/5-ways-architects-and-designers-are-responding-to-covid-19/>

11 <https://en.unesco.org/news/moments-crisis-people-need-culture>

12 https://15137cac-8623-4f94-b5bd-odb96d13fddc.filesusr.com/ugd/3cd779_1208104687b041ef9c8c2be2a6e239bd.pdf

13 <https://www.tusev.org.tr/en/announcement/the-state-of-civil-society-organizations-in-turkey-amid-the-precautions-against-covid-19#.XqfWWWgzBIU>

1- BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN THE CULTURAL FIELD DURING THE PANDEMIC

When these challenging times are left behind and the cities turn back to life, **all the actors in the field of culture and arts will assume active roles in social healing. The artistic productions and festivals would not only bear the traces of what we have been going through but also contribute to the renewal of energies and hopes.**¹⁴ With the end of the crisis, environment and climate change that have recently become the burning issues of humanity under the pressure of social development and extraordinary conditions would continue to be tackled from the perspective of creativity, and culture and arts. It is for this reason that the steps for directly supporting the creative industries should be taken immediately by an effective partnership of public and private sectors as well as non-governmental organisations.

As a non-profit institution active in the field of culture and arts for 48 years and dedicated to contributing to development of cultural policies as one of its main objectives, İKSV watches the recent global developments very closely and shares knowledge with all its partners. Like all other actors of the creative industries, İKSV is directly exposed to the impacts of the current shutdown.

This text has been produced with a commitment to acting together like an ecosystem to cope with the consequences of this historically unprecedented situation for the cultural field in Turkey. Below is a series of proposals about supports that should be provided for the field during the outbreak.

What kind of support mechanisms have been introduced for creative industries in the world?

What is the current state of public supports for the cultural field in Turkey?

Which measures should be taken in the cultural field in Turkey?

14 http://www.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/simon_mundy_-_article_-_culturecovid19.pdf

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

As the arts increasingly contribute to the building of bonds and networks of solidarity across the world, many actors tend to respond to the impacts of the pandemic on creative industries with support packages. Governments invent new models of economic stimulus and support while philanthropic organisations build emergency funds. Cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations are mobilised for knowledge sharing and advocacy.

The support measures for creative industries announced by a variety of partners in different parts of the world by April 17, 2020 can be classified as follows:¹⁵

- a. Loans, funds and compensations designed for the field of culture and arts as well as creative industries
- b. Facilities, loans and funds for independent artists, designers and cultural workers
- c. Supports for artistic production during social distancing
- d. Knowledge sharing and advocacy in the arts and cultural sector

a. Loans, funds and compensations designed for the field of culture and arts as well as creative industries

The Ministry of Culture of **Argentina** plans to support the cultural institutions with an emergency fund of 30 million pesos (**450 thousand dollars**).

The **Australia** Council for the Arts created a flexible fund of 5 million Australian dollars (**3.25 million dollars**) bringing all uncommitted funds together.

The **Canada** Council for the Arts announced 60 million Canadian dollars (**approximately 43 million dollars**) in advance funding to offer cash support beginning from May to cultural organisations, cultural workers and the artists they employ.

The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage in **Chile** has allocated CLP 15 billion (**18 million dollars**) to support copyright payments, promote artistic creation, and protect cultural spaces and organisations affected by the pandemic.

¹⁵ The amounts are given in US dollars unless otherwise stated. The following information on the governmental supports, unless stated otherwise, has been compiled from the web site: <https://www.bygroup.com/blog/2020/3/21/government-arts-responses-to-covid-19>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

In **England** Arts Council announced an emergency funding package of **160 million pounds** for organisations and individuals in need of support. **20 million pounds** of this package have been reserved for artists, professionals in creative industries and independent cultural workers. In **Estonia**, the Ministry of Culture has announced an initial support package of **3 million euros** to partially compensate for the income lost due to the cancellation of cultural and sporting events and activities.

The Ministry of Culture of **Finland** and the Finnish Centre for Art Promotion has announced that approximately **1.5 million euros** will be distributed to arts and culture professionals in April.

The **French** government created an emergency fund including **11.5 million euros** in support for the music sector, **5 million euros** for the performance arts sector, **5 million euros** for the publishing sector, **2 million euros** for the visual arts sector, and **2 million euros** for art galleries, to be allocated through the specific agency overseeing the concerned sector. At the regional level, the cultural institutions will be compensated for the income lost due to the cancellation of their activities and events during the sanitary crisis.

The **German** government has announced a package of **50 billion euros** for freelancers and small businesses, including professionals in arts and cultural sector, media, and creative industries.

The Arts Development Council which develops policy proposals for the **Hong Kong** government has launched the 55 million HKD-worth (**7 million dollars**) “Support Scheme for Arts & Cultural Sector.”

Italy has announced a support package of **130 million euros** for both cultural and touristic industries.

The **Japanese** government has announced a loan package of **15 billion dollars** for small businesses from which cultural organizations will also benefit.

The **Lithuanian** Culture Council has created individual scholarships for artists as well as a funding of **1.2 million euros** for cultural organisations.

The Ministry of Culture of **Luxemburg** will support cultural institutions through covering **80 per cent** of salaries of their employees via the Employment Fund.

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

Netherlands announced a special package of **300 million euros** for the cultural sector and creative industries. Organisations and independent artists active in creative industries can also benefit from the general support measures. The support package will supplement the already existing 6 governmental funds designed for creative industries.

The **Netherlands**-based **European Cultural Foundation** opened the first round of Culture of Solidarity Fund, launched on April 6 to support creative projects that reinforce European solidarity.¹⁶

Creative NZ, the arts agency of **New Zealand**, has announced a **4.5 million dollars** of emergency funding for 80 arts organisations and “resilience grants” for artists. The government is also offering anyone working in events industry a 12-week wage subsidy.

Norway has launched a new compensation scheme amounting to NOK 300 million (**29 million dollars**) for the cultural sector.

Creative Scotland, an agency of the **Scotland** government, has launched two special funds including **2 million pounds** support for culture and arts sector.

The **Singapore** government announced an additional SGD 55 million (**approximately 38 million dollars**) for the arts and cultural sector.

In **South Africa**, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture has announced a relief fund of 150 million rand (**approximately 8.2 million dollars**) in support for artists and athletes.

South Korea has launched a special loan for artists at a very low interest rate to be repaid after a term of two years. 12 thousand artists were granted a fund of 3 million won (**approximately 2.500 dollars**). The government has also offered extensive support packages for the performing arts sector.

The emergency fund launched by the **Swiss** government includes 280 million Swiss francs (**281 million dollars**) for professionals in arts and cultural sector. The freelance art workers can also benefit from the fund.

The **US government** announced a third economic stimulus package including **\$307.5 million** in support for the arts and cultural sector.

16 <https://www.culturalfoundation.eu/culture-of-solidarity>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

b. Facilities, loans and funds for independent artists, designers and cultural workers

The artist Matthew Burrows launched the **Artist Support Pledge** project in which artists pledge to spend 200 pounds to support another artist every time they reach a 1.000 pounds of their sales on social media.¹⁷

In **Australia**, the City of **Melbourne** has launched a grant programme of 2 million Australian dollars (**1.25 million dollars**) for artists and creatives to invest in new works and digital presentations. The City of **Sydney** has announced that it will increase the relief amount in its “Business, Arts and Creative Support” package by 3 times to 72.5 million Australian dollars (**approximately 45.16 million dollars**).

The **Belgian** government has announced that it will offer for self-employed people and their spouses a monthly benefit of **1.614 euros** with family expenses.

The **Colombian** Ministry of Culture has announced COP 80 billion (**approximately 20 million dollars**) of funds for artists and cultural managers through the Periodic Economic Benefits Scheme.

The **Croatian** Ministry of Culture has established a Crisis Fund including funds for cultural workers whose projects have been delayed, and will offer for those who have lost their jobs due to the crisis grants from HRK 1.625 up to 3.250 (**approximately 230-470 dollars**) for three months from April onwards.

The **Danish** government has announced compensation for self-employed people who have lost more than 30% of their revenue as a result of coronavirus outbreak. The government will provide 75% of the loss of revenue, up to a maximum of DKK 23.000 (**approximately 3,360 dollars**) per month, for three months.

The **Germany**-based **Ernst von Siemens Arts Foundation** has launched a special fund for independent restorators and scholars working for the museums which closed doors due to the pandemic. The fund accessible only by the museums will grant from **2 up to 25 thousand euros** to the projects for creating exhibition catalogues or inventories.¹⁸

¹⁷ <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/blog/artists-support-pledge>

¹⁸ <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/feature/are-you-a-freelance-worker-or-a-small-company-in-the-arts-here-s-a-global-list-of-financial-aid-available-to-you-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

Ireland will deliver income supports to self-employed people who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic as well as the unemployed for six months. The government also offers Illness Benefit of **305 euros** for workers diagnosed with COVID-19 or who have to self-isolate.

The **Mexican** Ministry of Culture has allocated MXN 32 million (**approximately 1.5 million dollars**) for artists.

The **Relief Fund for Artists in Seattle** initiated by an American writer is aimed at collecting funds for artists who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. The campaign has achieved to raise a sum of **453 thousand dollars** up to the present day.¹⁹ A similar initiative in Boston is offering small grants for workers in arts.²⁰ In addition, a coalition of foundations has created a 6-month long funding for artists.²¹

In **Romania** the Bucharest Biennial has launched an online fundraising campaign for artists, cultural workers and curators.²²

The museums, art galleries and artists in the **US** aim at supporting the arts and cultural sector through offering limited editions for sale.²³

19 <https://www.gofundme.com/f/for-artists>

20 <https://www.boston.gov/news/boston-establishes-artist-relief-fund-response-coronavirus>

21 <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/coalition-of-us-arts-organisations-launch-ongoing-relief-fund-for-artists-affected-by-coronavirus>

22 <https://www.gofundme.com/f/relief-fund-for-romanian-artists>

23 <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/artists-and-galleries-help-raise-coronavirus-relief-funds-through-print-sales>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

c. Supports for artistic production under conditions of social distancing

Argentina will spend 7.2 million pesos (**110,5 thousand dollars**) for hiring 500 artists to develop content for “Culture at Home” programme launched by the digital platform Formar Cultura.

Colombia has launched a fund of COP 40 billion (**10 million dollars**) for creation and production of face-to-face or virtual performances in performing arts for the next 18 months.

BBC Arts with Arts Council **England** has launched “Culture in Quarantine” fund which will support 25 artists to produce in digital arts. The artists can apply for grants from **3.000 up to 8.000 pounds**.²⁴

In **England**, the International Manchester Festival grants up to **1.000 pounds** for the audience to create their micro-festival at home.²⁵

The **Mexican** Ministry of Culture plans to grant MXN 20.000 (**830 dollars**) for each artist to be selected for the project “With you in the distance: Art movement at home.”

The Rotterdam Municipality in **Netherlands** will support the independent artists through an exhibition and a publication that will present the images taken by photography artists during the pandemic.²⁶

Norway announced that NOK 30 million (**2.9 million dollars**) of the Norwegian Cultural Fund will be allocated to art and cultural projects created to adapt to the crisis.

The **Polish** government has launched “Creativity on the Internet”, the grant programme for the development of digital forms of artistic presentation, and allowed film premieres on VOD platforms and the internet.

24 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/arts>

25 <https://mif.co.uk/my-festival/festival-in-my-house/>

26 <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/photographers-coronavirus-newyork-losangeles-washingtondc-rotterdam>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

d. Knowledge sharing and advocacy in the arts and cultural sector and creative industries

On the Move presents a thematic list of various resources on culture and arts during the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁷

BYP Group²⁸ who is offering consultancy services for creative industries and also **The Art Newspaper**²⁹, compile and regularly update the list of the governments' responses to the impact of COVID-19 on arts and creative industries.

The interactive map designed by **KEA** conducting researches on creative industries presents the measures taken for arts and cultural sector by governments from all over the world.³⁰

UCLG brings together the measures taken in the arts and cultural sector by the cities and local governments in its network.³¹

The common statement by the representatives of **Spanish, German and Italian** ministries underlines the role of culture in overcoming the impacts of the pandemic.³²

Creative NZ has launched a campaign to draw attention to the social value that art contributes in moments of crisis.³³

The **Compendium**, the monitoring platform for national cultural policies, produces reports on member countries and creates discipline specific lists of digital cultural initiatives related to the current crisis.³⁴

27 <http://on-the-move.org/news/article/20675/corona-virus-resources-arts-culture-and-cultural/>

28 <https://www.bypgroup.com/blog/2020/3/21/government-arts-responses-to-covid-19>

29 <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/feature/are-you-a-freelance-worker-or-a-small-company-in-the-arts-here-s-a-global-list-of-financial-aid-available-to-you-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

30 <https://keanet.eu/collaborative-map-covid-19-policy-measures/>

31 <http://www.agenda21culture.net/culturecovid19>

32 https://www.corriere.it/cultura/20_aprile_03/together-we-are-stronger-than-the-virus-c4e3f210-75ca-11ea-856e-f9aa62c97d7a.shtml

33 <https://www.thankfulforart.co.nz/>

34 <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/covid-19/>

2- WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE WORLD?

Americans for the Arts conducts surveys among the cultural organisations in the US to measure the economic impact of the pandemic on the sector. They have a resource and help centre on their websites.³⁵

Numerous networks and organisations, including **Culture Action Europe**³⁶, **IMPALA**³⁷, **Devos**³⁸, and **European Theatre Convention**³⁹, call for supporting arts and culture.

The **KONE Foundation**, a non-profit organisation funding arts and cultural sector, conducts a survey on urgent needs to help create a more focused funding mechanism.⁴⁰

Judith Benhamou-Huet Reports is conducting a series of interviews on how the museums respond to the current crisis.⁴¹

Live DMA compiles the measures taken by the EU and the individual countries to target live music sector.⁴²

Het Nieuwe Instituut focuses on the impacts of the pandemic on the international design sector and the responses that followed.⁴³

35 <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/disaster-preparedness/coronavirus-covid-19-resource-and-response-center>

36 <https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/effect-of-covid-19-on-creative-europe-and-the-european-ccs/>

37 <https://impalamusic.org/content/impala-adopts-covid-19-crisis-plan-calling-urgent-action-across-europe>

38 <http://devosinstitute.net/>

39 <https://www.europeantheatre.eu/news/press-release-coronavirus-pandemic>

40 <https://koneensaatio.fi/en/what-kind-of-support-do-the-art-and-research-professionals-need-because-of-the-coronavirus-epidemic-let-us-know/>

41 <https://judithbenhamouhuet.com/how-museums-are-responding-to-the-crisis-the-reactions-of-directors-from-los-angeles-to-saint-petersburg-1/>

42 <http://www.live-dma.eu/covid-19-live-music-sector-reactions-impact-support/>

43 <https://agentschap.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/coronavirus-impact-international-design-sector>

3- WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC SUPPORTS FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

As a first step to support the events and activities in arts and cultural sector and creative industries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Economic Stability Shield Package⁴⁴ announced on 18 March 2020 include the following measures:

For the institutions and tax payers involved in all kinds of artistic activities and in event-organisation sector, the repayment of loans, capital sum and interest rates have been postponed for three months.

For the institutions and tax payers involved in all kinds of artistic activities and in event-organisation sector, the payments of monthly taxes, social security premiums and VATs to accrue in the period from April 1 to June 30 have been postponed for six months.

The fees including the rents, revenue shares and adequate pays that must be paid by tourism investors and establishments for the period from April 1 to June 30 have been postponed by six months without any application.

The museum fees charged by A-class travel agencies have been further decreased by 10% for the period between 16 March and 15 October 2020.

The Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism Mehmet Nuri Ersoy announced between April 2 and 4, 2020 the following measures for the organisations involved in all kinds of artistic and cultural activities such as cinema, theatre, printing, books, periodicals, newspapers, and other events or activities along with the measures taken for the tourism sector.⁴⁵ All these measures attest to the fact that the policy proposals presented by various independent initiatives and professional organisations of diverse disciplines such as Actors' Union of Turkey and the Theatre Cooperative in their meeting with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism have been taken into consideration.

The re-opening of the institutions active in the arts and cultural sector has been postponed until April 30, 2020.

Approximately 3.000 artists hired by the Ministry of Culture on an outsourcing basis in return for daily wages have been offered the status of contracted staff to be valid from January 2020 onwards.

⁴⁴ <http://www.istanbul.gov.tr/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-ekonomik-istikrar-kalkani-tedbir-paketini-acikladi>

⁴⁵ The information presented here is compiled from the archive of the Istanbul Directorate of Culture and Tourism.

3- WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC SUPPORTS FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

Since all the theatre venues have been closed, the private theatres will not be able to accomplish the commitments they have made to receive support for their projects in 2019-2020 season. They will continue to receive the funds guaranteed in their contracts even if they cannot manage to fulfil their own commitments.

For the season 2020-2021, the limits related to the project supports and the number of private theatres to benefit are elevated. The deadline for the applications for the year 2020 has been moved to the beginning of July, and the payments to the beginning of September for earlier access to funding.

As a result of the meetings with private theatres, the scope of stimulus packages will be determined according to the seating capacity of the theatre, number of the insured staff and artists.

Presently, only 9 out of 130 private theatres have their own venues while the rest perform on rented stages. With an amendment to the “Code of Qualifications”, these theatres will be eligible to receive the Certificate of Cultural Initiative, through which they will receive discounts and tax exemptions in their infrastructural expenses.

Within the scope of the campaign “All Children Should Go to Movies”, 1 million children met with cinema for free in 2019. In the year 2020, the campaign aims at reaching out to 2 million children, which would bolster their morale in the aftermath of the lockdown and serve as a support especially for theatres in Anatolia.

In music, cinema, literature, fine arts and broadcasting sectors, the funds to be provided to 27 professional associations including authors, producers and publishing houses, will be increased by 50% in 2020.

TRT2 has recently started to broadcast the recordings of art events like operas, ballets, and theatres taken from the archives of the Ministry of Culture. Various materials from the archive are also shared via the official YouTube account of the Ministry.

For facilitating access to libraries, a series of apps including Active Library at Home, e-book, Speaking Library, Library in my Pocket have been created. On these platforms, people can buy books or access to digital books in the libraries.

3- WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC SUPPORTS FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

As for archaeologists and art historians, the terms of excavations in the historical sites and hence the accompanying support programmes have been extended from 45-60 days to the whole of the year. The excavation projects can benefit from monthly subsidies on the condition that their excavation committee include at least 5 archaeologists and 2 art historians. The number of the excavations sponsored by the fund has risen from 20 to 62 this year. Next year it will be further increased to 122, and the sponsored projects will create jobs for 600 archaeologists and 240 art historians.

The website *sanalmuze.gov.tr* has been launched with a view to increasing the number of virtual museums to be visited via digital platforms.

4- WHICH MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

The measures announced in different parts of the world to help creative industries and their professionals survive these tough times reveal that the need for creativity and the healing power of the arts will keep growing. The policies and support packages that the countries introduce depending on their models of cultural management and economic capacities will play an essential role not only in sustainability of the field of culture and arts but also in production of creative programmes to offer a relief to people isolated in their homes for a long time.

Given the already vulnerable situation of the culture and art scene in Turkey, the following proposals should be given highest priority by the concerned authorities in order to mitigate the impacts of the current crisis:

The central government should introduce targeted, focused, and **inclusive support mechanisms** for the field of culture and arts, to respond to the specific needs of the various sectors and disciplines.

The terms and scope of the facilities offered by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for organisations and tax payers (loans, tax postponements etc.) in the field of arts **should be extended**.

The support mechanisms should include stimuli packages or one-time public support not only for the organisations active in the field but also for **independent cultural workers, artists and designers** whose projects or contracts have been either delayed or cancelled. The application and admission process should be simplified as much as possible.

In developing empowering policies for the arts and cultural sector and creative industries, the central and local governments should have regard to **the priorities of privately sponsored or independent cultural institutions, foundations, associations, unions, professional associations, as well as independent initiatives, artists and designers**. The proposals presented by independent initiatives, cultural institutions, artists, and professional organisations of various disciplines such as such as the Theatre Cooperative, Actors' Union of Turkey⁴⁶ and Turkish Publishers Association⁴⁷ should be taken into consideration in **mapping out the requirements** of the field.

46 <https://oyuncularendikasi.org/calismalar/covid-19-dosyasi/>

47 <http://turkyaybir.org.tr/dayanisma-cagrиси-2/#.XqgK6WgzblW>

4- WHICH MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

As a compensation for the losses to the cultural institutions whose activities have been postponed for an indefinite period of time, the central and local governments should combine **the existing funds and project subsidies into a general support scheme for business**. The institutions should be offered loans without interest.

The funds to be delivered by the Ministry to the rewarded institutions and projects **should not be cancelled**. Instead, channelling of these funds into the development of programmes responsive to the current state of crisis must be encouraged.

Public and private sectors should build **emergency funds** for the field of culture and arts.

With **an amendment to the law no. 5228** regulating sponsorship in arts and the cultural sector, the support funds provided by the private sector for art institutions or artists, instead of being considered as taxable income, should be deducted from the calculated income/corporation tax.

The support measures introduced by the central government for small and medium scale enterprises should be **extended to non-profit organisations** as well. The culture and arts organisations with “public benefit” and “tax exemption” status should be offered an **effective VAT exemption** through amendment of the current tax regulations on sale and purchase of goods and services.

In conditions of social distancing, the partnerships between public, private sectors and individual sponsors should cooperate with institutions, independent artists and designers for the organisation of **cultural and artistic activities on digital media**. These activities can also involve **deployment of creative expression to raise social awareness** about the pandemic.

For managing the flow of information on the funds available for the arts and cultural sector, **local governments** should perform a mediating role between the central government and the cultural actors in their cities, and offer **counselling services** through digital media or information lines.

Local governments should take necessary measures for increasing **the visibility of cultural and artistic actors on social media or other digital platforms** during the pandemic.

4- WHICH MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN FOR THE CULTURAL FIELD IN TURKEY?

As for **the events and activities contracted before the pandemic** but which will not take place on the scheduled time, local governments should be in search of options like postponement, using digital media or taking it as an opportunity to provide support to individual or institutional actors instead of cancelling their contracts.

In line with the proposals by Turkish Live Music Association (TESDER), the measures for live music sector that will be severely affected by the conditions of social distancing should be taken in cooperation with local governments. When social distancing measures are removed, local governments should provide **communication support** for the sector and should conduct venue agreements and cooperation with members of TOBB Assembly of Creative Industries or persons and institutions authorised by TESDER. Reducing the rate of **VAT applied to event tickets to 1%** and **abolishing the “rüsum” tax (also known as entertainment tax)** will be a great relief for these sectors constituting the creative power of the society. The alternative could be to create for the music sector a relief fund from tax revenues.

The **private sector actors** should supplement their active role in empowerment of the field through creating **new funds** and **sponsoring** the small and medium scale organisations as well as building **cooperation** with cultural institutions to promote the social value of culture and arts.

In these challenging times, the **individual donors** should continue to support young artists, designers and cultural professionals through their donations to individuals or cultural institutions.

The **continuity of funds and grants designed in cooperation with international institutions and foreign cultural centres in Turkey** should be guaranteed for the sustainability of artistic and cultural interactions on international level.

National foundations and philanthropic associations that provide funds and grants usually in priority areas such as health and education should also consider **supporting arts and culture for its capacities in community building**. They should be encouraged to assume a more active role in organising support for inclusive art projects that serve to enhance sense of solidarity and well-being.

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