

Contextualization of the Anna Lindh Foundation's Greek Network thematic priorities in relation to the national socio-political context:

# Art & Culture



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Contextualization of the Anna Lindh Foundation's Greek Network thematic priorities in relation to the national socio-political context: Art & Culture

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## Introduction and Methodology

In the framework of the new Annual Program of the [ALF Hellas](#), a Call for Applications for the implementation of **Track 1.2: “Contextualization of Network thematic priorities in relation to the national socio-political context”** was launched in spring 2023. The Call was based on the results of a participatory process<sup>1</sup> aiming to identify the thematic priorities of the [Anna Lindh Foundation’s](#) Greek Network that was launched by the latter in February 2023.

The [International Centre for Black Sea Studies \(ICBSS\)](#) was successfully selected to carry out a comprehensive analysis in the thematic priority **“Art and Culture”**. The present report includes the results of the said analysis, clearly positioning the priority in the socio-political context, highlighting challenges and identifying available tools and frameworks. The structure of the present report follows the relevant template provided for this purpose.

Methodologically, the report was based on a) **desk research**, using the results of the initial identification process, as well as online resources, and b) an **online questionnaire** used to gather direct input from all ALF Hellas members involved in the field of “Art & Culture”. Their participation and expertise were significant to better understand, the main challenges, public policies and frameworks in the target thematic priority.

The questionnaire ran online from 21 December 2023 to 21 January 2024. In total, it was sent by email to 70 organisations and received 30 responses (42.86% participation), following reminders and direct communication via telephone.

## Relevance of arts and culture to the ALF Greek Network and to the national socio-political context

### Capacities and Expertise of the National Members in the Field of Arts and Culture

According to the results of the priorities’ identification process, “Art and Culture” is the main area of expertise for 72% of the participating national members (“Art and Culture” as a first field: 60%, “Art and Culture” as a second field: 12%)<sup>2</sup>.

Through the online questionnaire, the members identified **Learning/Training Activities** and **Arts/Culture Management** as the most common fields of work (73.3% and 53.3% respectively); while **Consulting Services** rank last (10%). In addition, many members work in the fields of **Research** (50%), **Artistic Production** (43.3%), and **Dissemination of Arts and Culture** (40%).

In parallel, their work impacts other cross-cutting areas, with **Education** (86.7%) and **Youth** (73.3%) being the most frequently mentioned, followed by **Environment/Climate Change** and **Tourism** (46.7% each), **Gender** and **Persons with Disabilities** (36.7% each), as well as **Physical/Mental Health** and **Entrepreneurship** (16.7% each).

In this context, many members often organise and participate in activities, such as interactive learning/training programmes, live concerts and film/documentary festivals. These artistic and

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<sup>1</sup> Conducted by the [United Societies of Balkans](#), co-head of the ALF Hellas, in February 2023.

<sup>2</sup> The ALF Hellas thematic priorities are: 1) Youth & Education, 2) Art & Culture, 3) Human Rights

cultural activities are a medium for them to enhance community building and strengthen intercultural dialogue.

## Main Challenges Preventing Further Action in the Field of Arts and Culture

The respondents of the questionnaire highlighted **the lack of public funding** and **the inadequate legal structures ensuring artists and cultural & creative professionals' fair practice and social security** as the most important barriers (63.3% and 53.3% respectively) in developing "Art and Culture".

In this context, it is worth noting the recent study on "Cultural and Creative Industries in Greece", published by [diaNEOsis](#) (October 2023). The study pointed out that government expenditure on cultural services per capita in Greece is the lowest in Europe -about one fifth of the European average<sup>-3</sup>, while the budget of the Ministry of Culture for 2023 was less than 0.06% of the total state budget<sup>4</sup>.

This lack of funding is closely linked to the uncertainty the sector faces, exacerbated further by the aforementioned inadequate legal structures, the low salaries, the undeclared and overtime work (unpaid rehearsals lasting several months are a typical example), the participation in short-term artistic projects and the need to work for more than one employer at the same time.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed even more the vulnerability of art workers and the need to reshape policies for better working conditions. The [Support Art Workers initiative](#) played an important role in making these needs visible. Some measures have been taken to this end, such as the creation of the [Register of Artists](#). However, the adoption of a more effective policy to guarantee fair practice and social security is urgent and necessary.

In addition to the difficulties mentioned, other challenges concern the following issues: the lack of **social inclusion through cultural engagement** (46.7%), the need for better promotion of **modern culture, especially in rural areas** (43.3%), the need for a more dynamic role of **cultural diplomacy** (40%), **regional disparities**, due to the concentration of Cultural and Creative Sectors in urban centres, the lack of **accessibility for Persons with Disabilities**, and the need for better protection of **cultural heritage from the effects of climate change** (36.7% each). **Digitalisation** on the arts & culture and **the copyright protection** (26.7%), as well as the lack of **a legal framework aimed at reducing the carbon impact** of Cultural and Creative Sectors (10%) rank last.

In general, all these challenges outline the existing gaps and, consequently, the need for a cultural policy which will include radical measures to turn the current situation around. The sector needs to be upgraded, in order to reach its full potential. If so, it will assist in strengthening the sector and expanding its human capital, e.g. more productive and creative art workers, higher levels of equity and inclusion ensuring access to cultural participation for all, empowered local communities, increased visibility of the cultural heritage and modern culture, etc.

## Public Policies and Frameworks

### Public Policies and Frameworks related to Arts and Culture

- Hellenic Ministry of Culture

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.50

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.243



The main government authority responsible for the thematic priority “Art and Culture” is the [Ministry of Culture](#). Its activities are divided into two central areas, Cultural Heritage and Modern Culture. The policies of the Ministry are designed and implemented at national level; while local and regional authorities receive targeted funding to support their implementation<sup>5</sup>.

In this context, the Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with the [General Secretariat of Coordination](#), publishes the [Annual Action Plans](#) which include the annual goals of the Ministry. The [2024 Action Plan](#) focuses on: a) the contribution of Culture to the national economy and social cohesion, b) the creation of a new cultural landscape, c) transnational and cross-border partnerships, d) the protection and promotion of cultural heritage and contemporary creativity, e) the modernisation of the structures and operations of the Ministry, and the promotion of e-government, as well as f) labour rights and Human Resources skills in the cultural sector. In addition, there are two horizontal goals: a) the protection of the Rights of the Child, and b) the improvement of the business environment.

#### - National Recovery and Resilience Plan

Moreover, the cultural sector is included in the [National Recovery and Resilience Plan "Greece 2.0"](#), financed by the [European Recovery Fund](#), and is mainly mentioned in **Pillar 4.6: Modernise and improve resilience of key economic sectors**. Special emphasis is placed on the culture-tourism relationship and on the role of the Cultural and Creative Sectors as drivers of economic and social growth, particularly in rural areas. Although investment in culture is close to 2% (the percentage benchmark for the National Plans)<sup>6</sup>, the fact that the Plan does not include sub-sectors, such as books, radio and design, and that measures for intangible cultural heritage are limited, underlines its weaknesses<sup>7</sup>.

Furthermore, it is worth noting the research project of [Cultural Prescription](#), *“the planning and adoption of initiatives that use arts and culture as a preventive and therapeutic treatment to promote the mental health and well-being of citizens”*. This initiative is integrated by the Ministry of Culture in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and there is increased interest concerning its implementation and results.

## Public Policies and Frameworks and their Contribution to the ALF Greek Network

A key result that emerged from the desk research and responses to the questionnaire is the gap between **the public policy frameworks and the national network**, despite the role of the former to provide guidance and support. The findings of the questionnaire confirm this gap. Many respondents focused on public funding provided by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport, etc., but the majority either did not refer to specific public policy frameworks or expressed ignorance about relevant frameworks and how they can be supported to their work. In addition, several national members noted that the lack of appropriate frameworks and policies has motivated them to become more flexible and to venture into alternative services and methods.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/greece/8-creativity-and-culture>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.89

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.92

In this respect, the establishment of an independent **Culture and Arts National Council**, as it is analysed in the diaNEOsis study<sup>8</sup>, would be a significant step in overcoming a wide variety of difficulties including the policies – industry gap. Apart from the potential to promote “*cultural pluralism*” and contribute to the long-term planning of the national cultural policy, the Council could act as a bridge of dialogue, mutual understanding and collaboration between the public authorities and other stakeholders, such as academia and civil society organisations, ensuring the development and sustainability of the Cultural and Creative Sectors.

## Other Related Policies, Frameworks, Action Plans or Strategies

[Youth '17-'27: Strategic Framework for the Empowerment of Youth](#) is the National Strategy focused on young people. In the framework of the Objective 1 “Promoting Young People’s Self-reliance and Independence and Facilitating their Transition to Adulthood”, there is the Sub-objective 1.4 aiming to “ensure access to Arts and Culture”.

Given that **access to and participation in cultural life is paramount to enhance personal development and active citizenship**, the Strategy promotes measures on the following topics: a) young people’s access to traditional and classical forms of art and culture, as well as to other – contemporary and alternative – cultural activities, b) encouragement of young artists and organisations supporting the contemporary creative industries in which mainly young people are employed, c) mobility of young artists within Europe and intercultural exchanges, d) access to and participation in cultural activities for specific youth groups, and e) development of more cultural actions targeting schools and students.

In the light of these priorities, some monitoring indicators have been developed, such as the number of students participating in cultural activities at their school and the number of young people benefiting from cultural programs implemented in remote areas.

It is also worth noting that, according to [a Eurostat study](#) on cultural participation (2015), Greece ranks 26<sup>th</sup> out of 33 countries in the participation of young people, aged 16-29, in cultural activities such as cinema, theatre, concerts and visits to cultural monuments. As the data is due to be updated [in April 2024](#), there is a growing interest in examining the new findings.

## Main Available Instruments and Relevant Institutions

### - Digital Culture

The Ministry of Culture has launched a digital platform, entitled “[Digital Culture](#)”, which informs the general public about cultural events, actions and educational programmes, by month and day. On this website, the visitors can also learn more about the “[All Greece One Culture](#)” programme. Its activities – theatrical, musical, dance performances, visual art exhibitions / performances, and events for children and teenagers in ancient theaters of the country – are held in the summer, while their concept is based on the idea of building more bridges between cultural heritage and contemporary culture.

### - Greek National Aggregator of Digital Cultural Content

In the context of digitalising arts and culture, the [National Documentation Centre \(EKT\)](#) has developed the [Greek National Aggregator of Digital Cultural Content \(SearchCulture.gr\)](#). This

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.175

public portal provides a single point of access to all the country's digital cultural heritage, as well as to modern and contemporary cultural production. Furthermore, through this project, the EKT is the accredited national aggregator for the European digital library [Europeana](#), with which it shares its digital cultural resources, in accordance with international standards and specifications.

- **Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation**

As for the research sector, the [Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation \(IHR/NHRF\)](#) runs programs and activities on the history of Greek and Roman Antiquity, Byzantium and Modern Hellenism so as to promote valid and methodologically advanced knowledge, as well as new researchers' training.

- **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**

The [Cultural Routes programme](#) of the Council of Europe contributes to the protection and promotion of the shared rich and diverse cultural identity putting into practice the fundamental principles of the CoE: "*human rights, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual exchanges across borders*". Greece is interconnected with [twenty Cultural Routes](#), while the [Routes of the Olive Tree](#) and the [Historic Cafés Route](#) are the two CoE Routes based on the country.

- **European Capital of Culture**

The [European Capitals of Culture](#) is an initiative that fosters the role of arts and culture in the sustainable urban development. The Greek city [Elefsina](#) was one of the three Capitals in 2023, and the fourth Greek city to hold the title<sup>9</sup> since the establishment of the programme. Its artistic programme, the "Mysteries of Transition", took its cue from the Eleusinian Mysteries, comprising of three main elements: people/society, environment and labour. Environment had a special focus as a subject inextricably linked with the challenges Elefsina as a (post)industrial city – as well as the wider world – is facing.

## Potential Partners and their Added Value in the Field of Arts and Culture

The selection of potential partners is based on an effort to address the main challenges faced by Arts and Culture. Consequently, the following initiatives could be considered as **good practices** that could inspire future action, in many areas, such as social inclusion through cultural engagement, digitalisation of art space, accessibility for Persons with Disabilities, cultural diplomacy, and the promotion of modern/contemporary culture in both urban and rural areas. However, as this list is indicative, the development of a relevant identification process would be very interesting and useful.

The [Benaki Museum](#) hosts three accessibility programmes. "[Seeing with the Senses](#)" is an educational programme for visitors with low vision or blindness who get to understand the museum through multisensory tours and workshops making its collections and exhibitions more accessible. In 2022, an innovative initiative was launched, entitled "[It's museum time](#)", including meetings for visitors with memory difficulties or dementia. In addition, there is the [SEN<sup>10</sup> Schools Educational Programme](#) designed for SEN students and focusing on multi-sensory stimuli and experiential learning.

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<sup>9</sup> The previous ECoC in Greece are Athens (1985), Thessaloniki (1997) and Patras (2006).

<https://bit.ly/3HOeogm>

<sup>10</sup> SEN: Special Educational Needs

In the context of promoting arts through digital tools, [Athens Poetry Walk](#), a free digital application linking poetic landmarks, which includes an interactive map, useful information, audio documents and gamification, has been created. Another case from the city of Athens is the [Athens Book Space](#), a centre with an extensive collection of printed and digital books available free of charge. It is located within the Eleftherias Park in the city centre and constitutes an example of **creative placemaking**<sup>11</sup>, i.e. the use of arts and culture to reshape the physical and social character of public spaces.

[Vamvakou Revival](#) is a project aiming to transform Vamvakou, a small mountain village in Laconia with few inhabitants, by building on people and its natural and cultural resources. The project is under progress and could be described as a case study on how to revitalise rural and remote areas.

Festivals can be an integral part of cultural diplomacy, while contributing to many other sectors, such as the development of local communities, the growth of sustainable year-round tourism etc. As analysed in the diaNEOsis study<sup>12</sup>, some successful examples are the [Thessaloniki International Film Festival](#) (organisation of events and activities throughout the year, not just during the festival period), the [Kalamata Dance Festival](#) (remarkable extroversion of contemporary Greek dance) and the [Animasyros International Animation Festival](#) (promotion of the international presence of Greek animation).

## Potential National and International Funding Opportunities

### - National

As mentioned before in the report, the lack of public funding is one of the main challenges the arts and cultural sector faces. However, there are some important funding tools, such as the scholarships granted by the [State Scholarships Foundation \(IKY\)](#) in support of studies and artistic work, both in Greece and abroad.

The [National Centre of Audiovisual Media and Communication \(EKOME\)](#) supports the production of audiovisual works in the country. During the last years, the adoption of investment incentives (cash rebate, tax relief) covering eligible costs for domestic and international audiovisual productions (fiction and documentary films, television series, animation and digital games) has led to the promotion of the domestic audiovisual industry. EKOME is supervised by the [Ministry of Digital Governance](#).

Moreover, in 2023, a new initiative was developed under the Ministry of Culture, entitled [“Creative Greece – 2024 Contemporary Culture Grants”](#). The programme gathers calls for proposals for grants to non-profit cultural organisations working on contemporary culture (theatre, music, dance, etc.). All these calls can be found on the new portal for cultural organisations which also issues calls for other three funding programmes: [“All Greece One Culture”](#) (applicants could only be Civil Non-Profit Companies), [“Intangible Cultural Heritage”](#) and [“Museums of Modern Culture”](#).

### - International

[Creative Europe](#) is the European Commission's flagship programme to promote the culture and audiovisual sectors, and a unique initiative for their coordinated support. In Greece, the

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf>, p.3

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf), p.142-143



coordinating body of the Creative Europe Desk is [the EU Department of the Directorate of International Relations and European Union](#) of the Ministry of Culture.

In addition, [Horizon Europe](#) (research and innovation) and [ERASMUS +](#) (education, training, youth and sport) fund projects which include culture –among other sectors. As for the first programme, the “Cluster 2 – Culture, creativity & inclusion” and “Cluster 5 – Heritage protection” are the Clusters focusing on the Cultural and Creative Sectors. In addition, Horizon Europe is the main funding instrument of the [New European Bauhaus](#), an initiative that promotes cooperation between the Cultural and Creative Sectors and the sectors linked to sustainable development.

## Resources and Acknowledgments

### Online Information Resources

<https://alfhellas.gr/en>

<https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/>

<https://icbss.org/>

<https://www.usbngo.gr/>

<https://www.dianeosis.org/en/>

[https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture\\_final.pdf](https://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/culture_final.pdf)

<https://www.supportartworkers.org/en/>

<https://www.gov.gr/en/upourgeia/upourgeio-politismou-kai-athlismou/politismou-kai-athlismou/metrou-kallitekhnou>

<https://www.culture.gov.gr/en/SitePages/default.aspx>

<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/greece/8-creativity-and-culture>

<https://gsco.gov.gr/esd/>

<https://gsco.gov.gr/esd/#-----hd-65b244c526cf0>

<https://bit.ly/3uvRwcm>

<https://greece20.gov.gr/en/>

[https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en)

<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/greece/82-administration-and-governance>

<https://bit.ly/42oJyhC>

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc\\_scp03\\_custom\\_9869534/default/map?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_scp03_custom_9869534/default/map?lang=en)

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture\\_statistics\\_-\\_cultural\\_participation](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_cultural_participation)

<https://digitalculture.gov.gr/>

<https://digitalculture.gov.gr/2023/11/oli-i-ellada-enas-politismos-2024-kentrikos-thematikos-axonas-i-enniatis-sigkrousis/>

<https://www.ekt.gr/en>

<https://www.searchculture.gr/aggregator/portal/>

<https://www.europeana.eu/en>

[http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/ihr/index-en\\_IHR.html](http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/ihr/index-en_IHR.html)

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/home>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/greece>

[https://olivetreeroute.gr/home\\_page\\_en/](https://olivetreeroute.gr/home_page_en/)

<https://historiccafesroute.com/>

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/culture-in-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-of-culture>

<https://2023eleusis.eu/en/>

<https://bit.ly/3HOeoqm>

<https://www.benaki.org/index.php?lang=en>

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_educations&view=education&id=1023431&Itemid=562&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_educations&view=education&id=1023431&Itemid=562&lang=en)

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_educations&view=education&id=1016281&Itemid=165&lang=en&Itemid=562&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_educations&view=education&id=1016281&Itemid=165&lang=en&Itemid=562&lang=en)  
[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_educations&view=education&id=1022851&Itemid=562&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_educations&view=education&id=1022851&Itemid=562&lang=en)  
<https://www.athensculturenet.com/en/content/athens-poetry-walk>  
<https://athensbookspace.gr/>  
<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf>  
<https://www.vamvakourevival.org/en/>  
<https://www.filmfestival.gr/en/film-festival>  
<https://kalamatadancefestival.gr/en/>  
<https://animasyros.gr/>  
<https://www.iky.gr/en/>  
<https://www.ekome.media/>  
<https://mindigital.gr/>  
<https://portal.culture.gov.gr/>  
<https://portal.culture.gov.gr/epichorigiseis/oli-i-ellada-enas-politismos/>  
<https://portal.culture.gov.gr/epichorigiseis/ayli-politistiki-klironomia/>  
<https://portal.culture.gov.gr/epichorigiseis/mouseia-neoterou-politismou/>  
<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>  
<https://www.culture.gov.gr/en/service/SitePages/view.aspx?iID=4536>  
[https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en)  
<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>  
[https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en)

## Other Relevant Information

**For the desk research:** all online resources are hyperlinked in the body of the report and are last accessed on 14 February 2024.

**For the online questionnaire:** the following annexes are attached to this document.

- Annex 1: Online Questionnaire
- Annex 2: Concept Note
- Annex 3: ALF Hellas Members – Respondents to the Online Questionnaire
- Annex 4: Respondents' Projects and Activities

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