

**PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT**

IN

THE ARTS

FEBRUARY 2017



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This report has been prepared
in the scope of the cultural policy
studies of Istanbul Foundation for
Culture and Arts.



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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Facilitating accessibility and engagement in the arts and democratization of culture are considered among the fundamental priorities of cultural policy. Countries with diverse cultural management practices have longstanding traditions of research on these subjects and a fairly broad scope of procedures implemented to build an arts audience and develop participatory practices in arts and culture.

With a holistic outlook on the sphere of arts and culture in Turkey, this report titled *Public Engagement in the Arts* attempts to identify the “users” of this sphere, while intending to shed light on the concepts of audience and participant. It embraces the premise of “culture for all” along the way, taking the context of accessibility and participation in cultural life as a reference. It thereby seeks to understand not only the motives of those engaging in the world of art and culture, but also the reasons why some others do (can) not; taking into account personal and environmental, physical and economic barriers, as well as obstacles behind accessibility, security, and communication. The report explores ways to discuss engagement also beyond these relatively tangible obstacles, by addressing topics such as making education and collaborative practices in artistic and cultural institutions more widespread; implementing localization processes; embracing innovative approaches in programming, and adopting an active use of digital technologies.

The report opens with an introduction describing why engaging practices—which can be considered a recent development in the sphere of arts and culture—are tackled, and what they signify in the context of Turkey. The introduction is followed by a section comprising definitions that would enable a better understanding of engaging approaches and practices in the arts, and data on the audience profile in Turkey. The three fundamental steps determined to integrate individuals in artistic and cultural life and to increase and diversify participatory practices (Research,

Eliminating Barriers to Engagement, Making New Ways for Audience Outreach) are explained in the report through examples. In these sections, where a selection of good practices from Turkey and around the world are accompanied by suggestions, each step is analyzed with the help of subheadings that elucidate engaging practices. The conclusion and recommendations section enumerates the basic principles of engagement in the arts, and puts forth suggestions about what public institutions, alongside art institutions, can do, and how individuals can take part in and contribute to this path through collaborations between different institutions.

In the present day and age, acknowledging the transformative and healing power of arts and culture, and investing in creativity are important for finding a way out of the political and economic crises experienced in similar ways in different geographies around the world. The need for new practices and strategies based on collaborations with the civil society in the field of arts engagement—analyzed thoroughly in this report—is growing further by the day. The report invites readers to take another look at the sphere of arts and culture and arts institutions in Turkey through the lens of a future in which every segment of the society can take part.

As seen from the perspective of Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV), the report's subject matter and timing coincide with the process of drafting a three-year strategic plan, prepared for the first time in the history of the institution. The approaches tackled in the study also constitute the point of reference for İKSV's search for effective strategies in its way of communication with its audience and supporters. This sixth report prepared in the scope of İKSV's cultural policy studies is intended as a permanent step towards making engaging practices and implementations—which can be agents of social transformation—more widespread in the sphere of arts and culture.

2 INTRODUCTION

In the present day and age, climate change, terror, economic depressions, migration and other such human-induced issues are deepened with each passing day. In such an environment, rethinking the responsibility of international networks, countries, institutions, entities and individuals regardless of scale or hierarchy and taking action can plant the seeds for more hopeful, more resilient and more enthusiastic communities. There are many things to be done at every scale within an approach that can be broadly defined as “contributing to society”.

The “Good Country Index”,¹ which sets out with the idea that global issues can only be overcome collectively, ranks 163 countries based on their contributions in diverse fields using data from several international research projects, including those led by the United Nations. In order to compensate for human damage to the earth, it invites countries to contribute to social life not only out of national interest, but also with the awareness that they are part of a global whole. What emerges when we probe the position of Turkey in the index is the following list, extending from areas where it is less burdened, to those where its damage is more significant:²

- 51st in Science & Technology: Nobel prizes, patents, international publications, etc.
- 58th in Culture: Press freedom, freedom of movement, creative goods and services exports based on UNCTAD data, etc.
- 60th in Planet & Climate: Ecological footprint, CO₂ emissions, reforestation, etc.
- 72nd in International Peace & Security: Arms exports, Internet security, dues in arrears to UN peace keeping budgets, etc.
- 103rd in Prosperity & Equality: Development assistance, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) outflows, fairtrade market size, etc.

¹ “Good Country Index.” *The Good Country*, www.goodcountry.org/index/overall-rankings.

² Ibid. www.goodcountry.org/index/overall-rankings#TUR

- 126th in global contribution to World Order: (Despite the fact that Turkey hosts over 3 million refugees as of January 2017):³ Charity giving, refugees hosted, refugees generated, birth rate, UN treaties signed, etc.⁴

The Good Country Index focuses on what countries do for humanity rather than what they accomplish within their own borders. By the same token, looking at areas where we, as citizens, contribute to social life through tools such as money, time, support, etc., it can be seen that Turkey falls short of making a contribution to the common future of the world.

Based on data from *Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Vatandaşlık Raporu 2015* [Report on Citizenship in Turkey and in the World, 2015] which examines 40 countries, 70 percent of participants in Turkey have indicated that “actively working in social and political organizations” is important; while those who make or raise donations for social and political causes constitute 6 percent (Turkey comes last among all countries); 12 percent are members of a political party; 6 percent are labor union members (Turkey is second to last), and 6 percent are members of sports clubs, cultural associations, or other associations or organizations where they can spend their leisure time (Turkey is again second to last).

The reason for low levels of engagement in and contribution to social life can be found in data from the same study. The participatory and contributory practices of individuals are determined by their sense of belonging to and trust in the society. Among those who have participated in the research, Turkey is the country where individuals trust each other the least. Only 14% of the participants in Turkey believe that one can trust others. While

3 “Turkey: Refugee Crisis, ECHO Factsheet.” *The European Commission Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations*, January 2017, http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/turkey_syrian_crisis_en.pdf.

4 Simon Anholt, the creator of the index, explains why Turkey ranks lower in the “World Order” category albeit hosting nearly 3.1 million refugees based on official numbers as follows: “Data pertaining to the 35 indicators which constitute the Good Country Index is compiled in fragments through diverse means; and therefore the entire index cannot be formulated with data from a single year. Some indicators report the previous year, a few are regularly updated, whereas some, for example, indicate positions extending over a period as long as a decade. For this reason, the most recent version of the Good Country Index, Version 1.1, is mainly based on data from 2011 (except for one indicator); because that is the most recent year for which all the 35 datasets available form a complete worldwide picture.”

people in Turkey trust those who are “similar” to themselves (relatives, neighbors, townspeople, etc.), they do not trust the “ordinary” people out there.⁵

Commenting on the results of their research, Prof. Ersin Kalaycıoğlu and Prof. Ali Çarkoğlu say it is not a coincidence that the level of trust is high in Scandinavian countries where democracy is deep-rooted. They point out that the feeling of trust renders people active citizens; that individuals take active part in civil society when they trust others.⁶

When we zoom in one step further and look at how active individuals are in everyday life and in which ways they participate in social life, we see that a lifestyle far removed from a sense of community and that leaves little room for change is widespread. According to *Türkiye’yi Anlama Kılavuzu* [The Guide to Understand Turkey] which comprises the results of a research conducted by IPSOS in 2016 with 13,799 people from 34 cities in Turkey, 49 percent of the society never go to the cinema; 39 percent never read books; 66 percent have never attended a concert, theater, opera, or a similar event; 81 percent do not play any musical instrument; 57 percent do not watch films or TV series on video, VCD, DVD or the Internet; 47 percent never read magazines or journals; 86 percent have never attended a leisure course. The most widely preferred activity, by 85%, is watching TV.⁷

All these data manifest that the society is making a limited effort to engage in the artistic and cultural world and acquire new knowledge and experiences in Turkey. The way to overcome this problem, that is, to foster an environment wherein individuals participate in social life more actively, necessitates an extensive mobilization, extending from structural changes to individual endeavors. All agents, from governments to civil society, from institutions to individuals, have their parts to play.

⁵ Çarkoğlu, Ali, and Ersin Kalaycıoğlu. *Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Vatandaşlık* [Citizenship in Turkey and in the World]. Istanbul Policy Center, 2015, pp. 85-86, ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/T%C3%BCrkiyede-ve-Dunyada-Vatandaslik-2014-1.pdf.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Türkiye’yi Anlama Kılavuzu* [The Guide to Understand Turkey]. Ipsos KMG, 2016, Microsoft Powerpoint file.

It is possible to make an impact on this picture if every individual contributes with the best of their knowledge, faculties, and resources. If individuals and institutions put on their thinking caps to assess what they are already doing and persist with tenacity, the first steps towards collective change can be taken. Regarding the sphere of arts and culture in Turkey, improving the current status of engagement would be a step towards increasing the number of individuals who actively participate in social life.

This report urges all the actors of the arts sphere to adopt new approaches that address contemporary needs. It invites cultural institutions to a self-assessment departing from the principle of contributing to social development and transformation, and all relevant actors to look at the sphere with a more holistic approach. While doing that, the report hopes to introduce the concept of engagement to a broader public by embracing a rights-based approach. It aims to discuss who participates in cultural activities and who do not or cannot, within the framework of individuals' right to take part in, access to and contribute to cultural life.⁸ The concept of engagement, sometimes referred to with keywords such as audience building, draws on an extensive literature which lies at the intersection of the disciplines of public administration, sociology, marketing, political science, cultural management, and law. Within the scope of this concept, the report intends to explain and illustrate what steps can be taken so that more people can engage in a much wider range of cultural events more often and more easily.

⁸ The proposed article to the Constitution entitled "The Right to Take Part in, Access to and Contribute to Cultural Life" is based on the General Comment number 21 which was adopted at the 43rd session of the UN Committee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on November 2-20, 2009, within the framework of article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of December 16, 1966, of which the Committee is the regulatory body. (For the proposed article to the Constitution drafted by İKSV, see: *The Proposed Article for the New Constitution: The Right to Take Part in, Access to and Contribute to Cultural Life*. İKSV, March 2012, p. 1, http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/files/Constitution_Article_Proposal.pdf.)

3 METHOD AND ITS LIMITATIONS

The qualitative and quantitative data in the report are presented in the framework of the concept of “public engagement in the arts”.

While the scope of the report is determined as the sphere of arts and culture in Turkey, the report confines research to Istanbul. Briefly summarizing the artistic and cultural universe in Istanbul through data on audience and cultural consumption in Turkey, it investigates what can be done in the context of engagement. In order to comprehend the picture in Turkey, it refers to leisure time and entertainment statistics, digital technology use rates, library use rates, and similar data and studies. Among these are the report *Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Vatandaşlık Araştırması* [Citizenship in Turkey and in the World] prepared by Ali Çarkoğlu and Ersin Kalaycıoğlu; “Youtube Türkiye Kullanıcı Profili Araştırması” [Youtube User Profile Research in Turkey]; *YEKON İstanbul Yaratıcı Ekonomi Çalışmaları Atölyesi Final Raporu* [YEKON Istanbul Creative Economy Studies Workshop Final Report]; *İSMEK Müşteri Memnuniyeti Araştırması* [İSMEK Customer Satisfaction Survey]; *Türkiye Okuma Kültürü Haritası* [Turkey Reading Culture Map], and various data from Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK).

The international examples cited in the work are mainly the cases mentioned in reports by arts councils, ministries of culture or similar institutions of countries that have integrated engagement in the arts in their policy processes, or good practice cases from around the world. Among those referred to are UNESCO, which has been conducting studies on engaging approaches and practices for almost half a century; Anglo-Saxon countries (USA, Canada, UK); EU member countries which have reported their deeds in the field of culture, and participatory practices from diverse regions of the world. The “Good Country Index” comparing countries in terms of their contribution to the world based on 35 categories is also used as a reference in the report.

Some of the data used in the report are based on the results of three studies in particular:

1. *Paydaşlar Araştırması Kalitatif Raporu* [Stakeholders Survey Qualitative Report] conducted by the research company GfK for İKSV.
2. *Paydaş Algı Araştırması Halk Paydaşı Raporu* [Stakeholder Perception Survey Report on the Public as a Stakeholder] conducted by GfK.
3. Interviews with cultural and arts institutions in Istanbul.

1. Stakeholders Survey Qualitative Report

Findings of the focus group meetings held in the scope of the Stakeholders Survey commissioned by İKSV to GfK, with the aim of identifying its audience, illustrate audiences' motives and thoughts concerning participation in arts events.

With the purposes of understanding how the audience interacts with the arts and revealing how İKSV is perceived by its audience, focus group meetings were held by GfK between March 3 and 25, 2016 with arts enthusiasts, potential arts enthusiasts, followers of İKSV events and Lale Kart members⁹ aged 18 to 50. Meetings were held with two groups per each category (one group for the 18-24 year old participants and one for the 25-50 year old participants) comprising at most six people. In addition, twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with artists. The excerpts in the report were compiled from the statements of the participants of the six focus group meetings held with arts enthusiasts and two focus group meetings held with potential arts enthusiasts.

2. Stakeholder Perception Survey Report on the Public as a Stakeholder

The Stakeholder Perception Survey Report on the Public as a Stakeholder prepared periodically in collaboration with GfK intends to contribute to the existing statistics on arts and culture

⁹ Tulip Card is the membership program of İKSV, bringing together 4,500 individual supporters while granting them discounts and privileges in all İKSV events.

in Turkey with research questions proposed by İKSV in addition to periodically collected engagement data in the scope of an omnibus survey.

The first phase of this research repeated every three months by GfK was carried out with 1,236 participants aged 15 and over in 15 cities across Turkey between March 23 and April 14, 2016 using the quantitative research method of data collection. The second phase of the research was conducted with 1,238 participants aged 15 and over in 15 cities in Turkey between September 20 and October 16, 2016, again with the same technique.¹⁰

The questions appended by İKSV to the omnibus survey and included with their findings in the report are the following, respectively:

1. Have you attended any arts events, such as the cinema, the theater, music, dance, performing arts, etc., or have you visited any exhibition-gallery or a museum in the past year?
2. Could you state your frequency of attendance to the following events in the past year?
3. Do you or does any member of your family practice any form of art or culture? If yes, could you identify what?

3. Interviews with Institutions

Face to face interviews were conducted by an independent researcher in the scope of the research with 17 public, private, or independent institutions. The interview questions prepared by İKSV sought to investigate the perspectives of these institutions—which actively contribute to the world of arts and culture in Istanbul—on public engagement in accordance with their missions and visions.¹¹

¹⁰ In both research phases, the confidence level of the sample is 95%, enabling analysis with a maximum margin of error of +/- 2.79%.

¹¹ The questionnaire used in the interviews with institutions can be found in the Appendix.

Among arts institutions in Istanbul relying primarily on sponsorships and individual support for their operation, the following were chosen for the interviews to represent different disciplines: Akbank Sanat, Arter, Borusan Sanat, Depo, Emek Sahnesi, Istanbul Modern, Kumbaracı50, Mekan Artı, Moda Sahnesi, Pera Museum, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, SALT and Zorlu PSM. Initiatives such as Sinemia and İyi Sahne were selected due to their novel and different approaches to the field. Institutions' selection was informed by their representing the different arteries of the cultural life in Istanbul. The said initiatives, on the other hand, were included in the scope of the research owing to their distinctive approaches in using contemporary techniques for arts access.

Among public institutions, survey questions were also addressed at Atatürk Library, an example for public libraries which stand out with their efforts towards increasing and spreading participatory practices as well as with their power of outreach, and at Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Lifelong Learning Center (İSMEK), a case illustrating institutions providing lifelong education. Distinguished by their services—which at times extend to the level of individual neighborhoods—the engaging practices of these institutions catering to their target audiences were also investigated in the same framework.

Examples compiled from institutions' replies to the survey questions were included in the report as excerpts. For readability, examples were separated from analyses, and in-text tables and graphics were used.

Suggestions aiming to enhance participatory practices were emphasized in the text with bold characters, while the various good practice cases compiled from around the world and from Turkey have been set against a blue background.

4 WHAT DOES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS MEAN?

Public engagement in the arts is the general name given to practices which create ways for the active participation of more people to the artistic and cultural life in the society, taking the right of every individual to take part in, access to and contribute to cultural life as a point of departure.¹² It targets not only the existing audience but everyone possible, since engagement aims to create processes which enable a majority of people to become observing, exploring, collecting, perceiving and self-expressing individuals. It encompasses several practices, such as eliminating barriers to access; developing arts education; promoting interaction between artists and audiences; increasing the quality and quantity of participation; cherishing cultural diversity, and making creative forms of expression more widespread, aiming for cultural production and services to reach as broad an audience as possible and become part of individuals' lives in different ways.

Stretching the boundaries of “the arts”, public engagement in the arts also encompasses, alongside professional art practices, creative forms of self-expression of the individual.¹³ In this respect, participation in the arts is inferred not only through the number of tickets sold, but also through different modes of engagement with the arts, such as individuals' amateur art practices, the music they listen to at home, or concerts they watch online. Thus, technological innovations are also taken into consideration. Today, new technologies, which lead to forms of engagement in cultural life beyond mere ticket purchase and the crowding of venues, present opportunities to attend arts events from all around the world, or even to record them for watching later. Art enthusiasts can participate interactively in some events, or they can be part of the artwork produced. Such interactions can leave deeper traces than an experience involving people as mere spectators

12 See: *The Proposed Article for the New Constitution: The Right to Take Part in, Access to and Contribute to Cultural Life*. İKSV, March 2012, p. 1, http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/files/Constitution_Article_Proposal.pdf.

13 Stallings, Stephanie N. and Bronwyn Mauldin. *Public Engagement in the Arts: A Review of Recent Literature*. Los Angeles County Arts Commission, August 2016, p. 8, www.lacountyarts.org/pubfiles/LACAC_PubEngLitRev.pdf.

would. In this sense, public engagement in the arts also expands the definition of participation in the arts by taking into consideration diverse contexts where the individual and the arts meet.

Engaging practices question to what extent art production and arts venues address and reach the audience and the broader society, and look at how the society interacts with cultural events. They emphasize that the road to building a network of relationships among art, artists and individuals (i.e. all the actors taking part in social life, including citizens) passes through open communication and collaboration. As they challenge the sharp distinction between artists and audiences in arts events, they aim to turn audiences into active participants and facilitate a more profound and more meaningful audience experience.¹⁴

Engaging practices attach particular importance to all institutions acting as dynamos of the arts milieu and the role undertaken by these institutions. In order to implement engaging practices, above all, all units of cultural and arts institutions need to be devoted to this long term process in collaboration. This process, which starts with every institution taking another look at itself and the audience it targets, consists of continuous, intertwined steps. On the one hand, it necessitates conducting usual audience development activities in an effort to identify the existing audience, determine the ways of participation, and pinpoint and eliminate barriers to participation, if any. On the other hand, it also encompasses the pursuit of addressing groups previously unreached by employing engaging practices. To this end, it would be useful to adopt several new practices, such as integrating active forms of participation in art programming, organizing education programs, or bringing service to people in the surrounding communities.

Audience development is the general name for audience relationship practices traditionally led by arts institutions in order to increase the number of participants or their frequency of participation in cultural events, or to diversify their audience profile. It mainly comprises the segmentation of the audience attending the events of a cultural institution, and doing the programming and content development in a way that addresses the characteristics of these particular segments. Most “offers” such as pricing, discounts, promotions, etc. geared toward increasing participation are effective methods of the field of marketing, and they target the existing audience of a venue or arts institution.

In time, these audiences may diminish, grow old, or their participation may suffer from interruptions. So arts institutions are in a constant need to reach new audiences. Who could be the audience for a recently launched arts institution, for instance? The easiest way to overcome this ambiguity is to position oneself so as to attract the existing audience already interested and participating in arts events. Yet, such an approach signifies a re-slicing of the existing audience pie. Engaging practices, however, promote a genuine growth of this pie, rather than its redistribution. While they aim one step further than audience development practices—which signify increasing the number or the diversity of audiences or their frequency of participation—they take a rights-based perspective as their point of reference. Considering the social role of art and its contribution to the betterment of life, audiences should emerge not as consumers of arts institutions, but as their essential partners.

5 STEP 1: RESEARCH

5 1 HOW TO MEASURE ENGAGEMENT?

The definition and the boundaries of the scope of what we call “artistic and cultural practices” affect the measurements of engagement. In other words, answers to the questions of who participates in arts and culture, and how often, are shaped by how we define arts and culture. Changes in the population structure, and behavior patterns and innovations introduced by the present age keep the question of how to measure different forms of engagement in the arts always on the front burner.

Several international studies extending over many years have been trying to understand how communities in different countries interact with the arts. These span a diverse range of measurement methods, from traditional household surveys to ethnographic studies. Among the studies at the national level, particularly those repeated periodically over years shed light on the changes in the interaction between communities and the arts over time.

Cultural Participation Surveys from Around the World¹⁵



15 This map has been excerpted from the 2009 UNESCO report *Measuring Cultural Participation* and updated. To access the report: *Measuring Cultural Participation: 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics Handbook No.2*. UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009, www.uis.unesco.org/culture/Documents/fcs-handbook-2-cultural-participation-en.pdf.

1 JAPAN

- Survey of Leisure Activities 2001-2008
- Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities 2016

2 UNITED KINGDOM

- Taking Part in the Arts 2010
- Taking Part Survey 2016

3 CHINA

- General Social Survey of China (Urban Questionnaire) 2003

4 CANADA

- A Profile of the Cultural and Heritage Activities of Canadians 2005
- Great Lakes Arts, Culture, and Heritage Participation Survey Report 2007
- Patterns in Culture Consumption and Participation 2000

5 USA

- Survey of Public Participation in the Arts 2008
- CEI2010: Philadelphia Cultural Engagement Index (Great Philadelphia) 2010
- Great Lakes Arts, Culture, and Heritage Participation Survey Report 2007
- Culture and the Arts Survey 2007 (Philadelphia)
- The Diversity of Cultural Participation: Findings of a National Survey 2004
- Arts, Culture and the Social Health of the Nation 2005

6 HONG KONG

- Public Attitudes on Art 2000
- Hong Kong Arts and Cultural Indicators Project 2005

7 SINGAPORE

- Population Survey on the Arts 2009
- Population Survey on the Arts 2014

8 MEXICO

- Encuesta Nacional de Prácticas y Consumos Culturales 2004

9 COLOMBIA

- Encuesta Nacional de Cultura 2002
- Encuesta de Consumo Cultural 2008

10 UGANDA

- Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010

11 NEW ZEALAND

- Cultural Experience Survey 2002
- New Zealand General Social Survey 2016
- New Zealanders and the Arts 2014

12 BRASIL

- O Hábito de Lazer Cultural do Brasileiro 2010

13 VENEZUELA

- Consumo Cultural 2010

14 FRANCE

- Les Pratiques Culturelles des Français 2008

15 MALTA

- Culture Participation Survey 2011

16 POLAND

- The Frequency and Determinants of Participation in Selected Cultural Forms, Szczecin

17 CHILE

- Encuesta de Consumo Cultural y Uso del Tiempo Libre 2004/2005

18 URUGUAY

- Imaginarios y Consumo Cultural
- Segundo Informe Nacional Sobre Consumo Cultural e Imaginarios 2009

19 ITALY

- I Cittadini e il Tempo Libero 2006

20 NETHERLANDS

- Culture at a Glance 2014

Comprehensive surveys like these are conducted by ministries, councils on arts and culture or agencies in order to make healthier decisions in cultural policy processes, determine the sphere of influence of culture and arts, and shape audience development activities. Centrality and periodicity of the surveys lend them consistency. The data gathered is made accessible to all relevant institutions and to the public. Some countries conduct surveys that focus on determining who do not or cannot participate alongside who do, and factors that influence non-participation.

Conveying statistics in an intelligible and usable form is as important as keeping thorough statistics. National Arts Council Singapore, for instance, opens its periodically-kept statistics on arts to public use through meticulously prepared graphics. The results, shared in a simple yet attractive visual language intelligible to anyone with Internet access, are presented in a data format researchers and interested parties can easily interpret and rework into knowledge.¹⁶

With the Taking Part Survey,¹⁷ the United Kingdom first determines the reasons for low levels of engagement, and then, tackling the subject more comprehensively, it establishes an Audience Agency network spread across the country.

Such agencies provide consultancy and education for arts institutions on audience development research and other managerial topics. This series of actions, which started out as a research project targeting hard-to-reach groups, in time gives life to an—online—platform where data from different institutions are collected, interpreted and shared.

16 “Population Survey on the Arts 2015.” *National Arts Council Singapore*, September 28, 2016, www.nac.gov.sg/whatwedo/support/research/population-survey.html.

17 “Taking Part Survey.” *UK Department for Culture, Media & Sport*, September 26, 2013, www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part.

Endeavors to improve the quality and presentation of data on arts and culture gathered on a national level show that a single method is not enough to measure the developing world of the arts, and cultural consumption practices. What comes out, especially when seen from the perspective of public engagement in the arts, is that engagement is not confined to practices of “high art”,¹⁸ and that measurement and the accessible presentation of findings are indispensable both for individuals and arts institutions.

In Canada, the Canada Council for the Arts, which considers establishing the relationship between art and audience as one of its fundamental missions since 1957, focuses on various groups within the society and integrates efforts to improve engaging practices in its corporate plan through planning of strategies and actions. Prior to preparing the 2011-2016 strategic plan,¹⁹ the council performs a self-assessment, and due to the rising importance of engaging practices in the arts, includes this subject among its priorities. Although the council states its main goal as primarily supporting professional arts, it deems a significant criterion of success as all Canadians being able to benefit from the works of the council. To this end, it delineates that it will continue to support cultural institutions as long as they reach the public, demonstrate an effort together with artists and other institutions towards the integration of the public, and build new relationships between sectors and their own communities.

18 Debated concepts of “high culture” and along the same thread “high art” are names given to cultural products believed to exhibit the best and most sophisticated examples of the arts. High art most often signifies cultural products which are appreciated by intellectuals or aristocrats (such as music, dance, painting, performing arts, etc.). On the other hand, the essence of the distinction between “high culture” and “popular culture” embraced by broader segments of the society, what it consists in, or to which extent such a distinction can be made at all, have long been debated by many thinkers.

19 *Strengthening Connections: Corporate Plan 2011–16 Summary*. Canada Council for the Arts, 2016, p. 7, publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/canadacouncil/K21-24-2011-eng.pdf.

In Turkey, the studies in question are officially led by TÜİK. In studies conducted by TÜİK and in other similar research, quantitative data is taken as the indicator of engagement, and qualitative data is not included. Such studies compile information such as the number of people flocking to a venue, the number of visitors in museums and archeological sites, or ticket sales in a movie theater. These pieces of information are sometimes grouped according to the city. Nevertheless, data about the participant's identity (age, sex, educational status, etc.) are oftentimes not officially collected. Furthermore, periodic data which could point to longitudinal change over years is not thoroughly compiled. Therefore, only a partial view of the changes in public engagement in the arts can be obtained.

While the small volume of official data collected on national and urban scales creates a problem for arts institutions, they develop their own methods to better understand their audience profile and work towards knowing their existing audience more thoroughly. It is clear that the adoption of a periodic data collection method by each institution, and the formulation of a system by which these data can be compiled by the public, would both facilitate a better understanding of longitudinal changes and make possible the proper coverage of these data on Turkey in international studies.

Among the arts institutions interviewed in the scope of the research, Akbank Sanat conducts surveys in event venues and in the institution's own venue in order to gather information about participants. In addition, the institution evaluates feedback from sector experts, advisory board members and social media. A comprehensive research is conducted every few years. In Pera Museum, in addition to surveys and online tools, more traditional methods are also employed: assessing the observations of employees, holding one-on-one interviews, and reading the comments in the guestbook every morning. As for Istanbul Modern, questions seeking to identify and determine the expectations of audiences are addressed in person to the visitors in the museum. The findings of the periodic research, wherein the questions are reformulated every six months, are shared and discussed with employees.

Every institution gives a different reply to the question of “Who participates?” in the framework of its own services and experience. A most common classification is to group the audience according to sex and age range. Income status can also be factored in for ticketed events. With ethnographic studies such as focus group meetings and face-to-face interviews with visitors, qualitative data can also be collected. Nevertheless, when it comes to public engagement, the question of “Who cannot participate?” must also be given equal weight, and determining causes of non-engagement and working towards solutions must be an integral part of these measurement processes.

In order to better understand and develop the audience profile for the arts, to determine the barriers to access and formulate sensible cultural policies in this field, it is essential that public institutions collect periodic data on a national level in a manner that can respond to the necessities of the present age and in light of changing demographics and the contemporary debates in the field. It is also important that these data are shared with relevant parties, institutions and the public, in a way easily accessible and intelligible, in collaboration with arts institutions. The process will follow a smoother course if arts institutions also make an effort to play an active part in it and welcome such collaborations with public institutions.

5 2 WHO ARE THE AUDIENCES AND HOW DO THEY ENGAGE?

One of the most important components of the world of art and culture is the audience. Both theoretical and empirical approaches have been used to define the concept of the audience. A review of the literature on engagement reveals that economics-based approaches and sociological approaches—which claim that the former are inadequate and highlight social factors alongside individual motivation—stand side by side. Bourdieu has been highly influential in understanding cultural engagement with his concept of “cultural capital”.²⁰ According to Bourdieu, cultural tastes and cultural engagement practices have social roots, and cultural consumption (e.g. upper classes using cultural consumption to underscore their distinction) in a sense plays a part in consolidating social stratification and class distinctions.²¹ According to the traditional economics-based approach, the audience is a rational consumer who tries to maximize utility. In this approach, the income of the audience and the price of the purchased service are the most important factors determining the audience’s decision. Engagement is directly proportional to income and inversely to price. Stigler and Becker, however, reconceptualized this approach and stated that artistic experience and prior knowledge of the arts, education, and family background are influential factors in addition to personal taste, income status and price variables.²² As suggested by McCarthy and Jinnett, the economics-based approach highlights the importance of “the role that practical factors such as price, income, information, and leisure alternatives play in individuals’ participation decisions”²³, and shows that the more knowledgeable people are, the more likely they are to participate in events, and the more enjoyment and satisfaction they get from a given event.²⁴

20 Briefly put, cultural capital signifies the familiarity with the prevailing culture in a society, and the ability to understand and use the language of educated classes.

21 Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.

22 McCarthy, Kevin F., and Kimberly Jinnett. *A New Framework for Building Participation in the Arts*. RAND Corporation, 2001, www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR1323.pdf.

23 *Ibid.* p. 14

24 *Ibid.*

Approaches which tackle the subject with the claim that social factors are influential in shaping an individual's choices and tastes underline the importance of factors which constitute identity, such as age, sex, class, family background and education. From the perspective of cultural policy, the leading influential factor is the existence of policies which promote engagement. Kelley's work focusing on the individual's free time provides a significant contribution in this approach, and suggests that the leisure time available to an individual directly influences her or his leisure choices.²⁵ In this sense, social roles and the demands of work life stand out as factors determining the amount of free time available, as well as how it will be shaped.

Hand in hand with changes in cultural life, audiences' tastes, attendance preferences and frequencies also change over years; they cannot remain stable. The social and financial status of a person may change over time, while age may also contribute to changing preferences. Changes in the cycle of life affect ways of participating in culture and arts. Consequently, categorizing the individual's relationship with the cultural life simply as "engaging" or "not engaging" will prove to be inadequate in many cases. The decline in the participation frequency of persons who often attended cultural events when younger means neither that they have lost interest in this field altogether, nor that they will raise their children without art in their lives. Therefore, when institutions are segmenting their audience, there are several factors they should take into consideration.

The UK-based Arts Council of Wales evaluates engagement practices based on frequency:²⁶

- Non attendance
- Infrequent attendance
- Occasional attendance
- Frequent attendance
- Venue / company / event supporter status²⁷

When the role played by arts events in socialization is taken into account, individuals may have different reasons for attendance:

- Support for participation of family member / friend
- Private personal participation
- Organized personal participation
- Organizational role
- Practice instructional / developmental role

When audiences are grouped according to their degree of participation, on the other hand, the following segmentation emerges:

- Central audiences: Those with an established practice of access and participation
- Occasional audiences: Those who attend sporadically, when it is convenient, or to blockbuster events
- Potential users: Those who are interested in the arts but do (can) not participate due to certain barriers
- Non users: Those who have no interest in the world of arts and culture, or those with a negative experience

²⁶ Adamson, Dave, et al. *Arts Council of Wales: Arts and Public Engagement: Patterns, Processes and Levers for Change*. The Arts Council of Wales, 2008, p. 10, www.arts.wales/what-we-do/research/latest-research/arts-and-public-engagement.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.10.

These segments can be read as subcategories helping institutions better identify their audiences. Some institutions describe their audiences under general headings; such as “art enthusiasts”, or “residents of Istanbul”, while some include smaller subgroups (such as families with babies) in their definitions. How institutions define their audiences also determines the scope of the service they provide.

To sum up, first defining the audience and then proceeding with sub-segmentations is a method that helps better comprehend the bigger picture before understanding audience practices. Overlooking important factors that might influence audiences’ motivation to participate, especially on the part of arts institutions, can cause a potential audience to become a non user.

5

3

IS IT POSSIBLE TO DESCRIBE THE AUDIENCE PROFILE IN TURKEY?

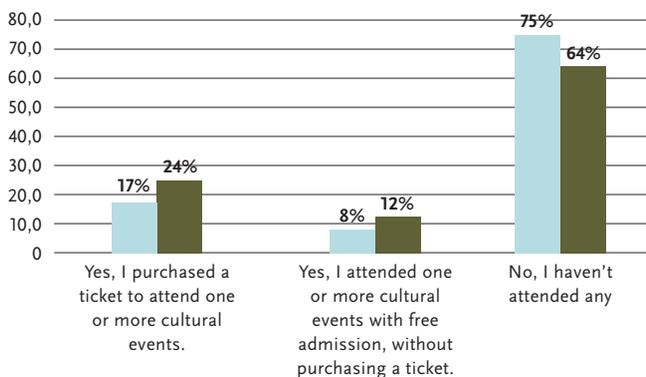
The lack of detailed and periodically collected official data hinders conclusive results about the audience profile in culture and arts. On the other hand, data yielded by the two omnibus surveys held in June and September 2016 by GfK demonstrate that engagement in the arts is limited.

According to these data, the highest rate of participation in the arts in Turkey is observed in people between ages 18-24 and in the segment distinguished by high educational status and high income—namely the AB group. When we take the average of June and September results, the ratio of those who “purchased tickets to attend one or more events per year” is 20%, while the ratio of those who participated in a free event, without purchasing a ticket, is around 10%. Those who say they haven’t attended any event comprise the vast majority with around 70%.

According to *The Guide to Understand Turkey*, which comprises the results of a Turkey-wide research conducted by IPSOS in 2016, 49% of the society have never been to the cinema; 39% never read books; 66% have never attended a concert, theater, opera, or a similar event; 81% do not play any musical instrument; 57% do not watch films or TV series on video, VCD, DVD or the Internet; 47% do not read magazines or journals; 86% have never attended a leisure course. The most widely preferred activity, by 85%, is watching TV.

Although they have different sample groups and questionnaires, both of these recent surveys manifest that the sphere defined as arts and culture has a very limited audience in Turkey. The GfK survey shows that participation is highest in high-education groups. This underlines once more the function of “having prior knowledge”, which, when identifying the arts audience, was seen to be a factor encouraging participation. As a brief note on this point, it would hardly come as a surprise if the inclusion of well-formulated courses on arts and culture in formal education made a positive impact on participation figures.²⁸

Participation in Arts and Cultural Events (GfK, 2016)

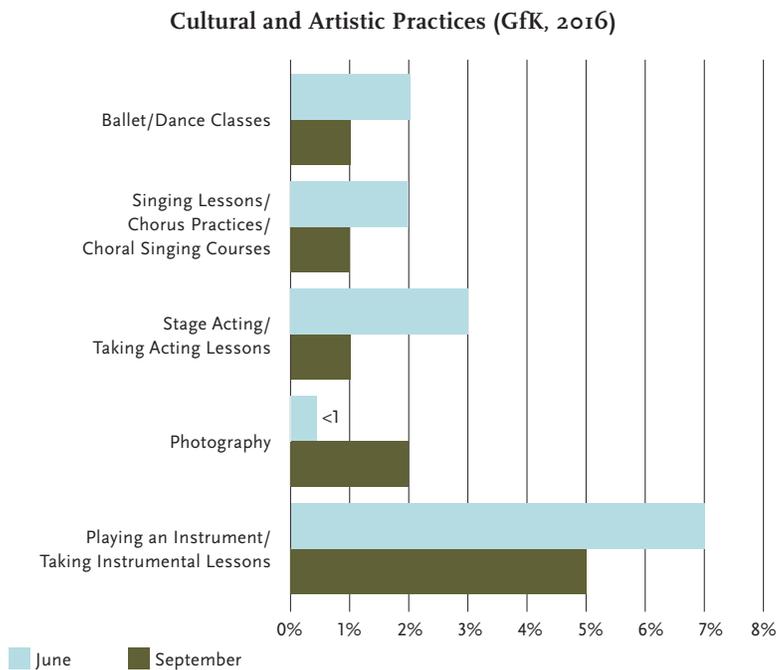


Among survey participants, those who go to the cinema have the highest frequency of attendance (once a month). These are followed by those who go to the theater, with 8 times a year.

28 For a more in-depth discussion and a policy proposition on this subject, see: Fazlıoğlu Akin, Zülal, and Özlem Ece. *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey*. Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, 2014, <http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/images/files/RethinkingArtsEducation.pdf>.

Visitors of museums and galleries, and those who attend events in a cultural institution in their close vicinity comes in their frequency of attendance.

As for participatory practices, it is observed that 82% of survey participants do not engage in any field of culture and arts. Among those who do, 7% play or are learning to play an instrument; 4% take painting or sculpture classes, and 3% act in a theater or take acting classes.



Based on the observation that those who are interested in or practice art in their daily lives, albeit little, participate to and follow cultural events more frequently, it can be said that arts participation constitutes a continuum extending from amateur practices to event attendance.²⁹ The said practices span a wide range from handicrafts to singing in a chorus, from selecting books in a library to watching concert videos.

29 Cited in *Public Engagement in the Arts Discussion Paper*. Canada Council for the Arts, October 16, 2012, p. 11. <http://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2012/10/public-engagement-in-the-arts>

On the other hand, according to leisure time activity surveys conducted with young people aged 15-24 in Turkey (TÜİK 2014-2015), watching TV (93.9%) and spending time on social media (56.4%) are among activities that young people most frequently engage in.³⁰

Data suggests that once again only a limited segment of the population in Turkey has an artistic or cultural hobby. It can thus be concluded that the majority of the population comprises non users or potential audiences.

30 “Basın Odası Haberleri.” [Press Room News] *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK)* [Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK)], May 31, 2016, www.tuik.gov.tr/basinOdasi/haberler/2016_66_20160531.pdf.

6 STEP 2: ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

In addition to physical barriers and barriers in areas of accessibility, safety, infrastructure, and communication; individual and socioeconomic factors can also be listed among the obstacles to participation in cultural life. The identification and elimination of the barriers in the former group are relatively easier. Eliminating obstacles stemming from personal biases and the social environment, and changing established priorities, on the other hand, require longer term collective endeavors.

It may not be possible for all institutions providing cultural services—save for public institutions—to represent all parts of the society, so women, children, elderly people, LGBTI individuals, minorities, people with disabilities, and disadvantaged communities. Public institutions must determine and plug the gaps in this respect. Setting goals in a way that embraces *all*, and encouraging institutions to develop new implementations in a way that no stakeholder in the society is left out must therefore be the priority when formulating cultural policies on national and local scales. Identifying the needs of the society or the barriers to engagement with a holistic and inclusive approach, and supporting the development of new practices to this end, might constitute one of the most significant steps towards the development of tangible policies addressing participatory practices, and their nationwide dissemination.

Although the leadership of public institutions is indispensable for eliminating barriers in the implementation phase, it may not be sufficient. The only way to eliminate all barriers is through a social consciousness and by taking collective responsibility. When it comes to leadership, it can be beneficial, however, that public institutions implement cases that could serve as a model, and establish support programs to increase good practices. Along this line, many states in Europe set out with the goal “Culture for all”, but also collaborate with civil initiatives with representative power on this intricate and sweeping path.

6 1 PERSONAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL BARRIERS

The effect of personal biases, problems stemming from the social environment and the education system, and financial factors come to the fore among reasons preventing large parts of the society from participating in cultural life. Demands of the school or work life, combined with a lack of motivation or financial difficulties, make it hard to solve this puzzle through individual efforts alone. All actors operating in the field, public or private, must play their parts on different levels to create exhaustive and long term solutions.

The solutions to physical barriers and barriers concerning accessibility, safety and communication—which can be regarded as rather obvious and tangible hindrances—do rely more on institutions, however; and when these barriers are eliminated, the possibility of potential audiences to become participants increases.

Biases

Despite the diversity in the milieu of arts and culture especially in Istanbul, some audience opinions on different disciplines of art tend to be biased. Biases naturally lead to selective perception, lowering the possibility of individuals to give a chance to certain cultural events.

As excerpts from focus group meetings illustrate, opera, for instance, is regarded highly in terms of artistry; but is also considered to be remote, and this has become an established opinion. It is striking that, due to lack of knowledge or curiosity, potential audiences claim that there is nothing opera can offer, or that they would not “get” opera; albeit the lack of any previous experience.

What is the reason you do not, or only rarely, attend some events?

- *I am not interested, no one I know attends them, I have no prior knowledge, I would feel lonelier.*
- *Opera does not fit in our culture, it feels like it belongs to a historical period. I am not sure, though, if there are any modern pieces. The same goes for the ballet; it has very symbolic origins, and honestly I cannot understand it, technically speaking. I have been in and around it for two months now, but still, the feeling of incomprehension persists.*

The way to overcome biases passes through creating opportunities for encounter and experience. Looking for audiences in places other than the institution's own events or the events of other institutions that give similar services, or making brief presentations to the existing audience about new programs are a few of the steps that can be taken to this end. **If possible, designing these presentations and encounters in a way that would encourage a reassessment of existing biases, either as guided events or in a format that allows for mutual dialogue, can help institutions meet new audiences.**

An event organized by the Turkish National Youth Philharmonic Orchestra in the Sarıyer marketplace sets an example for overcoming the said biases and establishing direct contact with the audience. In this unscripted event, the vendors of the Sunday market and shoppers are asked the names of certain popular classical music songs and their composers. Even though the names usually do not ring a bell, when four members of the orchestra start playing the pieces live, everyone remembers the tune from somewhere—mobile phone ringtones, the on-hold music for banks' call centers, the TV, etc.³¹ Although a survey conducted by the Radio and

31 "Mozart Ne Arar Pazarda?" [What Business Does Mozart Have in the Marketplace?] *Youtube*, uploaded by culture culture istanbul, July 29, 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsZAsYDV7Mo.

Television Supreme Council of Turkey (RTÜK) concludes that 92.3% of the population do not listen to classical music, it turns out that this genre of music is actually not far removed from our daily lives.³²

The social environment and the education system

Individuals spend most of their time initially at school and later at work, shaping their social environments. Both have their requirements and constraints. In addition, the priorities of those who have to care for other family members can change over time, or the demands of work life can vary from period to period. The part that individuals play in social life and in the family directly influences the availability of and the choice of how to spend their leisure time. And when we focus on the role of school life in determining the relationship between the individual and the arts, the education system in Turkey proves insufficient particularly in elementary and intermediate level art education.³³ **As such, strengthening art education at every level in the scope of formal education can be the biggest step that can be taken in this regard.**

Which arts events do you attend less, and why?

- *Things change when you're in university. Being in a big city, student clubs, student circles change one's ideas about this subject.*
- *Some of us get to meet activities like football, volleyball, and to some extent music and dance at school; but we do not encounter activities with an aesthetic dimension at school. The school might be a triggering force; I first met museums when I was at school, for instance, but I saw nothing of ballet there.*

³² “Kamuoyu Araştırması: Radyo Dinleme Eğilimleri-2.” [Public Opinion Poll: Practices of Listening to the Radio-2] RTÜK, January 2010, p. 70, www.ratem.org/web/radyo_dinleme_2.doc.

³³ Fazlıoğlu Akın, Zülal, and Özlem Ece. *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey*. Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, 2014, <http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/images/files/RethinkingArtsEducation.pdf>.

Getting into a different social circle can have positive impacts on fostering an interest in arts and culture. For instance, interest in the arts soars during one's university years thanks mostly to clubs and circle of friends; cultural institutions developing new strategies to address this change can positively influence engagement. **Along this line, institutions can get in touch with relevant university clubs to gain visibility in the campus, and can collaborate with relevant departments on productions and events.**

What prevents you from attending some arts events?

- *It is my introspection after university, my pursuit for knowing myself, emergence of questions such as what am I, what am I thinking, do I have my own truth, what kind of truth is that, do I want to share my truth with others, how do I express it?*

In the years that follow, amidst the fast pace of work life, the university effect can only be reattained if the social environment acts as a motivating force.

Excerpts from focus group meetings indicate that experiences abroad can lead to a reevaluation of one's engagement processes and the participatory practices in one's home country. Experiencing new things in life, stepping outside established daily routines, encountering the different can trigger a transformation in individuals.

What was the turning point that led you to become more interested in cultural events?

- *After going abroad a couple of times, I started feeling envious. I felt the desire to imitate their lifestyles. I saw that they lived their life fully. When I came back to Turkey I felt ...jealous, I could say, or something like that.*

Based on the findings of the focus group survey, social factors such as the absence of role models or companions are determining factors for engagement. The lack of a friend or a relative around who supports such interests makes it harder for these practices to become established.

Why do you attend some events more frequently?

- *My spouse takes me to a play. This experience brings joy, melancholy, intense emotions, and an outlet to express myself. I take my friends for instance; they say “Come on, leave it, what business do we have with the theater?” and I need to push them. But after once or twice, it turns into something everyone, from every part of the society, can understand. Once they delve into it, feel the heat of the stage, people genuinely say, “I thought it would be different”. They sometimes find theater, opera or ballet too intellectual. Opera is more highbrow, for instance, but I do believe they can find something about themselves in the theater. It expands one’s capacity for self expression.*

- *The friend factor is important. I cannot find anyone to go with, and I don’t want to go by myself.*

As mentioned above, getting into different social environments presents the opportunity to encounter different examples of culture and arts. After a certain age, however, the lack of people around one who follow cultural activities and provide guidance hinders participation.

Why do you attend some events more frequently than others?

- *We saw nothing like that growing up. They took us to the cinema and to the theater when we were children, but we had never been to the opera.*

What prevents you from attending some arts events?

- *Being introduced to things in the family is so different. I had to accomplish a lot by myself. My family never encouraged me; I explored, I strived. My mother never said, look, there is this class, you should take it.*

The excerpts from GfK focus group meetings underline that the social environment and educational system can both facilitate and hinder the access of the individual to arts and culture.

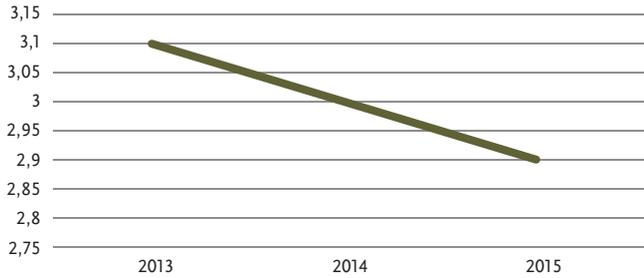
Financial barriers

These are the barriers of access to cultural events stemming from individuals' financial conditions or institutions' ticketing and pricing policies. Especially in societies where economic problems prevail, the income gap between affluent and impoverished classes is wider, and unemployment is on the rise, eliminating structural barriers to arts engagement can require long term policies. Strategies and certain practices developed by art institutions to eliminate these barriers may, however, facilitate individuals' access to the sphere of arts and culture and help overcome their lack of motivation.

A look at artistic and cultural expenditures in Turkey reveals a decrease, particularly over the last three years. Comparing the household consumption data provided every year by TÜİK, it can be seen that while household consumption has been increasing over the years, the share allocated for arts and culture has been on the decline. The percentage of artistic and cultural expenditures in the household go down from 3.1% in 2013 to 3% in 2014 and further down to 2.9% in 2015. While many factors may have contributed to the dwindling of this share in face of increasing general expenditures, safety issues

in the country as well as the waning of conditions that create an environment conducive to the arts could be significant reasons. Istanbul comes to the fore on a regional scale as the city with the highest share of artistic and cultural expenditures (3.8%).³⁴

Household Consumption Expenditures for Arts and Culture (%)



Household consumption is calculated through tickets purchased. Statistically speaking, individuals can participate in the arts through buying tickets, so only if they have an income. The 10% entertainment tax³⁵ and the 18% VAT charged for each ticket are also critical as reasons of low consumption. A household in Istanbul spends 115.63 Turkish Liras on arts and culture out of the total monthly income, independently of the number of household residents.³⁶ Of this amount, 32.37 Turkish Liras are paid to the state as tax.

As noted by a participant of the GfK focus group meeting, for several people, having a certain amount of money is a prerequisite for participation in cultural life. High ticket prices are stated as a barrier in the interviews.

34 “Hanehalkı Tüketim Harcaması, 2015.” [Household Consumption Expenditures, 2015] Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) [Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK)], August 1, 2016, www.tuik.gov.tr/PdfGetir.do?id=21580.

35 As observed by the Turkey Event and Entertainment Sector Association (TESDER), which works toward the development of the entertainment sector in Turkey, the entertainment tax is a practice specific to Turkey. The association underlines that with the readily paid taxes plus the 10% withholding tax and 20% income tax, the state is the one making the most out of ticket sales, and maintains that this tax, adopted nowhere else in the world, should be abolished. (See: Aksoy, Asu, and Serhan Ada. *YEKON İstanbul Yaratıcı Ekonomi Çalışmaları Atölyesi Final Raporu* [YEKON Istanbul Creative Economy Studies Workshop Final Report]. İstanbul Bilgi University Cultural Policy and Management Research Center, docplayer.biz.tr/12760464-Istanbul-yaratıcı-ekonomi-calismalari-atolyesi-final-raporu-yekon-istanbul-bilgi-universitesi-kultur-politikalari-ve-yonetimi-kpy-arastirma-merkezi.html).

36 According to 2015 data. Calculation based on the average household income of 3,043 TRY.

What was the turning point that led you to become more interested in cultural events?

- *Starting to earn money.*

People might tend to choose among the available cultural events not based on which field of art or type of event they enjoy; but through a price comparison.

Why do you attend these events more frequently?

- *I can find them in every shopping mall. Cinema offers a large selection of genres. And it is also more convenient for my budget. It is more affordable than going to a concert. I like things I can interpret; when I go to an exhibition I cannot interpret the piece of art in front of me, I like more concrete stuff.*

When seen from this perspective, **organizing free-of-charge events is necessary and crucial** to ensure the participation of socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. In this sense, events with free admission organized by libraries, cultural centers and lifelong learning centers are significant. Most of the institutions which carry a permanent collection or organize long-term exhibitions, like museums, aim to overcome this barrier by offering free admission one day of the week. **A well-announced practice with a fixed day can create participatory habits in time.** Nevertheless, organizing free events may not always be sufficient to overcome financial barriers.

Furthermore, there is a widely held belief that cultural activities with free admission would be of “low quality”. **Institutions ensuring that their free events are just as meticulously prepared and of equal quality as their ticketed events** can permanently alter these biases. According to the findings of the focus group meetings held by GfK, the free concerts organized by İKSV in the scope of its festivals in collaboration with the Kadıköy Municipality are received positively and attended frequently.

At the same time, some institutions maintain that while it is important to eliminate the financial barrier, a fee, albeit symbolic, needs to be paid in order to establish participatory practices, and furthermore that the rituals of printing tickets, going to and queuing at the box office, picking tickets prior to the event and showing them to venue attendants are also important.

The decision of making an event free of charge or available at a symbolic price is generally a part of institutions' pricing policies. For people who are familiar from everyday life with campaigns or products of diverse qualities and prices offered by the free market economy, it is not surprising to come across different prices for different offers and promotions in the world of art and culture. **While loyalty cards, discount cards, and similar marketing tools can be used to gain audiences, the same tools can also be employed for the use of people from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups.**

The "culture bonus" project from Italy, spearheaded by the undersecretary of the prime ministry, is an example for such an initiative. The culture bonus provides 500 Euros for young people turning 18 to spend on cultural items. The project, for which the government has allocated 290 million Euros, aims for a total of 574,593 young people to benefit from the bonus via logging in digitally. Through this culture bonus, which teenagers can get via a Smartphone or tablet app, not only can they buy books, but also tickets to the theater, the cinema, concerts, or museums, exhibitions, monuments, galleries, archaeological sites, and even natural parks. The implementation of a similar project for teachers next year is under consideration.³⁷

Such practices targeting groups whose access to arts and culture is limited, particularly due to financial reasons, can be implemented also in Turkey.

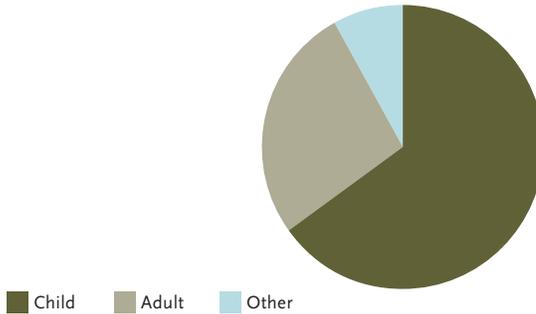
37 Hooton, Christopher. "From Today, Every Italian Will Get €500 From the Government on Their 18th Birthday to Spend on Books." *Independent*, November 4, 2016, www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/from-today-every-italian-will-get-500-from-the-government-on-their-18th-birthday-to-spend-on-books-a7397021.html.

6 2 PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Physical barriers refer to infrastructural or similar tangible shortcomings preventing individuals with any form of disability, the elderly, and the children from accessing the arts.

Several of the special regulations for facilitating the access of primarily people with disabilities, but also the children and the elderly to cultural events have only recently started being implemented, even though the number of disabled individuals living in Istanbul, according to the 2011 data of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) Directorate of People with Disabilities is around 670,000. The child population (ages 1-17) in Istanbul is 3,967,358,³⁸ the youth population (ages 15-29) is 3,398,715,³⁹ and the elderly population (65 years old and over) comprises 6,495,239 people.⁴⁰ The ratio of children to the city's total population is 27.1% while that of the elderly is 8.2%.

The Population of Istanbul (2015, %)



In light of these data, it can be said that despite the considerable size of especially the disabled population in Istanbul and the diversity of the city's overall population, its cultural venues fail to address this demography in a sufficient manner. There are several possible improvements that can be done, particularly to facilitate arts access for individuals with disabilities.

³⁸ "İstatistiklerle Çocuk, 2015." [Child Statistics, 2015] Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) [Turkish Statistical Institute], April 22, 2016, www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=21521.

³⁹ "İl, Yaş Grubu ve Cinsiyete Göre Nüfus." [Population Based on City, Age Group and Sex] Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) [Turkish Statistical Institute], 2015, www.tuik.gov.tr/PrelstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=945.

⁴⁰ "İstatistiklerle Yaşlılar, 2014." [Elderly Statistics, 2014] Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) [Turkish Statistical Institute], March 18, 2015, www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=18620.

What renders people with physical impairments or health problems disabled is the planning of their living environment, the attitudes they face, and the priorities of the society they are part of. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities put into force in 2008, “persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”⁴¹ The most significant point to note here is that the view which interpreted disability solely as a personal condition has changed. That is to say, the barrier to individuals’ participation is a result of their interaction with the environment. Therefore, making this environment conducive to the participation of persons with disabilities falls on the shoulders of all the actors in the society, above all central and local governments.

Considerable pace can be gained if every institution took a step towards eliminating the tangible barriers to arts access for persons with disabilities. The report published by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) investigating policies and practices in areas of culture and disability in Europe and Asia makes some policy recommendations to improve access to culture for persons with disabilities, specifically to arts and cultural events.

41 “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.” *United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development Disability*, 2006, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.

Among them are:

- Mainstreaming disability across cultural policies, programs and initiatives,
- Supporting demonstrative, illustrative projects which contribute to raising awareness,
- Fostering progress in this area through cross-sectorial partnerships,
- Paying particular attention to developments at the local level, where access to and participation in cultural life primarily take place,
- Making use of the potential of digital and mobile technologies to facilitate access,
- Providing access to specialized training and employment in the cultural sector for people with disabilities,
- Making further progress in research in the field of culture and disability,
- Enhancing international cooperation and networking in the field of culture and disability across Asia and Europe.⁴²

42 Portoles, Jordi Baltà. *Culture and Disability: Policies and Practices in Asia and Europe*. Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), November 2016, pp. 58-59, www.asef.org/images/docs/FA_CD_Inside_161201_lowres.pdf.

In European countries, the funding for cultural institutions receiving ongoing support by ministries of culture is tied to the precondition that they improve access to art and culture or develop the participatory practices of certain disadvantaged groups. In 2001, the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland has agreed to cooperate with disability organizations for developing policies to promote access to art and culture for citizens with disabilities. Following the work undertaken, the program for access to art and culture for the 2006-2010 period was launched. In the scope of the program, the state develops policy, funding and tools to facilitate arts access not only for people with disabilities but also for minority groups.⁴³

The website Disability Arts International⁴⁴ developed and coordinated by British Council, a UK-based cultural institution, as well as the bulletin published in tandem, comprise a similarly interesting case. The bulletin aims to promote the works of artists with disabilities, disabled-led companies and inclusive arts organizations. The bulletin further shares recommendations as to how the participation of disabled individuals to art events as audiences and visitors can be encouraged.

In Turkey, in addition to existing good practices, **creating similar policies and networks, meeting and collaboration between arts institutions for joint undertakings in the area of disabled access, and the cross-institutional sharing of good examples** can also be effective steps.

⁴³ Working Group of EU Member States' Experts. *A Report on Policies and Good Practices in the Public Arts and in Cultural Institutions to Promote Better Access to and Wider Participation in Culture*. Open Method of Coordination (OMC), 2012, p. 29, ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/strategic-framework/documents/omc-report-access-to-culture_en.pdf.

⁴⁴ The website can be accessed via www.disabilityartsinternational.org.

Pera Museum has special programs for children with mental disabilities, people with Down syndrome, people with visual and hearing impairments, and elderly people with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other health problems. Elderly people come to the museum with shuttles, discuss selected artworks together with the museum staff, and are offered complimentary food and beverages at the cafeteria. The museum entrance facilitates access for people with wheelchairs or those who cannot use the stairs. All floors can be reached via an elevator. The restrooms are designed to address the needs of visitors with disabilities. Furthermore, people with disabilities as well as their companions benefit from free admission.

As a first step towards integrating individuals with disabilities in cultural life, eliminating the physical barriers to venue access, **ensuring buildings are accessible and usable by disabled individuals and providing guided services** make a big difference. Several improvement efforts, such as organizing staff trainings to increase awareness about the needs of disabled visitors; making building entry and indoor cruising easier; allocating guides or resources to provide guidance to those in need, including subtitles at multimedia screenings and special earphones, can create an opportunity for thousands of people facing difficulties in many aspects of their everyday life to participate in social life through cultural events. Furthermore, **increasing collaborations between institutions working in the fields of disability and culture in Turkey, creating opportunities for education and employment in the cultural sector for people with disabilities, and employing digital and mobile technologies specifically to facilitate cultural access for people with disabilities** will be steps to overarch the existing gap in this field.

6 3 BARRIERS OF ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

These are barriers to arts access stemming mainly from the location of the venues. Although these barriers have different characteristics for city dwellers and the rural population, they can be addressed under one heading.

According to the findings of focus group meetings, the first thing that comes to mind when speaking of access to arts institutions in big cities like Istanbul is traffic, and the insufficiency of public transport. Partly because of this, cinemas are the most frequently visited cultural venues, thanks to their prevalence:

Why do you attend these events more frequently?

- *Because cinemas are more accessible, they are everywhere.*

Individuals have to make an effort to create a space for arts events among the hubbub of daily life, especially in a metropolis like Istanbul. As a result, city dwellers opt for the most convenient choice. They prefer events after work in the close vicinity of their office and refrain from facing heavy traffic or crossing to the other side of the Bosphorus to attend an event. If they have their own cars, the parking facilities in the event venue becomes an important factor.

While some do not find it appropriate for an arts institution to foster an identity so closely intertwined with a shopping mall, as in the example of Zorlu PSM, audiences can prefer such venues not only for the content offered but also due to the advantages being under the roof of a shopping mall brings.

Similarly, **cultural institutions choosing locations which are initially devoid of such institutions instead of congesting city centers** not only brings a solution to the problem of transportation but is also valuable in the context of engaging practices. Yet another solution is the shuttle service provided by municipalities, especially those of peripheral districts, to facilitate the transportation of neighborhood residents to cultural institutions. These excursions to cultural institutions or events also have a socializing function for the participants.

Occasionally, safety problems also accompany transportation barriers. For instance, elderly participants do not consider it safe to go out after dark; women do not feel safe on their way back from late events, or students staying in dormitories or with their families do not opt for events that end late due to difficulties in transportation, their families' disapproval of their staying out late, or dormitory check-in hours.

As a solution to this problem, some venues pay attention to ending events at earlier hours, and thereby giving their audience the chance to get back home via public transport without experiencing problems. The expectations of the audiences include **the adoption of a sensible schedule during programming, or else the provision of transportation services, such as shuttles, to accompany the events, and the preparation of all-inclusive programs for elderly people.**

6 4 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

Communication barriers refer to shortcomings in the announcement of arts institutions' activities, facilities and events. In the present era of communication, it is a prevailing assumption that individuals partaking in social life are also familiar with mediums where cultural events are announced and promoted. When the focus group meetings are analyzed, however, it is seen that following such events requires a certain perspective, planning habits, time, and effort. Several participants report that they cannot keep regular track of these events.

Are there events you avoid, thinking, such and such people would attend this event, and people like me, young students, would not?

• It is important that the events reach out to people. If I keep seeing promotion material everywhere I go, it attracts my attention.

Which events do you attend less, and why?

• The reason I do not attend events is I am not informed of them. The news that an opera is being staged does not reach out to me.

These examples underline that the most important condition for making engaging practices in the arts more widespread is to establish direct and regular communication. **It is necessary to disseminate promotion material, written in a language intelligible to all segments of the society where information on the event (date, time, price, address, content... etc.) is clearly outlined and contact information of the institution is included, in mediums selected with a focus on the interests of different segments, in ways that are familiar and recognizable.**

Cultural institutions both use existing communication tools to promote themselves and announce their activities and events to the society and they also try novel outlets. Social media are the prevailing communication tool, while the TV and classified ads are used the least widely. Although it is possible to reach a large number of people through the radio and the TV, due to the high cost of advertising these mediums can usually only be used if a barter agreement is reached with channels. The usage of outlets such as billboards or the radio varies from event to event.

Institutions try to reach certain defined audiences, for instance university students, through ways such as shelter ads, or distributing posters and billboards in student clubs. Oftentimes they use and advertise on social media channels such as Facebook or Instagram. Some also prefer sending mail invitations to their followers to notify them of openings.

Promotion of cultural events with a language and a way of expression intelligible to all parts of the society using mass media is very rare. Using all existing methods and mediums implies a hefty communication budget for the institutions. Due to budget restraints or the strategic decision to focus on a particular target segment, it sometimes becomes necessary to make a choice between announcing the events to those who are interested in cultural events but do not participate, and those who have no interest in the field.

It is only institutions operating as part of central and local governments that can make announcements that target all segments, thanks to the means available to them.

The content and the form of the communication are equally important as reaching the masses through all available channels. In this regard, institutions formulate a communication strategy based on their institutional identity, vision and mission. They try to follow new trends while formulating their strategies. An interesting work of art can also play the part of a communication tool. Such communication strategies can help get those deemed uninterested through the door of cultural venues.

On the ground floor of Arter, located on İstiklal Avenue, is a wide showcase facing the road. Artworks placed in this area attract the attention of those pacing along this avenue heavily congested with pedestrians, and allure them to get in and see the exhibition. While this area visible through the showcase is an integral part of the exhibition, it sometimes works also as a communication channel. In cases where intriguing or interactive artworks are placed behind the showcase, an increase in visitor attention is observed.

In certain venues and exhibitions where taking photographs is restricted, the solutions developed can also enhance the interaction with the audience, as aptly exemplified by a practice in the *ZERO. Countdown to the Future* exhibition held at Sakıp Sabancı Museum. Due to the preconditions imposed by the collectors loaning artworks, taking pictures was prohibited in this exhibition. Nevertheless, a photo booth was placed outside the museum, which used images of works from the exhibition as background pictures, and provided Wi-Fi access. The videos taken in this structure, which evoked a sense of being inside the artworks, could be instantly shared by visitors on their social media accounts.

Popularizing the events organized or bringing popular elements to the foreground offer a way to reach potential audiences that cannot be reached via announcements.

Pera Museum states that it “also tries to do things that are popular, without being populist”. They note that for the Andy Warhol exhibition, a sculptural structure bearing the artist’s name was prepared and set up in the middle of the gallery for those who wanted to take pictures, which thousands of people ended up doing.

All these communication strategies are formulated hand in hand with institutions’ programming and content development processes. Depo, which states its mission as “giving voice to the communities in Turkey who are currently excluded from the official discourse, oppressed, and rendered voiceless” organizes exhibitions which are both document-based and have a political and social agenda. It strives to use a simple and accessible language for communicating its events, and refrains from using a complicated language and texts that contain several names and concepts. Such writing is reserved for exhibition texts or brochures rather than announcements.

Shaping its communication language in a framework extending from the format of its website to the typeface used, SALT presents its programs comprising the elements of “experimentation and not refraining from making mistakes”, as summarized by the institution itself, in an environment where audiences can express themselves. It hopes that an active audience profile putting their investigation and communication skills to use will thereby develop.

The communication language preferred by institutions, and the social and physical mediums which host it, reflect not only the institutions’ identity but also their program content. This stance, defined as “corporate identity” in communication science, also determines how remote the institution chooses to remain to the audience. So, while some institutions refrain from giving information that is readily available with a belief in triggering the sense of exploration, some others strive to get across what they want to convey with their programs to as many people as possible.

7 STEP 3: MAKING NEW WAYS FOR AUDIENCE OUTREACH

Besides eliminating existing barriers, new ways can also be created for audience outreach. Developing education programs and collaborations, taking steps toward localizing the services, formulating innovative solutions in programming, and exploiting the potential of digital technologies are some of the things that can be done to this end.

Communication can thus be deepened through a dynamic programming approach sustaining the interaction with the surrounding environment and paying heed to demands. There are several endeavors undertaken to increase participatory practices in the world, extending from making the audience part of the artistic production processes to raising awareness, from developing creative forms of expression to collaborating with local governments.

7 1 EDUCATION AND COLLABORATIONS

Among the most important missions of cultural institutions is mainstreaming the appreciation of arts and culture in the society and promoting interest in this field. To this end, most institutions **develop collaborations and design education programs targeting audiences, in addition to their existing programs.**

Institutions which set out with the idea of cultivating the audience of the future target children and the young generation with their programs. Borusan Sanat, which supports education efforts especially in the field of music, also provides support to Barış için Müzik Vakfı (Music for Peace Foundation) with its headquarters located in Edirnekapı, the aim of which is to give outright music education to as many children as possible.⁴⁵ In the scope of this endeavor, children attending the foundation's orchestral classes and their families can watch Borusan Sanat concerts free of charge. Furthermore, publications catering to teachers or students training in classical music are prepared and shared with relevant parties every year.

⁴⁵ For detailed information about the Music for Peace Foundation in Turkish see www.barisicinmuzik.org.

As for the development of arts education in Turkey in the general sense, there is a lot that can be done. The report *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey* published by İKSV in 2014 makes several recommendations as to what steps can be taken in this regard. As mentioned in the report, cultural institutions can contribute in certain ways to art education, which has a direct influence on arts engagement. For instance, they can work towards including more quality arts education projects in their programs; try to partake in policy development and planning processes regarding arts education; allocate larger sums from their budgets for these programs; spearhead applications to international funds for new projects to be developed in this field in collaboration with schools; collaborate with civil society organizations operating in the field of education; provide content and staff to schools with limited resources in order to improve the quality of arts education, and act as intermediaries to facilitate visits to schools by artists and culture professionals.⁴⁶

According to the findings of the research conducted by GfK for İKSV, young people complain about the insufficiency of affordable price categories and the limited number of tickets available.

In this sense, free or affordable programs particularly targeting young participation and also aiming to increase cultural literacy bear significance.

With a focus on developing collaborations and activities toward this goal and dedicated staff, the effectiveness of the activities of cultural institutions increases. Pera Museum, specifically targeting future generations with its events, anticipates the greatest participation from young people. In addition to Genç Çarşamba (Young Wednesdays) organized to this end with free admission, it organizes collection exhibitions catering also to young people, and scientific talks.

⁴⁶ Fazlıoğlu Akın, Zülal, and Özlem Ece. *(Re)thinking Arts Education in Turkey*. Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, 2014, pp. 117-119, <http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/images/files/RethinkingArtsEducation.pdf>.

Istanbul Modern stands out as an institution which has established strong relationships with schools over the years. 2,500 schools in Istanbul visit the museum through their own means to participate in free education programs, getting transportation support from the relevant District Directorate of National Education when needed. Two members of the museum staff are dedicated to managing these relationships.

In addition to events focusing on education, collaborations are also important for institutions to strengthen engagement processes. Creating conditions which facilitate access to the arts for all segments of the society, and their effective penetration to the local level can only be possible through **dialogue and collaboration between public institutions, the private sector, and civil society**. Cultural institutions sustaining their relationships especially with local governments and inviting representatives of these bodies to their events can open doors to opportunities for localization. A recent example could be the exhibition tour organized by İKSV during the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial specifically for the cultural directors of forty municipalities in Istanbul, with the aim of establishing a sustainable exchange between İKSV and representatives of public administrations on a local scale.

Collaborations established for similar purposes on a regional scale constitute another example; institutions' vicinity to one another and the geographical region they inhabit can result in a common target audience and common needs.

Kadıköy Tiyatroları Platformu (Kadıköy Theaters Platform) which emerged through a call by Kadıköy Municipality addressing theaters with similar demands is a good example in this regard. Working together with the arts and cultural departments of the Kadıköy Municipality, the Platform comprises all theater venues, and all theater companies without a venue, in the district of Kadıköy. It states one of its most important goals as the collective creation of the cultural and arts policy in Kadıköy. All theaters that are part of the Platform stage their first play in the scope of the

Kadıköy Theater Festival with reduced fares. The visibility and promotion of especially smaller groups and newly launched theaters are thereby facilitated.

Collaborations among institutions operating in the same field are valuable both for determining and overcoming common problems, and for enhancing solidarity and contributing to the field. Independent/alternative theaters and groups, which have been increasing in number over the past couple of years, have established the Alternative Theaters Union between 2010 and 2012. Among their establishment goals are discussing fundamental problems and taking collective action. The main aim of the union is to promote the venues which are part of this network, and draw on solidarity to reach a wider audience. In addition, the union also explores areas such as searching collaborative solutions to problems or finding shared sponsors. Having evolved over time into the Independent Theaters Union, the body plans to work more actively to make its demands heard.

7 2 LOCALIZATION

As the opportunities and possibilities of encountering the arts increase for individuals, we are getting closer to the ideal of a society consisting of individuals who embrace themselves and their lives, and can empathize with the lives of others. Engagement practices, which are defined over a broad spectrum extending from watching an event to actively participating in artistic production, pave the way for the participation of individuals in social life through a wide range of activities, be it voting or voluntary service.

Localization can be a way to help cultural institutions mainstream and facilitate easy access to their services, and thus assist the progress of individuals' participation in social life. This can in turn encourage individuals to embrace these events and institutions. Reciprocally, institutions can also shape their services around audience needs and practices paying heed to local conditions.

The existence of venues catering to a general audience and located at an arm's length carries a vital function in making culture accessible. Groups that cannot access arts institutions mostly clustered in the center for various reasons find the opportunity to express themselves in venues scattered around different parts of the city. **The localness of cultural institutions develops a sense of belonging to culture and to these institutions in time;** it consolidates mutual trust and confidence among the society.

Nevertheless, states, which have been withdrawing themselves from cultural services using the ever increasing and migrating population and economic reasons as excuse, hinder the sustainability of such initiatives. It is evident that widespread service networks are hard to establish through privately funded institutions and independent bodies, such as civil society organizations, alone. Europe has found a solution for this problem in reviving the experience of “culture houses”. It strives to transform remnants of these institutions, of various sizes and inhabiting diverse spaces—from a town room to a multifunctional center in a municipal building—to community centers and local culture houses which can address idiosyncratic cultural needs.

Similar institutions in Turkey known as “halk evleri” (people's houses), which were managed by the state between 1932 and 1951 and by civil society later, are still trying to stay relevant. Another similarly active network comprises the cultural centers of municipalities⁴⁷ and libraries under the central government. The library network, which represents an important potential for localization, operates in a sphere that intersects with the activities of arts and cultural institutions with a much wider outreach.

⁴⁷ For a more detailed study on nearly 90 cultural centers launched by 39 district municipalities in Istanbul, see İnce, Ayça. “Kültür Politikalarında Eşbiçimlilik: Kaçınılmaz mı, Bilinçli bir Tercih mi?” [Isomorphism in Cultural Policies: Is it a conscious or an unavoidable choice?] *Toplum ve Bilim*, Vol. 125, İletişim Yayınları, November 2012, pp. 178-204.

Atatürk Library has served over one million people in 2015. Although there are 900 neighborhoods in Istanbul, there are only twenty one children's and public libraries apart from Atatürk Library. These libraries are scattered around Istanbul's various districts and neighborhoods, such as Beykoz, Tuzla, Sefaköy, Esenler, Bağcılar; but are not enough for a city with a population of almost twenty million.

A general outlook on libraries in Turkey reveals that, according to 2015 data, there are 1,030 public libraries in Turkey, representing a wide library network. Based on data from the *Turkey Reading Culture Map*, however, 77% of the population do not use libraries, albeit knowing of their existence.⁴⁸ The most common reason for this is stated, by 43.5%, as "I am not used to using libraries", and the least common response, with 4.6%, is "the library is far away / I do not know where it is or there is no library". Both responses indicate accessibility-related problems. Only 47.3% of young people state that they have found time to read books in the last month. Only 8.5% of those did this activity in a library.⁴⁹

A look at the accessibility practices of Atatürk Library, a member of this library network in Turkey most attractive for visitors, reveals the following: The practice of borrowing books, a library tradition, still comes first among the uses of a library. Readers with an established practice of borrowing books continue to visit libraries. The second biggest library audience comprises students who use the library for exam preparation or as a room for study. Open 24/7, Atatürk Library is used 70% for this purpose, and becomes fully occupied until daybreak particularly during school terms. Those in the third group of audiences do not feel the need to come to the library since they can find what they are looking for online.

⁴⁸ *Türkiye Okuma Kültürü Haritası* [Turkey Reading Culture Map]. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture General Directorate of Libraries and Publications, 2011, www.kygm.gov.tr/Eklenti/55,yoneticiozetipdf.pdf?o.

⁴⁹ "Basın Odası Haberleri." [Press Room News] *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK)* [Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK)], May 31, 2016, www.tuik.gov.tr/basinOdasi/haberler/2016_66_20160531.pdf.

Although a part of the library visitors use the library for studying, which stems in effect from the insufficiency of working spaces, it is seen that **extending service hours and facilities as much as possible to provide accessibility to city dwellers is as instrumental in increasing participatory practices as is the prevalence of cultural institutions.** The quality and relevance of the service provided by these institutions and the technologies they use also come to the fore as motivating factors influencing audiences' engagement frequency.

Atatürk Library states that studies of library science began much too late in Turkey, and failed to spread to the broader society. Reader interest in existing libraries can go down as collections are not renewed; it is noted that dusty shelves, old furniture and uninvolved attendants lead to a decline in the number of visitors. Since many of the libraries under the Directorate of Libraries inhabit the buildings of district municipalities in Istanbul, several desired activities cannot be programmed in these buildings—which ideally should also be spaces of socialization. It is noted that if the library is conveniently located and has a central position in the transportation network in the district, a massive turnout of readers is observed. According to library officials, Hacı Bektaşî Veli Library, opened recently in the Sultangazi district of Istanbul, illustrates this case with its steadily increasing number of readers.

As revealed by the example of Atatürk Library, cultural institutions can transform their venues to spaces that foster a sense of belonging by paying heed to visitors' demands and tastes, such as their need for socialization.

For instance, prompted by the lack of a youth theater in Turkey, Kumbaracı50—initiated by the team of Altıdan Sonra Tiyatro, which has been active since 2009—has established an “incubation center” targeting young people in order to plug this gap. They aim to create a team wherein more experienced volunteers work together with younger people; young people can come together and produce collective scripts; can practice on the stage during their free time, and give advice to Kumbaracı50 not only with regard to the plays, but also on managerial topics. In another example, members of Trans Europe Halles, a network representing 52 independent cultural centers in European countries, believe that a collective life can be created through fulfilling the potential of culture. **They underscore that in order to make way for and contribute to the development of creative expressions in their venues, they regard their followers not as ticket-purchasing customers but as partners.** Stanica, the network's member from Slovakia, designs its venue together with architects, students and neighborhood residents, and realizes projects based on their preferences—for instance by building a stage underneath a club or a bridge.

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Lifelong Learning Centers (İSMEK) operating under the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB), which have a similarly widespread network in Istanbul, constitute another example illustrating localization efforts. In addition to vocational training, they offer classes in artistic and cultural practices, and are located in every district of Istanbul except for Adalar. Thanks to the collaborations with district municipalities, 30% of the classes take place in municipalities' cultural centers and 30% in İBB buildings; they rent the remaining 40% themselves and thus achieve considerable outreach.

Since its establishment in 1996, İSMEK has provided free adult education to over 2 million 300 thousand Istanbul residents and operates in 38 districts of Istanbul. In the 2016-2017 education year, a total of 235 course centers give education in 540 different fields, indicative of a high capacity. Every resident of Istanbul, who have completed the compulsory elementary education, can be an İSMEK student. The lower age limit for students is 16 at İSMEK, while there is no upper age limit. Courses are extended during summer months with programs for children over 9 years old.

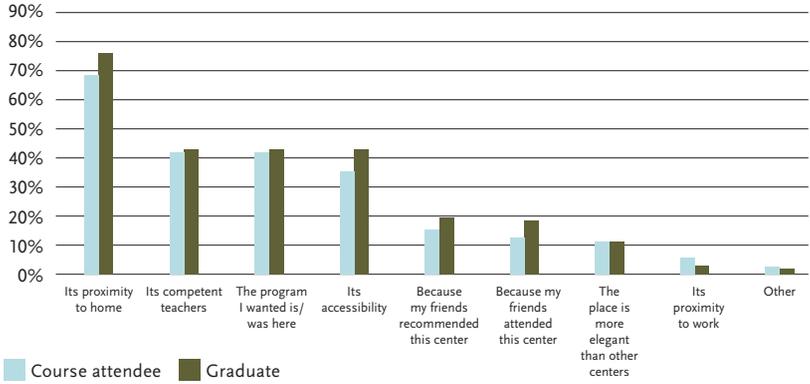
Vocational training and vocational advancement are the primary reasons of participation of İSMEK course attendants (52.78%). This is followed by improving artistic and sportive skills (30.70%).⁵⁰ The fact that such a large group in broader Istanbul is interested in disciplines of art and culture, as a hobby or professionally, shows an important potential in terms of engagement. These data also remind us that the said group is a potential audience for arts and cultural institutions. Although there aren't any documented studies on the topic in Turkey yet, studies conducted particularly in Europe demonstrate that the participants of handicrafts, crafts, or amateur arts courses also tend to be followers of the field of arts and culture.⁵¹

Many Istanbul residents of diverse ages and educational backgrounds, primarily women, get education at İSMEK. According to İSMEK data, women in particular participate in social life in İSMEK venues. It is noted in the interviews that İSMEK is the only place some families let their daughters go to. This is not surprising, since proximity to home, i.e. ease of transportation, comes out as the most important factor for women as highlighted in the graph below.

50 According to data retrieved from 2016-2017 registration forms.

51 Adamson, Dave, et al. *Arts Council of Wales: Arts and Public Engagement: Patterns, Processes and Levers for Change*. The Arts Council of Wales, 2008, www.arts.wales/what-we-do/research/latest-research/arts-and-public-engagement and *Public Engagement in the Arts Discussion Paper*. Canada Council for the Arts, October 16, 2012, canadacouncil.ca/~/_media/files/corporate-planning%20-%20oen/finalversionofenglishpublicengagementpapertoprintit.pdf.

What was the main reason why you chose the particular İSMEK Course Center you attend/have attended?



Steps towards localization do not always have to start with large-scale planning. There are simple yet effective strategies that cultural institutions can implement in order to interact with their close environment.

For instance, in the scope of an event called “neighbors day”, Sakıp Sabancı Museum offers one day of free admission for the residents of the neighborhood surrounding the museum in Emirgan in every exhibition. Neighborhood residents can thereby attend conferences or visit exhibitions. In a similar fashion, prompted by the thought that “we do not know our environment very well”, the museum organizes a series of conferences about settlements, buildings, art and social life, music and literature that have emerged along the Bosphorus throughout history. This free event organized once a month is received with great interest by the audience. Scholars of different religions, authors and poets, historians and art historians give lectures that elaborate on the history of, and talk about, the Bosphorus.

As cultural institutions localize with the intention of being part of the neighborhood they inhabit, the chance of the local audience embracing these institutions increases. Theaters, rising in number with each passing day on both sides of the Bosphorus, strive to reach the potential audiences in their proximity. Emek Sahnesi describes their presence in the Hasanpaşa Neighborhood as “bringing themselves on the doorstep of a group of people who never watched a play”, and deems it part of their mission. It also offers reduced fares for neighborhood residents. Furthermore, people without tickets are also invited to see the play if there are empty seats. Kamusal Tiyatro Projesi (The Public Theater Project), which aims to encourage the theater audience of the future, is another project targeting neighborhoods. They plan to adopt methods such as alerting audiences above the age of 18 of the presence of a theater in their neighborhood and inviting them to plays; giving them a tour of the venue when a play is not being staged, and explaining what is done where; organizing seminars, and staging plays with those who volunteer. Among their aims are having conversations about the theater, showing how a play is created, and introducing theater through discussions of the plays.

In the present day, the number of persons and communities who choose to, or are forced to become mobile is constantly increasing. Localization is now a concept which cannot be thought of without taking this phenomenon into consideration. How individuals are defined (citizen, refugee, tourist, immigrant, etc.) also determines the framework of the rights that these individuals are entitled to, in the framework of arts access. In this regard, **it is crucial for cultural institutions, which are expected to be as inclusive as possible, to evaluate how they relate their programs to current topics and big demographic shifts on the one hand, and pay particular attention to the language and the way of communication used on the other.**

An endeavor in the scope of the opening concert of the 23rd Istanbul Jazz Festival organized by İKSV is a good example in this context. Setting out to highlight the musical diversity of Syria stemming from its rich cultural heritage, Damon Albarn realized a project that brings together fifty Syrian musicians, whom he has been working with since 2010 and who had to flee their country due to ongoing events. The project was part of the program of the 23th Istanbul Jazz Festival, where İKSV—in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with the support of the Vehbi Koç Foundation and the Sabancı Foundation—organized the attendance of 300 refugees residing in Istanbul to the concert as audiences. An opportunity for a healing and unifying dialogue was thereby created among the audiences who experienced the concert together.

With a similar approach to localness, Berlin museums are conducting a project called “Meeting Place”, where they organize guided tours for refugees from Syria and Iraq in Germany in their native language. So far, over four thousand refugees have participated in these tours started in November 2015 with funding supported by Germany’s Federal Ministry of Family Affairs.⁵²

In this context, **arts institutions adopting a more comprehensive approach in defining the places and persons they can reach with their activities, beyond the usual definition of an audience, can create a difference.** Institutions can thereby contribute to overcoming, even if to a certain degree, the lack of trust among individuals in Turkey, and to their sharing the public space not only with people like themselves, but also with those that are different.

52 Spicer, Isabelle, and Victoria Stapley-Brown. “Berlin’s Museums Use Culture as a Means of Integration for Refugees.” *The Art Newspaper*, September 20, 2016, www.theartnewspaper.com/news/museums/berlin-s-museums-use-culture-as-a-means-of-integration-for-refugees.

7 | 3 PROGRAMMING

Programming has a leading role in the participatory planning of processes. Programming efforts which innovate in venue design; enhance the audience experience and aim to diversify it through additions to the program; pay heed to the transformations in the social structure, and invest in the audience of the future strengthen the pillars of engagement.

When cultural institutions reevaluate their programs and services with a focus on demand, several opportunities to develop and increase participatory practices can be created. A programming effort taking the needs and interests of different segments of the society into account brings more visitors, more frequent visits, or a more diverse audience. At the same time, in ageing societies the audience profile can change and diminish over time, which institutions adopt rather radical changes to overcome. For instance, the number of classical music audiences is falling dramatically in many countries.⁵³ Some posit that the etiquette of classical music concerts is too restrictive for today's society. There are several initiatives both to address this issue and to render the classical music culture more flexible. Among them are concerts followed by DJ performances, concerts streamed in cinemas—like in the example of Simon Rattle and Berlin Philharmonic—or classical music concerts open to families with babies.⁵⁴

Changes in venue setup or spontaneous elements added to the program can help reach people who were previously not participants or enthusiasts of the arts. Associated with the performance or exhibition, **these encounters in unexpected places and forms can create long-lasting experiences.**

⁵³ “Musical Briefing: Ageing Audiences.” *Limelight*, October 19, 2012, www.limelightmagazine.com.au/Article/319863,musical-briefing-ageing-audiences.aspx.

⁵⁴ “Baby Concerts to Save Classical Music?” *Youtube*, uploaded by SWI swissinfo.ch-English, April 29, 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEucBRqaPtI.

Moda Sahnesi states that its main aim, while setting up the venue, is to show that a space of such size can constantly be reconstructed in a different way. It intends to change the audience experience through eliminating the one-sided and one-dimensional audience relationship, and presenting them with new viewpoints.

Mekan Artı, which has had to change its location on the European side of Istanbul more than once due to financial reasons, has conducted many observations on the positioning of the audience throughout this process, and transmitted their results into artistic production. For instance, experimental plays such as *Takip* (The Chase) taking place in the streets of Galata—where the audiences, having followed a character, figure out at the end of the play that they themselves were being chased—or *İç içe* (Nested), where they took the audiences to a silo in Kemerburgaz with buses to stage the play, and then brought them back to Taksim, were products of this process.

Expanding and renewing the program can also be an effective way to diversify the audience profile. Innovative rearrangements in the program and integrating different disciplines into artistic processes can enrich the audience experience. For instance, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra has invited world-renowned thinkers and scientists to give talks alluding to the program before concerts, intending to enhance the concert experience for the audience. In one such event, physicist Brian Cox delivered a speech on the new findings in the solar system, followed by the orchestra playing a new astronomy-themed piece. In another example, following neurologist Frederic Ullen's speech on music, biology, and the working principle of the brain in which he described the transformation elicited by music on the human brain, the orchestra played *Metamorphoses* by Richard Strauss.

Cultural institutions are concerned that when programs are developed based on audience demand, amateurish or popular taste can become prevalent. There are ways for them, however, to expand their existing production with new examples paying heed to the demands and expectations of the audience without compromising on quality. To this end, cultural institutions are hiring experts specializing on engagement, who would integrate this subject into programming, and help coordinate all units of the institution along this direction. We see these experts working under diverse titles: This post is named public engagement curator at Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, engagement and dialogue curator at Vancouver Museum, and education director and public practice curator at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. What they have in common is that, rather than regarding education and engagement merely as organizational topics, they make it part of the programming.

For instance Allison Agsten, the former public engagement curator at Hammer Museum, states that there is no recipe for engagement practices for museums, and that she had chosen to lead an artist-based program. Defining her approach in the museum as curatorial, Agsten summarizes her work as realizing art projects that aim to strengthen the bond between visitors and the institution and favor interaction.⁵⁵ On the other hand, on the occasion of Sarah Schultz's appointment as the Walker Art Center Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice, Andrew Blauvelt, the Walker's Chief of Communications and Audience Engagement states that by creating this position, the center strives to expand and enrich its relationship with its surrounding communities, and focus on the betterment of the civic life in the region and explore the ways in which the public sphere can be a space of practice for contemporary artists and visitors.⁵⁶

55 Agsten, Allison. "Five Years of Public Engagement." *Hammer Museum*, June 5, 2014, www.hammer.ucla.edu/blog/2014/06/five-years-of-public-engagement.

56 "Sarah Schultz Named Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice." *Walker*, February 1, 2012, www.walkerart.org/press/browse/press-releases/2012/sarah-schultz-named-director-of-education-and.

Engagement-oriented approaches invite institutions to think in broader terms. **Institutions coordinating all of their departments toward the goal of developing engagement practices can be both effective and less costly.** Communication efforts focusing on collections or periodic events alone may not be attractive to people with no previous interaction with the arts; but new initiatives in programming can also entail a momentum in engagement.

7 4 DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

According to the findings of “Youtube User Profile Research in Turkey, 2016”, half of the internet users above the age of 45 and one out of every four users above 55 visit YouTube every day.⁵⁷ Similar research in the field also indicates that the rate of using digital technologies is increasing exponentially with each passing year in Turkey. Almost all arts institutions are positioning digital technologies at the center of their future communication strategies.

From the perspective of cultural institutions, the development of new media and online services allows for reaching different segments of the society faster. Access to and follow-up of visitor-related information (provided that they get visitor consent as regards the privacy of personal data) give institutions the opportunity to get to know and monitor their audience better.

⁵⁷ Ferah, Buğra A. “Youtube’un Türkiye Kullanıcı Profili Araştırması.” [Youtube User Profile Research in Turkey] *Webrazzi*, October 5, 2016, www.webrazzi.com/2016/10/05/youtubeun-turkiye-kullanici-profil-arastirmasi.

Conversely, these technologies also provide audiences with new ways of accessing arts and culture. Audience interaction with the digital medium is tackled under five different categories:

- Discovering new events, looking for existing opportunities and planning participation,
- Acquiring new skills and knowledge (e.g.: finding information about the life of an artist),
- Viewing an artwork online,
- Using the internet for sharing content, experiences and opinions,
- Using the internet for creative processes.⁵⁸

Consequently, this multifaceted world that audiences access through digital technologies should be taken into account both for the measurement and for the service of culture and arts.

The collections and archives of museums and research centers provide an unparalleled opportunity, especially for art enthusiasts wanting to dig deeper in certain subjects. Most of these collections can be reached online anytime and anywhere. While institutions themselves decide what to share, to what extent, and through which means; rich, periodically shared content has the potential to increase followers.

58 *Digital Audiences: Engagement with Arts and Culture Online*. MTM London, November 2010, www.aandbscotland.org.uk/documents/2012-05-28-13-11-39-10-Digital-audiences-for-arts-and-culture-november2010.pdf.

Increasing use of digital archives also entails developments in this area. Google Arts & Culture⁵⁹ enables digital access to the collections and exhibitions of cultural institutions, whereby museums from all around the world can be visited through a 360-degree virtual reality experience, or certain documents about a historic event can be accessed. Still in the beta phase, the initiative presents information under a classification system comprising categories such as artists, materials, art movements, historic events, historic figures, and places. Accessible to anyone with an internet access, this platform is considered one of the most important visual resources created through digital technologies.

Pera Museum, SALT, Istanbul Modern, and Sakıp Sabancı Museum are among those in Turkey that have shared their archives or collections with Google Arts & Culture. While SALT prefers sharing its temporary exhibitions and its digital archive material accompanied by texts, Sakıp Sabancı Museum presents selected content on its permanent collections supported by exhaustive written material, and Istanbul Modern shares images of some of the artworks from its collection with explanatory texts.

From the perspective of audiences, digital technologies and social media also allow individuals to become content creators. The keyword for engagement practices here is “creativity”, since, thanks to new technologies, creativity turns from being a talent specific to certain people into a skill anyone can master. New technologies are highly instrumental for manifesting this creativity and mainstreaming new ways of expression. Collective websites created by people writing on arts and culture constitute such an example.⁶⁰ It is very valuable that individuals are adopting different creative practices through digital applications, learning from one another, and reaching wide audiences with their productions.

Digital platforms provide the medium where cultural institutions and audiences can reach each other most easily. Nevertheless, both parties are only newly discovering how to express themselves. Fast-adapting institutions become role models for others and are closely followed, especially by the young generation comfortable with digital technologies. At this junction, there are a few intermediaries that determine the communication gaps between the audiences and the institutions, and develop solutions that address existing needs.

iyisahne.com is an initiative that brings together service provider and service seeker in the arts and culture and entertainment sectors. The website presents a list of artists living in the cities of Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Eskişehir, Antalya and Muğla. Targeting those who are looking to hire performers for birthdays, weddings, the New Year’s Eve, or corporate events, the website serves as a meeting platform. With a transparent approach to service, the aim is both to create further economic opportunities for artists, and to raise the bar of event quality.

⁶⁰ Examples include www.m-est.org; www.ortafomat.org, www.sanatonline.net, www.sharffiler.com.tr, www.sanatatak.com, www.e-skop.com, www.kulturlimited.com.

Digital applications may also exceed their role as practical tools and lead to a change in consumption behaviors in the field of arts and culture.

Focusing on developing and garnering wider interest in the culture of cinema, Sinemia can be regarded as a cinema club offering a card system valid in all cinemas across Turkey in parallel with a mobile application. Based on an online membership system, this initiative establishes a deal with the cinemas in Turkey and offers its members the chance to see a film of their own choice at their desired session every day. According to research by Sinemia, members' frequency of going to the cinema increases fourfold over time. Analysis of data from the user app shows that members who go to the cinema more often tend to share and comment more. Through the free application of the service, audiences can play an active role through sharing and adding comments.

In addition to such digital systems facilitating access to arts and culture, there are also other examples making use of technology in different ways.

In scope of a project initiated in 2015, Salon İKSV collaborated with London-based National Theater Live and brought its plays to art enthusiasts in Istanbul through digital streaming. It may seem "odd" that a play staged in London is seen by a roomful of audiences in Istanbul, particularly considering that under normal circumstances, plays are staged in direct contact with the audience, face-to-face. However, as underscored by engaging approaches, such innovative setups carry the potential of transforming participatory practices in the arts. The vast demand for all plays shown at Salon İKSV in scope of the National Theater Live collaboration is evidence to the potential that experiences employing new technologies bear in terms of increasing access opportunities for audiences.

Collaborating with the actors of different industries is also crucial for arts institutions to keep proper track of the development of digital technologies. One of the most impressive examples in this regard is the digital R&D fund for the arts initiated in the UK in 2012, which remained effective until 2015, as a collaboration between the Arts Council England, Nesta— a foundation focusing on innovation—and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The fund, the main aim of which was to connect actors from the three sectors, namely arts and cultural organizations, technology companies and academic research institutions, had set out to understand how new technologies can broaden, diversify, and deepen audience reach, and to discover new business models. The pilot projects that benefited from this fund were intended to serve as inspiration for other arts institutions. Pilot projects in the areas of social media; user-created content; distribution; mobile and game technologies; archiving and data; education and learning, and online resources were developed, and these were compiled in a publication.⁶¹ Thus, cultural and arts institutions, universities and tech companies came together to ignite an initiative which can contribute to audiences' future experiences in the arts. Similar collaborations shaped through digital technologies, even if on smaller scales, can increase audience outreach for arts institutions also in Turkey.

61 “Digital R&D Fund for the Arts.” *Nesta*, www.nesta.org.uk/project/digital-rd-fund-arts and Bakhshi, Hasan. “Innovation in Arts and Culture: Sounding the Horn for R&D.” *Guardian*, April 3, 2012, www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2012/apr/03/innovation-arts-culture-nesta-fund.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: FROM AUDIENCE TO ACTOR

It is important to push arts engagement beyond the economic and physical barriers that confine it, and adopt engaging practices in the arts in order to facilitate the participation of all—and not only people that belong to a certain age range and a certain income group—to arts events. In addition to the good practices they have formulated, there are new practices that all institutions, both public and non-public—for profit or not-for-profit—can implement in order to develop the field of arts and culture and contribute to engagement.

Principles

Engaging practices in the arts refer to all activities which aim to make the universal right to take part in, access to and contribute to cultural life effective for all individuals in a society. These practices:

- Target everyone in the society regardless of sex, age, religion, language, race or status.
- See individuals as active participants in the field of arts and culture, and audiences as inherent partners of arts institutions.
- Expand the borders of the definition of “arts and culture” to encompass, in addition to professional artistic endeavors, individuals’ creative ways of self-expression.
- Encompass all events in the sphere, regardless of time, place, price (free or paid), type (amateur, professional), content (crafts, art, education), form (online, visual or performative), and focus on their accessibility.
- Question to what extent art production and arts venues can address and reach the audience and the society; also investigate how the society interacts with cultural and arts events.

- Highlight that the network of relationships among art, artists, and individuals necessitates open and direct communication and collaboration.
- Consider the notion of cultural literacy important for engagement in social life. Highlight the significance of the first experience, wherever, however or through the mediation of whomever it may be, for becoming an arts audience or an arts enthusiast. Attribute a responsibility to public institutions and to education in this regard.
- Are processes wherein people who already regard culture and arts as indispensable parts of their lives, or artists, can take part in as the critical mass towards change.
- Require a holistic and long-term process: while all public and civil institutions and actors of arts and culture have their respective parts to play, the role of arts institutions is considered especially critical.
- Aim for arts and cultural institutions to contribute to the society, and spearhead a mental transformation with a desire to develop, grow and diversify together.

Arts and cultural institutions

Increasing, diversifying, and improving the quality of engagement necessitates familiarity with and embracement of these practices. Institutions can evaluate their engaging practices based on the three steps listed in the report:

Step 1. Exploring how engagement is measured and the ways in which audiences engage,

Step 2. Identifying and eliminating the barriers to engagement.

Step 3. Creating new ways for audience outreach.

It is important for every institution to take another look at what it does, within its own limitations, in the framework of engagement. It is possible to attain a considerable growth and development in the field if these steps for engagement, briefly summarized in the report, are implemented by all institutions.

The following points can be highlighted with regard to the process whereby arts institutions adopt engaging practices:

- It is crucial to remember that this process, which necessitates a mental transformation, is a strenuous and long-term effort; to take steps with great determination and consistency; maintain collaboration and harmony between all units of the institution, and act on plan. Institutions can only accomplish successful results if they embrace this approach with their entire staff, and mobilize their tools to this end, such as the strategic plan or the budget.
- While working to increase the attendance frequency of, retain, and expand their existing audience, institutions that strive also to diversify their audience would be taking an important step towards achieving cultural diversity, which is the main pillar of cultural policy.
- However important it may be to eliminate tangible barriers, it should be remembered that this is not sufficient to attract individuals from different socioeconomic groups or ages. Institutions creating their action plan also paying heed to the demands in their sphere of influence might make engaging practices more widespread, and create results that make a difference.
- While concrete barriers are the reason withholding those who cannot participate, those who do not participate are kept back mostly due to mental barriers. Perceptive biases and priorities, which are enumerated as other factors preventing individuals' participation, are also valid for institutions. Since they define their audiences and their respective barriers usually in non-research-based ways, institutions can also be mistaken. This is why investing in the research process is crucial.

- Priorities of arts and cultural institutions and their biases regarding the participation of broad audiences can prevent leading an effective strategy in this area. Before taking action, it can be beneficial to create a common understanding within the institution as to why accessibility needs improvement.
- In order to achieve the desired mental transformation, it can be instrumental for institutions to regard the individuals they address not as audiences, viewers, consumers or customers, but rather as active companions that they can take steps together.
- Perceiving the sphere of arts and culture as a breathing space, and making ways for all participants to coexist in this medium despite their contrasts, are approaches that create an opportunity for everyone who wants to partake in social development and transformation.
- The ultimate way to eliminate perceptive barriers is reaching the audience and establishing a communication. While doing that, using different communication channels such as education, localization, programming, and digital technologies and similar mediums; formulating content to fit the needs, and accurately communicating the message through a proper language are also among important steps.
- If individuals, whose interaction with culture and arts was limited as children, can re-establish this relationship after they have children of their own, it can also be possible for the older and more experienced generation to overcome barriers and gain experience in arts and culture with the help of younger generations. Arts institutions can form mutually nurturing relationships as described, and can win over different audience groups at once.
- Several museums abroad provide volunteering opportunities for art enthusiasts from different age groups for short terms, as exhibition attendants, hosts, or in other similar positions. By encouraging the involvement of these people in the field of arts and culture in different ways, museums strengthen their sense of belonging. More importantly, the candid relationship established between art enthusiasts and audiences help the latter overcome

several perceptible barriers. Arts institutions can also work with volunteers in their day-to-day practices.

- Cultural institutions embracing their devoted audiences with an attachment to the institution or the event has a positive impact on the process. Since when the “critical mass”—more influential than big-budget marketing efforts—is attained, the change that will lead the institution’s future in a different direction is automatically triggered.

Public Institutions

Providing the basic needs, such as transportation, safety, well-being, etc., for the participation of all parts of the society to cultural life, i.e. ensuring that everyone can navigate through the course of everyday life on an equal footing, is among the primary duties of public institutions. In the scope of individuals’ right to take part in, access to and contribute to cultural life, elimination of infrastructural deficiencies is also among the responsibilities of the relevant units of central and local governments.

- It is necessary to design built spaces by central and local governments in such a way as to facilitate access for women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities: to render venues accessible. Although the topic falls outside the scope of this report, the infrastructure to enable access to built spaces must also be created in order for cultural services to be properly provided.
- While the mentioned examples of libraries and İSMEK show how a handful of public services with widespread organization and free access can create positive results, it is necessary to take steps to improve the quality and quantity of the events and content served by several institutions that receive public funding, such as theaters and cultural centers.
- Public institutions must also encourage programs and institutions which facilitate access to arts and culture, create and develop awareness and appreciation, and support cultural literacy within the scope of formal and non-formal education practices.

Collaborations

Although arts institutions operating in Istanbul through their own financial means or mostly through private funding work towards expanding their existing audience, the audience profile for culture and arts remains more or less stable. Thus, if a social transformation is desired, not only arts and public institutions but all actors of the field of arts and culture, from artists to academics, must work together to increase, diversify and develop cultural literacy and appreciators of art.

This can only be possible through new and long-term collaborations between institutions operating in different fields. Instead of wasting their energy on exploring new fields, institutions can thereby take steps together with other relevant and competent institutions. They can focus on producing more work with more such partners and strive for the sustainability of the desired impact.

- Horizontal organizations formed by the conjoining of similar institutions are important for retaining and expanding existing audience. Programs and education and communication strategies formulated by institutions with a view of other institutions not as rivals, but as partners, can yield results that are both more focused, and financially more efficient and tangible.
- The ultimate path towards reaching new audiences passes through education. In order to cultivate the art enthusiasts of the future and reach groups that have yet to establish a relationship with the arts or have faced barriers, arts institutions can collaborate with educational institutions or teachers, and penetrate into this field.
- In scope of their education programs, cultural institutions can get in touch with retirement homes, nursing homes and disability foundations to create targeted programs for these groups.

- Besides creative sectors (design, architecture, etc.), cultural actors can also collaborate with institutions which give non-formal education in amateur arts, such as handicrafts, crafts, choral singing, theater, etc. Research conducted outside Turkey⁶² show that people who engage with any one of these activities have a potential to become arts audiences.

Public engagement in the arts, which will gain momentum with diverse actors coming together and acting collectively, make a positive impact on social life. When individuals (art enthusiasts) take active part in engaging practices, they become inherent ambassadors of the arts, which in turn creates a multiplying effect. In addition to its contributions to individuals, cultural engagement also has social contributions, such as nurturing self-respect, promoting the understanding of diversity, developing curiosity, “opening up” individuals and contributing to their communication with others, making it easier to tackle the hardships of everyday life; thus, it leaves deeper traces than is generally thought to. As individuals become parts of the society, they start trusting one another, developing a sense of belonging, and they become empowered. This is why events or voluntary services organized by art enthusiasts working up from the smallest group they are part of (family, apartment building, neighborhood, school, etc.) can play a critical part in introducing participatory practices to new and different audiences, and for these groups to embrace such practices.

Engagement in the arts carves a path for the followers of the field extending from being an audience to being an actor. Individuals who develop participatory practices in the arts can also become more visible and more influential in social life over time. Cultural and arts institutions acting collaboratively with a similar perspective can contribute to the development of arts and culture in Turkey, and to social development and transformation.

⁶² Adamson, Dave, et al. *Arts Council of Wales: Arts and Public Engagement: Patterns, Processes and Levers for Change*. The Arts Council of Wales, 2008, www.arts.wales/what-we-do/research/latest-research/arts-and-public-engagement and *Public Engagement in the Arts Discussion Paper*. Canada Council for the Arts, October 16, 2012, canadacouncil.ca/~media/files/corporate-planning%20-%20oen/finalversionofenglishpublicengagementpapertoprint.pdf.

9

APPENDIX - LIST OF CULTURAL AND ARTS INSTITUTIONS INTERVIEWED AND SURVEY QUESTIONS**INSTITUTIONS:**

Akbank Sanat, Arter, Atatürk Library, Borusan Sanat, Depo, Emek Sahnesi, İSMEK, Istanbul Modern, İyi Sahne, Kumbaracı50, Mekan Artı, Moda Sahnesi, Pera Museum, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, SALT, Sinemia, Zorlu PSM

SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1) How would you define the mission of your institution? (More than one mission can be selected by specifying percentages.)

- a) Acting as an intermediary to increase art appreciation in the society
- b) Reaching different communities through art events
- c) Presenting new artworks to the public
- d) Facilitating the production of new artworks
- e) Funding artistic practices
- f) Integrating participants into creative processes
- g) Preserving or collecting existing artworks
- h) Organizing activities in art education
- i) Other: please specify.

2) Which of the art disciplines below do your institution's activities encompass? (More than one discipline can be selected by specifying percentages.)

- a) Visual arts
- b) Music
- c) Literature
- d) Dance
- e) Theater
- f) Other: please specify.

3) Which of the different communities below do you collaborate with? (More than one group can be selected by specifying percentages.)

- a) Schools
- b) Universities
- c) Businesses
- d) Civil society organizations
- e) State institutions
- f) Local governmental institutions
- g) Other cultural institutions
- h) Other: please specify

4) What are your reasons for collaborating with these institutions and entities?

- a) Reaching different audience segments
- b) Promoting our activities
- c) Organizing activities
- d) Sharing event venues
- e) Reaching artists
- f) Getting technical assistance
- g) Getting consultation on programming
- h) Sharing funds, staff, or equipment
- i) Sharing the workspace
- j) Acquiring visibility
- k) Other: please specify

5) What is the target audience of your institution, and which sub-segment of this target audience do you choose to focus on?

6) In your opinion, what are the reasons for audiences' participation in the programs organized by your institution? (More than one reason can be selected by specifying percentages.)

- a) Personal interest
- b) Establishing social relationships
- c) Acquiring knowledge on art
- d) Accompanying a friend or family member
- e) Getting education
- f) Because of the promotion activities of the event
- g) Expressing oneself artistically
- h) Interacting with one's own culture and one's own past
- i) Other: please specify.

7) To what extent do different target audiences participate in your institutions' events? (Please assign a number between 1 and 5.)

8) What is the targeted participation for these audiences? (Please assign a number between 1 and 5.)

9) What methods do you employ to collect information about your audiences? (You can make separate assessments for existing and pursued audiences.)

- a) Meetings with employees
- b) One-on-one interviews with communities and audiences
- c) Interviews with representatives of different communities
- d) Surveys
- e) Focus group meetings
- f) Online tools
- g) Other marketing activities
- h) Other: please specify.

10) What do you do to increase engagement? (More than one method can be selected by specifying percentages.)

A. Collaboration with artists

- a) Bringing together audiences and artists
- b) Organizing talks
- c) Organizing workshops

B. Art programming

- a) Paying heed to different communities and audience groups in programming
- b) Creating alternative programs about topical subjects.

C. Pricing

- a) Discounts
- b) Membership cards and programs

D. Time, physical space, and accessibility

a) Creating solutions to address the needs of people with disabilities and elderly people

b) Organizing events at different hours

c) Increasing accessibility

d) Providing transportation facilities

E. Other practical implementations

a) Organizing staff trainings for improving their relationship with audiences from different segments

b) Creating opportunities for the convenient use of facilities (such as venue design to enable an easier navigation in an exhibition, or highlighting the most commonly searched topics on the website)

c) Providing open access resources (online archives, exhibitions, libraries, etc.)

d) Offering written/verbal promotion and event-related promotion material and content in different languages

11) What do think could be the barriers hindering the participation of audiences in your institution's events? (More than one reason can be selected by specifying percentages.)

A. Perceptive reasons

- a) Lack of interest
- b) Having difficulties interacting
- c) Regarding the events as elitist

B. Personal reasons

- a) Not finding enough time
- b) Preferring other activities (sports, etc.)
- c) Lack of a companion

C. Practical reasons

- a) Participating with children is difficult
- b) Transportation is hard
- c) They do not have information about the programs
- d) The timing is inconvenient
- e) The venue is unsafe
- f) The ticket/admission prices are considered expensive

12) Through which means do you promote your institution's events? (More than one method can be selected by specifying percentages.)

a) Word of mouth

b) News in media outlets

c) Mail

d) Promotion efforts targeting diverse communities

e) Through representatives of different communities

f) Brochures

g) Advertisements in media outlets

h) E-mails

i) Website

j) Social media

k) Telephone

l) Billboards

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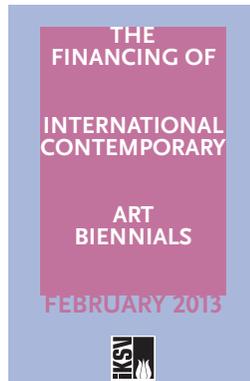
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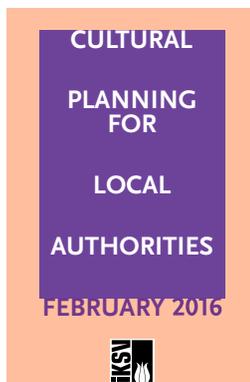
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