

**European Review Programme
of National Cultural Development Policies**

**Bulgarian Cultural Policy
in a State of Transition**

National Report

European Review Programme of
National Cultural Policies Development

**BULGARIAN CULTURAL POLICY
IN A STATE OF TRANSITION**

National Report

Report prepared at the request of the Ministry of Culture
by the Institute of Culturology - Sofia

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Foreword

The National Report entitled „The Cultural Policy of Bulgaria in the Transition Period“ that I submit for consideration by the Committee for Culture of the Council of Europe is an analytical survey covering the 1990 - 1995 period. This was a difficult period for Bulgaria though it is far from being as critical as the present one. Since the end of 1995 the crisis in our country has deepened and has acquired an uncontrollable character. The problems of culture, placed in such a framework, may seem problems of minor importance but in fact they constitute one of the aspects of the present crisis.

After the changes of 1989, the cultural policy of the Republic of Bulgaria has been implemented by the ministers of culture of seven governments. Despite the different political platforms, all of them have declared their intention to undertake a total reform in the field of culture oriented towards decentralisation, privatisation, the introduction of market mechanisms in the processes of the creation and distribution of cultural products. The practical results so far, however, show that only partial and often contradictory changes have been effected. An overall programme for reforming the national cultural policy has not been elaborated and real steps in this direction are still missing.

Part of the new approaches implemented in the cultural sector are due to the amended general legislation and to the abolition of the state monopoly over a number of cultural areas such as book publishing and distribution, film production and distribution, audio-visual production and marketing, visual arts marketing, etc.

The Ministry of Culture has put into practice some important changes in its policy, mainly through the establishment of National Centres for the arts and cultural activities. The National Centres are aimed at providing subsidies for artistic projects, support for Bulgarian arts, and last but not least - a guarantee for the autonomy of the cultural institutions. Unfortunately, the bureaucratic and administrative drift has often hindered the adequate realisation of the objectives put before the Centres.

In my opinion, the lack of a common strategy for cultural reform

shortcomings of the state cultural policy in the period mentioned above. The consequences seem to be the following:

- incomplete process of decentralisation;
- lack of transparency in the activities of the Ministry of Culture;
- lack of co-ordination in the activities of the Ministry of Culture and the rest of the state organs directly related to the financing and the implementation of the cultural policy;
- dropping of the audio-visual industry and the electronic media out of the scope of vision of the state cultural policy;
- low level of interest in the cultural problems of the different ethnic communities and generations in the country;
- progressive reduction of the state subsidy for culture.

The Ministry of Culture highly appreciates the advice and recommendations given by the panel of experts of the Council of Europe: Ms. Vera Boltho (Head of Cultural Policy and Action Division, CE), Ms. Irmeli Niemi (Chairperson), Mr. Charles Landry (Rapporteur), Ms. Naima Balic, Ms. Cornelia Dumcke, Mr. Peter Schreiber.

I would like to thank all colleagues from the Ministry of Culture who have assisted in the collecting of information and contributed to the compilation of the report with their texts and consultations.

Last but not least I express my gratitude for the preparation of the National Report to the team of the Institute of Culturology with the Ministry of Culture and to the head of the team, Dr. Lazar Koprinarov. The quantitatively and qualitatively valuable information that has been analysed and generalised in the Report will be very helpful for the further activities of the Ministry of Culture.



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Introduction

The transition to democracy and market economy in the post-communist world opens wide horizons for the development of culture on one hand and places culture under new and extremely difficult conditions, on the other. This requires a thorough analyses of the running processes and of the cultural and political activities necessary to regulate them.

Bulgaria's participation in the CE Programme of National Cultural Policies Review is an important stimulus for studying the system, the dynamics and problems of cultural policy in Bulgaria as a condition for its presentation in a national report.

The objectives pursued in the process of work, in the discussion of problems with the CE expert team and through the publication of achieved results are in several areas:

- to call forth, accelerate and enrich the national debate on democratisation of Bulgarian cultural policy;
- to arrive, together with experts from the Council of Europe (i.e. within the context of the European experience and on the basis of possible comparisons with other countries), at a possible objective assessment of the changing cultural situation, problems and prospects;
- to accelerate the international exchange of cultural and political experience;
- to single out the priority problems and the priority needs for expert financial assistance to Bulgarian cultural policy.

The structure and content of the report are dictated by *two considerations*.

The *first* consideration concerns the subject and approach of the study. The report is oriented towards cultural policy, rather than to cultural life. We have been guided by the understanding that it should:

- render cultural policy *operational*;
- present all basic *spheres* and *levels* of cultural policy;
- the *basic means* by which cultural policy is applied (administrative, legislative, funding, influence on public opinion);
- reveal both the *state* and the *dynamics* of cultural policy;
- describe both the *quantitative* and *qualitative* characteristics of cultural policy;
- limit the possibilities of confusing objective *description* with the assessment of cultural policy;
- create *possibilities for international comparison* of the attained results.

The *second* consideration concerns the chosen manner of presentation. It is dictated by our desire to combine the interests of *two groups of "consumers" of the future report*. The report will be aimed at two addressees,

differing both in their needs and aspirations, as well as in their prior knowledge of the studied subject. It is intended both for "native" and foreign readers. The report will probably be used both by experts and a broader audience (politicians, artists, cultural administration representatives, etc.).

The report covers the period from 1990 - 1995. For lack of sufficient information, some aspects or others, as well as the separate stages in this period have not been given equal coverage. The problems of financing and regulating the cultural policy have been given special emphasis because of two reasons: financing and cultural legislation need a radical change; the problems of carrying out reforms in financing and in cultural legislation are among the most acute and difficult to solve, and at the same time, among the most poorly studied and systematised ones.

The research team which has prepared the national report is grateful for the useful advice and constructive recommendations given by experts from the Council of Europe: Ms Vera Boltho (Head of Cultural Policy and Action Division, Council of Europe), Ms Irmeli Niemi, Chairperson, Mr. Charles Landry, Rapporteur, Ms Naima Balic, Ms Cornelia Dumcke and Mr. Peter Schreiber.

The authors are grateful for the assistance through information materials, views and opinions given by Mr. Dimitar Dereliev, Director of the National Film Centre; Mr. Iliia Raev, Director of the National Theatre Centre; Mr. Yavor Dimitrov, Director of the National Music and Dance Centre; Mr. Boiko Lambovski, Director of the National Centre of Cultural Clubs, Libraries and Amateur Creative Work; Mr. Peter Balabanov, Director of the National Centre of Museums, Galleries and Fine Arts; Mr. Dimitar Enchev, Director of the National Copyright and Related Rights Protection Centre; Mr. Georgi Nehrizov, Director of the national Centre of Immovable Monuments of Culture; Ms. Anna Sendova Head of the General Administration of International Cultural Co-operation in the Ministry of Culture; Ms Liliana Dimitrova, Head of Department "Art and Culture Schools"; Ms Polka Alexandrova, Head of the Legal Department of the Ministry of Culture, as well as a number of other experts from the Ministry of Culture without the cooperation of whom work on the report would have been strongly impeded.

The research team express their gratitude to the British Council in Bulgaria for its assistance in editing the English version of the Report.

The Report has been prepared by a research team of the Institute for Culturology headed by Mr. Lazar Koprinarov, with the participation of experts from the Ministry of Culture. Publications and information sources of the National Statistical Institute and the Ministry of Finances have been used, as well as materials of the Ministry of Culture and the National Arts Centres.

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1. NATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PRESENT-DAY CULTURAL POLICY

Cultural policies are not the outcome of arbitrariness. They are target-oriented, realise the possible and necessary planning of specific actions for the attainment of set goals and accomplish these goals to some extent, depending on the intentions and professional skills of politicians, artists and the cultural administration, as well as on the country's socio-cultural potential.

This requires the analysis of state cultural policy in Bulgaria, starting with a panorama of the basic demographic, economic and educational processes which shape the background and determine the horizon of the country's cultural and political development.

1.1. Demographic composition and territorial and administrative development

Bulgaria is situated on the Balkan Peninsula and occupies an area of 110 993.6 sq. km. In 1995 the *population* was 8.384 million people, /by 1988 it was 8.986 million/, which makes an average density of 75.3 persons per square kilometre. The population of the capital city, Sofia, is 1, 113, 674 people. Urban population is 67.2%. Eight towns have a population of above 100 thousand people.

The average age of the population is 38.6 years. The average life span is 71.2 years. During the last decade the population age structure has become increasingly unfavourable. Every fourth person is of pensionable age. The birth rate follows a permanent downward trend. In recent years Bulgaria has been among those countries with the lowest proportion of children and adolescents, and with the highest proportion of adults in the population. The proportion of children and teenagers up to the age of 15 is 18.6% and that of the population above the age of 60 has reached 21%. The aging population brings about complex economic, social and health problems. In future it may become a source of cultural pressure.

According to the latest population census of 4 December 1992, the ethnic composition of population is: Bulgarians /7 271 185/, Turks /800 052/, Romanies /313 396/, others /102 684/. The larger part of the population profess the Christian Eastern Orthodox faith /7 349 544/, and Islam /1 110 295/. The official language is Bulgarian.

Concerning its *administrative and territorial development*, the country is divided into 9 regions which include 279 municipalities. Municipality is the basic self-governing administrative and territorial unit. For its part, the region is an administrative and territorial unit which ensures government administration at the local level and facilitates conformity of national interests with local interests. Regional administration is provided by the Regional Administrator appointed by the Council of Ministers, who ensures that government policy and control are carried out. Regions do not have their own cultural and political role.

1.2. Political changes

The Plenum of the CC of the BCP of 10.11.1989 is considered the start of the democratic changes in Bulgaria. It ousted Todor Zhivkov who was at the

head of the country for more than 35 years. The democratization process started in a complex situation. The country experienced an extremely serious economic crisis. During the 1985-1989 period Bulgaria's gross foreign debt in convertible currency trebled. The total debt to foreign creditors reached 12 billion US dollars. Due to the policy of the Zhivkov regime in the so-called "regenerative process" (an attempt at the forced assimilation of the Turkish minority) Bulgaria was in complete international isolation at that time.

Against this background the country was faced with the necessity to make a series of fundamental social changes without violence, in the conditions of civil peace: to realize the transition to a market economy, to restore party and political pluralism and the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens, to effect a geopolitical reorientation in line with the all-European integration processes and to attain national consolidation by overcoming the legacy of the so-called "regenerative process".

After the political change at the top, realized in late 1989, the opposition started to form: dissident groups were legalized and some traditional parties were restored. The opposition managed to impose the convocation of a "round table" which achieved important results for the country's democratization: Article 1 of the Constitution which legalized the monopoly of the communist party was repealed and it was decided to administer parliamentary elections for a Grand National Assembly which was to draft and adopt a new Constitution.

The first democratic parliamentary elections were held in June 1990. They were won with 47% of the votes by the former communist party which had recently renamed itself Bulgarian Socialist Party. The socialist cabinet which was formed failed to take the necessary measures to prevent the deterioration of the economic situation. It resigned at the end of 1990. The newly formed coalition government included three ministers from the opposition.

The adoption in 1991 of a new Constitution which provided the legal basis for parliamentary pluralist democracy and a market economy was an important step in the democratic transition. Article 23 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria affirms the commitments of the state to the cultural sphere of society: "The state shall establish conditions for the free development of science, education and the arts and assist them. It shall also be concerned with preserving the national historic and cultural heritage." The Constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and the mass media. Article 39 (1) states: "Everyone has the right to express his opinion and to disseminate it in writing or orally, through sounds, images, or by any other means." Article 40 (1) reads: "The press and the other mass information media shall be free and not subject to censorship."

The second free parliamentary elections were held in October 1991. The Union of Democratic Forces /UDF/ won 110 seats., the Bulgarian Socialist Party /BSP/ - 106 seats, and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF - the party of the ethnic Turks) - 24 seats. A UDF government was formed with the support of the MRF. The reforms subsequently undertaken proved painful. In less than a year in power the government lost support.

In 1993 and 1994 the country was governed by a government of experts, supported in parliament by the so-called "floating majority" with the decisive role of the parliamentary group of the BSP. In the early elections administered in

December 1994, the BSP and its coalition partners won 125 seats in the 240-seat Bulgarian parliament and formed their own government.

The instability of the political changes in recent years results in frequent changes in the leading teams in the government and in management structures. During the 1989-1996 period the Ministry of Culture has been headed by six different ministers.

1.3. Economic trends and living standard

The Bulgarian transition to a market economy, launched after 1989, passed through a number of contradictions, difficulties and vacillations. A mixed economy has come into being in recent years. Of the total number of employed, the proportion of people working in the private sector already exceeds 30%. But due to difficulties in market privatization, as well as due to the delay in agrarian reform and the so-called "mass" privatization, the necessary radical changes in the structure of ownership have still not taken place.

The gross domestic product decreased considerably during the 1990-1993 period. This trend was broken during the next two years, but remains very frail (Table 1). Thus, taking 1990 as a basis, the real figure of the 1995 gross domestic product was merely 86.6%. A comparison of the per capita G.D.P. in some European countries at 1993 prices and dollar exchange rate reveals big differences: Austria - 22,678, Greece - 7,169, Turkey - 2,298, Bulgaria - 1,276.

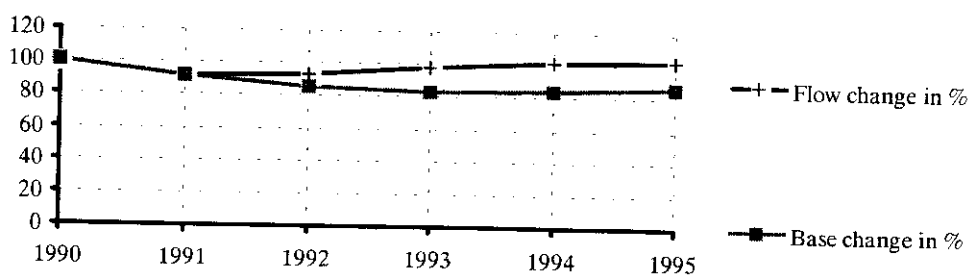
Table 1
Change in the gross domestic product

/ at comparable prices /

YEARS TAKEN AS A BASIS=100					
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
1990	100.0				
1991	91.6	100.0			
1993	84.9	92.7	100.0		
1994	82.9	90.5	97.6	100.0	
1994	84.4	92.1	99.4	101.8	100.0
1995	86.6	94.5	102.0	104.4	102.6

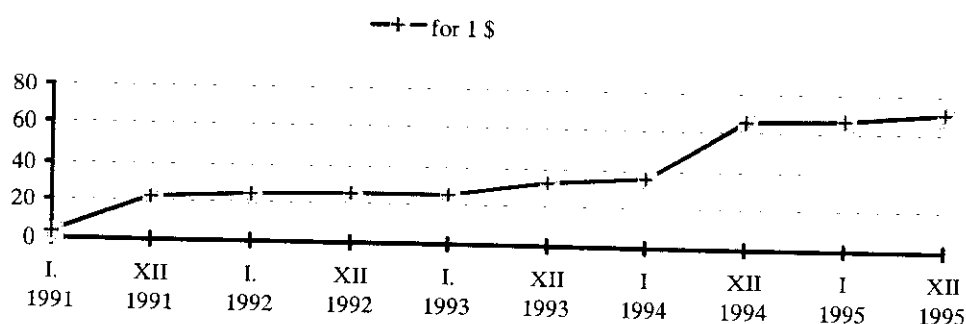
Source: Bulgaria'95. Socioeconomic Development. National Statistical Institute

Chart 1
Changes in the gross domestic product



The state of the economy during the analyzed period is also evidenced by the devaluation of the lev against the US dollar.

Chart 2
Exchange rate of the US dollar in January and December during the 1991-1995 period



Source: BNB

The period of transition is marked by a high rate of inflation. During the years of transition it was respectively as follows: in 1991 - 473%, 1992 - 79.4%, 1993 - 63.9%, 1994 - 121.9% and 1995 - 32.9%. Within the context of inflationary processes it should be noted that the index of consumer prices of goods and services for cultural life approximates to the general index, exceeding it in 1993 and 1995.

Table 2
Index of consumer prices of goods and services for cultural life, education and leisure

GROUPS OF GOODS AND SERVICES	preceding year = 100					
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
General index	100	573	179.4	163.9	221.9	132.9
For education and leisure	100	440.4	172.3	171.9	210.4	143.4

The slide in production, the loss of foreign and domestic markets, financial instability and the shortage of foreign investments were accompanied by high unemployment. In fact, the drop in employment started in 1987-1988, but grew particularly in 1991-1994. Taking 1989 as a basis, 75.8% were employed in 1995. The trend towards an increase in the relative proportion of people employed in the non-production sphere is worth noting against this background. Whereas 34.4% were employed in the service sphere in 1989, in 1995 their number had risen to 40.8%. Changes in the sectors of science, education and culture have not been equal, however. The last two sectors record an increase in employment, in contrast with a drop in the science sector,

particularly during the 1994-1995 period. Despite this, employment in none of the three sectors has been restored to its 1989 level.

Table 3
Employment in the sectors of education, science and culture

/in %/

	Indexes, 1989=100						RELATIVE PROPORTION						
	1900	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Total	93.8	81.6	75.0	73.8	74.2	75.8	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Science	93.8	69.1	54.6	37.1	31.2	29.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.6	1.1	0.9	0.9
Education	98.6	96.8	94.9	94.9	92.0	91.5	6.3	6.7	7.5	8.0	8.2	7.9	7.7
Culture	102.	82.6	73.9	89.1	89.5	90.8	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.3

Source: BNB. Annual Report 1995.

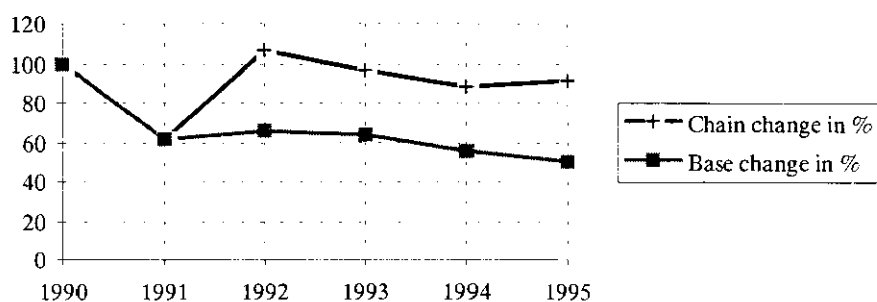
Against this background of negative economic trends, the living standard has greatly deteriorated. The real incomes and consumption of a large part of the population have dropped sharply. Nominal per capita incomes in 1995 increased nearly 19 times compared to 1990. But their size amounts to only about half of the real income received in 1990.

Table 4
Average monthly per capita real aggregate income in a household

YEARS	BGL AT 1989 PRICES	PRECEDING YEAR =100	1990=100
1990	209	-	100.0
1991	128	61.2	61.1
1992	137	107.0	65.6
1993	132	96.4	63.2
1994	116	87.9	55.5
1995	106	91.4	50.7

Source: Bulgaria '95. Socioeconomic Development. National Statistical Institute

Chart 3
Changes in per capita aggregate income in a household



The sharp drop in the incomes of a large part of the population leads to changes in the structure of consumption. Households are earmarking their expenditure above all for food, clothing and energy for household needs. The extremely large proportion of food expenditure, which have constantly been growing during the analyzed period, is indicative of the general impoverishment. At the same time the proportion of expenditure on cultural needs plummeted from 4.6% in 1990 to 2.7% in 1995. A comparison between the structure of expenditure of households in Bulgaria and in some of the developed and neighbouring countries shows significant differences.

Table 5
Structure of expenditure of households by separate countries

	BULGARIA		GREAT BRITAIN	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE
	1990	1995	1990	1990	1990	1990
Food, drink, tobacco	41.8	50.3	21.5	19.1	16.6	37.9
Clothing and footwear	11.9	7.8	6.2	6.4	7.7	8.7
Rent, energy	7.3	7.2	18.5	19.1	18.4	11.6
Furnishings	4.3	3.4	6.7	7.9	8.8	8.2
Hygiene	2.0	4.1	1.5	9.4	14.3	3.8
Transport, communications	8.0	7.0	17.9	16.6	15.1	14.3
Education, leisure	4.6	2.7	9.7	7.5	9.0	5.6
Others	20.1	17.5	18.0	14.0	10.1	9.9

Source: Bulgaria '95. Socioeconomic Development. National Statistical Institute

Mass impoverishment goes hand in hand with economic stratification. There is a noticeable trend towards a strong differentiation in the incomes of households. The proportion between the incomes of 20% of the richest and 20% of the poorest varies between 3.5 in 1992 and 5.7 in 1995. The resulting coefficient is higher in Bulgaria than in countries like Sweden, Germany, Belgium, Hungary and Poland in 1980-1992 (*Source: Human Development Report. 1994. 1995*).

The critical economic processes hamper the development of the population's living standard which was low even before the start of the crisis. The relatively low living standard is also evidenced by the level of availability of communication means.

Table 6
Communication means, distributed per 100 persons of the population in some countries in 1992

COUNTRIES	RADIO RECEIVERS	TV SETS	NEWSPAPERS /NO./
Bulgaria	45	26	16
Germany	44	56	33
France	89	41	21
Great Britain	115	44	38
Austria	62	48	40
Greece	42	20	14

Source: NSI. Living Standard of the Population in Bulgaria. 1996

1.4. Educational situation

More than half the country's population has a low level of education (uncompleted elementary, elementary and primary). Illiterate persons comprise 2% of the population aged 7 and over. At the same time there is a trend towards an absolute and relative increase of persons with higher, college and secondary education (Table 2). During the 1994/95 academic year the country boasted 4,100 educational establishments, including 3,359 schools of general education and 40 higher educational establishments. The number of students was 1,431,795, including 980,491 in schools of general education and 196,046 in higher educational establishments. During the period of transition the number of students dropped by about 16%. The reason lies in the low birth-rate and early school-leavers.

Bulgarian education is secular. The system of education is centralised. The first private schools appeared in recent years. There were 31 such schools during the 1994/95 academic year. There are 91,809 teachers. A comparison with other European countries shows that in the number of academic years per person aged 25 and over, Bulgaria (9.5 years) is ahead of Greece (7.0), Poland (8.2) and Russia (9.0), but behind Austria (11.4), Germany (11.6), Great Britain (11.7) and France (12.0).

Table 1

Population structure according to the level of completed education
(Population aged 7 and over, in percentages)

Level of education	1985	1992
Higher	6.2	8.1
College	2.9	3.5
Secondary	27.3	33.4
Primary	32.2	30.6
Elementary	20.8	16.0
Uncompleted elementary	10.6	8.3

Source: Bulgaria 1995. The Development of Man. Sofia, 1995.

Higher education lasts from 4 to 6 years. New higher educational establishments opened during the period of transition, including some at the initiative of foreign subjects. Academic autonomy is developing. Due to the economic crisis, the number of students whose education is paid for by the state is greatly diminishing. Concurrently with the changed conditions for student enrollment adopted in 1990, individuals were allowed to pay privately for their education. As a result of this measure there has been an overall increase in the number of students (133,184 during the 1989/90 academic year; 196,046 in 1994/95). More than a third (38.1%) of the students paid for their own education in 1994/95.

The proportion of expenditure on education in the consolidated national budget varied between 8.4% (1988), 13.7% (1992) and 10% (1994). The economic status of teachers is very low - their salaries differ significantly from the salaries of professors requiring a similar level of education. The low level of payment in higher educational establishments hampers the recruitment of

teachers and lecturers and causes a "brain drain" to other sectors of the economy or abroad.

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Against the background of drastically diminishing gross domestic product, impoverishment and unemployment, of some unfavourable tendencies in education, it becomes obvious and understandable that culture is in a difficult situation. The sharply decreased state economic potential to finance the cultural sector is visible. Households' possibilities for cultural consumption have dropped drastically and the chance of normal development of the cultural market is very small...

2. CULTURAL POLICIES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1. The historic vicissitudes of Bulgarian culture

The Bulgarian state was founded in 681 as a military union for survival and the territorial differentiation of Slavs and Bulgarians within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire. During the first two centuries of its existence, the newly emerged state remained pagan. The two ethnic groups coexisted independently, on different territories, with different religions, different economic traditions and ethnic mentality. The state organisation lacked the shaping core of a uniform language. For the needs of administration Greek was used as the written language.

The adoption of Christianity (865) and the introduction of the Slav script (886) caused a radical change in the development of Bulgarian culture. Bulgaria entered the Byzantine spiritual circle and joined the civilised achievements of Christian Europe. Prerequisites were formed for overcoming ethnic differentiation and the transition to a common religious system. The Slav script assured the reproduction of state institutions as national and cultural.

The alphabet created by the brothers Cyril and Methodius was spread in Bulgaria by their disciples Clement and Nahum. Schools of literature came into being, the Slav language was introduced in liturgies, the capital became the hub of impressive literary activity. This was the first big blossoming of Bulgarian culture, known in history as the "Golden Age" of Bulgarian literature. It was linked with the literary output of the Preslav School and the intellectual circle around Tsar Simeon. It was also the time of the first major influence of Bulgarian culture on the Slav world, both with the amount of original and translated literature, as well as with the formulation of the philosophic and political doctrine of the emancipating Slavs.

At the same time, as a reaction to official Christianity and the church institution, heresies sprang up and spread during the 10th century. Among them, the Bogomil movement, whose anti-state and anti-church pathos tragically deadlocked the idea of a Bulgarian state system, was of particular importance.

In 1018 Bulgaria was conquered by Byzantium. The political domination of Byzantium put an end to the First Bulgarian Kingdom. The Bulgarian lands were included in the more advanced economic system of the Empire. The process of incorporation of Bulgarian traditions in the political and cultural model of Byzantium continued. At the same time, the foreign domination activated the Bulgarian ethnic consciousness formed during the preceding three centuries.

The liberation from Byzantium and the revival of the Bulgarian state in 1186 heralded the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Bulgaria was territorially and economically consolidated and expanded its international contacts. Trade and political relations with Europe were strengthened. The link between culture and state was restored. Schools of literature multiplied, and painting, architecture and music developed. A Bulgarian mediaeval nobility was formed which, together with the church and state, patronised the arts. The decline of this glorious period marked a new blossoming of Bulgarian literature with the Turnovo School and the lifework of the last Bulgarian Patriarch -

Euthymius. The Turnovo School was the last powerful influence which Bulgaria exercised as a cultural centre of the Slav world.

The speedy feudalisation, accompanied by a fragmentation of power, the revival of old religious heresies and the shaky international environment created the danger of disintegration of the Bulgarian state. This happened with the invasion of the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans.

The conquest of Bulgaria by the Turks in 1396 deprived the Bulgarian nationality of a state system and changed the cultural orbit of the national spirit. The destruction of state and church institutions put an end to the high culture created by the clergy and maintained through the church organisation. The spiritual elite was physically destroyed or scattered through emigration.

The monasteries remained the only cultural centres. Although greatly reduced in number and limiting their literary creativity mainly to making copies, they managed to preserve literacy.

From the 15th -17th century culture shrank to the level of everyday life and was reproduced through the development of verbal folk art, folklore, customs and the family. Deprived of any chance for development, the written language became archaic and died. Thus the link between the cultural ages was severed. A number of forms of folk culture and national spirit were orientalised. The lack of hierarchical values in culture was reflected in the social compactness of Bulgarian society and the absence of elites and mobile social strata in its social organisation.

At the end of the 17th and the start of the 18th century bourgeois development gradually started paving a way for itself. It gathered momentum in one century. Property-owning classes emerged and with them the idea of education and national emancipation.

The Bulgarian National Revival period started. The social institutes of culture started being reorganised during the 18th century. The social and demographic composition of the Bulgarians changed. Guilds appeared along with big and small merchants, the heralds of a new consciousness and new cultural standards. The start of the 19th century saw a large-scale migration wave of compact Bulgarian population to the cities. Culture was secularised. The monasteries ceased to be the centres of education. Monastery schools were replaced by secular ones. School trusts were set up as bodies of public self-government. The local municipalities supported and controlled education. Reading clubs emerged as an original form of the organisation of cultural activity. A new Bulgarian intelligentsia, educated abroad, started taking shape. The new Bulgarian written language was created and new Bulgarian literature started developing.

The start of the 19th century marked two major achievements in the spiritual growth of the new Bulgarian institutions: the implementation of the new Bulgarian educational reform and the success of the struggle for independence of the Bulgarian church.

The second half of the 19th century saw the emergence of the Bulgarian national revolutionary ideology as a form of national emancipation, which culminated in the April Uprising (1876) and triggered international intervention in defence of the Bulgarian population in the Russo-Turkish Liberation War of 1877-1878.

As a period in Bulgarian cultural history, the National Revival summed up the quests for a modern national identity, understood as an attempt to reformulate the national tradition in the spirit of the European New Time and as a connecting link between the torn cultural layers of national consciousness.

Bulgaria's Liberation heralded the start of a new period in its political and cultural history.

2.2. Institutionalisation and Europeanisation of cultural policy: 1878-1944

Bulgaria's cultural development from 1878 to 1944 moved in an upward direction, despite the vicissitudes in the country's historic fate. These dynamic 66 years saw the establishment of the institutions of the modern Bulgarian state. The intelligentsia was consolidated as a highly professional social strata. Bulgarian cultural policy became *comparable to that of Europe*.

Cultural development during that period had a continuity with the Bulgarian National Revival when secular Bulgarian culture was created under the conditions of Turkish domination. At the same time, it marked a qualitatively new stage in Bulgarian history, represented by the construction of state political, public and cultural institutions on a grandiose scale for such a small country (the last to separate from the Ottoman Empire).

The Turnovo Constitution of 1879, which remained in force until 1934, became the legal framework of the bourgeois-democratic establishment of the state, liberated from Turkish domination. It was modelled on the best examples of liberal legislation - on the Belgian Constitution in this case. The Constitution served as a basis for the participation of the state in the management and funding of culture. The national, municipal and charitable initiatives were retained at the same time. In this respect, a role was played by the fact that a large part of the founders of the new Bulgarian state were intellectuals, genetically linked with National Revival cultural traditions. This was a lasting feature of the period's cultural development - the Bulgarian political elite descended from and continued to be directly linked with the intelligentsia.

The Ministry of National Enlightenment (MNE) became the backbone of the cultural policy of the Bulgarian state. It prepared and implemented a policy which virtually encompassed all spheres of cultural development. The Ministry's budget more than trebled in five years. It represented about 6% of the total national budget. The MNE's main task was to ensure compulsory and free primary education to all Bulgarian subjects. Teacher training was another important task, greatly aided by the Higher Pedagogical Course, which eventually became the first Bulgarian University. The first National Education Act was unanimously passed in 1891. It effectively placed both the entire education in the country, as well as the development of cultural institutes, under MNE supervision

A Scientific and Literary Enterprises Act was drafted in 1890, providing the legal framework for subsidising the tracing of historical and archaeological monuments and archive documents, as well as for the documenting of folkloric heritage. The state funded the publication of the Collection of Folklore, Science and Literature which was exceptionally rich in content. The funds allocated by the MNE under this Act were doubled between 1889 and 1894. Subsidies for

the Dramatic Troupe in the capital also started being granted in 1889. The National Museum separated from the National Library in Sofia in 1891 and an archaeological commission was set up with the MNE. These were the main cultural institutions which shaped the appearance of Bulgarian culture throughout this period.

During the first decade of the 20th century Bulgaria continued the extremely quick pace of economic and cultural development which caused talk - first in the British press - of the "Bulgarian Miracle". On the eve of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), the literacy level of the Bulgarian population was the highest in the Balkan countries. In 1903 a University Act was passed which guaranteed its academic autonomy. In 1911 the Bulgarian Literary Society became the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The National Museum was festively opened in 1905, and in 1904 the Dramatic Troupe was transformed into the National Theatre. The State Drawing School (1896), the State Music School (1906) and the Operatic Society (1908), the future National Opera, were set up. The MNE also provided funds for reading clubs which had previously been supported mainly by the municipalities. The ethnographic and art collections of the National Museum also started being subsidised.

The Bulgarian government, in the person of Prof. Shishmanov as Minister of Education and author of the most thorough and comprehensive program of cultural policy, did not fail either to encourage the promotion of Bulgarian culture abroad. Starting in 1906, an annual sum of 5,000 leva was allocated to the Bulgarian seminar of Prof. Gustav Weigand in Leipzig University. It turned into a Balkanwide institute for the comparative study of Balkan languages.

State support for the education of Bulgarians in the developed European scientific and cultural centres formed an important element of the Europeanisation of cultural policy during this period. The Bulgarian governments legislatively regulated the status of state scholarship students. A total of 451 scholarship students, including 423 men and 28 women, studied abroad during the pre-war period (1912-1919). Most MNE scholarships were granted for medicine, the different philologies, engineering, pedagogy, law, natural sciences, fine arts, music and mathematics.

In addition to state scholarship students a large number of students also studied abroad at their own expense. Before the wars the MNE had legalised 1,586 diplomas received abroad, including 1,533 of men and 53 of women, issued mainly in France, followed by Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Russia, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Romania, etc.

An impressive number of Bulgarians completed dissertations: 585 men and 46 women.

Through studies abroad, specialisations and doctorates, including some of indisputable scientific merit, the Bulgarian intelligentsia became part of European cultural relations, gained self-confidence and established a direct dialogue with the centres of European culture. The fact that almost all foreign alumni returned to Bulgaria speaks for itself. Embarking on a professional career, they came to head the country's political, cultural and international life. The best of them occupied leading posts, drafted legislation for the functioning of the system of culture, science and education on a modern, contemporary

basis, using the experience gained abroad. Besides implementing their knowledge, they inspired the Bulgarian intelligentsia with renewed confidence as an equal partner to Europe's intellectuals. The international acclaim of many Bulgarian scientists, as well as the successes of Bulgaria's artists and musicians abroad, confirmed this.

All this represents the main characteristics of the establishment of the cultural institutions of the Bulgarian state. They were preserved and developed further during the following interwar period. The normal way of cultural development was changed during the wars. During the First World War a Cultural Section was set up with the Staff of the Operating Army, modelled on the German example, which not only guided varied cultural activities among the troops, but also organised research and collecting activity under the most prominent scholars and scientists: historians, archaeologists, philologists, geographers and natural scientists in Aegean Thrace and Macedonia. Strict censorship was introduced and the official line of patriotic education and apologetic battle genres was sponsored at the same time.

The post-war period in the development of Bulgarian culture was marked by a radically changed domestic and external situation, national catastrophes, economic collapse and international isolation. The government of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BZNS) introduced drastic changes to the existing cultural policy which caused an open clash with a large part of the established intelligentsia. The BZNS measures in the sphere of culture aimed to satisfy the demands of the broad peasant masses and broaden access to higher education. But this was done contrary to the traditions of freedom and autonomy of cultural institutions and with dictatorial methods. This is why this cultural policy was strongly isolated. Its positive aspects include turning the State School of Drawing into the Academy of Art, the School of Music into the Conservatoire, the addition of the Theological and Medical Faculties to the University. Bulgarian journalism was also greatly boosted.

During the next period the Bulgarian governments did not significantly change the basic line of development of Bulgarian culture. It was primarily expressed in the deepening and expansion of the established cultural institutions; the increase (in absolute and relative terms) of the budget of the MNE, the National Museum and National Library; considerable growth and enhanced activity of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; turning the University into a leading cultural institute; vigorous international contacts in the field of culture, compensating, in part, for the country's international isolation. At the same time, the strengthened trend towards the centralisation of power was reflected in the activity of cultural institutions. This was best seen after the coup of 19.05.1934 when virtually all cultural activities were directly supervised by the Department of Culture. Things were the same during the Second World War.

A remarkable example of the European level of the Bulgarian state system during this period was its policy relating to the religious and cultural development of minorities. All minority groups in Bulgaria enjoyed very broad autonomy. They were organised in municipalities where not only religion, education and mass culture were managed by their representatives, but even family and property matters were subject to current common law. The Bulgarian state granted equal rights and freedoms to its citizens, regardless of their ethnic

origin. The most eloquent proof of Bulgaria's tolerant policy with regard to the cultural development of minorities was the state subsidy for their schools (secular and clerical) and periodicals.

This line changed after 1934 when the centralisation of state power led to the tight supervision of all activities and minorities, including schools and mass cultural activities.

During the 1878-1944 period the Bulgarian state established a modern and constantly developing cultural institutional system. It asserted the state principle and skilfully funded and encouraged publishing activity, research into the Bulgarian past, literature, the fine arts, music and the theatre. At the same time this system largely preserved the intrinsic value of cultural institutes. This trend was expressed in the preservation and fostering of the public principle in the management of schools, reading clubs, amateur art, etc. The democratic principle in local self-government inherited from the National Revival period was thus retained.

One of the most favourable circumstances in the development of Bulgarian culture was that legislative bills were drafted by leading figures of cultural and scientific institutes and suffered no significant changes when passed. As a result of the competent participation of the intelligentsia in the management of cultural policy, a democratic, flexible and progressive system was established for the training and realisation of academic and cultural figures, broad access to academic education was ensured, and the number of specialists graduating abroad increased. This resulted in the formation of a solid strata of professional and competent Bulgarian intellectuals which rivalled the criteria of European cultural development. The interruption of this upward trend in the establishment of a new, modern Bulgarian culture, commensurate with European culture, in 1944 is a tragic page in our history.

2.3. Bulgaria's cultural policy during the period of socialism

The country's cultural policy during the 45 years of socialism is characterised by a number of general features which, presented schematically, can be summarized as:

- total centralisation of the management of cultural processes;
- ideological monopoly in imposing cultural values;
- focus on the extensive development of culture.

2.3.1. Nationalisation and control

Right from their creation in post-Liberation Bulgaria, cultural institutions were thought of and established as educational institutions, as a means of raising the nation's confidence and as a way of incorporation to the values of European culture. "The values of self-assertion, equalisation with European culture, openness to foreign cultural influences, enlightenment and, to some extent, imitation form the basis of Bulgarian cultural institutions." (1)

In a society in which the arts are regarded more as a means of enlightenment, rather than as a means of entertainment, the opinion prevails that the state has to look after them. The dependence of the Bulgarian creative

artists on the civil service became a traditional feature of Bulgarian cultural life. This proved a blessing for the advent of totalitarianism in the late 1940s.

The totalitarian cultural institutions were created as soon as the communist regime was established in this country. They transformed all components of the traditional Bulgarian cultural institution and completely encompassed the country's cultural life in their network. The public system preached and consistently practised political and cultural protectionism from the positions of communist ideology. The documents of the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party (December 1948) formulated the task of "building the economic and cultural foundations of socialism". Together with the economy, culture was regarded as the main target of socialist construction. The strategy of the BCP in the sphere of cultural policy was formulated in the reports of its leaders. Georgi Dimitrov declared before the Congress: "The struggle on the cultural and ideological front is of paramount importance for eradicating the corrupt heritage bequeathed by capitalism." Vulko Chervenkov's report speaks about a cultural revolution, including urgent measures for eradicating illiteracy among a part of the population; consolidating the cinema and radio as the most powerful means of canvassing and propaganda; reevaluation of literature and history textbooks for high schools and universities; the struggle against aestheticism, individualism, decadent influences in poetry, painting and the cinema. Poets and writers are charged with the task of "helping the Party, the Fatherland Front and the State to educate the people in devotion and loyalty to the great cause of socialism, to strengthen its hatred for the enemies of the people."

Essentially, this strategy was pursued throughout the whole period under review; the stages which may be differentiated show, more than anything else, the firmness of the means with which it was imposed:

Establishment of the system of state cultural institutions and centralisation of the management of culture

1948 was the year of the *nationalisation of all cultural institutions* and the barring of any private initiative in promoting cultural values. A Cine and Film Industry Act was passed at the start of the year which removed private entrepreneurs from film production and turned film import and distribution into a state monopoly. This tightened control in the selection and import of foreign films. A Council of Ministers decree of 6 October 1944 instructed the state authorities to confiscate all publications with pro-German fascist and anti-Soviet themes. In July 1946 Georgi Dimitrov ordered the book market to be cleansed of "sensational literature of doubtful quality and to create still broader possibilities for the spread of progressive literature."

New state publishing houses were created immediately after 9 September 1944: Partizdat in the autumn of 1944, the MNE State Publishing House, the Otechestven Front Book Publishing Co-operative, Detizdat and Profizdat in the spring of 1945. The nationalisation of private printing houses started in 1947 and ended with the promulgation of the Book Printing Act in March 1949. The activity of private publishing houses was terminated in May 1948. A General Administration of Publishing Houses, Polygraphic Industry and Trade with Printed Materials was set up with the Council of Ministers in July 1950.

The process of creating a stringent, *centralised management system* was essentially completed in 1948 when two opposing trends emerged in Bulgarian cultural policy. The line of confidence in the intelligentsia, for broad cultural contacts with near and distant countries, increasingly retreated before the Zhdanov norms, and the country's cultural relations were increasingly localised and restricted to the countries of the emerging socialist community. (2)

The creation of the Committee of Science, Art and Culture in 1948, replacing the Chamber of National Culture, completed the establishment of the centralised system of management of culture which imposed *total control on all spheres of cultural life* and essentially turned culture into a means of attaining extra-cultural objectives: politico-ideological, social and propaganda goals. The Chamber of National Culture was not closed because of the opposition of its members - it too was composed of communists. The Chamber was dissolved because, as Vulko Chervenkov writes: "The Party and Government could not entrust the development of the visual arts, and of all arts, to one, no matter which, group of figures, corporatively organised and in fact separated from the party leadership. The sphere of the cultural front, too, must be guided by the Party." (3)

The pyramidally centralised model of management renders any sphere of culture institutionalised and administered by the power of the party-cum-state. The real generator of cultural policy (the CC of the BCP) and its subordinate formal creative unions, the ministries and committees, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the scientific research institutes and all following steps of the model functioned like a machine for the production of correct meanings and contents, for tolerating them from top to bottom, for allowing controlled portions of cultural heritage and information, for orchestrating communications and creative art and for filtering them through censorship. (4)

The creative unions became the conductor of state monopoly in culture - they focussed within them the control over the entire process of the creation and promotion of cultural property and made individual expression almost impossible. "The interests of the state become the interests of the creative union, and its freedom is the freedom to defend these interests." (5)

Or, as Vulko Chervenkov writes: "The creative unions are fellow-workers of the Committee of Arts and Culture. Both Union and Committee must together implement the policy of the Party and work in close contact." (6) The idea of total ideological and political control replaces the idea of creative freedom which formed the basis of the creative unions, free ideative union is substituted by mandatory membership, democratism is replaced by democratic centralism, and the idea of national art with communist internationalism, poorly concealing Soviet cultural imperialism. The creative artist, connected with the state earlier too, now became absolutely dependent on the party and state, and essentially turned into a civil servant. Thus, in the early 1950s, the system of state cultural institutions was fully established and its functioning had become routine. Every single one of its elements was hierarchically subordinated and subjected to dual state and party control. The conducted cultural policy was ideologically orthodox, any disagreement with it was sanctioned (the party invectives against communist artist Alexander Zhendov are a drastic example of this).

Relaxed control methods and formal introduction of democratic procedures

Only the echo of Khrushchev's reforms caused a certain softening of the ideological climate after 1956, advertised by the ruling BCP as its "April policy" and ending rapidly after the Czech events of August 1968. The following period of stagnation was extolled as the blossoming of socialist art.

The early 70s saw the appearance of the ideologem of the "public-cum-state principle in the management of culture", which presupposed the electivity of all management bodies and wide broadening of the circle of people taking part in the discussion of management decisions. The Bureau and Chairmanship of the Committee of Culture were elective bodies but the appointment of their leaders and members was approved respectively by the National Assembly and the State Council, and mass participation in the discussion of cultural problems quickly turned into a ritual, creating democratic visibility in the approval of already taken decisions. This is why the widespread promotion of the "public-cum-state principle" as a democratic achievement of Bulgarian cultural policy proved "to a large extent propaganda and demagogy: despite the advertised electivity of management teams in culture, the real decisions were always taken by the party bosses. The ideological and political monopoly on the culture of the Bulgarian nation was never seriously shaken since it was embodied in the hierarchy of coalesced party, state and repressive structures and served the reproduction of ideologised, politicised culture, motivated by the speculative identification of the "class and party approach" with "universal human values and ideals", of "party-mindedness" with "nationality", and through tendentious absolutisations of the sort of "socialist realism" and "the Leninist formulation of the two cultures". (7)

A certain amount of opposition against the Soviet cultural influence was noticed in the late 70s and early 80s which, without ever being openly declared, was accepted as the official cultural policy by a part of the creative intelligentsia, since it was linked with the name of the then leader on the "cultural front" Lyudmila Zhivkova. It was essentially reduced to an attempt to focus on what was national in Bulgarian culture, which quickly degenerated to a jingoistic idealisation of Bulgarian history. This policy infected a part of the Bulgarian intelligentsia with false messianism and the conviction that servility to the new patrons gives them the chance to create "national" art.

Despite these negative aspects, towards the end of the totalitarian period the Bulgarian creative artists as a whole had gained considerable creative independence, the totalitarian creative unions had become a cosy place. They no longer mercilessly stifled criticism and simultaneously guaranteed privileges and financial security. By the mid-80s, under the influence of the Soviet "perestroika", a part of the creative unions turned into opposition-inclined alliances of intellectuals, and their congresses in 1989 became rostrums for attacks against the system.

2.3.2. Extensiveness of the cultural development

The state cultural policy in the period between 1944 and 1989 was predominantly oriented towards extensive cultural development. Its main goal was to achieve mass participation in culture through:

- **maximum access** guaranteed to cultural products and cultural institutions;

- **equal and equitable participation in culture** for all social strata and ethnic groups, and of the population in the different economic, geographic and cultural regions.

The extensive cultural development was achieved along in two *phases*:

- development of professional cultural infrastructure;
- stimulation of amateur art.

In the *first phase* solutions were sought to the problems of guaranteeing mass access through quantitative saturation on the territory of the country:

- through networks of cultural institutions for professional, "live" art (theatres and puppet theatres, symphony and chamber orchestras, choirs, song and dance ensembles, pop groups, opera theatres, architectural and sculptural studios);

- through production and distribution of mass circulated art (film-making studios and cinemas; printing houses and bookshops; sound recording and video-recording; photographic studios; TV and radio, including the installation of electrical radio broadcasting networks in the villages, small towns, industrial plants, large enterprises, etc);

- through institutes for studying, preservation, conservation and restoration, as well as for the updating and exhibiting of the cultural heritage (libraries, museums, galleries, memorials).

The *second phase* was manifested in the extensive spreading of *amateur art institutions* and in stimulating participation in amateur forms of various artistic activities:

- the existing network was expanded and a wide network of polyfunctional cultural institutions was developed (the traditional reading club, houses of culture, festival complexes, clubs according to interests), in which amateur art was practiced and contacts were maintained in the sphere of professional and amateur forms of art;

- a wide range of artistic activities and amateur forms of art were developed, as well as forms for their demonstration before an audience;

- As a result of a definite re-orientation in the content of state culture policy during and after the 'sixties, there was a stimulation and rebirth of forgotten and neglected folk arts and crafts. The training and the education of young artists and craftsmen, of folkloric singers, dancers and instrumentalists, were covered by the formal secondary and higher education;

- special attention was given to the cultural training and artistic education of children and young people. School libraries were created, as well as various extracurricular forms of amateur art. Palaces of Young Pioneers,¹ children's homes, youth culture homes and discotheques were made. Schools

¹ The Dimitrov Young Pioneers' Organization was composed of practically all children aged 9-14 years. In addition to the communist education, it had many functions and activities were similar to the familiar boy scout organizations in the West. The Organization ceased to exist in 1989.

of music, fine arts, applied arts, ballet, folklore and modern dances were opened out of formal educational system.

Parallel with the expansion and development of the network of state cultural institutions, two more objectives were pursued and attained, namely:

- *regional cultural centres* were created in the 26 district cities, which were the administrative and territorial centres of the regional state structures before 1990;

- *the local cultural elite* was stabilized. This was attained by restricting its natural migration towards the bigger cities and the capital through various direct and indirect means. For example, the state introduced (by the end of the 'seventies) mandatory allocation for young people who had just obtained their university degree in the arts to work in the culture centres all over the country. Accordingly, the local municipal authorities set aside a certain proportion of the available housing facilities for the cultural institutions, so that they could accommodate the young artists sent to work there. Local subdivisions of the unions of creative artists were created at the regional cultural centres. Other methods for restricting migration and at the same time for encouraging the stabilization of the local cultural elite were also implemented.

The local cultural elite was formed by the people practicing professions in the sphere of the arts; by teachers and university lecturers of art; by researchers of the present-day and historical aspects of culture. The second circle of the cultural elite was formed by people who actively appreciated art; by journalists; by art critics; by the cultural administration. The third circle of the local cultural elite was formed by people engaged in amateur art. Large portions of the first, second and third circles overlapped. According to representative sociological data, after 1968 the proportion of the cultural elite thus outlined ranges between 9 and 11 % for the country, reaching 14 % for the population in some of the bigger cities.

The expansion of the infrastructure of the cultural institutions, as well as the increasing numbers and the higher professional achievements of the cultural elite, provided new and bigger opportunities for expansion of the *international cultural contacts* of Bulgaria. Since the Party-state was the only Maecenas of culture before 1989, the state-Maecenas invested enormous amounts of money in order to create an attractive facade of Bulgarian socialist culture. It formed and supported elite art formations (musical, folklore, children's, etc.), which presented Bulgarian art abroad. Few talented artists had access to the international stages, exhibitions and other cultural events as representatives of Bulgarian culture. The state organized and financed many international cultural mega-events, periodically held in Bulgaria and enjoying considerable international prestige. Modern palaces of culture and festival complexes were built in Sofia and in several other bigger cities in the country in the 1980s.

The state *cultural policy in education* was fundamental to the increasingly mass character and accessibility of the cultural participation. The mass literacy campaign for the elderly illiterate population continued for several years after 1944. Compulsory education was introduced for all children and adolescents: initially primary education was required (4 grades); later elementary education (8 completed grades) became mandatory, and

preparations started in the 'eighties for the introduction of mandatory secondary general education or occupational training (until the 11th or 12th grade). Art education features prominently in the school curricula with its long traditions. From the beginning of the century, music, art and folk dances were taught in Bulgarian state schools. That tradition was preserved in the curricula after 1944 as well.

Another trend in the state cultural-educational policy consisted in developing the existing secondary schools for art and higher academic institutions for professional education in the art sphere, as well as in creating new ones. Parallel with them, there were many forms of art training and education outside the formal educational system.

Through a wider accessibility was now possible to attain to a certain extent one of the objectives of the equal and equitable participation in consumption: an ever increasing percentage of the population could communicate directly with the works of professional and amateur artists (if not in the actual village or small town in which they lived, at least in the nearest regional culture centre). The goals of equal accessibility were attained with other direct and indirect means as well, namely:

- by maintaining low prices of the tickets for the scenic art and the cinema; low prices of books and the periodical publications; cheap subscription rates; free admission (or symbolic admission prices) for art galleries, museums, memorials, etc.; free or extremely inexpensive membership of libraries;
- reduced prices for organized group visits; rated price reductions for certain social groups (students, soldiers, pensioners);
- organized cultural and educational tourism with discounts and reduced prices for travelling and accommodation;
- cultural trips and tours (in the country or region) by groups of artists, musicians, ensembles, writers, poets and other intellectual figures of national or regional significance;
- free art education in schools, extracurricular training centres and universities;
- expansion of the road infrastructure and maintenance of regular and inexpensive mass transport linking small towns and villages with regional cultural centre;
- gradual introduction of radio broadcasting, cinemas and telephone communication; the establishment and maintenance of the state TV broadcasting network.

Until 1989, cable and satellite TV, telecommunication networks and other modern conveniences of civilization were still either inaccessible, or the "forbidden fruit". In those years computerization had just started.

A basic factor in the socialist cultural policy was that *all principal cultural institutions were owned by the state*. The cultural elite was formed by artists and employees paid out of the state budget. *Culture was supported by the state*, irrespective of the formal belonging of some institutions to municipal authorities, socio-political or artistic organizations, to industrial plants, culture clubs or schools (the press, cinema halls, libraries, etc.). The revenues from culture went to the state budget, where they were redistributed and returned to culture in the form of budget-planned support, subsidies and investments.

Both the financing and the *management* of the cultural institutions was *totally centralized*. Irrespective of all simulated democratic forms introduced in the so-called public and state principle in the management of culture, state-party and ideological control was imposed over all produced, reproduced and distributed artistic and information products.

A third characteristic feature of this cultural policy was that planning for it was done on a five- and one-year basis, whereby the so-called "dynamic norms and regulations" for the development of culture were set. This outlined different periods in time, with domination of various Communist Party notions about culture (and about the nation and the state as well), and accordingly with domination of different priorities in the management, financing and investment in culture.

Numerous contradictions can be perceived in the priorities of the socialist cultural policy. An example indicating fatal consequences in culture and its subcultural layers can be observed in the periods of discrepant treatment given to the "nationality" of the Bulgarian citizens. In the beginning, Bulgaria was dominated by the "Stalinist directive" that it should present itself before the world as a multi-national state, whereas Bulgarian socialist culture would be formed as a model of coexistence of numerous "national" cultures which were to be placed on an equal footing and have the same rights. After 1980, that policy changed totally in a movement towards one unified national culture, culminating in the 1984-1989 period, when the process of the coercive changing of the names of the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria (euphemistically referred to as the "revival process") was being conducted. Bulgarian citizens with Turkish or Arabic names were forced to take Bulgarian names (even the dead were renamed); it was forbidden and entailed criminal liability to speak Turkish in public outside one's home.

A peculiar and essential characteristic feature of the state cultural and educational policy was its compulsory atheistic content. Religion as a school subject, which existed in Bulgarian schools until 1944, was abolished. The adult population, and to an even higher degree the young people as well, were literally persecuted and punished for having visited places of religious worship and for observing the religious rites and rituals. For the rites associated with the most important moments in the life of a person - baptism, marriage and death - the state created special municipal ritual homes in which the traditional religious rituals are replaced by their secular imitations. The so-called "festive and ritual sphere of culture" was a permanent focus of the cultural policy of the state until 1989.

The results of the extensive guaranteeing of mass access and equal participation in culture before the 1960s were predominantly favourable. The leap in the educational level and in the professional qualification of the population after 1944 is an indisputable fact. Schooling was made available to traditionally barely literate and completely illiterate communities, e.g. the population of the high-mountainous regions, Turks, Gypsies and other less numerous ethnic groups. The reading club and amateur art forms, as well as the cinema, books and the press, the radio and the TV, staged a mass penetration among the population and raised its artistic and aesthetic tastes and education. Parallel with the expansion of the networks of the traditional,

modern and amateur cultural institutions and arts by the mid-1970s, there was a gradual increase in the number of their audiences.

The state-subsidized artistic culture was offered inexpensively or even free of charge, hence it appeared to be more and more accessible to the broad masses. In turn, the mass accessibility created the illusion of a guaranteed equal and equitable participation in culture. However, the sociological surveys carried out in the 1970s and 1980s have indisputably disproved that ostensible finding. The sociological surveys registered considerable differences between the active and selective demand (by a small number of people who were connoisseurs) and passive consumption (with a constantly increasing percentage of passive consumers); between the cultural participation of the rural and urban population, between the citizens of small towns and bigger cities; between individuals with different educational backgrounds and practicing different professions. Differences were also registered in the cultural participation between people of different ages; between married and unmarried individuals; between men and women. Special surveys on the cultural participation of children and adolescents also reveal big differences. Inter-ethnic differences in the cultural participation were not studied systematically during the years of communist rule. Whenever and insofar as they were investigated, the results were never made public. However, it is no secret that the ethnic characteristic is also an essential factor in the non-equitable participation in the officially regulated cultural life. For instance, while the relatively small Jewish and Armenian communities (who live in the cities) were oriented towards an active and elitist cultural participation, the cultural participation of the Gypsies and of the ethnic Turks (from the villages with a compact Turkish population) was becoming more and more passive. This tendency became particularly pronounced after the closing down of the Turkish and Roma culture clubs and public libraries, set up when the multicultural concept dominated, and closed down when the notion of a unified national culture began to dominate.

The data obtained on the basis of national, representative one-year analyses of the time budget of the population of Bulgaria have been an important source of information on the tendency of transition from active cultural participation to passive cultural consumption. The studies were conducted in 1970/71, 1976/77 and 1988.

According to the compared data from the three studies during the 1970-1988 period, the leisure time of the entire population aged above 7 years gradually increased: from an average of 268 min per one person for 24 hours in 1970 to 289 minutes in 1977. That increase was by 34 minutes for the men and only 7 minutes only for the women. Leisure time for the urban population increased by 23 minutes, for the rural population - by 6 minutes. The increase in the 1970-1977 period was mainly at the expense of the transition from six- to five-day working week.

Leisure time continued to increase in the 1978-1988 period, and at a much faster rate than during the preceding period, to reach 337 minutes in 1988. For the men, that increase was by 75 minutes, for the women, by 26 minutes; for the urban population, by 45 minutes, and for the rural population, by 37 minutes.

The increase in the leisure time, however, was paralleled by a reduction in the time devoted to professional training and raising of the educational level; the time for visits to libraries and various educational and training courses also decreased. The leisure time spent on visits to cultural institutions - opera, theatre, musical theatre, ballet, concerts and other performances - was also less, coupled with a drastic reduction in the time for going to the cinema or to video-clubs. While in 1970 a person spent an average of 4.40 minutes - going to the cinema, in 1977 that time increased to 6.44 minutes, dropping in 1988 to 3.15 min. In 1970 the population devoted 17.90 minutes of its daily time budget to reading books, newspapers and periodicals, in 1988 - 25.86 minutes, with preference being given to books. In 1988, 21 % of the population read books regularly, compared to 16.8 % who read newspapers. Women preferred books, men tended to read more newspapers.

The most substantial changes in the structure of leisure time are associated with the increased time spent watching TV. In 1970 the population devoted 42.70 minutes per day, on average (16 %) of their leisure time to that activity, in 1988 - 83.89 minutes (24.9 %), when Bulgarians spent a quarter of their free time in front of their TV-sets. The time spent watching TV almost doubled over a period of 18 years.

Ever since the end of the 1970s, but mainly towards the mid-1980s, the negative results of the cultural policy pursued became evident:

- a superabundance of *uniform networks of cultural institutions* for professional and amateur art in the country (in terms of their structure, overlapping functions and activities, the type of ownership and the mode of management and financing);

- *inefficiency* in the utilization and *lack of cost-effectiveness* in the activities of the available national cultural infrastructure was manifested (according to statistics from 1978, a process of closing down of reading clubs, libraries, cinemas and other similar institutions started in the semi-depopulated settlements);

- culture was burdened by an *excessively oversized bureaucratic structure* which administered and controlled every cultural activity;

- the *costly maintenance and the cheap supply* of products of art became an increasingly unbearable burden for the state budget, which led to several successive cuts in the administrative apparatus, in the administrative and servicing staff, and in the creative teams. The prices of books, cinema and theatre tickets increased, admission fees were introduced in galleries, museums, etc.

- *the cultural elite became increasingly dissatisfied* with its low average salary from the state budget; it was also dissatisfied with the price at which the state bought and sold the product of their art; it protested against the political and ideological control over creativity. The first dissident groups emerged in 1988, consisting mainly of intellectuals. Open criticism of the cultural policy of the Communist Party and of human rights violations were heard at the congresses of the Writers' Union and the Film-Makers' Union (1989).

- *acute inter-ethnic confrontation* was provoked, especially in the mixed population regions. An organized clandestine Movement for Right and Liberties

emerged, predominantly among the ethnic Turks. In 1987-1989 the ethnic Turks were forced to emigrate on a massive scale from Bulgaria;

- a *retreat of the audience* from the traditional cultural institutions started, as well as massive retreat from active amateur art activities. There was an increase in the time for non-formalized contacts (i.e., much less controlled by the state) in club forms, for entertainment and amusement (by going to restaurants and discotheques; exchanging visits to the homes of friends and relatives; listening to recorded music; reading at home, etc.).

The processes of accelerated restructuring of consumption and the involvement of the population in the country's cultural life, which have only recently begun to be cited as indicators of a crisis in Bulgarian culture, actually started much before the watershed year 1989. Some of these processes were natural and to a great extent independent of the ideological and political objectives of the cultural policy. Such is the case of the massive retreat from the cinema halls and libraries at the expense of the TV and video-films. A similar trend is also observed in the natural non-equitable cultural participation, arising from the different social status of the different population groups.

Most of the causes of the crisis today, however, were intrinsic to the very process of conceiving the goals of the socialist state cultural policy pursued for 45 years. On the one hand, the Communist-Party-cum-State rationally planned and pursued its political, ideological and economic interests in the cultural policy. On the other hand, it ignored completely irrationally both some natural social and cultural processes, and the effects caused by its policy, which were often contrary to its declared intentions. For ideological reasons, the state cultural policy undertook to abolish the cultural differences between the town and the village, between social groups with a different professional, educational and other status, and between the different ethnic and religious communities. The authorities either covertly or overtly encouraged and opposed the differences stemming from political and economic interests (not declared openly). This actually resulted in the development of a Bulgarian culture with two faces:

- the face of the official socialist mass culture in which cultural differences were blurred and an illusory equal, equitable and accessible participation was ensured;

- the face of the unofficial, ignored but nevertheless live culture, in which natural processes of group differences and subcultural diversities took place.

However, due to the fact of being pushed into the sphere of the "incorrect" and "forbidden", natural processes took place in unnatural conditions and gave rise to narrow, archaic, monstrous and perverted socio-cultural effects.

The referring of the start of the crisis to 1989 stems from the simple fact that the second, monstrous face of socialist culture emerged from the "twilight zone" only after the crucial year, 1989. The subcultural layers were currently trying to present peremptory claims for legalization; they demonstrate self-appreciation and self-confidence through their preserved - albeit mutilated - differences in the tastes, values and needs. The economic crisis and the political confrontation of the recent years additionally exacerbate the crisis in culture.

2. 4.The Difficult Steps of the Transition

2.4.1. The cultural consequences of the social reform

The state of Bulgarian culture after 1989 is characterized by controversial phenomena and processes, which are not susceptible to unilateral evaluations. Under the conditions of the transition, culture proved to be among the spheres most profoundly affected by the economic and spiritual crisis accompanying this transition. At the same time, it was precisely culture that manifested particularly tangibly the positive moments in the reforms taking place in society.

To the positive changes it is possible to attribute:

- the emerging tendency of *breaking the fetters of artistic creativity and cultural life*, especially in those of their spheres and trends which were previously subjected to strong ideological control, censorship and crude administration under the conditions of the totalitarian state (book publishing, theatre, film-making and distribution, museums, radio and TV broadcasting, etc.);

- *the growing differentiation and diversification of the cultural needs and interests* of the population as a result of the new trends, types and forms of participation in the country's cultural life, in the production and dissemination of cultural values. There are also growing opportunities for *access of Bulgarians to the heritage and modern achievements of European and world culture*. An important role in this respect is attached to the liberalization of the international cultural exchanges and to the development of modern telecommunications (satellite TV, private radio and TV channels, audio- and video-industry, etc.);

- *the resurgent interest in forgotten or hitherto untolerated cultural traditions and customs* in the life of Bulgarians, of the different villages, regions, ethnic groups, etc., e.g. the folklore and the festive systems of the ethnic communities; religious festivals, holidays and rituals; sponsorship, donation, independent associations, foundations, etc. This in turn contributed to the consolidation of Bulgarian national culture, as well as to the preservation and enrichment of the traditional national forms of artistic creativity and cultural activity;

- the real steps undertaken for the implementation of the *structural reform* along the main trends of culture (privatization, development of the private sector, restoration of the municipal infrastructure of culture, etc.) resulted in an improvement in the quality of the activities of some cultural institutions (art galleries, publishing houses, music houses, etc.), as well as an increase in their social and economic effectiveness.

Positive effects also resulted from the *changes in the system of state financing and subsidies for culture*, as well as the experimentation of essentially new models of partial and complete self-financing of cultural institutions.

Irrespective of these and other positive changes, the general socio-cultural situation during the present stage of transition is dominated by *unfavourable tendencies and phenomena*. These create serious difficulties and problems before the functioning of the cultural sphere and reforming of its institutional organization in accordance with the changed social conditions.

- The economic crisis and other factors has caused a sharp *shrinking (quantitative change) and lowering (qualitative change) of the cultural consumption* of considerable layers of the population, and especially of the young generation. The restriction of access to valuable forms of art and to other cultural values is done both directly, by increasing the price of the cultural product, and indirectly - through the forced curtailment of the activities of some important cultural institutions, due to a "chronic" shortage of financial resources (theatres, libraries, museums, reading clubs, etc.).

- In the *sphere of the production and dissemination of cultural products* there exist some extremely negative tendencies: mass production and circulation in large quantities of low-quality products, widespread theft of intellectual property, *absence of real market behaviour* on the part of numerous producers and distributors of cultural products of dubious aesthetic and artistic value.

- A marked *destabilization of many of the cultural institutions and organizations* is observed in the areas of financial, organizational, personnel and socio-psychological planning. It is difficult to overcome the decline in the creative tone and the doubts about the successful outcome of the crisis among the people involved in the sphere of culture and the arts. One of the main reasons for this destabilization should be sought in the lack of sufficient willingness and resoluteness to consistently implement the structural reform of the institutional organization of some sectors of culture, whose maintenance continues to be based almost entirely on the state budget.

- As regards the *possibilities of artistic and creative manifestation* of professionals and amateurs in the sphere of culture, the situation is likewise impossible to assess unambiguously. The reasons for the emerging problems consist mainly in the dissonance between the politically and psychologically guaranteed freedom of creativity and self-expression, on the one hand, and on the other - the restrictions of an economic and social nature which this freedom faces. At present these restrictions are exercising a stronger influence.

- *New controversies and problems* have emerged in the course of the market reform and the liberalization of public relations, but they are not always the object of a timely and adequate intervention at the executive and legislative levels.

At both the theoretical level and at the level of the executive government practice there is insufficient clarity on issues like:

the admissible and socially justifiable degree of state intervention in the regulation of market relations in the concrete spheres of culture, the forms and mechanisms needed to counteract the invasion of low-quality cultural products from abroad, the protection of national art and cultural traditions, the manifestation of the national cultural identity, while at the same time not hampering the international cultural exchanges;

legislative prerequisites and government mechanisms for effective protection of the cultural wealth of Bulgaria against destruction, theft and other violations;

ways and means of overcoming the governing "reflexes" accumulated over the last decades for administrative implementation of the reform in the cultural institutions "directed from above" (mainly through improvements in the

mechanism for state financing), underestimating the role of local and intra-institutional factors, etc.

- Among the principal problems in the country's cultural development it is possible to cite also the insufficient *coordination and synchronization* between the cultural policy and policy in the economic and in other spheres of public life. This largely accounts for the failures in the reform of the system for financing the cultural activities and institutions. This experiment was not safeguarded by the necessary economic and legislative prerequisites against the effects of sharp changes.

2.4.2. The transition in the cultural policy: aims and trends

The severe impact of the prolonged and persistently aggravating economic crisis on certain spheres of culture, as well as the still unsurmountable differences in the viewpoints of the principal political forces concerning the character and the ways of implementing the reforms in the institutional organization and management of culture, do not permit at the present stage the drafting and consistent application of a generally accepted strategy and programme for the development of Bulgarian culture under the conditions of the transition.

In spite of the similarity in the principles and goals of the cultural policy successively proclaimed by the changing governments and ministerial teams, their positions and actions are influenced by elements of confrontation and mutual rejection. This creates additional obstacles to the attainment of consensus on the principal issues of the national cultural policy.

According to the programme documents of the government, the cultural policy nowadays is oriented towards achieving the following aims:

- Recognition and consolidation of the freedom of culture and the autonomy of its forms and institutes;
- Preservation of the Bulgarian cultural specificity, traditions and achievements, of the national cultural identity;
- Encouraging artistic creativity, creating conditions for the development of all its traditional as well as new areas;
- Creating better living conditions, public recognition and creativity of Bulgarian writers, artists, musicians, actors and other eminent figures in cultural life;
- Active cultural contacts and cooperation with other countries, cultural "opening" towards the world, informing it about the best in Bulgarian culture, both ancient and modern;
- Protection of national culture from the expansion of foreign socio-cultural models which threaten the cultural identity of the nation.

The main means by which the implementation of these objectives are sought can be summarized as follows:

- *Preservation, enrichment and development of the cultural environment.* The state makes efforts to create more favourable conditions for protection of its cultural and historical monuments, and the archives, for the existence of the Bulgarian book, fine arts, cinema, theatre and music, of reading clubs, culture homes and libraries, and for the normal functioning of the state schools for fine and applied arts.

- *Satisfying the cultural needs of the different social strata.* State bodies and institutions are aspiring towards cooperation with all cultural institutions and organizations - international, regional, private, municipal, etc. - for the popularizing, dissemination and transmission of the cultural values to the next generations, for expansion of entrepreneurship in the sphere of culture.

- By activating its *legislative initiatives and norm-building*, the government is working to create the normative basis needed for the normal functioning of all cultural institutions and activities under the conditions of the new market-oriented environment.

- *Protection of Bulgarian creative artists*, guaranteeing conditions for their self-development and self-expression. The government sees it as its duty to support artistic and cultural initiatives of social significance, thereby rendering assistance to the creating of valuable cultural products.

- *Drafting of a modern state policy for financial assistance to culture.* This policy comprises all necessary changes in the taxation system and state financing: differential taxation imposed upon different types of literature; direct financing out of the state budget for institutes of national significance and for ensembles that are representative of Bulgarian national culture; the establishment of associations on a shareholding principle with state participation; the sale of cultural products and services on the domestic and on the international market; the satisfaction of the maximum possible range of consumer interests.

- Encouraging and providing direct assistance for *alternative forms for resource support* for culture by specialized and goal-oriented funds and foundations (providing guarantees for government-independent allocation of the donations and contributions).

- *Assistance and effective aid to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church* with a view to its real participation in defending Bulgarian spiritual values, as well as for the preservation of the national traditions and virtues.

- *Intensification of the links with the occupational, artistic and other public organization in the sphere of culture*, protection and assistance for the reproduction of the creative potential of professional and amateur art.

- Updating and improvement of the *research and information basis* for the management of culture, creating a comprehensive system for investigation and analysis of the cultural processes, as well as for the training of experts for work in the sphere of the cultural administration and cultural management.

- *Territorial decentralization* of the cultural policy, broader management and financial autonomy of the cultural institutions.

3. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, PERSONNEL AND INFORMATION RESOURCES OF CULTURAL POLICY

3.1. Structure and resources

The main team in the implementation chain of cultural policy are the bodies which determine the goals, apply the mapped out measures and compare the planned aims, programs and tasks with the effects of the actions taken. The system of these bodies and the relations of co-ordination and subordination between them form the organisational structure of cultural policy.

On an organisational level, state cultural policy in Bulgaria is implemented at two levels - *national and local*.

On a national level the responsibility for its formation and application is distributed between the legislative body, in the person of the National Assembly, and the executive body - the Council of Ministers. The National Assembly determines the guidelines and guarantees cultural policy through legislative actions, proposed by the executive or the parliamentarians and drafted by its Standing Commission on Culture. The Council of Ministers implements cultural policy through the Ministry of Culture and in co-ordination with other ministries and state institutions (the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technologies, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Agency for Expatriate Bulgarians, etc.).

On a local level cultural policy is implemented by the local self-government bodies. These are responsible for the territorial decentralisation of cultural policy. The local self-government bodies apply cultural legislation to the conditions of the respective settlement by adapting the resolutions of the executive and concurrently realise their own projects within the framework of their budget possibilities.

The personnel of culture is a significant condition for the democratisation and successful implementation of cultural policy both on a national and local level, in particular the readiness of the *cultural administration* for the challenges proceeding from the economic crisis, the decentralisation of cultural life, the complication of the management of cultural institutions, the international openness of cultural life, etc.

The other important condition for the democratisation of cultural policy is the existence of a developed *informational infrastructure* capable, on the one hand, of assisting the leading management bodies in taking correct decisions and, on the other, of guaranteeing public transparency of the activities of these bodies and the attained results and, finally, to serve as a condition and resource of public debate on the problems of cultural policy.

The problems emerging in the organisational structure, personnel and information level of cultural policy in Bulgaria may be summed up in several groups:

- Delay in the passage of the necessary new cultural legislation due to the tight schedule of the National Assembly and the absence of this legislation among its priorities;
- Insufficient co-ordination between the bodies implementing cultural policy on a national and local level;

- Lack of a properly trained cultural administration, capable of coping with contradictions in the development of culture in the conditions of democratisation and extremely scarce financial resources;

- Scarcity of information in cultural-political decision-making.

The solutions to these problems are sought with varying degrees of success through:

- purposeful formation of public opinion in support of the need for new cultural legislation;

- creation of organisational structures with the Ministry of Culture for the development of regional culture;

- assistance for projects linked with the training of the cultural administration;

- preparation of the establishment of an information system for the Ministry of Culture.

3. 2. Structure and functions of the Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture is a specialised state body entrusted with the formulation and implementation of state cultural policies.

3.2.1. Institutional changes

From Bulgaria's Liberation until 1947 cultural matters were departmentally subordinated to the Ministry of Enlightenment. A Committee of Science, Art and Culture functioned between 1948 and 1954. The Ministry of Culture was created for the first time in 1954 and existed until 1957 when education and culture were again joined in a single ministry.

The Committee of Culture and Art with the rank of a Ministry was set up in 1963, renamed Committee of Art and Culture in 1966, and Committee of Culture in 1977.

The Ministry of Culture was created on 16th February, 1990. During the period from January to June 1993 it was again joined with the Ministry of Education to form the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

With Council of Ministers Decree No.139 of 19th July, 1993 the Ministry of Culture was established as an independent institution.

3.2.2. Basic functions and tasks

The Ministry of Culture is a body of the Council of Ministers for the implementation of national policy in the sphere of creation, promotion and conservation of cultural property. The Ministry also co-ordinates the activities of other departments in the cultural area.

The Ministry of Culture performs the following basic functions and tasks:

- It defines the place and role of culture in the life of the nation and the policy of the state; it determines the principles, methods and the strategy of the national cultural policy.

- It takes care of and monitors the preservation of the national cultural heritage; it shapes the policy of raising public interest in the protection of the

movable and immovable monuments of culture; it encourages the unity among the cultural and historic heritage, the arts, the national traditions and the way of life as an element of the cultural identity of the Bulgarian people.

- It assists the development of culture by determining the principles of elaboration of the state budget for culture; Synthesises and substantiates before the respective state bodies the state budget financing needs of the different cultural sectors; disburses the approved budget funds to units within its jurisdiction and controls their use. Within the framework of the approved budget funds, it finances cultural initiatives and projects.

- Assists the creation of a market in the sphere of culture, guaranteeing the protection of national traditions. It works out and submits drafts of legal acts which provide the application of economic and financial stimuli for the promotion of cultural activities and culture.

- Organises, exercises control and realises international co-operation in the sphere of copyrights and related rights, exercises copyright and related rights transferred to the state in the absence of legal heirs.

- Creates monitoring and study mechanisms in the different spheres of culture, works in the domain of cultural statistics and cultural documentation, creates and maintains data banks for the cultural spheres.

- Controls compliance with the laws and regulations in the course of construction and use of material and technical facilities within the system of culture.

- Exercises the rights of the state as the sole capital owner in private commercial companies in relation to state enterprises under its sectoral authority.

- Assists and supervises the activity of non-profit associations in the sphere of culture.

- Organises personnel training and retraining of teachers and managerial staff and structural and organisational adjustment in the sphere of art and cultural education.

- It works out the strategy and assists the development of international cultural co-operation and the integration of Bulgarian culture with world culture; recommends the opening, transformation and closing of Bulgarian cultural institutes abroad.

3.2.3. Organisational structure

During the years of transition the organisational structure of the Ministry of Culture changed on several occasions. Of special significance are the changes related to the number and status of arts centres: they increased in number but their legal autonomy was curtailed.

The Ministry is headed by a Minister, aided by four Deputy Ministers and a Chief Secretary. The Collegium of the Ministry is an auxiliary consultative body of the Minister. In addition, the Minister is directly assisted by his Office, the Protocol Department and the Institutional Control Department.

Divisions and autonomous departments

These include:

1. The Legal Division includes the Legal and Statutory Departments.

2. The Finance and Economic Division. It includes the following departments: Finance, Privatisation and Control of State Participation, Property and Investment and Accounting. The Division also incorporates two sections: Financing of Programmes and Projects and Labour Planning and Compensation.

3. The Division on International Cultural Co-operation with the departments of Bilateral Co-operation and Bulgarian Cultural Institutes Abroad, European Integration and International Organisations, as well as the Art Genre Propagation Service.

4. Information Department.

5. Art and Cultural Schools Department.

6. Coordination and Links with the Local Administration Sector.

Administrative services in the Ministry are provided by the General Office, the Administrative and Operational Department and the Personnel Service.

National Centres

The national centres are specialised bodies of the Ministry of Culture entrusted with supporting, co-ordinating and regulating the activities of cultural institutes and with the implementation of national cultural policy regarding the creation, conservation and promotion of cultural values.

According to the latest changes in the structure of the Ministry, the following national centres exist:

National Film Centre

National Book Centre

National Centre for Museums, Galleries and the Visual Arts

National Centre for Immovable Monuments of Culture

National Theatre Centre

National Music and Dance Centre

National Centre for Reading Clubs, Libraries and Amateur Art

National Centre for the Protection of Copyrights and Related Rights

The national centres fulfil some general and specific functions and tasks which have been described in the next chapters of the report.

The centres help differentiate the activities of the Ministry, thus raising the level of competence in implementing the state cultural policy. The national centres cooperate in their work with the specialised national commissions. The latter give expert opinion on the general trends and suggest concrete programs of work for the respective fields of art and culture; they evaluate the quality of the projects submitted for financial support by the state and determine the size of the subsidy for those approved. The members of the commissions are outstanding artists and figures in the respective fields of art and culture. The number of members, functions and structure of the national centres as well as the statutes, rights and membership of the national commissions are determined by the Minister of culture.

State cultural institutions of national significance

The cultural institutions of national significance are specialised budget organisations with the Ministry of Culture granted the status of legal persons

and trustees of with the subsidies allocated to them from the state budget. They are assigned special rights and obligations associated with the safeguarding, creation and distribution of outstanding samples of Bulgarian cultural heritage and contemporary Bulgarian culture. Their activities focus on the implementation of long-term and short-term programmes and projects of a nature representative of national culture, across the country's territory.

Below is a list of those institutes:

Ivan Vazov National Theatre

Sofia Opera and Ballet

Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra

National Art Gallery

Gallery of Foreign Art - Sofia

Bulgarian National Cinematheque

National History Museum

St.St.Cyril and Methodius National Library

Departmental Institutes with the Ministry of Culture

1. National Institute of Monuments of Culture

The National Institute of Monuments of Culture (NIMC) is responsible for the implementation of state policy in the sphere of conservation of immovable monuments of culture and their environment. The NIMC is a budget-supported legal organization with registered office in Sofia and is directly subordinated to the Ministry of Culture.

The main tasks of the NIMC are: tracing and study of immovable monuments of culture, conduct of procedures for their legal protection, state supervision over the application of the Immovable Monuments of Culture and Museums Act, expert and methodical activity (including analytical, research and pilot project development) and popularisation of the national cultural and historic heritage in the country and abroad.

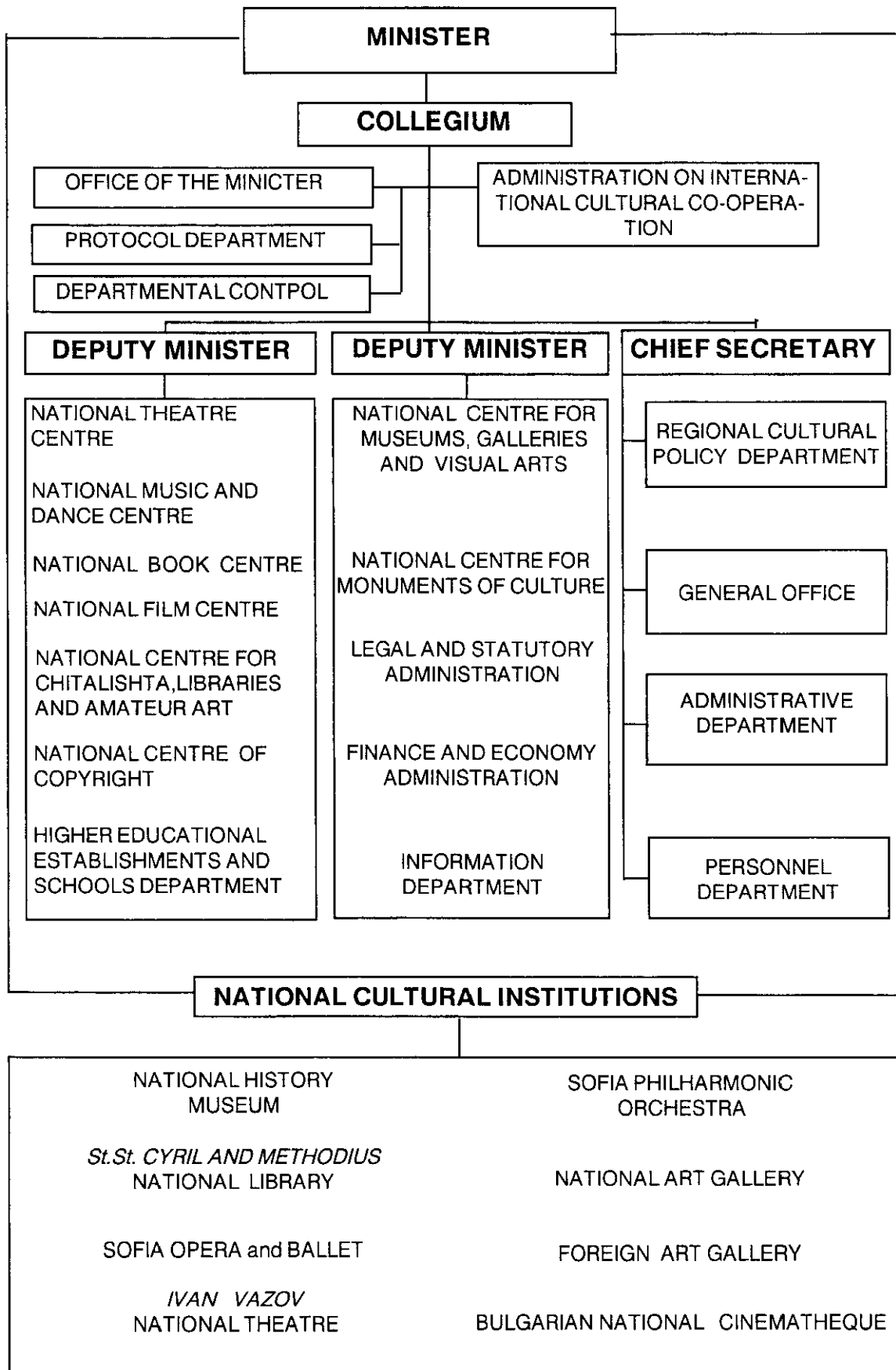
2. Institute of Culturology

The Institute was set up in 1992 as a successor to the Institute of Culture which operated until 1991. The Institute's research work is supervised by an academic board. It is funded mainly by the Ministry of Culture.

The Institute of Culturology is engaged in:

- scientific research;
- scientific and information back-up of key services and teams in the management of culture;
- publishing activity.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE



3.3. Municipal level of cultural policy

3.3.1. Statutory framework and organizational structure

The change in the balance of power structures is a significant dimension of the transition to democracy in Bulgaria. The previous central concentration of power was dismantled in the name of attaining a balance between central and local government, between national goals and local needs, between the state and local self-government. The Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria adopted in 1991 guarantees this balance, defining the municipality as a the basic administrative territorial unit in which local self-government is practised. The Local Self-Government and Local Administration Act concretizes the constitutional provisions.

The municipality is a juristic entity with the right to ownership and an independent municipal budget. A regional governor who represents the central government in the municipalities and controls the observance of the law is appointed by the government between the central government and municipal self-government.

The municipalities enjoy partial economic independence. Their budgets are formed from state subsidies and their own revenues from municipal property and local taxes. In 1992 the municipalities received a little over 11 billion leva from the central government budget, and about 28.5 billion leva from their own incomes. Every year one of the points of conflict in drafting and adopting the national budget is the way the central government subsidies for the municipalities are distributed.

The political independence of the municipalities proceeds from the local elections, in which mayors and municipal councillors are elected. The municipal council is the local self-government body which determines the policy of the municipality and solves local problems in the sphere of the economy, environment, healthcare, education, the social sphere, etc. Culture on the territory of the municipality is an important sphere within the scope of these powers.

The municipal councils hold elections among their members and set up permanent and interim commissions. Their task is to study the problems of the population, make proposals, assist the municipal councils in the decision-making process and control the implementation of these decision. In the period of transition there are 279 municipalities in Bulgaria. *Commissions of culture* or of culture and education have been set up in 87.8% of them. These commissions consist of 1,536 members.

The municipal administration, performing executive and operative functions, implements the decisions of the municipal councils, including cultural policy decisions. For this purpose *departments of culture* have been set up in 90.3% of the municipal administrations. Depending on the size of the municipality, these departments are devoted either only to culture, or may combine culture, education, science and religions.

3.3.2. Funding and material support of local cultural policy

The structure of expenditure of the municipal budgets is determined by the powers and range of activity of the municipal councils. The *municipal*

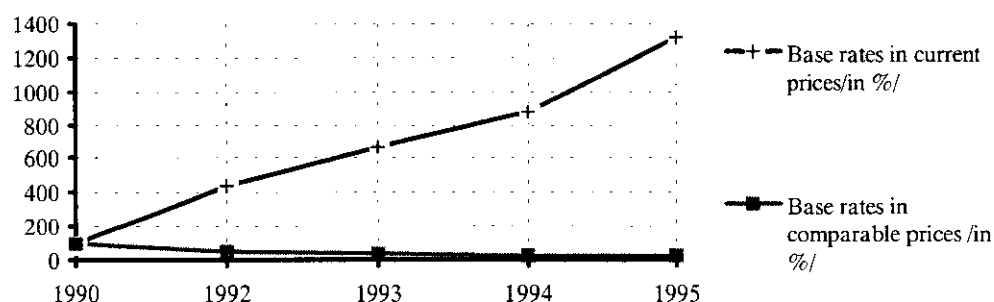
budgets mainly fund expenditure on healthcare, education, social and cultural activities, which are municipally-supported, communal activities, and support of the municipal administration. The biggest expenditure in 1992 were for education (31.9%) and health care (31.9%). The proportion of *expenditure on culture* was 2.5%. This proportion differed in the different regions of the country: it was lowest in Sofia (1.4%) and highest in municipalities on the territory of Lovech region (3.6%). A still greater difference is observed between the separate towns and cities. For example, 4.4% were spent on culture in Gabrovo, whereas in Vidin the figure was a mere 0.9%.

The funds for culture in the municipal budgets during the 1990-1995 period have increased more than 13-fold in nominal figures. The real amount of this expenditure, however, is four times less according to 1990 prices.

Table 1
Dynamics of municipal expenditure on culture

Year	Expenditure according to current prices /in mill leva/	Expenditure according to prices during the preceding year	Chain rates in current prices /in %/	Chain rates in comparable prices /in %/	Expenditure at 1990 base prices	Base rates in current prices /in %/	Base rates in comparable prices /in %/
1990	148.9				148.9	100	100
1992	651	651	100	100	63.2	437.2	42.4
1993	987	602.1	151.6	92.4	58.5	662.8	39.2
1994	1309.1	589.9	132.6	59.7	34.9	879.2	23.5
1995	1965.3	1478.7	150.1	112.9	39.5	1319.9	26.5

Chart 1
Dynamics of municipal expenditure on culture, taking into account the base index of inflation



The analysis of the structure of municipal expenditure on culture shows that during the 1990-1995 period there has been a relative increase in the proportion of expenditure on libraries, orchestras and ensembles, ritual centers and halls. Simultaneously, the proportion spent on reading clubs and amateur art, as well as on museums, art galleries and monuments of culture decreased.

Table 2
Dynamics of municipal expenditure on culture according to type
/ in mill. leva/

Activity	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
Reading clubs and amateur art	61	264.4	351.6	500	730.3
Museums, art galleries, monuments of culture	33.8	89.5	123	177.2	254.5
Libraries	11.1	54.3	79	113	165.6
Radio relay centers	2.1	9.8	13.6	19.9	29
Ritual centers and halls	18.1	94.3	134	208.6	316.1
Zoos	3.1	14	22	29.7	42.1
Orchestras and ensembles	9.9	41.4	63	95.5	138.4
Other expenditure	9.8	83.3	200.8	165.2	289.3
Total	148.9	651	987	1 309.1	1 965.3

Source: Ministry of Finance

Chart 2
Structure of municipal expenditure on culture in 1990 and 1995
/numeration as in Table 3/



Table 3
Structure of municipal expenditure on culture 1990 - 1995
/in %/

Activity	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
1. Reading clubs and amateur art	40.96	40.61	35.63	38.19	37.15
2. Museums, art galleries, monuments of culture	22.69	13.74	12.47	13.53	12.94
3. Libraries	7.45	8.34	8.00	8.63	8.42
4. Radio relay centers	1.41	1.50	1.38	1.52	1.47
5. Ritual centers and halls	12.15	14.48	13.58	15.93	16.08
6. Zoos	2.08	2.15	2.23	2.26	2.14
7. Orchestras and ensembles	6.66	6.35	6.38	7.29	7.04
Other expenditure	6.58	12.79	20.34	12.61	14.72

Source: Ministry of Finance

As a body implementing local cultural policy, the municipalities dispose over a considerable *building stock*. Out of a total of 26 258 buildings, extending over an area of about 23.4 million sq m, 3 980 buildings are used by the municipalities *for cultural needs*, i.e. a total of about 16 percent. 10.2% of the total area are used for cultural activities.

The problems of the cultural policy of municipalities proceed from:

- large financial restrictions imposed on the municipal budgets;

- lack of well-trained experts and managers to use the existing possibilities in the most efficient way;
- failure to properly assess the problems of culture against the background of the other major problems of municipalities;
- poor coordination with the central state bodies responsible for cultural policy.

3.4. The need for a new type of cultural administration

The effectiveness of any cultural policy is largely dependent on the level of cultural administration. This dependence is even greater in a situation in which cultural policy problems are greatly complicated. This is the situation of transition to a new paradigm of society, including its cultural policy, experienced in Bulgaria during the last five-six years.

On the eve of the radical changes, the cultural sector in Bulgaria boasted a large personnel potential, i.e. artists and cultural administration. Although the employment of cultural cadres was reduced during the years of transition (the lowest employment figure being recorded for 1991-1992), their relative proportion in the general structure of employment is increasing.

Table 4
Employment in the sphere of culture

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Thousands of people	46	47	38	34	41	41	42
Index 1989 = 100%		102.2	82.6	73.9	89.1	89.5	90.8
Relative proportion of employed in the country	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.3

Source: National Statistical Institute

Despite a certain concentration in the capital city, artists and the cultural administration are comparatively well spread in a territorial aspect and largely correspond in numbers to population size in the respective administrative territorial unit. The results of the 1992 census reveal the following picture:

Table 5.
Distribution of cultural personnel according to districts

Regions					
	Total	Sofia	Bourgas Region	Varna Region	Lovech Region
total	43 768	17 208	3 056	4 057	4 209
in towns	39 037	16 890	2 558	3 575	3 594
in villages	4 731	318	498	482	615

Continued:

Regions					
	Montana Region	Plovdiv Region	Rousse Region	Sofia Region	Haskovo Region
total	1 906	4 458	3 032	2 948	2 894
in towns	1 484	3 788	2 398	2 303	2 447
in villages	422	670	634	645	447

Source: NSI. Results of the population census. Socio-economic characteristics. vol. 2, part II

By sex, there is certain predomination of women in the body of cultural personnel; by ethnic composition, the proportion of Turks, Romanies and other minorities is quite small /See table 6/.

Table 6.

Distribution of cultural personnel according to ethnic groups and sex

TOTAL			ETHNIC GROUP							
			Bulgarian		Turkish		Romany		other	
total	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
43768	19244	24524	18338	23444	358	545	216	103	331	432

Source: NSI. Results of the population census. Socio-economic characteristics. vol.2, part II.

Challenges to cultural administration have grown during the years of transition. These challenges come from several sources.

- The first source is the hard economic crisis which makes financing of cultural projects difficult and places extremely high demands on the cultural administration managing public funds for activities in the field of culture.
- The second source is the complication of the cultural market dynamics and structure, which makes it necessary for cultural administration to have radically new knowledge and skills.
- The third source is the emerging decentralisation of cultural life which brings about a new type of responsibilities for local cultural administration.
- The fourth source is the establishment of cultural and political pluralism in the country, as well as the country's exposure to active interactions at an international level.

If not decisive, the cultural administration's skill to make decisions and accomplish assigned tasks by conforming with the cultural market situation, with the socio-economic, political and cultural situation of the specific social environment determines to a great extent the success of cultural policy democratisation in Bulgaria. At the preceding totalitarian stage however Bulgarian cultural policy did not need such skills, neither were they tolerated. Besides, by force of the fast political changes taking place nowadays, there is great mobility of personnel in the Ministry of Culture and in the municipal cultural departments. For this reason, important positions at the central or local levels are sometimes taken by people who do not have appropriate experience or have already acquired experience that is no longer relevant. A negative factor for the new cultural administration development is the low payment of this kind of labour. The average monthly incomes and wages of persons dealing with this activity are not only below the level of the average salary for the country, but are well at the bottom of the scale of incomes.

About 25% of the workers of culture are engaged in institutions and activities within the system of the ministry of Culture. In 1991 they numbered 12, 430. That number subsequently decreased to 10, 531 /1992/, 9, 903 /1993/, 9, 453 /1994/ and in 1995 it started increasing again, reaching the figure of 10, 207 persons.

Table 7.
**Average monthly wages and salaries of workers and employees by
branches of economic activity***

YEAR	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Total for the country	378	1 012	2 047	3 145	4 822	7 460
Sector with the highest wages and salaries	421	1 423	3 274	6 207	9 120	14 138
Sector with the lowest wages and salaries	292	790	1 517	2 124	3 300	4 749
Culture and arts	322	876	1 597	2 560	3 663	5 865

Source: BNB. Annual Report of 1995.

* Excl. women on maternity leave.

Three groups of needs have emerged against the background of the situation described:

- to undertake retraining of presently functioning cultural administration;
- to provide conditions /study centres; trained lecturers, here including use of European experience; education materials etc./ necessary for cultural administration training;
- to promote careers in the field of cultural administration through better financial support.

3.5. Information resources

3.5.1. The state of cultural statistics

Statistics are one of the main sources of information and analysis of the cultural policy of the Republic of Bulgaria.

As an institution, Bulgarian state statistics were established with Decree 712 of the National Assembly of 19 August 1981, with the task of collecting, processing and annually publicising statistical data on all branches of management and any phenomena pertaining to the physical, economic, intellectual and moral condition of the state.

At first, cultural statistics were kept by the "service" (department) on education and culture of the General Statistical Administration. Since 1959 the information in the sphere of culture has been monitored and processed by the Central Statistical Department which in 1991 was transformed into the National Statistical Institute.

Initially, cultural statistics monitored cultural and educational associations, chitalishte (reading clubs), the religious matters and press, on which information was available even before the turn of the century. Gradually, with the development of culture, the statistics of culture were also developed and new spheres were monitored: libraries, theatres, cinemas, music ensembles, amateur art, etc.

Cultural statistics are kept on an annual basis. For a short time, press and book statistics were kept on a quarterly basis, and theatre statistics were reported every six months. The number of indicators on which information

about cultural activities was initially collected and processed was very limited. The more important ones included: the number of establishments engaged in cultural activity, their staff, the number of cultural events, etc. More detailed information was collected about libraries: number of libraries, library stock, number of readers and staff.

Gradually the program of statistical studies of cultural activities came to include new indicators. The information about theatres was enriched. Initially only information about their number and staged performances had been collected. Later this information was enriched by figures about the number of seats and visitors, proceeds from tickets and playbills, sex and type of staff (actors, administrators, etc.), guest performances, etc. The entire information was processed by types of theatres: dramatic, operatic, operetta and puppet theatres, by districts and settlements. Since 1966 information has also been collected about performances according to the nationality of the plays' authors. Since 1991 information about theatres has also included data about private theatres.

Since 1964, libraries have been monitored by groups of readers and types of books lent. Until 1965 only libraries with a stock of over 500 volumes were monitored, and after 1965 libraries with a stock of over 300 volumes. After 1977 account has been kept of the library stock which includes books, periodicals and other library materials (patents, standards, graphic publications, records, maps, music scores, slides, film strips, etc.). Since 1962 library workers have been monitored by education and since 1967 by manner of payment as well.

Cinema activity (screenings, visitors, proceeds from tickets) is monitored by type of cinema (stationary, mobile, open-air, drive-in) and by type of film projector (wide reel, narrow reel). Since 1992 information about cinemas also includes data about private movie theatres.

Cultural statistics also cover film production with information from 1960 with indicators about the type of produced films: full length films, short films, feature films, documentaries, television films, etc.

Since 1992 information about reading clubs has been enriched by figures about the type of revenues and expenditure (budget revenues, membership dues, business, cultural and education activity, donations, sponsors, etc.; expenditure on wages, office and business expenditure, expenditure on basic repairs, cultural events, etc.) and for the staff by manner of payment and kind (budget-supported or on an extrabudgetary account, reading club secretaries, lecturers in schools, etc.).

The collected information about museum activity contains figures about the number of visitors (incl. foreigners), museum exhibits (existing, acquired, struck off), type of staff (scientific workers, curators, guides, conservators and restorers, etc.), revenues and expenditure (total revenues, budget revenues, income from company activity, proceeds from visits, etc.; expenditure - total, for acquired museum exhibits, for conservation and restoration) and for material facilities - useful areas of type of rooms (for exhibitions, storage, etc.).

The activity of Bulgarian Radio and Bulgarian Television has also been reported since 1975 with indicators about the type of programs (news, cultural, commercials, entertainment, etc.).

Since 1992, information about radio programs also includes data about private and municipal radio stations, and since 1995 information about television programs also includes data about private and municipal television stations.

Publishing activity, too, is monitored in the sphere of cultural statistics.

The statistics on book publishing and the press collect and process information about books for general consumption, official and other restricted use, music and graphic publications, newspapers, magazines, newsletters and periodicals. Monitoring is done according to sections of the classification scheme, decimal classification, in conformity with the methodology recommended by UNESCO, function, literary groups, language of publication, language of the original, periodicity, etc.

Since 1967 the monitoring of book publishing has also included the new indicators of original and translated literature by content, fiction by genre and language of the original.

The whole information in the sphere of cultural statistics is computer processed.

The indicators on which information is collected in the sphere of culture after 1980 are standardised with the basic UNESCO indicators.

The present problems of cultural statistics may be summed up in two groups:

- difficulties are faced in collecting information because many private institutions, and state ones as well for that matter, cannot be compelled to provide the required information (absence of legal framework);
- the information collected by the Central Statistical Institute is much greater than the part appearing in the specialised Kouloura publication, owing to financial reasons.

3.5.2. Publications specialising in the sphere of cultural statistics and cultural policy

Until 1962 there were no specialised publications or newsletters in the sphere of culture along the lines of national statistics. Information about activities in this sphere appeared only in the general publications of the General Statistical Administration, and later also of the Central Statistical Department, in its statistical yearbooks which have been published since 1910.

The first Kultura publication containing information about the state of cultural affairs in Bulgaria in 1961, was published in 1962. The publication's general part contains tables of columns based on information from the statistical yearbooks. The independent publication "Book Publishing and Press" started being published in 1964, and a number of tables showing the basic indicators of book publishing and the press were included in the Kouloura publication.

Until 1966 Kultura was published every other year. After that it started being published every year.

The first part of the Kultura publication now contains information about basic indicators for the whole country for 1960, 1965 and the 1970-1975 period.

In its second part the information is arranged by regions, only for 1995. It also includes information by cities and municipalities for cinemas, libraries and reading clubs.

The Book Publishing and Press publication contains information about publications other than periodicals: books, brochures and music scores, and about periodicals: newspapers, magazines, bulletins and periodical collections. Information is published about titles, circulation, decimal classification, publishing houses (including private ones), language, periodicity, year of foundation, etc.

During the 1972-1991 period other specialised publications in the sphere of cultural policy included "Problems of Culture" and "News of the Institute of Culture", both issued by the Scientific Research Institute on Culture. They publish studies in the sphere of the theory and history of culture, the economy of culture, aesthetic education, cultural prognostication, etc.

The Crossroads magazine, which started appearing in 1993, carries materials on the problem of specific cultural policy, as well as theoretical studies. The Problems of Culture magazine continues to be published as a private magazine.

3.5.3. Publications devoted to the separate arts

Periodical publications in Bulgaria play an enormous role in people's cultural education, their integration in models of European culture, acquaintance with the works of Bulgarian writers and poets, and the reviews, criticisms and analyses of Bulgarian artists and musicians.

A total of 223 magazines and papers were published between 1878 and 1944, of which 5% (12) were specialised publications for literature, painting, music and folklore. The other publications deal with different subjects, but devote up to one third of their content to the problems of art and literature.

During the next period, from 1944 to 1990, the number of publications increased to 368, including 26 specialised ones, published by institutes with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia University, etc. They are wholly state subsidised and, for the most part, mouthpieces of the cultural policy implemented during that period.

The state monopoly on publications treating cultural problems disintegrated after 1990. Forty-seven central papers, including seven specialised ones, now carry criticisms, analyses and reports of artefacts. 106 magazines devote a considerable part of their content to cultural events or short literary forms, and 18 of them are specialised in the sphere of culture and art. However, the relatively greater space devoted to cultural events is due mainly to information, advertisements and announcements for cultural events and this is done to the detriment of art criticism of the ongoing cultural process.

During the period of transition all papers and magazines have been self-supporting and this creates problems for their existence. A small part of the publications are assisted by foundations and companies, some are aided by foreign foundations, yet despite this, publications occasionally stop appearing for a time until the money needed for printing is raised. These publications still lack a proper market orientation, and at times only serve the ambitions of their publishers.

3.5.4. Scientific service of cultural policy

The institutionalised scientific service of culture started in the early 1970s when the Institute of Culture was set up with the Committee of Culture, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Scientific Research Institute on Television and Radio and the Scientific Centre on the Press. The Decree of the Council of Ministers of 1976 on the adoption of a general scheme of specialisation, concentration and management of the Artistic Creativity, Cultural Activity and Mass Media national complex terminated the activity of the latter two institutes which shifted to the Institute of Culture. It is concerned with the development and study of key issues in the promotion and management of Bulgarian culture and the mass media, co-ordination of all scientific studies on questions of culture and the mass media in the country, projections, standards and methodologies. Until 1992, when the Institute of Culture was closed, it was staffed by prominent sociologists, culturologists, art critics and philosophers. Within the framework of implemented state cultural policy the Institute of Culture conducted a number of sociological and theoretical studies whose conclusions and results were not always publicised or used in the decision-making process.

The Institute of Culturology was set up in 1992 as an autonomous scientific organisation within the Ministry of Culture and as the successor to the former Institute of Culture. The Institute's research work is directed by a Scientific Board, composed of outstanding Bulgarian cultural specialists. It is basically funded by the Ministry of Culture. In status it conducts scientific research, provides scientific and information support of state cultural policy, publishes the Crossroads magazine, organises and stages scientific conferences, meetings and symposia on cultural subjects, takes part in the training of personnel in the sphere of culture and cultural studies.

The Institute's scientific activity extends both to theoretical studies and analyses of the practice of the cultural process. It has specialists in the different spheres of the humanities and social sciences. Problems of the philosophy, history, sociology and psychology of culture, as well as matters of modern cultural policies are studied. The Institute's current plan includes studies of the post-communist cultural situation, cultural policies, European cultural identity, ethno-cultural problems, media culture, etc.

The Institute of Culturology conducts studies included in its own scientific plan, as well as studies assigned to it by the Ministry of Culture. The main aspiration of the Institute's members is for objective analysis and studies, independent of the current political situation.

4. FINANCING OF CULTURE

4.1. Public expenditure on culture

The objective assessment of the state and trends in the public funding of culture is impossible without the use of a number of objective indicators. Otherwise there is a danger of falling prey to personal impressions and hasty, empirically and emotionally induced impressions.

A particularly useful role in tracing the *most general trends* in the public funding of culture is played by the following two indicators. The first indicator concerns *the relative proportion of expenditure on culture of all expenditure in the national budget*. In an economic dimension this indicator shows the political attitude to the nation's cultural potential. The changes in it, pinpointed over a long period, in general terms evidence increased or decreased attention to the needs of the cultural sector and the importance attached to this sphere in public development.

The second indicator is *the proportion between the expenditure on culture in the central government budget and in the local government budgets*. This indicator enables conclusions to be drawn about the degree of decentralization in culture. The understanding of decentralization as a characteristic of the spatial positioning of cultural institutes is a superficial understanding of this concept. Decentralization is spatial diversification, but something else besides - it is above all pluralization of subjects with financial possibilities for regulating cultural life. Decentralization in this case means a distribution of responsibilities in cultural policy.

On the basis of the cited indicators the following may be inferred:

First. There is stable trend towards the reduction of public expenditure on culture. It is not influenced by the nature of the parties in power. Regardless of the growing concern for culture constantly declared in party programs, the proportion of expenditure on culture in the general expenditure of the state and the gross domestic product is decreasing.

Table 1

Proportion of expenditure on culture in the total expenditure of the consolidated budget and the gross domestic product

	/in mill. leva/			
CULTURE	1988	1990	1992	1995
Expenditure on culture in the consolidated budget	491	497	1 655	5 164
% of the gross domestic product	1.28	1.09	0.85	0.58
% of total expenditure in the consolidated budget	2.15	1.84	1.79	1.37

Source: Based on materials of the Ministry of Finance

Are the cited percentages big or small? Compared to the figures for some economically developed countries, it will be seen that the relative proportion of expenditure on culture of the total expenditure in the consolidated budget are higher in Bulgaria in many instances. In Austria, for example, between 1976 and 1989 the percentage of the relative proportion varied

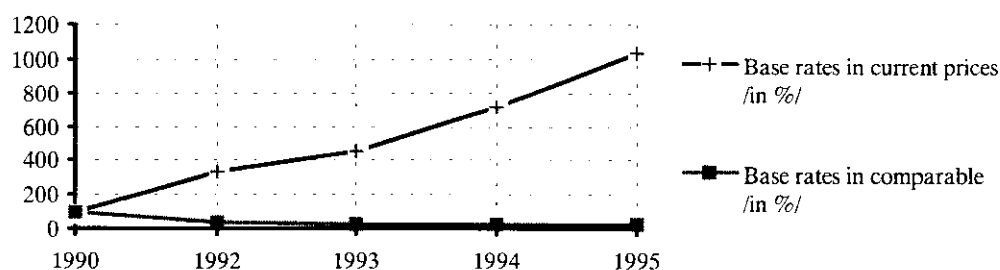
between 1.26% and 1.36%. In 1993 this percentage amounted to 1.4%. During the same year it was 1.5% in Bulgaria. However, it does not follow from this that culture in Bulgaria at that time received more funds than in Austria. First, because with the existence of a developed cultural market, the main financial sources for culture do not come from the state, but from households. Second, because not only the proportion for culture in the total expenditure is important, but also the proportion of this expenditure in the gross domestic product. During the years of transition both the gross domestic product and the proportion of it expended on culture were reduced. Calculated at 1994 prices, the 1989 G.D.P amounted to 711.50 billion leva and was reduced to 536 billion in 1993. At that time the per capita G.D.P in Austria at 1993 prices and dollar exchange rate was 22,678 dollars, compared to 1,276 dollars in Bulgaria. Both the G.D.P and the proportion of expenditure on culture in it dropped during that time.

The analysis of expenditure on culture in the consolidated budget shows that during the years of transition this expenditure increased more than 10-fold in nominal expression, but their real amount, taking 1990 as a basis, decreased almost five times.

Table 2
Dynamics of expenditure on culture in the consolidated budget
 /in mill. leva/

	Expendi- ture according to current prices	Expendi- re according to prices during the preceding year	Chain rates in current prices /in %/	Chain rates in compara ble /in %/	Expendi- ture at 1990 base prices	Base rates in current prices /in %/	Base rates in compara ble /in %/
1990	497				497	100	100
1992	1 655		100	100	161	333	32
1993	2 253	1 375	136	83	133	453	27
1994	3 543	1 597	157	71	95	713	19
1995	5 164	3 886	146	110	104	1 039	21

Chart 1
Dynamics of expenditure on culture in the consolidated budget
 /base year 1990=100/



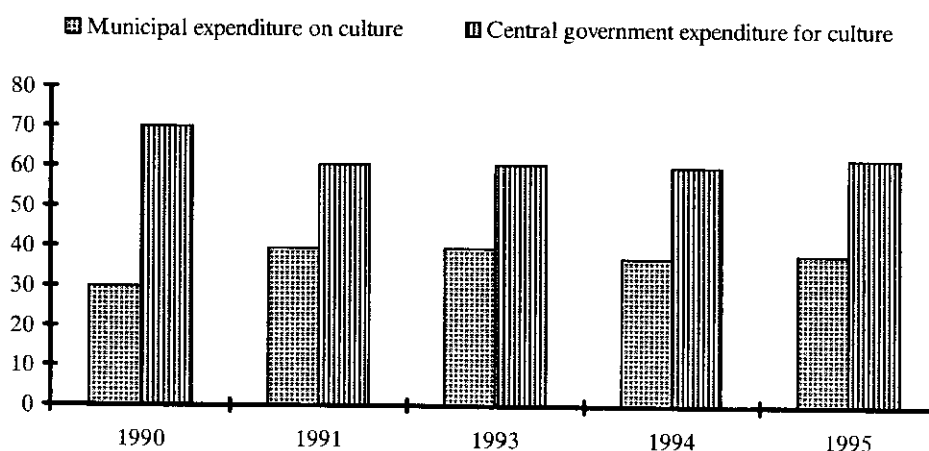
Second. National budget subsidies continue to be the main and leading source for the funding of culture. Sponsorship and financing by foundations account for a negligible proportion. This fact is explained by the lack of traditions and sufficiently strong tax privileges in this direction. The most significant fact in support of the above conclusion, however, is that the

expenditure on culture of households have not suffered any marked changes in recent years. According to information from the National Statistical Institute, in 1988 this expenditure comprised 3.5% of the total household expenditure, and 3.4% in 1993.

If we ignore the concrete figures for the sake of a general projection, it may be claimed that no radical changes should be expected in the role of the Bulgarian state as the main source of funds for the support of culture in the near future. In countries such as France, for example, the proportion between the expenditure on culture by households and by the state in 1990 was 76.7% versus 23.3% in favor of households. The expenditure by households in Bulgaria are greatly limited due to mass impoverishment. This means that the state will continue to be the main and decisive source of subsidies for the cultural sector.

Third. The decentralization in the funding of culture, if judged by the proportion between expenditure on culture in the central government budget and in the municipal budgets, has not changed significantly since 1989. The proportion of municipal expenditure on culture in the total expenditure on culture in the consolidated budget was largest in 1993 and smallest in 1990.

Chart 2
Proportion of municipal and central government expenditure on culture
 /in %/



Source: Based on materials of the Ministry of Finance

The decentralization of funding is evidenced with regard to the different cultural institutions. Some cultural institutions are subsidized only (or to a very large extent) by the central government budget, and others only by the municipalities. This difference places them in a very unequal position at times.

4.2. Dynamics and structure of the Ministry of Culture budget

The Ministry of Culture is the state body which implements cultural policy and its realization at state level. This is why the changes in the budget of the Ministry of Culture are a key indicator for the assessment of cultural policy. The structure of its expenditure and the proportion of its participation in public expenditure on culture are of great importance here.

**Changes in budget expenditure of the Ministry of Culture
according to activities**

Table 3
**Dynamics of expenditure in the budget of the Ministry of Culture
according to activities**

/in thousands of leva/

ACTIVITIES	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Theater	69 823	108 984	146 391	224 729	311 617
Opera	42 407	62 111	85 286	151 118	202 062
Galleries	5 348	8 130	10 885	16 089	27 070
National Library	15 253	19 024	24 410	34 787	61 040
Museums	12 214	18 458	25 858	38 702	64 576
Orchestras and ensembles	18 894	28 876	37 027	64 255	107 207
Educational establishments	49 101	91 000	141 956	201 926	269 880
National Institute of Monuments of Culture	1 525	2 009	2 665	4 887	6 832
International activity	8 909	10 000	10 017	32 996	57 936
Central Administration	5 867	7 847	12 386	20 759	26 923
National Book Center	-	-	7 238	9 692	11 998
National Center for Museums, Galleries and Visual Arts	-	-	1 570	4 772	5 788
National Reading Club Center	-	-	-	-	189
National Theater Center	-	-	1 803	6 692	8 398
National Music and Dance Center	-	-	363	6 225	8 398
National Film Center and Film Archives	25 000	28 000	45 993	60 007	80 569
Others	52 486	23 201	155 893	148 193	350 613
Capital investments	32 711	41 124	50 812	64380	102 289
Total	339 538	448 764	714 560	1 090 209	1 703 385

Source: Ministry of Culture

The expenditure of the Ministry of Culture in nominal figures increased more than five-fold during the 1991-1995 period. At the same time, their real amount in 1995, taking 1991 as a basis, was only 58%. The Ministry's financial possibilities were particularly limited in 1994 when this expenditure amounted to a mere 49%.

Table 4
Dynamics of expenditure of the Ministry of Culture

/in mill leva./

	Expendi- ture according to current prices	Expendi- ture according to prices during the preceding year	Chain rates in current prices /in %/	Chain rates in compara- ble /in %/	Expendi- ture at 1990 base prices	Base rates in current prices /in %/	Base rates in compara- ble /in %/
1991	339				339	100	100
1992	449	250	132	74	250	132	74
1993	714	436	159	97	243	211	72
1994	1090	491	153	69	167	321	49
1995	1703	1281	156	117	196	502	58

Source: Ministry of Culture

Chart 3
Dynamics of expenditure of the Ministry of Culture

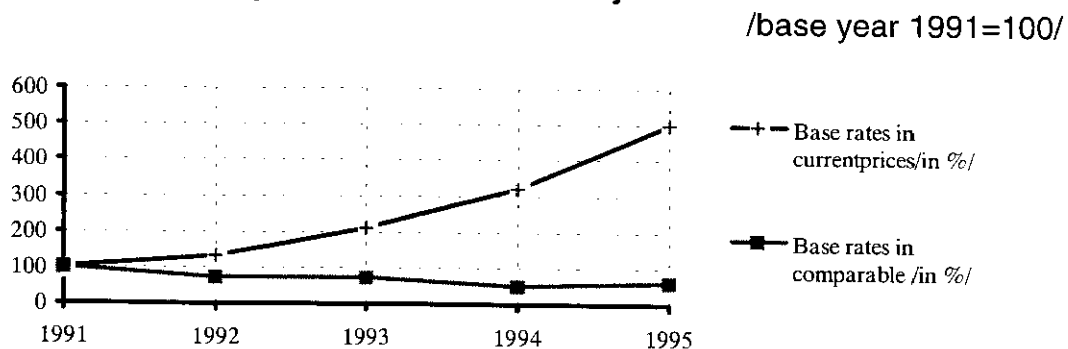
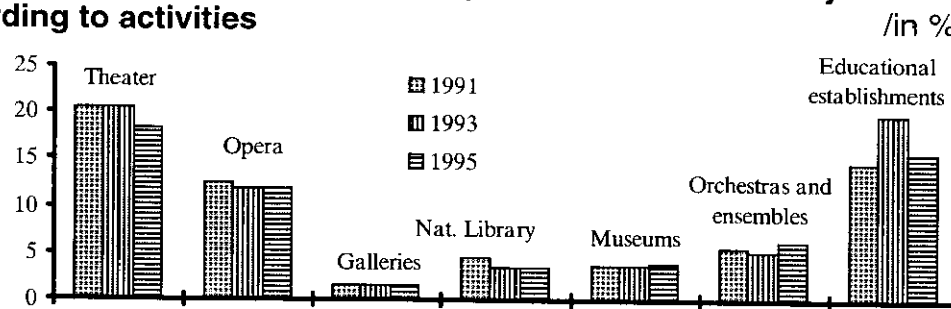


Chart 4
Structure and dynamics of expenditure of the Ministry of Culture
according to activities



Source: Ministry of Culture

Subsidies for the theater have been reduced during the last 1995 year. Both a greater commitment of municipalities, as well as a growth of private theaters and theatrical troupes are noticeable in this sphere. The reduction is also considerable for the National Library.

Support for music - operatic art, as well as orchestras and ensembles, is one of the priorities in current cultural policy. Opera houses as cultural institutions are funded by the central government budget. There has been no

financial assistance or commitment to them at municipal level. Compared to budget subsidies, the incomes from sponsorship and other activities are negligible. There is also a marked trend to subsidize art schools. Despite a certain drop after its peak in 1993, this item in the budget of the Ministry of Culture clearly remains a priority.

Relative proportion of budget funds allocated by the Ministry of Culture for capital investments and current expenditure

The proportion between the two types of expenditure is a measure of support for a specific policy for the establishment of the necessary facilities of culture over a given period of time.

According to financial information from the Ministry of Culture, budget funds allocated for the current expenditure of cultural institutions during the last three years almost completely covered the allocated budget subsidies for these institutions. The funds allocated for current expenditure in 1993-1994 comprised 93.3% and 93.5% of the expenditure of the Ministry of Culture.

Wages and social insurance make up the largest relative proportion of the structure of expenditure. In 1991 wages and social insurance in educational establishments, subsidized by the Ministry of Culture, comprised 59%, in opera houses - 76%, in theaters 68%, etc.

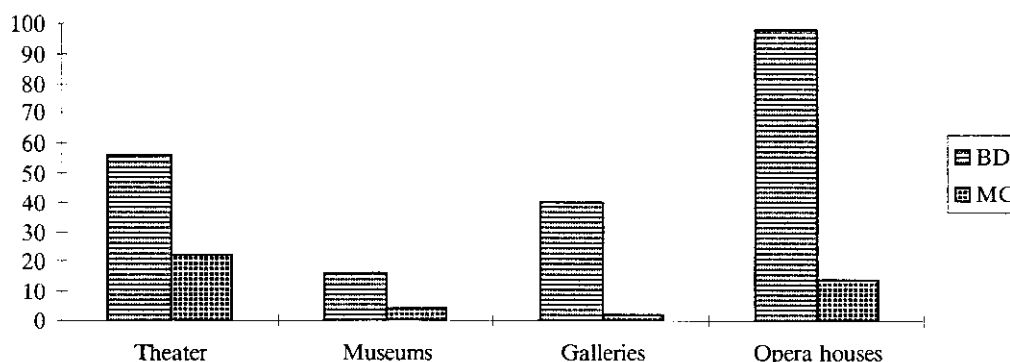
Funds for the maintenance of the building stock have significantly increased.

The anyhow small, yet decreasing percentage of funds allocated for capital investments (6.7% in 1993, 6.4% in 1994 and 6% in 1995) shows that cultural policy is conducted mainly "day by day". Funds are spent only for the maintenance of the already existing infrastructure and no funds are invested in cultural development.

Participation of the Ministry of Culture in public expenditure on cultural activities

Chart 5

Relative proportion of the participation of the Ministry of Culture in public expenditure in 1993



Source: Ministry of Culture

Key: BD - relative proportion of participation of the Ministry of Culture in public expenditure on different types of cultural activity;

MC - relative proportion of expenditure of the Ministry of Culture.

Operatic art covers the larger part of its expenditure with the subsidies of the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry of Culture covers 98.09% of the budget funding of opera houses.

Despite the fact that the Ministry of Culture allocates only 1.6% of its budget for subsidizing art galleries, these budget funds represent approximately half the funds allocated by the state for funding galleries.

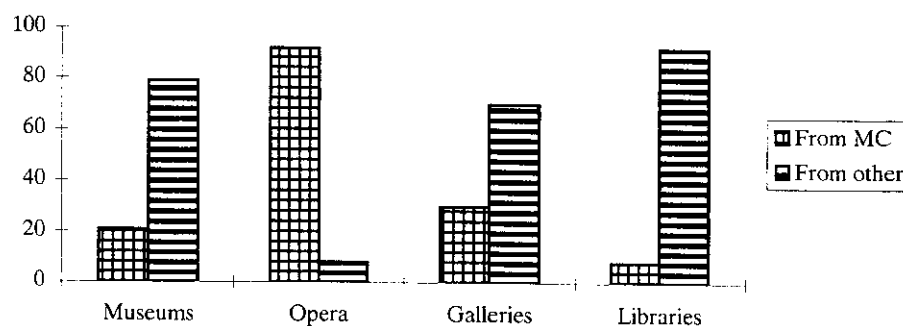
Among budget-funded cultural institutions the Ministry of Culture covers almost one third of the budget of museums, regardless of the fact that they comprise less than 4% in its budget.

Proportion of the participation of the state, the municipalities and households in national cultural expenditure

The proportion of the participation of the state and the municipalities in the funding of cultural activities is indicative of the degree of decentralization in current cultural policy. The relative proportion of participation of the Ministry of Culture at a central level and the relative proportion of participation of the municipalities on a local level is an expression of centralized or decentralized cultural policy.

Chart 6

Relative proportion of participation in the 1993 funding of cultural institutions by the Ministry of Culture and other state institutions.



Source: Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture participates to different degrees in the budget funding of the different cultural spheres, compared to the participation of the other state institutions (other ministries, municipalities, institutions) which allocate funds from their budgets for funding cultural activities. It is largest for opera houses and smallest for libraries which are mostly supported by departments, institutes, other ministries, etc.

With regard to museums, galleries and especially libraries, there is a noticeable trend towards decentralization.

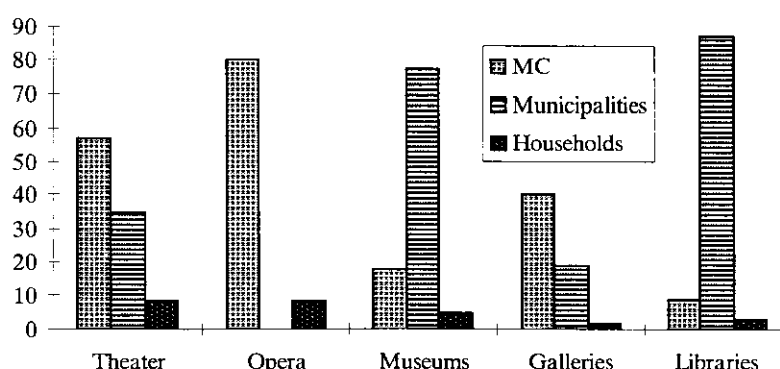
Table 5
Participation of the state (Ministry of Culture, the municipalities and other state institutions) and households in the funding of cultural institutions in 1993

/ in thousands of leva/

	Total revenues	From the Ministry of Culture	From the municipalities	From households	Other
Theater	324 915	146 391	117 473	24 330	36 721
Opera	106 902	85 286	-	4 727	16 889
Museums	197 321	25 828	132 719	4 513	34 261
Libraries	355 845	24 410	301 195	6 504	23 736
Art galleries	30 018	10 885	5 799	217	2 232

Source: Ministry of Finance

Chart 7
Structure of the revenues of cultural institutions from a central level, from a municipal level and from households



Source: National Statistical Institute

The trend of cultural institutions being primarily budget-subsidized has been retained in the country's cultural policy.

Priority cultural institutions such as the theater, opera, libraries and museums receive more than 80% of their revenues from subsidies (directly from the budget of the Ministry of Culture and/or from the budget of the municipalities and other state institutions).

For the most part theaters are budget-supported by the Ministry of Culture. Their support at local level is considerably smaller, although this trend is already visible. Opera houses are wholly budget-supported at national level. In the case of museums and libraries a more flexible policy has already been attained, with local state institutions participating in their financial support.

The state has a considerable presence in cultural life mainly through the network of cultural institutes which it maintains. Non-institutional forms of culture are still largely ignored. Cultural policy should aim at certain changes in the approach to the funding of cultural activities: it is necessary to allocate more subsidies to projects presented both by already established institutions, as well as by individual artists or teams. The first successful attempts in this direction

are being made with the aid of project competitions, organized by the national centers of the Ministry of Culture. This new form of subsidizing is an important condition for the democratization of artistic life. At the same time a step is made towards the decentralization of cultural policy.

Other possibilities for increasing the funding of cultural institutes are provided by the better utilization of so-called "hidden sources". Cultural institutes have still not sufficiently mastered the skill of deriving the maximum possible revenues from their own secondary activities.

4.3. Privatisation

Privatisation in the sphere of culture is one of the levers for attaining decentralisation and the economic independence of activities which could be self-supporting, for doing away with the monopoly of the state on cultural industries. The institutions which are subject to privatisation are divided into several groups: polygraphic industry, film screening and film production, publishing activity, book distribution and commercial and industrial companies.

Privatisation is realised on the basis of the general legislation of the Republic of Bulgaria and, above all, the Transformation and Privatisation of State-Owned and Municipal-Owned Enterprises Act and all subordinate legislation for its implementation.

Appraisals and transactions are realized under the provisions of the above Act. The forms of sale are: public auction, publicly announced tender, negotiations with potential buyers, open sale of shares, etc.

Six companies were privatised by the end of 1995: four printing houses, one publishing house and one concert agency. The proceeds from them total 34,200,000 leva, divided as follows: 20% for covering the expenditure in the conduct of privatisation, and 80% are transferred to the extrabudgetary account of the Privatisation Agency, managed by the Ministry of Finance. Privatisation procedures for 20 units started in 1996, including seven printing houses, four publishing houses, eight bookshops and one industrial enterprise for study aids.

4.4. Patronage and foundations

An important role in the funding of culture is played both by Bulgarian and international foundations which are active in the country. Three stand out in particular among them: the 13 Centuries Bulgaria National Donors Fund, the SS Cyril and Methodius International Foundation and the Open Society Fund.

After 1948 foundations did not start any organised activity until 1981 when the 13 Centuries Bulgaria Fund was set up. According to its statutory documents, the Fund's establishment was necessitated by the need to set up a state-cum-public organisation which was to receive donations by Bulgarian and foreign citizens: money, immovable property, securities and valuables, works of art, documents and archive materials, which were expected on the eve of the then upcoming celebrations of the 13th centenary of the foundation of the Bulgarian state, and, in addition, to finance scientific research, the buying or copying of books, documentary collections and other objects linked with the country's history. Until 1990 the Fund was integrated in the state structures

linked with the celebrations to such an extent that its character as a public organisation was almost completely blurred. In 1994 the Fund was renamed 13 Centuries Bulgaria National Donors Organisation and already at the start of the 90s its activity was channeled towards the funding of projects linked with education and the identity of expatriate Bulgarians, with active assistance for the literary publications of Bulgarian authors, suffering from serious difficulties, and with the preservation of the national cultural heritage.

The other foundation making a great contribution to the realisation of cultural projects is the SS Cyril and Methodius Foundation, established initially as the Lyudmila Zhivkova Foundation in 1982. Since the late 80s, in addition to its main activity - sponsoring the education of children and young people in the country and abroad - the Foundation has been financing the organisation of concerts and festivals for young artists, supporting international cultural exchanges by financing the travel expenses and sojourn of theatrical troupes, music ensembles and individual creative artists abroad and inviting foreign artists to Bulgaria. It promotes publishing activity through its K&M publishing house and supports the publication of significant foreign authors who are little known in Bulgaria. Since 1985 the Foundation has been spending considerable funds on buying works of art for the SS Cyril and Methodius Gallery of Foreign Art. A total of 706,000 leva were spent during the 1988-1990 period, and 2,300,000 leva between 1990 and 1995. Over 9% of scholarship students in its educational programs are in the sphere of music and the visual arts.

In 1990 the well-known financier and philanthropist George Soros opened a branch of his Open Society Fund in Sofia. The Fund is exempt from rates and taxes, and the government obliged itself to ensure the leva equivalent of the subsidy granted by Soros according to a special exchange rate, and thus to from half of the revenues of the Fund's budget.

Until the start of 1993 the Fund rendered the following financial support: scholarships, travel expenses for postgraduate studies, technology for separate persons and more rarely for institutions. This practice changed after 1993 when the Fund established a network of information centres and clubs throughout the country. Until 1994 the fine arts, music, literature and cultural heritage were included in the open program which approves projects, corresponding to the goals of the Fund, but which cannot be specified thematically. During the same year the Soros Arts Centre opened with the Fund, which is working on the following programs in 1966: Plastic Arts, Cultural Heritage, Theatre, Music and Musical Performing Art, and Literature. The Bulgarian cultural institutions and artists are also supported under other of the Fund's programs.

Ever since it started functioning the Open Society Fund has been maintaining the Libraries and Specialised Literature program, which in five years has supplied the country's libraries with scientific and technical literature for over 7,000,000 dollars. The Fund's major projects in the sphere of culture include the Establishment of an Automated Library Information Network. The Open Society publishing house and a chain of Open World bookshops are working with the Open Society Fund.

The following table provides a rough idea of the funding of cultural activities by the two biggest foundation. Expenditure does not include funds for art scholarships, short-term and long-term specialisations, or for participation in

competitions, festival and concert tours of individual artists. Nevertheless, it provides a clear picture and accurate proportions of the scale of their activity. The cited amounts in leva and US dollars are taken from the annual reports of the foundations.

Table 1
Funding from foundations*

St. St. Cyril and Methodius					
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Cultural programmes and publishing	396 822	2506033	3799111	4678572	3680042
St.St. Cyril and Methodius Gallery	506 867	108 705	-	1 143 635	533 135
Open Society Fund					
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Libraries	2 012 995	5 776 304	70 106 636	18 126 236	14465752
Cultural heritage			20 000	4 091 718	14465752
Theatre and cinema	305 463	2 081 614	1 068 322		5630214
Music	207 790	892 764	1 755 379	8 678 659	5893627
Literature and cultural programmes		212 013	1 193 972	4 706 154	15374730
Fine arts	127 994	715 643	401 486	6 304 558	9348008
Kabaivanska Fund**			387 000	509100	2883313
Publishing	216 002	545 347	3 013 860	6 839 501	8226455

* The figures have been taken out of the annual reports of the foundations. The sums in US dollars reflect the average annual exchange rate of US dollar - Bulgarian lev of the Bulgarian National Bank for the respective year to make comparison easier. The dollar equivalent is calculated according to a round exchange rate for 1 USD for the respective year as follows: 1991 - 12.35; 1992 - 24.21; 1993 - 28.66; 1994 - 50.6; 1995 - 68.54; 1996 - 119.71

** The Raina Kabaivanska Charity Fund centers its activity on the discovery of talented children from the orphan hostels and assists them in getting trained in the arts.

4.5 Problems and prospects

Over the coming years, too, the state will obviously continue to be the main patron of culture. By virtue of its lasting economic difficulties and deficits, however, the state will probably not be able to allocate more funds for the cultural sector than in recent years. Consequently, unless new ways of funding are sought, culture will dispose over a reduced or at least an insufficient financial resource.

Although discussed for a long time, the changes in the model of cultural funding is yet to come. Only the first steps have been made so far. There are several leading directions of the needed change.

The first direction is to seek possibilities for the decentralisation and pluralism of the forms and sources of funding.

Generally speaking, there are two basic forms of direct state funding of culture: funding of institutions and funding of projects. In the first case support is sought for the network of state cultural institutes, in the second - subsidies for creative projects. In one case above all salaries are paid, in the other conditions are created for directing public funds to culture and the non-institutionalised

forms of cultural life. The priority funding of institutions normally leads to a blocking of innovative groups among creative artists. Conversely, the greater the proportion of funds for competing artistic projects, the bigger the chance of invigorating cultural life and motivating the "civil society" among creative artists. During the last three to four years the Ministry of Culture has been using both forms of funding. But subsidies for projects do not exceed 1-2% of the total subsidies, i.e. they do, in fact, play an insignificant role.

The diversification of the sources of funding is also important. Insofar as the private sector is still weak, foundations could be another serious source. The subsidies for culture from the different foundations will probably never be large, but they are particularly important because of the possibility to finance avant-garde projects and due to the great flexibility in distributing the subsidies of these institutions.

The second direction is to strengthen the role and importance of the municipalities in the funding of culture.

One of the conditions for the attainment of this aim is for the Ministry of Culture to pursue an active dialogue with the local government bodies and seek the necessary statutory and organisational decisions for the facilitation of this dialogue. The opinion also exists that it is necessary to introduce normative guarantees that the municipalities won't underrate culture in their budgets.

The third direction is the de-nationalisation of cultural institutes and activities.

The de-nationalisation presupposes that the state will partly relieve itself of its present responsibilities and financial burdens by conducting privatisation, closing some institutes, introducing the shareholding principle and joint property, etc. Megalomania, the extensive development of cultural infrastructure and the overproduction of "cultural cadres" in the conditions of so-called real socialism have bequeathed a heritage which requires enormous funds for its maintenance and functioning. In this sense de-nationalisation is a possible way of coping with this heavy heritage.

The fourth direction is the development of indirect funding through changes in tax legislation.

There are two polar views among creative artists about the necessary attitude of the state to the funding of culture, which are probably a response to foreign liberal experience or nostalgia for our previous experience. One opinion is that the state should have no obligations to culture. Conversely, the other, more widespread opinion, pleads for continued patronage: culture, as an exclusive public property, should be fully supported by the state. Correspondingly, according to one view, the state should not give, nor should it take from the men of art - "without subsidies, but also without taxes". The other view expects everything from the state. Clearly both orientations are impossible to realise in the Bulgarian conditions. The realisation of the first view is hampered by the lack of traditions, a developed cultural market, an adequate network of foundations, strong private sector, etc. And for the realisation of the second view the state does not have the necessary resources. The impossibility to realise either variant warrants the following conclusion: the state which is experiencing a severe and prolonged economic crisis could partly unburden itself of its financial obligations to culture by, instead of subsidies, guaranteeing

possibilities for the self-support of cultural institutions and creative artists. This is possible though a facilitated tax regime. Changes in taxation should be differentiated, however. The widespread application of tax concessions is difficult in the existence of a national budget with a large deficit. This is why it is of exceptional importance for the development of cultural policy to assess and identify its priorities in order to impose the necessity for differentiated tax concessions in society and the state.

The fifth direction is to realise that the funding of culture is not isolated from the overall system of regulatory financial mechanisms in changing society.

The funding of culture is indirectly linked with many factors which seem remote, but are actually extremely important for the future of cultural development. For example, if the rate of aggregate income tax grows in a way as to primarily burden the emerging middle class, the result will be a growing stratification between the super-rich and desperately poor people. In fact, this trend is already noticeable. In 1990 the population with incomes below 50% of the average income comprised 8%; three years later it had already risen to 20%. In turn, the mass impoverishment of the population will undermine still further the chance for the existence of a middle class because the middle class is occupied mainly with activities which produce services and consumer goods. The marked stratification in the growing impoverishment of the larger part of the population presents one of the greatest threats to culture. It means that the chances for the development of the cultural market will be reduced because precisely the middle class is its main consumer. In other words, the future money for museums will depend on whether the middle class will have a future in our society. The answer to this question is a set of political, legislative and economic actions, assisting the formation and support of a middle class in Bulgaria.

The sixth direction is to spark a broad public discussion on the problems of the funding of culture.

In the present social situation the funding of culture is probably the strongest, yet still ignored instrument of cultural policy. The money spent on culture and the manner of their utilisation are of key importance in the formation and implementation of a specific cultural-political strategy. In principle this importance proceeds from the need to increase economic rationality in the cultural sector. Culture is becoming an increasingly more costly activity. This is why it is of exceptional importance for any modern society - economically prospering states and countries in an economic crisis alike - to spend public funds for culture in the most expedient and efficient way. This instrument should be of particularly great importance in Bulgaria's cultural policy: first, because we have to outlive the heritage of the time when cultural policy was reduced to a subjectivist addressing of priorities and their realisation with administrative measures; second, because against the background of the state's diminished possibilities it would be a crime not to seek optimal variants for utilising the limited financial resources for culture.

Despite being so important, this instrument of cultural policy continues to be ignored. The ways, volume and priorities in the funding of culture are not subject to broad public debate. Despite the fact that society should be confident that the money for culture is spent in the best possible way, because it is its

money, turned into national budget. The economy of culture as a theory is still in embryo, despite the fact that putting culture on a market foundation or in a market context urgently demands the development of such a scientific discipline. There are no information sources to service theoretical and public discussions and assist optimal decision-making in the funding of culture. Despite the fact that without such sources and without wide access to them neither a productive public debate, nor the development of the economy of culture can be expected.

The seventh direction is the formation of public opinion in support of culture.

The prospects of culture are linked with whether and how the viewpoint on questions whose answer is provided by art will change. If it is regarded as a luxury, as the icing of the cake, hardly any government or parliament is likely to be generous towards the cultural budget. And it is not only important how the government and MPs assess the public needs of culture. In a democratic society it is very important what the face of culture is, what the image of its leading representatives is, to what extent broad circles in society realise that culture is also an industry from which society stands to gain, one which creates jobs, attracts tourists, etc. When the budget for culture is decided, politicians cannot act contrary to the public sense of justice. If the funds are few, and the spheres vitally needing them many, public consent on how much to allocate to the cultural sector depends to a large extent on the prestige of culture and the understanding of its public value. The improved funding of culture presupposes a better work of the bodies mapping out and implementing cultural policy for the formation of a favourable public opinion of culture.

5. CULTURAL HERITAGE, IMMOVABLE MONUMENTS OF CULTURE, MUSEUM ACTIVITIES AND GALLERIES

Through the ages Bulgaria's territory has been a true crossroads of civilizations, where political, economic and cultural influences of the West and the East have intersected. In order to understand the Bulgarian cultural heritage and estimate present day activities for its preservation, one should know the dramatic history of the Bulgarian lands - a cradle of the oldest European cultures, an integral part of the European cultural space.

- *Archaeological remains of human settlements on today's Bulgarian lands - in the central part of the Balkan peninsula - date back to the end of the Paleolithic period (40 000 years B.C.). By the end of the third millennium B.C., the Thracians had settled in these lands. They built a highly organized society and created a remarkable material and spiritual culture. In the 6th century B.C. the Hellenes colonized the Thracian land along the Western shore of the Black sea, and in the advent of the new era a massive Roman invasion began. This invasion left a specific imprint on the administrative and territorial management of the Thracian settlements. After the 5th century these lands were included within the boundaries of Byzantium which had inherited the Eastern Roman Empire. In the 5th century, the nomad tribe of the Proto-Bulgarians, after its long march from Asia, crossed the Danube and settled in the lands of the Byzantine province of Moesia. The Bulgarians united with the Thracian and Slavic tribes who had settled there a century before. Thus, in 681 one of the oldest European States was founded - Bulgaria. It grew rapidly as an equal rival of Byzantium, with its own original culture. In 855 the Cyrillic script was created and in 865 Christianity was adopted as the official religion. The first Bulgarian Kingdom existed till 1018 when its lands were conquered by Byzantium for more than a century and a half. In 1185, after a successful uprising led by the descendants of the last royal dynasty, the Second Bulgarian Kingdom was founded. It extended from the Carpathian Mountains to the Black Sea shores, to the Aegean Sea and the Adriatic Sea, and became the dominant factor in South Eastern Europe. The Bulgarian culture flourished and its supreme achievements ranked next to those produced in the European Proto-Renaissance. In 1396, Bulgaria was conquered by Turkish invaders and remained under Turkish domination for 5 centuries. The Bulgarian political, spiritual and cultural institutions were completely destroyed, the aristocracy and the intellectual elite were exterminated or banished and the Bulgarian ethnos subjected to total oppression. Ottoman culture was imposed as the official culture but the Bulgarian ethnos zealously preserved its national and Christian spiritual values. Their resurrection in the 18th century marked the beginning of the Bulgarian National Revival /the Bulgarian Renaissance/ which ended in 1878 with the liberation of Bulgaria. The Third Bulgarian Kingdom developed as a modern constitutional monarchy until the end of the Second World War, when (in 1944) a totalitarian system of government was introduced. After 1989 Bulgaria began to participate in the context of the social, political and economic changes taking place in Eastern Europe.*

In this complex and contradictory melting pot of diverse cultures, external influences and local traditions, a veritable treasure house of cultural values has accumulated in the Bulgarian lands.

- *Inhabited caves and remnants from settlements and settlement mounds from the Paleolithic and Neolithic have been found and studied; the gold vessels from the Aeneolithic necropolis near the city of Varna are considered to be the most ancient samples of European art culture. Numerous valuable objects of Thracian, Hellenic and Roman cultures have been found - remnants of fortifications, of civil and military settlements, of churches and public buildings, numerous necropolises, sanctuaries and objects of decorative monumental art (the Thracian tombs in the town of Kazanluk and near the village of Sveshtari belong to the World Cultural Heritage). Typical of the early*

Middle Ages and built during the Byzantine domination and the First and Second Bulgarian Kingdoms, there are numerous fortifications and road constructions, castles, monasteries, churches and necropolises, as well as objects of the fine arts and the monumental arts, which are essential elements of a large part of these monuments (the Madara Horseman, the Boyana Church and the Rock-cut Churches near the village of Ivanovo are also part of the World Cultural Heritage). A number of objects, typical of Ottoman culture in the late Middle Ages, have also been preserved - Muslim cult buildings and complexes, public and residential buildings, village and road fortifications, dungeons. Along with these representatives of the official culture, numerous Christian monasteries and churches, built during these times, have been preserved - with humble dimensions and unpretentious architecture, but harbouring remarkable works of wall paintings and plastics. Most numerous are the preserved valuables from the Renaissance period which manifest the Bulgarian creative genius most comprehensively. These are entire villages, impressive monastery complexes, churches, public buildings - schools, community centres, watch towers, road inns, administrative buildings, bridges, etc. Some modern European influences are also clearly discernible in these monuments along with the restored traditions. Particularly valuable are the monuments of fine arts, of applied and monumental arts from this period (the Rila monastery and the town of Nesebar are part of the World Cultural Heritage, and it should be noted that in Nesebar, besides the Renaissance layer, the antiquity layers and the early Middle Ages layers, in particular, are also very rich in findings). In the monuments of recent times - residential, public and cult buildings - the European orientation of the country after its liberation is clearly expressed and in many such monuments the preserved national tradition has further developed in the context of the new times.

All this is an indispensable part of Europe's memory, supplementing the ideas and concepts of the cultural evolution of the Old Continent.

The institutional awareness of the value of the cultural heritage in the Bulgarian lands and of the necessity to place it under legal protection emerged as early as the 1850's or 1860's, when museum collections were created in the Bulgarian community centres. Right after the liberation from the Ottoman yoke, the foundations of the system for the conservation of the cultural heritage were laid as part of the legal regulations of the Constitutional Monarchy.

The legal regulations governing the preservation of cultural values were introduced in 1888.

In *Provisional Rules of Scientific and Literary Enterprises* (1888) the objects of cultural and historical heritage are denoted by the term antiquities. The search for the following objects was regulated: coins, monuments (statues, tombs, etc.) and documents (manuscripts, old printed papers, etc.). Discovered "immovable antiquities", such as churches, castles, etc. were under the supervision of the local authorities and belonged to the State.

In the *Law on the Search of Antiquities and on Assisting Scientific and Literary Enterprises* (1890) the provisions of the "Rules" were legitimized with negligible changes: digging for the search for antiquities without permission was prohibited; the antiquities found without permission were confiscated by the government; all antiquities, regardless of their location, belonged to the State; antiquities could not be exported by the State without the permission of the Ministry of Education; landowners received compensations for the losses incurred during excavations.

In the *Law on Antiquities* (1911) the regulations providing for the search and preservation of antiquities were improved. The range was extended and the organizational structure of preservation was developed. All state and public institutions which possess antiquities were obliged to submit a list of these

antiquities to the Ministry of Education not later than one year after the finding. The expropriation of all movable and immovable antiquities, endangered by destruction or disappearance, was authorized. The priority right of the State to buy antiquities for its collections was regulated.

In the 1927-1937 period the *Law on Antiquities* was supplemented by a number of lists containing "people's antiquities."

In 1936 the *Decree-Law on the Preservation of Ancient Buildings in Inhabited Localities* was adopted. To the immovable antiquities, as objects under conservation, were added streets, squares and buildings of architectural, public and historic importance. Preferences were established for the owners of buildings-monuments: property tax exemption and exemption from municipal taxes (fees), as well as the right to financial aid from the municipal budget.

Thus, Bulgaria became one of first European countries to initiate a modern system for the preservation of the cultural heritage based on appropriate principles, rules and legal regulations; on an effective institutional organization; and on stimulating public interest in the problems of the cultural heritage.

During the last 50 years, the activities for the preservation of this cultural heritage have gone along a complicated and controversial road. This road reflects not only the evolution in the specialists' professional way of thinking, but also the moral values of the epoch which have not always been pure and consistent.

The political changes after 1944 brought about nihilism towards anything created prior to that date; they fostered the conviction that the old is doomed to give way to the new; they consolidated the idea that a completely new and more attractive world can be created. This illusory communist idea threatened the Bulgarian cultural heritage, the preservation of which became the sole responsibility of the state. Private initiative was sharply restricted. The development of this sector was also subjected to state orders under the conditions of the centrally planned administration of the socialist state. Gradually, the preservation of immovable monuments and museum activities was assigned to two separate bodies. Specialized central and local bodies of the state administration became responsible for the preservation of immovable monuments.

In this political context, the centuries-long European traditions in the domain of the preservation of the cultural heritage, mentioned above, have been of particular importance. They have contributed to the lasting affiliation of Bulgaria to the international system for the preservation of the heritage by training conservation specialists at a European level and by giving priority to professional criteria despite orthodox ideological norms. In this respect, the historic merit of the *ICOMOS Venetian Charter* (1964) about the development of Bulgarian conservation activities should also be pointed out. It introduced new professional conservation ethics; it suggested different moral criteria, and provided clear methodological instruments for conservation activities. All this has prompted the adoption of the *Law on Cultural Monuments and Museums* (1969) which is in effect today. Other requirements are that the main conservation object - the monuments of culture - should be specified which provides for the legal protection of almost 40 000 cultural objects (among them 7 of the World Cultural Heritage); that a multi-disciplinary team of the National Institute for Monuments of Culture should be founded and consolidated; that conservation activities at a high scholarly and professional level should be carried out; and that the first attempts at seeking dialogue between urbanists, architects and archaeologists should be made to influence urban policy in a number of historical villages and towns. The

network of museums and galleries was built most intensively in the '70s and '80s covering all towns. The number of specialized museums increased. Gradually the national system for the preservation of the cultural heritage was founded; it was in line with the highly centralized social and economic system that existed till 1990.

The political events that took place after November 1989 prompted radical social changes. The country began the process of democratization, of rejection of the old totalitarian structure, and of opening up towards the world. This process is strongly desired, but painful; full of hopes and apprehensions.

On the one hand, the changes have brought about real chances for preservation activities. Possibilities have been created for their democratization and depoliticizing. The role of private initiative has increased, especially under the conditions of restitution and privatization. The market is liberalized, new agents in preservation activities appear. There has been a real boom in housing construction in the old city parts unlike the extensive urban development of the past. The ratification of the two European conventions - on architecture and on the archeological heritage, have furthered the legal framework in the sphere of preservation.

On the other hand, however, the changes occur under the conditions of a severe economic crisis, an antiquated law, and slow rates of economic reforms and legislative changes. This seriously jeopardizes the hitherto existing achievements in the preservation of the cultural heritage, and creates risks for irreversible damage to the monuments of culture .

The specific nature of conservation and the management of the different kinds of heritage requires that in Bulgaria, as in many other European countries, two distinct, though closely related, spheres of cultural heritage should be differentiated:

- immovable (monumental) cultural heritage;
- museum activities and galleries.

This differentiation has also been adopted in the analysis and prognostication proposed here for the preservation of the Bulgarian cultural heritage.

5.1. Preservation of immovable monuments of culture

5.1.1. General Characteristics of Immovable Cultural Heritage

The immovable cultural heritage in the Bulgarian lands exhibits the following specific features :

- The network of monuments of cultural value in Bulgaria is widespread, but with a relatively high extent of concentration (about 40000 registered monuments over 111 000 sq. km of national territory). This creates conditions for complex interrelations among the separate objects. We may speak of spatial continuity of the Bulgarian historical environment.

- The objects exhibit a high diversity of typology (architectural, archeological, historical, works of art, the art of gardening) and of level (single objects, collections, historical settlements, remarkable sites, vast historical territories).

- The heritage possesses a complex historical stratification, bearing messages from Prehistoric, Thracian, Ancient, Byzantine, Mediaeval, Ottoman, Renaissance and other cultures. This is the result of the complex historical destiny

of the Balkan peninsula - a crossroads of civilizations. The evidence is to be found in a number of "eternal" Bulgarian cities such as Sofia, Plovdiv, Nesebar, Silistra, etc., which accumulated remarkable depths of historical layers, covering an extraordinary temporal range of up to 25 centuries. The environment possesses temporal continuity in which the role of the monument's historical life greatly increases.

- A particularity of the Bulgarian heritage is the permanent role of traditions in its development: continuity of methods, functions, and lifestyles, related to the specific national psychology. With rare exceptions, the Bulgarian historical environments represent vital centres which live a wholesome social life. Their "transformation into museums" is impossible without discrediting the quality of their social life. Conversely - their vitality and future development are related to the attainment of contemporary standards.

- The historical layers possess a different degree of conservation. Some environments have preserved their authentic spatial and temporal continuity. Others (ancient and Mediaeval, for example) are greatly disrupted and fragmented - the result of dramatic historical events and the specific climate with large temperature amplitudes.

- The objects exhibit different degrees of historic importance: ranging from the seven monuments that belong to the World Cultural Heritage and the national cultural objects (about 1200) to numerous monuments of local importance

This complex and ramified system of objects of cultural value should be evaluated as an integral part of the European cultural treasure-house whose specific profile has been greatly supplemented by the valuable archeological layers of the Bulgarian lands (Thracian, Ancient, Mediaeval) and the remarkable examples of Bulgarian national architecture.

5.1.2. Evolution of Conservation Activities during the last 50 years

The system of preserving immovable monuments of culture was ultimately formed during the '80s in the specific political, economic and cultural context of the times. For the 1944-1989 period the characteristics of the system were as follows:

At a national level the main organizing body in the system is the Ministry of Culture with a central priority role in managing and supervising conservation activities. The main organ of the Ministry of Culture is the National Institute for Monuments of Culture, which centralizes and coordinates all specific conservation activities. At regional level (in the 28 districts) there are District Cultural Heritage Directorates which are responsible for the investment policy and local supervision. The investment mechanism includes the following main stages:

- Parliament adopts the budget and provides subsidies, which the State allocates to the preservation of the most valuable and endangered monuments - annually about 12 million leva (about \$12 million in comparable prices referred to this period);

- The Ministry of Culture proposes selective distribution of the budget funds among the territories and the monuments;

- The Ministry of Finance directs the funds to the respective districts;

- The districts (through the Cultural Heritage Directorates) conclude contracts with the National Institute and with other organizations for specific

preservation activities. The districts and the municipalities ensure additional funds for preservation from their own or other sources of income up to 50 % of the amount of the state subsidy.

This model, marked by open central governmental control, aims at implementing a policy that is, in principle, selective, since the funds from the state budget are allocated to the priority monuments of culture (world or national), and the remaining resources are to cover the needs of monuments of a lower category. The rationale behind the model is that it is only the State which is capable of managing the process of preservation of all monuments of culture.

This centralization of the system of preservation during the period defined above, restricts interests and initiatives, and deprives the system of a valuable potential. However, thanks to it, almost the entire available national creative potential in the field of preservation is concentrated in the National Institute for Monuments of Culture - about 2000 highly trained specialists in the required professional spectrum, many of whom have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge in world and European training centres. This provides an opportunity for a massive concentration of creative effort, professionally controlled and assessed according to the generally valid scientific criteria and international recommendations. It also provides for the required multi-disciplinary nature of conservation activities (for the Boyana church, the Thracian Tomb in Sveshtari, etc.). It enables the National Institute to oppose professionally the central and local government in order to save endangered monuments of culture, valuable city nuclei, reserve zones etc. - a painful resistance indeed, which sometimes yields results, but not infrequently is completely futile.

In the 1969-1988 period, conservation-restoration activities amounting to about 300 million leva (about \$300 million) were carried out on approximately 10 thousand monuments of culture. The preservation activities reached their peak in 1980-1981 in connection with the 1300th anniversary of the foundation of the Bulgarian State, the celebration of which consumed enormous efforts and funds (\$29 million were spent only in 1981). The circles of specialists engaged in this activity were creatively stimulated and inspired by world theory and practice. They used a differentiated and multi-disciplinary approach to the historical layers, maintaining the idea of historical continuity. Conducive to this approach was a different social climate which reflected people's heightened sensitivity towards the fate of their own roots. The results of these dramatic efforts are there, before all of us. Without them the Bulgarian national landscape would have been quite different.

Despite these efforts, in a number of cases, the Bulgarian heritage has been used as part of a political scenario, as the window-dressing of the official cultural policy. Thus, the aggressive historical romanticism of leaders of no particular intelligence has frequently given rise to pseudo-historical symbols which defy scientific criteria. Elsewhere, these leaders' disregard of the authentic cultural values has resulted in losses in the historical environment, regardless of the experts' violent reaction. In a number of cases local pressure has distorted the selective policy of preservation and has created risks for the monuments - especially for archeological objects, monasteries, etc.

The artificially sustained equilibrium between the centralized economy and culture could not last long. And when, by the end of the '80s, the economic collapse of the system became more evident, the interest of the State in the

cultural heritage started decreasing ostensibly. A crisis developed in conservation activities and it revealed all the shortcomings of the totalitarian model. A centralized preservation system encompasses state monopoly on all conservation activities and, when this role decreases, the system itself begins to degrade. Sharp collisions appeared among its former partners. The economic crisis greatly restricted the possibilities of municipalities greatly and shattered investment activities. The ineffective use of the historical environment (especially in the sphere of tourism) was not in a position to attract new interests and initiatives. Economic and social incentives were lacking for a wide public participation, and a free market of supply and demand did not exist. Legislation became more and more inadequate in the context of the rapidly changing conditions. By the end of the period, preservation activities had launched a massive campaign for their own survival ...

This contradictory stage of the Bulgarian conservation development should be evaluated impartially, without political bias, with a full knowledge of both the positive and negative aspects of the system for preservation. A summary of the system's positive and negative aspects in the 1944-1989 period would look like this:

Positive Aspects:

- Priority role of the State in preservation;
- Clearly regulated investment mechanism;
- Regulated role of local government in the preservation of monuments, in the investment process, and local control over the monuments of culture;
- Consistent and expanded regulatory system;
- Large concentration of creative efforts for preservation, ensuring high professional competence, multi-disciplinary operations, impact on urban policy and professional resistance for saving endangered monuments of culture;
- Participation in the international conservation system (ICCROM, ICOMOS, Committee for World Heritage).

Negative Aspects:

- Excessive concentration and centralization of state functions in the Ministry of Culture;
- Lack of free initiative and of market competition among conservation contractors ;
- Lack of separation of control and performance functions in the National Institute for Monuments of Culture; inadequate economic system in the field of preservation;
- Strong pressure on people and institutes, motivated by interests alien to preservation objectives. Such a pressure distorts preservation policy;
- Lack of unity among the partners in the preservation system;
- Lack of interaction among conservation, urbanization and environmental policies;
- Lack of sufficient incentives for preservation;
- Cumbersome mechanism of registering the monuments of culture;
- Politicization of preservation activities.

The radical social and economic changes in the *period of 1989 till now* have inevitably affected the overall conservation system.

Above all, the changes have weakened the role of the state in the preservation process. Under the conditions of the severe economic crisis the

budget funds have decreased (more than 100 times as compared with those of 15 years ago, taking into account the inflation rate); the possibilities for exercising effective state control and penalizing perpetrators by sanctions and fines have also been restricted. At the same time, the system continues to be strongly centralized and concentrated. Under these conditions, the local levels of preservation start deteriorating. In many municipalities there are no longer sufficiently competent experts in preservation and local control is discredited.

The liberalization of the market has included many new conservation contractors, but the lack of sufficient control and regulations has created conditions for non-professionalism and corruption, which threaten the monuments of culture. Besides, this has a detrimental effect on the professional community.

The lack of sufficient economic preferences for the owners of monuments of culture continues to alienate them from the system of preservation nor does it stimulate their partial financial participation in complex operations in cultural historical zones. This strongly jeopardizes the cultural identity of the historical settlements.

The role of private initiative increases particularly under the conditions of restitution and privatization. But the application of the restitution laws on over 240 immovable monuments of culture (up to 1993) has created serious obstacles. Conflicting situations arise between the wish of the new owners to use their property and the protective regime for the monuments; elsewhere, the owners refuse to reimburse the funds which the state or municipal authorities have invested in conservation.

All this has placed the cultural heritage preservation activities in a critical situation. Lacking funds for continuous care, the monuments start to deteriorate. The crisis has affected the highly valuable professional potential of the restorers who took dozens of years to be trained. Some owners of monuments, for whom the status of "monument" is just an excessive burden, direct their efforts either at having this status removed, or at bypassing the law by introducing changes in the monument's functions, by construction alterations etc. without the consent of the respective authorities. Flawlessly organized criminal acts of plundering monuments of culture - treasure hunting, illegal export etc. - are on the rise. At the same time the sharp political confrontation has gripped the attention of the public at large to such an extent that it has alienated it from the fate of the architectural heritage, and has brought about the old revolutionary nihilism towards the values of the past.

Here is a similar summary of the positive and negative aspects of the 1989-1996 period in the development of the conservation system.

Positive aspects:

- Directing the state funds for preservation towards the Ministry of Culture (not towards the local authorities, as hitherto), which enhances the possibilities of the state to control their use;
- Differentiation between control and executive functions in the field of preservation;
- Formation of a market for conservation contractors, thus including a new creative potential in preservation activities;
- Ratification of the two European conventions for the preservation of cultural heritage;
- Depoliticizing of the system of preservation.

Negative aspects:

- Sharp reduction of the role of the state in the management of preservation activities;
- Drastic reduction of conservation funds;
- Continuation of the process of strong concentration and centralization of state functions in the Ministry of Culture;
- Strong weakening of the role and competence of local authorities;
- Inadequate legislation under the changed conditions;
- Lack of control over the markets of conservation contractors;
- Imperfect investment mechanism;
- Low level of cultural tourism;
- Rise in criminal activities against the national cultural values under the conditions of weak executive and judicial powers.

There are cultural activities which are capable of overcoming not only similar social collisions, but also of using these collisions for new and powerful incentives. However, every compulsory pause in the process of the preservation of the cultural heritage may result in irreversible damages.

5.1.3. The state of the system of preservation

The state of the national system of preservation of the immovable cultural heritage will be presented below as a an entity of all conservation *objects* and conservation *subjects* and the mechanisms of their interaction for the implementation of the national policy in this sphere.

Contemporary Legislation for the Preservation of the Immovable Heritage

As pointed out, Bulgaria has an impressive legislative tradition for the preservation of the heritage. The present day legislative system came into being after the adoption of the Law for the Monuments of Culture and Museums in 1969. It comprises regulatory acts at four levels:

- the Constitution adopted by the Grand National Assembly;
- Laws passed by the Bulgarian Parliament;
- Sublegislative Regulatory Acts - regulations, adopted by the government;
- Sublegislative Regulatory Acts - regulations issued by the Ministries.

To these, the ratified international conventions in this field should also be added. According to art 5 para 4 of the Constitution any international instruments ratified by the constitutionally established procedure shall be considered part of the domestic legislation of the country.

The *Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria* (1991) defines in article 23 that "the state shall organize the conservation of all national monuments of history and culture," and in article 18 that "The state shall enjoy exclusive ownership rights over ... the natural and archeological reserves established by a law."

There are three interrelated legislative sectors which act with a different degree of force upon the preservation system:

First legislative sector - Preservation of the Cultural Heritage, is the present *Law for the Monuments of Culture and Museums* (1969). It defines the legal regime in the activities concerning movable and immovable monuments of

cultures, as well as the structure and development of museum activities. The Sector also includes the following Sublegislative Regulatory Acts:

- *Regulations governing the structure and tasks of the National Institute for Monuments of Culture*, adopted by the Council of Ministers and amended by Decree #222 of the Government, November 1, 1991) which in some respects has the functions of Rules for the application of the Law;

- *Decrees of the Ministry of Culture* on specific problems of conservation: documenting, use, presentation, defining the regimes etc. of the monuments of culture.

- *Decrees for the preservation of reserves*, issued by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction.

Second legislative sector - Territorial and Urban Development, represented by the *Law on the Territorial and Urban Structure* with the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction as the main conservation subject of the state government. The law regulates all aspects of the environment's structure to which the immovable cultural heritage belongs by its very nature. Art 15, item 3 and item 5; art 35, para 1; and art 37, para 2 refer to some urbanization problems of the cultural heritage preservation.

The sector comprises the following sublegislative regulatory acts:

- *Regulations for the application of the Law on the Territorial and Urban structure*, whose art 46, para 2, art 71, para 1, item 32a, article 75, para 2, item 1 and art 103, para 1, address also urban problems and the preservation of the cultural heritage;

- *Decree 5 for the Rules and Standards of Territorial and Urban structure*, which, in its last version, includes for the first time a separate chapter on "The structure of the territorial and cultural and historical heritage" (art 36 and art 37).

Third legislative sector - Preservation of the Natural Environment, represented by the *Law for the Preservation of the Natural Environment* with a main managing subject - the Ministry of Environment. So far the Law encompasses only the ecological aspects of the environment, regulates the legal protection of the valuable natural heritage, but has no reference to its cultural sub-text.

To the legislative sectors cited above we should also add the indirect legislation, in as far as a number of new laws refer to the issues of the cultural heritage during the period of transition.

The *Law on Changes and Amendments to the Penal Code* (1993) regulates, with updated decisions, the kinds of criminal acts and increases the respective penalties for encroachment upon monuments of culture several times. Despite this, the examination of the merits of the case against monuments still needs further precision, and due to the inflation processes in the country, the cited fines do not represent adequate penalties.

The Rules for the Application of the Law on Ownership and the Use of Agricultural Lands (1992) stipulate that the ownership rights on agricultural lands, over or under which inseparable archeological objects and monuments of culture are located, should not be restored. The obligations of the owners and the users of such lands, related to the preservation of the monuments, are pointed out in a special article.

In the *Law on Restitution of State Immovable Property (Real Estate)* (1992) the problems of restitution are regulated, but without, as stated, taking into account the specific cases of immovable property (real estate) which has the status of monuments of culture.

The *Law on the General Income Tax* (1993) specifies a tax reduction of up to 20 % for donation, restoration and preservation of natural, historical and cultural monuments from the tax revenue of free professions, the arts and crafts, rent etc.

The *Laws on State and Municipal Property* (1995/6) regulate the classification of world and national monuments of culture as public state property, and of monuments of local importance - as public municipal property with all restrictive consequences, connected with this classification.

The international agreements in the field of the cultural heritage ratified by the Republic of Bulgaria are:

- *Convention on the Preservation of Cultural Values in the Case of Armed Conflicts;*
- *Convention on the Measures to Prohibit and Hinder the Import and Export and Transfer of Property Rights of Illegally Owned Cultural Values;*
- *European Convention on the Preservation of the Archeological Heritage;*
- *Convention on the Preservation of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;*
- *European Cultural Convention;*
- *European Convention on the Preservation of the Architectural Heritage.*

The analysis of the Bulgarian legislative system in the field of the cultural heritage preservation and its comparison with that of some developed European countries shows that Bulgaria has a comprehensive and consistent regulatory basis for preserving its cultural heritage which has been improved throughout the years. The achievement in this field are mostly due to this system.

However, the analysis also shows that today this system of rules and regulations is to a large extent obsolete and inadequate for the rapidly and radically changing conditions. This conclusion derives from the following aspects of the system:

- The interrelations between the above mentioned three legislative sectors are at the moment rather weak and ineffective. They do not contribute to the desired balanced strategy for the preservation and development of the environment.
- The Law does not regulate the interdependence of conservation and urbanization policies, nor does it apply the principles of "integrated conservation", in which the preservation of the cultural heritage becomes the main element of the policy in the environment sphere.
- The conception of conservation objects, developed in the Law is rather obsolete. It does not correspond to the new meaning of the notion of "cultural heritage," in the sense of the international conventions, the ICOMOS charters (Florence 81, Washington 87, Lausanne 90, etc.) or contemporary theory and practice in this field.

- The notion of “monument of culture”, put forward in the Law, does not regulate the corresponding conservation regime sufficiently. From among the criteria, used to identify a certain valuable as a “monument of culture,” only the “cultural historic importance” is pointed out which, by itself, could easily be interpreted subjectively; essential criteria, such as authenticity, are missing.
- The Law does not regulate the mechanisms and functions of the national system of preservation of the cultural heritage clearly. In its present form, it predetermines today’s institutional and regional concentration of the state conservation functions.
- The Law also stipulates the excessive centralization of functions in the central government, without elucidating the functions and the prerogatives of local government.
- The Law does not regulate the financial and organizational synchronization between archeological research and conservation activity. This has caused a number of damages to the Bulgarian archeological heritage.
- A basic flaw in the Law is that it lacks sufficiently effective incentives; material incentives could engage the owners, the users, the community and the public at large, and would reveal new sources of funding.
- The Law does not stimulate the activities of non-profit making organizations in the field of conservation sufficiently, and thus does not meet the requirements of the European convention on the preservation of the architectural heritage.

Conservation Objects

The Law regulates the central object of legal protection - “*the monument of culture*,” the officially recognized summit of the cultural heritage. Three types of immovable monuments are defined: architecturally constructed (i.e. archaeological, architectural, urbanistic, including historical parks and gardens); historical (environments, including also natural, connected with historical events or personalities); objects of the fine arts, of monumental or applied arts. The natural values and phenomena are protected by the Law on Protection of the Natural Environment.

The Law defines three categories in the value hierarchy of the monuments: (World (the 7 monuments of the World Cultural Heritage); national (about 1200 objects) and local. The monuments are classified according to the extent of their complexity - single and group (collections and reserves - total 42 settlements, parts of settlements, archaeological zones, etc.).

The Law regulates the two-stage preservation of the monuments by declaration and announcement. The declaration is the act of placing a monument under temporary protection and the announcement - under permanent protection. Protection acts with equal force, regardless of whether it is temporary or permanent.

The monuments are placed under permanent protection by declaring them in the “State Gazette” after approval by the National Council for the Preservation of Monuments of Culture following the proposal of the Director of the National

Institute for the Monuments of Culture and they are entered in the National Register of the Cultural and Historical Heritage, thus being listed.

Table 1
Declared and listed monuments of culture by type

	Listed Monuments	Declared Monuments
Total	9678	19727
Archaeological	3118	2094
Architectural	4037	15603
Art	267	1475
Historical	2238	359
Group		110
Gardens and parks	10	31
Reserves	42	

In total the declared and listed monuments are 29 402; this figure does not comprise tombs and settlement mounds which are declared as archeological monuments with Decree # 1711 of the Government, dated October 22, 1962. Together with the listed mounds, the total number of monuments becomes 39402.

The National Register also includes the Bulgarian monuments abroad . The conservation activities on these monuments are within the powers of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The monuments abroad are Bulgarian churches and monasteries, as well as a number of public objects which today are located on the territories of Greece, Turkey, Serbia, Macedonia, Rumania, Ukraine etc.

Conservation Subjects

The national system of preservation includes the following groups of actors with specific functions in this field:

A. Central Government Agencies

- The *Ministry of Culture* is the supreme agency for the preservation and use of the national cultural heritage. Its functions of control and care of the conservation and maintenance of immovable monuments are: activities for defining, protecting, restoring, maintaining, displaying and developing the archeological and art heritage; policy of enhancing the public interest in preserving the monuments; encouraging the interaction among the heritage, the arts, folk traditions and lifestyles, as elements of the Bulgarian cultural identity. The Minister of Culture performs his functions, set by law, with the help of: the National Council for the Preservation of the Monuments of Culture, the National Centre for Immovable Monuments of Culture and the National Institute for the Monuments of Culture.

- The *National Council for the Preservation of the Immovable Monuments of Culture* is the supreme consulting body of the Ministry of Culture on the problems of immovable monuments and their environment. It takes part in the elaboration, discussion and application of the preservation strategy and tactics; it discusses and expresses opinion on conservation procedures, methods and technologies; it considers and proposes to the Minister of Culture statements and decisions on the

restoration of monuments; it discusses and proposes the distribution of the annual state subsidy for the preservation of monuments; it approves specific conservation projects; it makes recommendations for establishing relations with international organizations.

-*The National Centre for Immovable Monuments of Culture* exercises coordinating and supervisory functions in formulating and pursuing the state policy. It shapes the state policy in the preservation of the cultural heritage by determining the annual state problems for the preservation of monuments; it governs and controls the expenditure of the state subsidy on activities in the preservation of the immovable cultural values; it sustains a database of the computer system "Archaeological Chart of Bulgaria"; it raises funds from international organizations and institutions, sponsors, and other extra-budgetary sources; it performs and coordinates information and monitoring functions in the activity of the state institutions engaged in preservation; it penalizes established violations.

- *The National Institute for the Monuments of Culture* is a state institute with the Ministry of Culture, specializing in the activities of defining, supervising, preserving and managing immovable monuments. According to the Law, the Institute prepares proposals for the declaration of monuments; it coordinates all project assignments, competition programmes, urbanization plans; it issues permission for constructions in reserves, for repair and changes to the monuments; it draws up general and detailed urbanization plans for settlements of historical, archaeological, ethnographic and architectural importance or for parts of such settlements; it provides methodological guidelines for research and design; it supervises fortification, restoration, conservation etc. jobs on the monuments; it determines the order and the conditions for the use of monuments; it sustains and develops the Scientific Documentary Archives of the monuments.

As regards the excavation and preservation of archeological monuments there is another conservation body - The Archaeological Institute and Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, engaged in activities of excavating and documenting archaeological values. Specialized institutes of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences carry out research on the different monuments of culture, as a basis for their identification and preservation regimes.

B. The Specialized Agencies

The Specialized Agencies of the Local Authorities conduct on-site guidance and supervision over the activities on monuments; they invest in this field; they manage, protect and maintain the archeological monuments on their territories; they carry out restitution procedures; they coordinate the activities with the National Institute etc.

C. The Specialized Agencies

The Specialized Agencies include the following state subjects:

- "*Restoration*" is a single trader shareholding company which functions with company capital with entirely state participation, encompassing the national territory with six regional divisions which perform conservation activity mainly by order of the State.

- *The Centre for Conservation and Restoration of Objects of Art* is a non-profit making organization specializing in the preservation of objects of art by a constantly functioning unit and a network of free-lance curators.

- The *Central Research Laboratory* is the only specialized unit of this kind in the country.

Besides the subjects listed above, there are many municipal and private contractors of activities for the preservation of immovable monuments.

D. Users of Monuments of Culture:

owners, proprietors, renters etc. of immovable monuments having certain obligations for their preservation, maintenance, use etc.

E. Non-Profit Making Organizations

Non-Profit Making Organizations in the Field of Preservation, formed on the basis of the Persons and Family Act (1948); cooperatives and foundations, pursuing goals related to the preservation of the immovable cultural heritage. Thus, for example, a model of effective partnership between the Ministry of Culture and the Bulgarian National ICOMOS Committee (a non-profit making organization) is set up in Bulgaria at present. There are in total 18 non-profit making organizations, whose charters include objectives related to the preservation of the cultural heritage.

Instruments and Mechanism in the System of Preservation

The acting legislation regulates certain forms and rules of interaction between the conservation objects and the conservation bodies. We shall pay special attention to those which have a key role in conservation activities.

-The *State Assignment* is the main instrument for conducting the state policy on the preservation of immovable monuments. It is drawn up annually as a list of objects and required activities for their conservation, in accordance with the annual state subsidy, approved in the budget of the Ministry of Culture as a target subsidy. The project of the list is drawn up by the National Institute on written applications by the municipalities and individual owners. The list is submitted to the Ministry of Culture for discussion and adoption and when it is finalized it is approved by the Minister of Culture.

-The *Financing* of conservation activities has been marked in recent years by a sharp drop in funds. For example, in 1981 the expended funds for conservation were \$29 million; in 1996 they are \$216 380. Moreover, the sources of funds come almost entirely from the state budget. For the last few years the municipal funds for conservation have decreased to about 4 % of the state subsidy.

Table 2

Funds for Conservation in the Budget of the Ministry of Culture - state assignment (in millions of leva). Source - Ministry of Culture (MC).

Kind of expenditure	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Budget of MC	339,5	448,7	714,5	1090	1703
Expenses for NMC					
- Total	26,8	34,5	35,6	42,1	55,8
- for CRW*	25,2	32,5	32,8	37,2	49
- for NIMC	1,5	2	2,8	4,9	6,8
% for NMC rel to the MC budget	7,8	7,6	4,9	3,8	3,2

* Conservation restoration works

The proportion of conservation funds with respect to the funds for culture in the consolidated state budget decreased from 15.8 % to 3 % in the period from 1988 to 1995 (see Table 1). The proportion of the municipal funds for conservation with respect to the total funds for culture of the municipalities decreased from 24.8 % to 4 % in the 1988-1995 period. There is a smaller, but quite remarkable, contrast between the subsidy of the Ministry of Culture for conservation and the total budget of the same Ministry - from 7.8 in 1991 it dropped to 3,2 % in 1995.

There is a sharp shortage of funds with respect to the real needs for the preservation of the monuments of culture. Thus, for example, in the budget for 1994 (on the basis of 1993, increased by a normalized percentage for increase 33.6) a minimum of 75.2 million levs should be allocated for conservation. Because of the new and imminent problems in the conservation activities, the proposal for the draft budget envisaged 112 million of levs. In fact, amounts three times lower than those needed were approved. The funds progressively decrease. Thus, while in 1993 the funds received were 58.2 % of those asked for, in 1994 they were 33.1 %.

Table 3

Chain rates for changing the funds (in millions of levs) for conservation from the budget of the Ministry of Culture

Years	Subsidy current rate	Subsidy rate of preceding year	Chain rates of variation in current prices	Chain rates of variation in comparable prices
1991	26.8		100	100
1992	34.5	19.2	128.7	71.7
1993	35.6	21.7	103.1	62.9
1994	42.1	18.9	118.2	53.2
1995	55.8	41.9	132.5	99.7

Chart 1

Chain rates of variation of the conservation funds from the budget of the Ministry of Culture

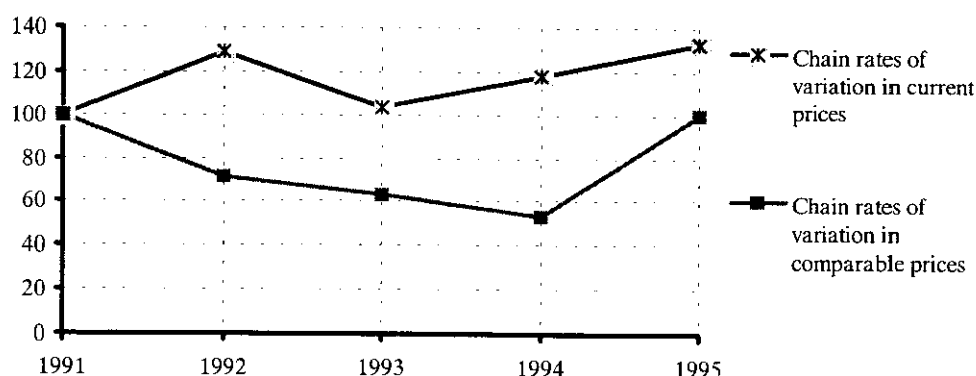


Table 4

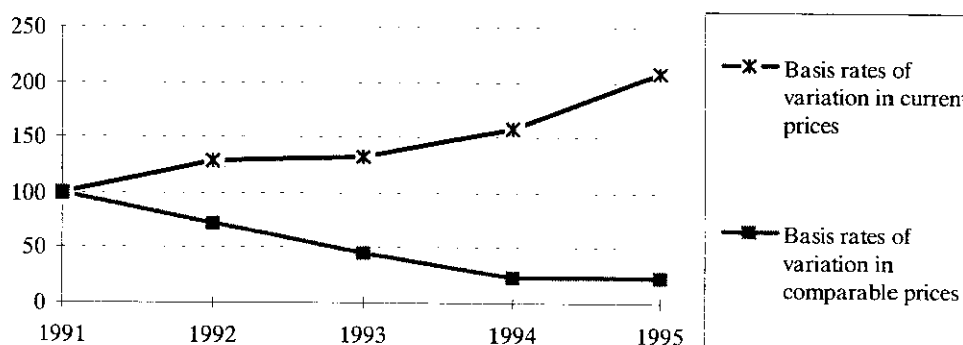
Dynamics of conservation funds spent from the budget of the Ministry of Culture compared to 1991
(in millions of leva)

	Subsidy in current rate	Subsidy in prices rel. to preceding year	Basis rates of variation in current prices	Basis rates of variation in comparable prices
1991	26.8		100	100
1992	34.5	19.2	128.7	71.7
1993	35.6	12.1	132.8	45.1
1994	42.1	6.4	157	24
1995	55.8	6.4	208.2	24

Source: Ministry of Culture

Chart 2

Dynamics of spent conservation funds from the budget of the Ministry of Culture referred to 1991



When the inflation rate is accounted for, the funds for conservation from the budget of the Ministry of Culture turn out to be well below the value of the nominally spent funds. Although in absolute figures each successive year's budget exceeds that of the preceding year, in real terms (calculated with the reference to prices in the preceding year), it drops and in 1994 was almost twice lower than in the 1993 budget; in 1995 it attained the 1994 budget level. The variation in expenditures, with 1991 as a basis, reached a 208.2 % rise in 1995, while in actual prices (referred to 1991) the funds had decreased 4 times.

In 1992 the technical assistance and materials received amounted to: \$40 thousand for the conservation of the Saint Stephen Church in the town of Nesebar, and \$50 thousand for research and fortification against erosion of the Madara Horseman. For current conservation restoration works on the Royal Palace in Sofia \$14 256 were donated in 1994, and \$50 320 in 1996. Bulgarian projects applied for financial aid to the PHARE and RAPHAEL programmes. In 1994 and 1995 the European Commission granted financial aid to support the conservation restoration works on the Royal Palace in Sofia and the archaeological monument - the Church of John the Baptist in the town of Kurdzhali. In 1996 the World Monuments Fund (USA) donated \$20 000 for the Rock-cut Churches in the village of Ivanovo, which, together with the Madara Horseman, are included in the list of the most endangered World Cultural Heritage monuments.

- *The personnel in the field of conservation* is trained at two levels: education received mainly at universities and post-graduation training in national and international centres and schools (participation in seminars and scientific

conferences, international workshops of ICCROM and ICOMOS, Jeunesse et Patrimoine, etc.; international teams for the preservation of archaeological monuments; participation of Bulgaria in international programmes on conservation. Architects and constructors are trained at the University of Architecture, Construction and Urban development in Sofia. In the Department of Architecture, Chair of "Theory and History of Architecture" there exists a specialization (from the 3rd to the 5th year of studies) and a diploma project on "Preservation of the Architectural Heritage". On average, 20 architects graduate with this specialization. Historians and archaeologists are trained mainly at the University of Sofia. Restorers of monuments of culture and the arts and art historians are trained at the N. Pavlovich Higher Institute of Arts. Other specialists - chemists, physicists, microbiologists, climatologists are trained at the corresponding schools of higher education.

Participation in the international system of preservation.

Bulgaria is an old and active member of a number of international governmental organizations, specialized in the problems of the cultural heritage: UNESCO, ICCROM, the World Heritage Committee, and the Committee of Cultural Heritage with the Council of Europe (since 1992). Bulgaria has ratified all international conventions concerning the problems of immovable monuments of culture. The Bulgarian professionals are among the founders of ICOMOS. The city of Plovdiv is the headquarters of ICOMOS International Committee of Folk Architecture. A distinction for Bulgaria's position and role in the international system of preservation is that the *11th General Assembly of ICOMOS and the International Symposium on "The Heritage and Social Changes"* were held in Bulgaria.

The analysis of the present situation regarding activities for the preservation of the immovable cultural heritage can be used to recapitulate the assets and liabilities in the present critical state of the existing system of preservation.

A clear summing up of the potential still available in the field of conservation is needed most of all, namely the cultural, institutional, intellectual, technical and legislative potential. The assets of Bulgaria are : a cultural heritage that is exclusively important, declared conservation objects; qualified specialists with remarkable conservation experience; huge past professional activity in the conservation of thousands of monuments, historical zones and reserves; an institutionalized system that is still preserved although not sufficiently adequate; valuable legislative traditions; long-lasting membership of the international system of preservation. The 11th General Assembly of ICOMOS has confirmed in principle the quality of this potential and the results of its realization in a special resolution.

At the same time, the system of preservation experiences acute problems related to the situation of deep crisis in this country. These problems may be summed up in the following manner:

- *The legislation is inadequate under the social and economic conditions that are constantly changing.* Since the current legislative reform is global and radical, its rates are inevitably not fast enough. Moreover, the problems of the heritage are not among the legislative social and economic priorities - by tradition it is assumed that the heritage does not have the required economic potential in order to attract enough attention in a predominantly economic reform.

- *The desired transition from centralized socialist economy to a market-oriented society weakens the role of the state in conservation.* The leading role of

the state that has existed thus far in the field of conservation has been substantially eroded. The opportunities of the state to fund and govern become more and more restricted. Nevertheless, the process of concentration and centralization of conservation functions predominantly in the state agencies continues. Such a discrepancy, which continues to grow deeper, is a risk to the cultural heritage.

- *The increased role of the local authorities does not correspond to the existing concentrated and centralized system for managing the heritage, which does not stimulate regional and local initiatives for using the public and economic potential of the cultural heritage. On this basis, the functions of the local authorities deteriorate - in some places local authorities are completely deprived of competence and powers.*

- *The objects listed for conservation are already out of date. Whole categories of new objects of value, considered of importance during the last decades (industrial heritage, cultural landscapes, urbanistic riches, etc.), are incomplete.*

- *The expanding market of conservation contractors remains to a certain extent uncontrolled and unregulated, which creates conditions for lack of professionalism and corruption and endangers cultural monuments.*

- *The incentives for the owners and users of the monuments of culture are not sufficient. This lack of incentives alienates them from the conservation system and directs them to search for illegitimate roads in order to realize their intentions.*

- *New bodies are lacking in the system of conservation. The old "actors" still continue to participate with traditionally regulated functions. World experience has shown, however, that new participants acquire increasing importance in the system; among them the various non-profit making organizations play a particular role.*

- *Inconsistency and conflicts exist among the two goals: "preservation" and "development" of the historical environment. With rare exceptions the new urban plans of historical settlements do not take into account their full cultural and historical resources. The discrepancy between the developing urban zones and the deserted historical cores ruptures the homogenous town texture and dooms its values to degradation.*

- *The social and economic potential of the architectural heritage is not used efficiently enough. This is related to the public and professional underestimation of the possibilities of heritage to act as an incentive for social and economic growth; to create a new quality of architectural environment that makes it profitable.*

The problems listed above create risks for irreversible damage to the Bulgarian heritage as part of the European cultural heritage. Concern for such damage was expressed in a special resolution of the 11th General Assembly of ICOMOS in Sofia, where an appeal was launched for international support for the Bulgarian cultural heritage.

5.1.4. Trends of development

Today there is an ever growing awareness that the mentioned risk of transition requires a flexible, multi-disciplinary, dynamic and open conservation strategy, applying suitable instruments and mechanisms of different types. Some

elements of the desired strategy, which is the basis of the forthcoming reform in this field, will be listed below.

- *Perfecting the basis of the preservation rules and regulations* . Today all three regulatory sectors, which were discussed above, are undergoing radical changes, thus providing real chances to shape the desired unified legal framework. The problems of the general structure of the legal framework, however, become extremely acute. The framework includes the listed sectors: preservation of the cultural heritage, territorial structure and urbanism and preservation of the natural environment; optimal ties among them, ensuring the unity of the legal framework for the desired integral preservation of the heritage; support for the idea of cultural identity at all levels of the legislative system. A priority role in the legal framework will be assigned to the *Law on the Cultural Heritage*, which at the moment is being drafted up on the basis of the best European and Bulgarian legislative traditions in the field.

Widening the definition of objects worthy of conservation.

It will be done in several directions:

- Raising the level of the conservation object to the value of the historical town, cultural landscapes and routes, historical territories, etc.;
- Widening the thematic range of the conservation object to comprise new values such as: the industrial heritage, the non-material (intangible) heritage, etc.;
- Widening the temporal range of the conservation object in a direction towards the works of contemporary architecture, created during the last 50 years.

Preservation activities

Adequate regulation of preservation activities in the following important directions

- *Decentralization of the state agencies for preservation*, by forming centralized state units, which should function at a regional level⁷³ in coordination also with the national network of cultural values. So far a similar decentralization has been planned for: *the National Centre for Immovable Monuments of Cultures*, the Ministry of Culture and *the National Institute for the Monuments of Culture*, the newly founded investment structure "*Kulturinvest*" (with investment functions for monuments of world and national importance) and the state executive conservation bodies: the "*Restavratsia*" company, and the *Centre for Conservation and Restoration of Art Values*.

- *Decentralization of conservation functions*, delegated by the state to the municipal level: participation in the preparation of State assignments, local supervision over immovable monuments, investments in monuments of local importance, etc.

- *Formation of new sources of funding for conservation activities*. For example, a National Fund "Heritage" is in the process of being founded at the Ministry of Culture. This Fund shall use the tax exemptions regulated by the Profit Tax Law and the subsequent changes in the Law on the Monuments of Culture and Museums. It is expected that the funds collected by this Fund shall surpass the present volume of the state subsidy for conservation activities.

- *Introducing financial and other incentives* for preservation activities on the monuments of culture (subsidies by the state, by the municipalities, etc., loans, tax relief, etc.) in an acceptable balance with the required restrictions.

- *Control over conservation contractors* connected with the introduction of rules and regulations in two directions:
 - regulation of the kinds of specialized activities on the preservation of immovable monuments of culture and licensing of their contractors;
 - regulation of the manner of assigning, control over the execution and approval of specialized activities on the preservation of immovable monuments of culture.

Integration of “preservation” and “development” in the historical territories and zones, including:

- Creation of new *conservation models* on the basis of the principles of integrated conservation, coordinating the efforts of all partners in the field of the conservation and development of the environment;
- Creation of new *urbanistic models*, stimulating the stable development of the environment. European experience has shown that for the preservation of the heritage to be most effective it has to be an indispensable part of the urban and regional planning at all levels. The recommendations of the Convention on the Architectural Heritage of Europe and the Charter of the Historical Cities of ICOMOS (Washington 87) are along these lines. The goal is to assert the role of urbanization plans not only as instruments of development, but also of the environment's preservation; to regulate the specific “preservation plans”, to create connections with urbanistic activity;
- Creation of new *investment methods* for the preservation and development of the environment.

Increasing the economic effectiveness of preservation in the spirit of the Final Declaration and the Resolution of the IVth European Conference of the Council of Europe (Helsinki, May 1996). This effectiveness is sought to expand cultural tourism; to stimulate labour employment in conservation; to restore city economy and welfare; to influence the historical environment at a “commercial climate” level; and to increase the profits from the monuments of culture, etc.

Inclusion of new Conservation Contractors. Article 14 item 2 of the Convention on the Preservation of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (ratified by Bulgaria in 1991) stipulates that the states are obliged to favour “the development of patronage and non-profit making associations, active in this sphere”, as well as to create “structures for information, consultation and cooperation between the state, the local authorities, the cultural institutes, the associations and the community.” Concurrently, special attention is paid to the role of the non-profit making associations in the field of heritage, as a stimulator of public consensus; as a mediator among social groups, national and international institutions and professional communities; as both partner and competitor of the State.

Effective Bulgarian participation in the World and European integration in the field of the cultural heritage. An international partnership and assistance (scientific, information, methodological, financial, educational, etc.) for Bulgaria at this moment, so critical for its heritage, would be important not only for its national culture, but also for the unique cultural identity of the Old Continent.

On the one hand, Bulgaria hopes to receive international grants for its endangered monuments. On the other hand, however, a mutually profitable partnership may be concluded with the Bulgarian specialized institutions and the highly trained professionals in international projects, missions, etc. for the

preservation of the cultural heritage, research, training of personnel, information exchange, etc.

The huge, though still insufficiently developed, potential that Bulgaria has in the field of cultural tourism may be integrated with the European system of cultural routes. A similar integration would undoubtedly enrich Europe's cultural map.

5.2. Museum and Galleries

5.2.1. Aims and Priorities of the Cultural Policy in Museum Activities

The main objectives of the state policy in museum activities are:

- to protect and preserve the movable monuments of culture as an essential element of the historical and cultural heritage;
- to found the national structures for investment and methodical supervision and coordination of the different institutions' participation in museum activities;
- to ensure judicial and physical preservations of the cultural and historical heritage;
- to create optimum conditions for expanding the museums' initiative and independence when solving their problems;
- to create equal opportunities for effective work to all the participants in the museum activities.

The preservation of the collected cultural-heritage monuments under the conditions of the present-day economic crisis is the *priority* of the cultural policy in this field (according to the National Centre for Monuments, Galleries and Fine Arts). To meet this purpose the efforts are directed as follows:

- to change the regulations basis;
- to create nationwide information systems;
- to restructure the available resources and to find new sources of income;
- to benefit from the experience of other countries;
- to create conditions for the conservation and restoration of movable monuments of culture;
- to organize research activities;
- to disseminate and propagate museum activities;
- to intensify the participation of the Bulgarian museums in international programmes and events;
- to find help for supporting and developing the material base of the Bulgarian museums and galleries and for introducing contemporary technologies.

5.2.2. Statute, Operation Structure and State of Museums and Galleries

The state cultural policy in this sector has been designed and implemented by the Ministry of culture - till 1992 by specialized units within the central management structure, and since 1992 by the National Centre for Monuments, which in 1993 was expanded into *National Centre for Museums, Galleries and Fine Arts* (NCMGFA). The Centre has been founded as a specialized budget-funded unit within the MC structure with the non-profit statute of a judicial person. The judicial independence of the Centre was lifted when MC was restructured in the summer of 1996. Its field of activities (according to the 1994 Regulations) include:

- to study, preserve and advertise movable monuments of culture;
- to define the priorities of the state cultural policy in the museum and gallery activities;
- to supervise methodically the museums' and galleries' management and the activities in Bulgaria;
- to organize tenders for distributing state funds over museum projects;
- to aid and encourage the development of modern Bulgarian fine arts;
- to organize an information system in the field of movable cultural heritage.

In 1996 work has been done to define the functions, rights and responsibilities of NCMGFA within the new MC structure.

Two consulting bodies work in association with the National Centre:

The National Committee of Experts on Museum Activities and the National Committee of Experts on Fine Arts; they provide assessments of the grant-receiving projects.

According to their newest regulations (Article 7 of the Law for the Monuments of Culture and Museums, LMCM), the museums are research, cultural and educational institutes, which conduct search, study, collect, acquire, preserve, document and advertise monuments of culture and natural samples. According to their territorial range of action and methodical functions, defined by the Council of Ministers, the museums are *national, regional and local*. According to the owner, the museums may be owned by *the state, by the municipality, by physical and judicial persons*. The state and municipal museums are state budget-funded judicial persons; the buildings are provided by the state and the municipalities; the field of activity is defined by Statutes and Regulations approved by the Minister of Culture. The National museums are founded and closed by the Council of Ministers and the museums of the municipalities and of other judicial persons - by their managing bodies, in coordination with the Ministry of Culture. The private museums, as well as the museum collections are founded, transformed and closed following a procedure set up by the Minister of Culture. The museums are managed methodically by MC, in their research activity by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), in their administrative work by the mayor of the local municipality.

The national structure of museum science was shaped in the late '70s. The main link in this structure are the District Directorates "Cultural and Historical Heritage," which coordinate all actions on studying, preserving and advertising the cultural monuments on the territory of the corresponding regions. The directorates were dissolved as a result of the administrative reform started in 1988 and still running.

The principles of organization and management in museum activities, are so far very difficult to put into practice. They include:

- independence;
- funding of tender projects;
- diversification of the sources of funding;
- equal rights and the right of association when solving certain problems;
- unified regulation basis, regardless of the owner;
- methodological, methodical and administrative management by MC without infringing the independence in the work of the separate institutes.

The nationwide net of museums comprises: 13 museums and galleries which are directly governed and funded by MC, among which 3 institutes of

national importance (National Museum of History, National Gallery of Arts, National Gallery of Foreign Arts); 193 museums and galleries, funded by the municipalities. The remaining museums are associated with different institutions and organizations. Taking into account the natural preponderance of the capital, the remaining museums and galleries are distributed *territorially uniformly in the larger cities* of the country. Regardless of this distribution there quantitative differences as to the extent of development of the museums in different cities, as well as to the concentration of institutes, experts and funds. At the moment, 226 state museums and galleries exist in Bulgaria, out of which 31 are in Sofia. Their structure as to number, kind and capacity (number of exhibits, visitors and staff) is given in the Following Tables:

Table 1
Number of Museums and Galleries in Bulgaria

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number and kind						
- total	206	212	223	221	222	226
- museums	-	174	179	176	172	176
of General history	41	47	49	49	50	53
Commemorative	55	53	47	47	47	47
Specialized	72	74	83	80	75	83
- Galleries	-	38	44	45	50	43

Source: National Statistics Institute

Table 2
Exhibits and Visitors of the Museums and Galleries in Bulgaria

(in thousand of levs)

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Exhibits						
-total			4974	4924	5342	5389
-museums			4838	4801	5217	
-galleries			135	123	125	
Visitors						
- total	15712	3219	3156	3435	3775	4314
- museums		2535	2483	2680	2994	3156
- galleries		684	673	754	780	1157

Source: NCMGFA, NSI

During the last five years the development of the museums and galleries has shown:

- an increase in number (of the museums of general history and in part of the specialized museums, a certain reduction in number of the commemorative museums);
- an increase in number of exhibits;
- a five-fold decrease in number of visitors in 1991 referred to 1985 and an increase after 1992, the highest rise was in 1995;
- diversification of activities;
- reduction of material base and budget;
- removal of political factors;
- new techniques and technologies.

During the last two years, parallel to a rise in the interest in the Bulgarian museums and galleries, the interest was re-routed from the museums on general history to the specialized museums and galleries. They, on their turn, seek more actively contacts with the educational institutions, tourist companies, possible sponsors. International contact are intensified mainly by export and exchange of expositions, participation in project grants tenders, enhancing experts qualification (according to NCMGFA).

Table 3
Staff of Museums and Galleries in Bulgaria

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Staff in museums and galleries - total	3366	3156	3046	2938	2927	2901
Curators						
- total	902	949	917	892	887	886
- in galleries		123	135	116	135	122
Researchers						
- total	140	143	136	136	123	116
- in galleries		3	7	9	5	7
Guides						
- total	316	331	304	287	265	257
- in galleries		27	30	22	28	24
Restaurateurs						
- total	122	134	144	144	135	141
- in galleries		29	31	31	27	26
Other experts with higher education						
- total	109	130	146	152	212	155
- in galleries		21	32	35	34	36
Others						
- total		1469	1399	1327	1305	1346
- in galleries		223	250	239	239	256

Source: NCMGFA

Chart 1
Structure of Staff in Museums

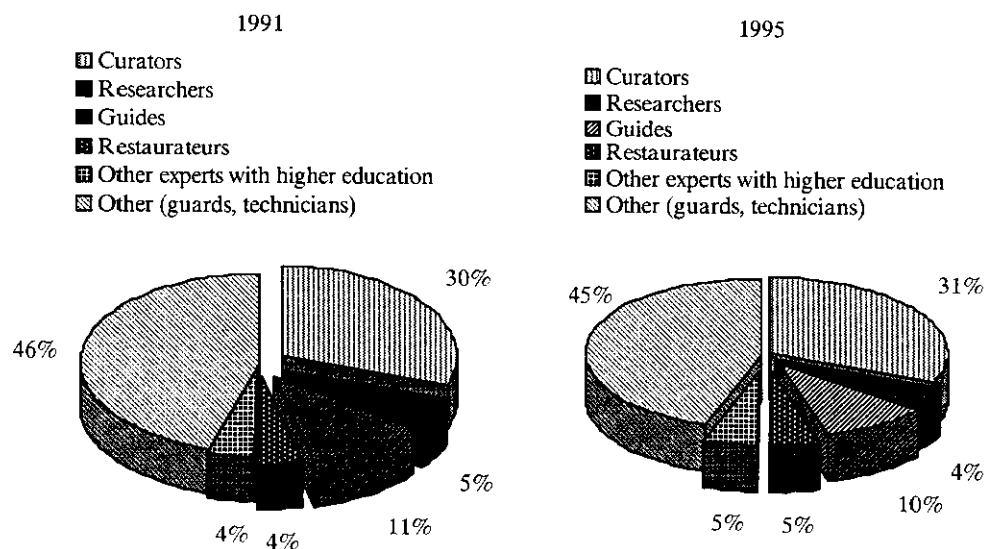
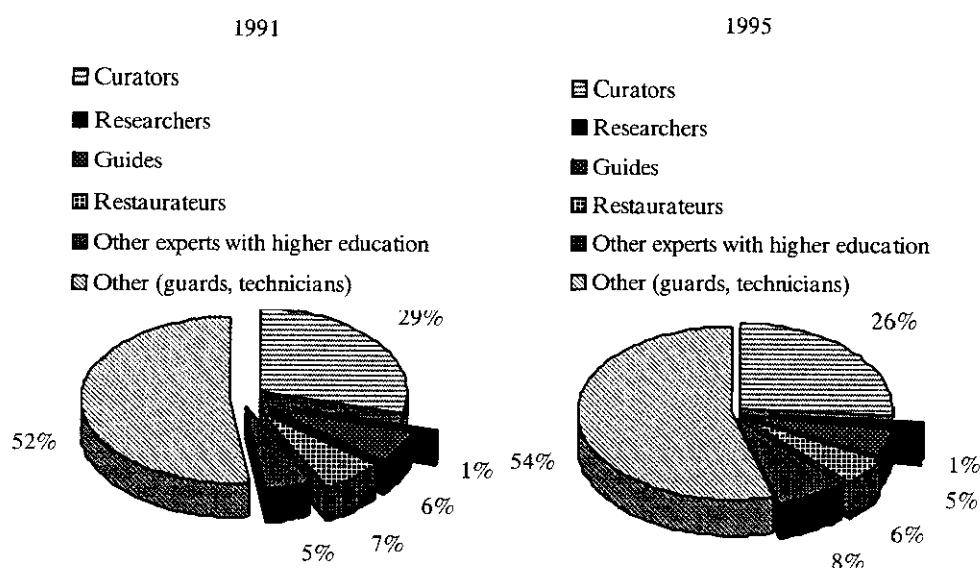


Chart 2
Structure of staff in galleries



A general reduction in number of the museum staff workers including also curators, researchers, guides is observed as a trend; the number of restaurateurs is relatively constant; there is a slight rise in the number of other experts with higher education and of the technical staff. The trend to reduce the special staff in museums and galleries will be also preserved in the future in view of the low average salary and due to difficulties in the funding and repairing the museums. It may be assumed that part of the experts with higher education will apply in the future for teacher jobs.

Outside the museums, there exist about 400 collections of museum exhibits in schools, community centres, public organizations etc., collected by connoisseurs and by donations; there is, however, no systematic information about these collections (according to NCMGFA).

5.2.3. Regulations Basis

The regulations of museum and gallery activities are based on the *Law for Monuments and Museums* passed in 1969 and on sub-legislative acts.

The special Law regulates the legislative regime of work with the movable monuments of culture and the museum activities. The amendments to the Law adopted in 1995 reflect the socio-economic changes which have taken place in Bulgaria after 1989.

Special sublegislative acts regulate: structure, activity, management and funding of NCMGFA, of the municipal museums and galleries; the projects subsidizing procedure in the field of museums, galleries and fine arts; management and supervision of the museum activities on collecting, preserving, accounting, conservation and restoration of valuables; regulations on archeological drills and excavations; regulations on mining, refining and on deals with precious metals; regulations on sale and export of cultural valuables.

5.2.4. Funding

The museums and galleries operate mainly on budget funds. Thirteen state museums and galleries, among which National Museum of History, National

Gallery of Arts, National Gallery of Foreign Arts, receive budget subsidies directly from the Ministry of Culture. The institutional state museums receive their subsidies from the Republican budget through the respective institutions. The Budget of municipal museums and galleries is formed from state and municipal subsidies within the municipality's budget; municipalities are autonomous to determine the amount of funds.

Table 4
Subsidies from Ministry of Culture for Museums and Galleries

(in thousands of levs)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
For Museums	12214	18458	25858	38702	64576
For Galleries	5348	8130	10885	16089	27070
Total	17562	26588	36743	54791	91646

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

The share of subsidies allotted by MC for museums and galleries is relatively constant both with respect to the total budget of the Ministry, and with respect to the part of the consolidated state budget, assigned to museum and gallery activities. In 1995 there was a slight increase of this share:

Table 5
Ratio of Subsidies by MC with respect to the total MC budget and with respect to the consolidated state budget for museums and galleries

MC Subsidy (in %)	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
- to the total MC budget	5,4	5,8	5,1	5,4	6,3
- to the consolidated state budget for museums and galleries	23,9	23,3	21,95	23,3	24,7

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

During the last five years both the MC subsidies and those from the consolidated state budget increase in absolute values. However, if referred to the inflation processes, they decrease substantially.

Table 6
Dynamics of state subsidies for museums and galleries

	Subsidies in current prices (in thousands of levs)	Subsidies in prices from the preceding year	Subsidies in prices from 1991	Chain rate of variation in % in prices from the preceding year	Basis rates of variation in % in prices from 1991
1991	73414	73414	73414	0	0,00
1992	113888	63482	63482	-13,53	-13,53
1993	167334	102095	56916	-10,36	-22,48
1994	235053	105927	36023	-36,70	-50,94
1995	369794	278249	42647	18,37	-41,91

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

Chart 3
Dynamics of state subsidies for museums and galleries

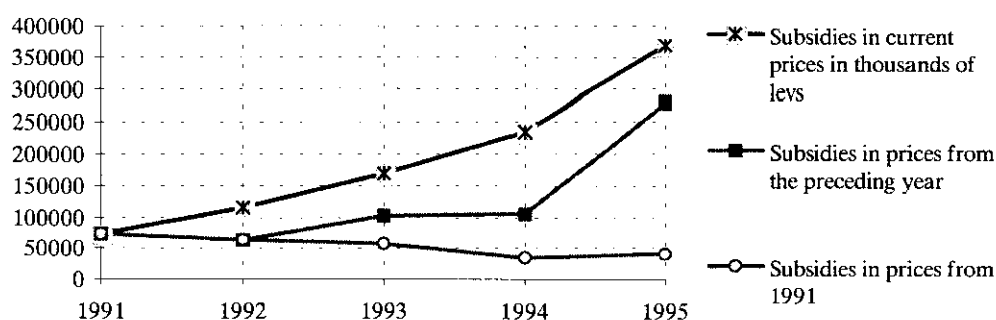
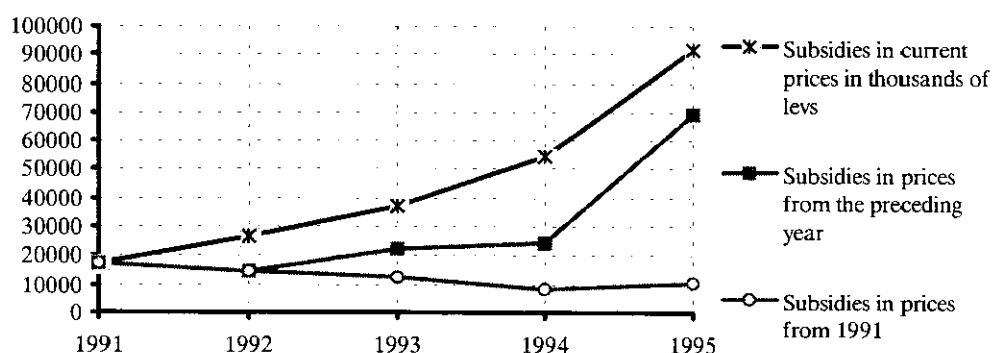


Table 7
Dynamics of the MC subsidies for Museums and Galleries
(the preceding year is taken as 100 %)

	Subsidy in current prices	Subsidy in prices from the preceding year	Chain rates of variation in % in prices from the preceding year	Subsidies in prices from 1991	Base rate of variation in % in prices from 1991
1991	17562	17562	0,0	17562	0,00
1992	26588	14820	-15,62	14812	-15,62
1993	36743	22417	-15,69	12497	-28,85
1994	54791	24691	-48,17	8397	-52,19
1995	91640	68954	25,84	10568	-39,83

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

Chart 4
Dynamics of the MC subsidy for museums and galleries
(in thousands of levs)



The Ministry of culture supports the museum and gallery activities with *additional funds* outside the budget subsidies. They are available through the Fund "Advancement of Culture" for specific activities and the "Creative Fund" for tender project grants

Table 8
Museum Funding from the "Advancement of Culture" Fund
(in thousands of levs)

	1994	1995	1996 (till Sept. 30)
Number of Museum Projects	3	5	8
Total sum	550	540	2 357

Source: NCMGFA

NCMGFA distributes the state subsidy, released through "The Creative Fund" in tender museum projects in the following programmes: new museum and gallery expositions; conservation and restoration of particularly precious exhibits; research and conceptual exhibitions in the country and abroad; purchasing particularly valuable museum and gallery exhibits; registration and scientific description of movable monuments of culture; scientific programmes and publications of museum, museum scientific and arts study nature. Both budget-funded museums and galleries and creative associations, private galleries as well as groups of persons, performing impresario actions in the sphere of fine arts can apply for state subsidies. The annual sum for projects grants is distributed as follows: 55 % for projects of museum activities and 45 % for projects of galleries and fine arts activities.

The extra sums granted by the "Creative Fund" for tender projects are given in the following Table:

Table 9
Financing by "The Creative Fund"

(in thousands of levs)

State subsidy	1993	1994	1995
For museums			
- number of projects	13	15	22
- total sum	1302	2213	1753
For galleries and associations			
- number of projects	6	4	8
- total sum	715	188	880

Source: NCMGFA

As seen, the relative share of the state subsidy for approved projects with respect to the total funds for museums and galleries is so negligible that this kind of financing has rather of the nature of an experiment.

All institutes have *extra-budgetary funds* from own activities, rents, donations, sponsors. As budget-funded judicial persons, the museums and the galleries can manage themselves their budget and extra-budgetary funds.

The structure of income and expenses of museums and galleries is shown in the next Tables.

Table 10
Income of Museums and Galleries

(in thousands of levs)

Kind of income	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
From the consolidate budget galleries included	73414	113888	167334	235053	369794
From tickets, etc. including galleries	5364	4513	10825	18690	69331
From own activities including galleries	95	1350	2055	6580	12245
Total including galleries	78874	129813	197321	279566	45131
		21922	28761	43738	

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

Table 11
Expenses of Museums and Galleries

(in thousands of levs)					
Kind of expenditure	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
For exhibits including galleries		5124 2236	5547 1327	4977 1352	7447
For conservation (restoration) including galleries		9276 95	8397 101	10406 325	6714
Total Including galleries	74084	123993 21407	182021 27761	264653 40392	417085

Source: Division "Finance and economy", Ministry of Culture

The remaining expenses are for salaries, insurance and repair.

As to the kind of income, the largest absolute and relative share comes from budget funds. After 1991, however, income from visitors and especially from own activities has risen, the extra-budgetary funds being larger for museums of general history than those for galleries. During the last years, in separate municipal museums a large part of activities is carried out due to commercial companies which sponsor such activities. Attempts have been made to attract foreign investment both by bilateral cooperation and by providing funds projects within European programmes.

As to the kind of expenditures, the largest absolute and relative share have the funds for salaries, insurance and repair, whereas the funds for museum activities, for purchasing exhibits, conservation and restoration are minimal and there is evidence that such funds are in fact a deficit.

5.2.5. Galleries and Fine Arts

From the beginning of the century till 1944, the development of the fine arts in Bulgaria follows the processes which are typical for countries, striving to catch up the main trends of development in the European Arts Culture. The aesthetic and artistic platforms have been gradually diversified and widened, new trends and styles have emerged that are connected with impressionism, cubism and expressionism. The efforts to preserve the traditions in Bulgarian arts, connected with the national renaissance and the Medieval arts heritage are not less important. In practice, all great artists stayed for long periods of time in the large centres of European arts, such as Munich, Berlin, Rome and Paris.

Private galleries exist in Bulgaria in the period of 1911 till 1945. At that time, the main subjects in the market relations are formed in the field of fine arts. Among them an important place is taken up by the state structures. This is the time when the first private collections are formed.

After 1945 a sharp change occurs in the entire restructuring of the artistic life. Up to 1989 continuous extensive development in the field of artistic manifestations is observed - the number and size of the exhibitions constantly increases, the number of authors, participating in the exhibitions also increases, the artworks increase in quantity, as well as the number of sales. This is the time when the full spectrum of gender and species range of the fine arts is created - from industrial design and vogue to fine classical forms (painting, graphics, sculpture) and the monumental forms. The nationwide net of galleries is created in the country and became denser. The area of exhibition increased tens of times. In the period of 45 years, in practice, in all of the former district capitals, art galleries

have been operating. These galleries have been supported financially mainly by the municipalities. The state-owned and new galleries developed mainly as museums of fine arts. Even now, regardless of the reforms, they keep their functions unchanged.

Parallel to this development, the private initiative in this region, and the private galleries ceased to exist. The State transferred part of its monopoly functions to a mediator - of the creative unions; this has been done by setting up a system, in which all activities, connected with the creation, propagation and perception, realization and preservation of artworks, have been placed under "one roof" and have been managed by one centre. In practice an artist is restricted in his initiative - the creative union has to sanction his actions. In fact, the state and the creative unions, founded and supported by the state, divided the space taken up by mediator institutions; they deprived simultaneously from power and economic opportunities all the remaining subjects, other than the state and the unions. Thus, the state and the creative union merged together: the interests of the state became interests of the unions and the union's freedom is the freedom to defend these interests. Quite naturally, under such conditions, the private initiative in trading works of art is not only impossible, but it is put in a category of being termed as improper for the socialist system.

In this peculiar circle, the only possible solution is to sale the works of art to the state. During the socialist regime, a market for artworks is inadmissible not only from the point of view of the ideology, but also because the necessity of such a market is lacking - the state takes care of all. In this situation the principal occupation of the existing galleries is to purchase works of art from contemporary painters.

The build up of collections of contemporary works of art has been carried out by compliance with the principles of ideological orthodoxy. However, irrespective of this development, the foundation of municipal and state galleries, with the purpose of collecting works of arts by contemporary authors is not meaningless. On the one hand, this is the only possibility for art to function, on the other hand - massive sales of works of art allow collections to be formed in which important works can be sorted out. The sum allocated to such a kind of activities under the socialist regime are rather large. Up to 1989 there are 45 state and municipal galleries. Tens of private collections have also been formed (mainly by people, pertaining to the high ranking party nomenclature), having acquired the importance of an informal, but a considerable factor in the development of the fine arts.

After the change In the socio-political situation in 1989, serious changes occurred in the whole artistic life: on the one side, the possibilities of the state to buy artworks decreased (in this respect the creative unions also lose their economic levers and power); on the other side, new subjects of artistic life appear - private galleries. These galleries have been gradually restored during the socialist regime, setting aside a new space in the cultural life; they changed essentially the dimensions of the market of artworks. The first private gallery was opened in 1989 in Varna and the first private gallery in the capital "Crida art" exists since June 1990. At the moment there are about 60 galleries in the country, half of them in Sofia. The main source of funding is the share from the value of the sold pictures, but many galleries rely also on income from additional activities. The financial problems arise from the constantly narrowing market of artworks and from the crisis in the purchasing power, in general. At the moment, sales in galleries also

experience difficulties in the developed countries. In Bulgaria, however the difficulties are greater due to the sharp impoverishment and to a restricted market for artworks.

Well-defined carriers/subjects of the market relations are still lacking in the country. If this is not valid in full power for the galleries, for the possible private and public buyers it is of particular importance. There are not enough important legislative and financial preferences for them; such preferences could increase the interest in purchasing and collecting works of art. Investing capitals in works of art cannot be still defined as perspective activity. In this respect, the negative effects from the collapse of the existing system begin to appear just now.

The profanation of the buyer's taste is the main negative factor. Mostly works of arts having a mediocre, "one-day" value of a souvenir are offered on the market. Part of the galleries have tried to oppose these trends by uniting around their common goals: to educate and stimulate the interest in the fine arts, to form collections and to create a normal market for works of art. The Association of the private galleries has been formed. With the support of the Union of the Bulgarian Painters and the Association, one of these galleries (the Makta Gallery) started to publish the magazine "Galleries." It is the only monthly magazine, publishing the programmes of galleries and museums, and information about the antiques shops in the country, accompanied with maps of the locations of all more important galleries, museums and antiques shops in different cities.

It is too early to speak about narrowly specialized galleries. Most of the private galleries still do not have their own conceptions and aesthetic programmes. With the exception of 5-6 galleries, most of them located in Sofia, the galleries do not support new forms and exhibitions in the field of fine arts in Bulgaria.

The relations between the galleries, the Union of Bulgarian Painters and the Fund for Aiding the Arts so far are in an embrional form: results of common activity are almost lacking. So far in practice the private galleries do not reckon on any help from state institutions. The gallery staff is of the opinion that the opposite trend is present - the state administration in the field of arts hinders the existence of galleries, particularly as far as the international activity is concerned. Here the lack of a strategy on behalf of the institutions should be once again emphasized - a strategy that is sufficiently clear and connected with the artistic practice.

In the period up to 1989 the main line of behaviour envisaged not just the representative participation of Bulgarian authors in the most prestigious international fairs and exhibitions; there was a trend to organize such events within the framework of the socialist community. Thus, international contacts were realized mainly within the framework of the socialist system; stepping over "the wall" to the other side was done rarely and possibly in a most representative form. As a result, the contacts with the global arts - exhibitions and exchange visits - were rather weak, which brought about gradual distancing from development of European and global arts. Conversely, the stimulation of ties within the socialist system gradually created a system of criteria and assessment which supported official and ideological representations. Trends and lines of development, which were close to the style of the European and global arts did not enjoy the respect of a real work of arts. Just in the last two years of this period, Bulgarian art had sufficiently important presentation on such prestigious forums such as the Bienale in San Paulo and Johannesburg. The attendance at the Venice Bienale so far remains in the field of private initiative coming from abroad.

The association of the Private Galleries considers that the market of works of arts and the net of galleries may receive a considerable positive impulse if the state undertakes several important cultural political activities:

- to lower the tax on total income and the tax on profits from activities connected with the creation of works of art;
- to create possibilities for lending to painters long term credits under reduced interest rates;
- to liberalize the export of modern art;
- to reduce the tax and tariffs on materials, connected with artistic work (paints, canvas, frames etc.);
- to reduce the consumatives tariffs which are now at the level valid for industrial enterprises;

To a large extent these requirements are similar to those coming up from other creative associations, unions and associations, acting in the remaining sphere of the cultural life.

5.2.6. Problems and Trends of Development

Problems of Decentralization

There exists a contradiction between the judicial independence of the municipal museums, regulated by their statute, and the factual restriction of this independence, due to other laws and sub-legislative acts in the sphere of the local self-government and municipal property, as well as due to the unwillingness of the municipal administration to grant this independence.

There is a contradiction between the state owing on the large part of museum funds and the museum management by the municipalities; according to the law the municipalities are autonomous in distributing the budget for the museums, located on their territory. A step towards solving this contradiction are the new *laws on the state and municipal property* (May 1996). The harmony in the relations between the central municipal authorities and the museum institute is possible by more detailed regulation of the power of management; the function of the Ministry of Culture is reduced to legislative initiative, methodical norms and supervision. The independent initiative of the museums is guaranteed in the interest of local diversity and needs of the cultural development.

Coordination of the net of museums is predominantly vertical and hierarchical. The interaction and the information exchange are insufficient: between the museum institutes themselves; with other institutes from the educational, artistic and tourist sectors; with institutes from abroad. These problems can be solved not by the creation of mediating regional administrative links but by: optimizing the functions of the present administration; upgrading the activity of the national net of museums; transferring regional functions to some museums; freeing the initiative of the museums for any kind of associations and interactions with the purpose of enriching the activity; unified system for information.

The information service of the museum activities should create a nationwide automated information system for the museum and gallery funds and a "horizontal" information database for the artistic life, private galleries, antique shops and private collections. Such a system is envisaged in the NCMGFA Statute. The creation of a unified computer database of the movable monuments of art at the

Centre for Museums and Galleries is a problem of financial nature and rational organization.

Financial and Material Technical Problems

The main problems in financing are the budget deficit in absolute values and the obsolete principle of budget funding, by which funds are provided on the basis of the staff, not the activities. There exists a sharp disproportion between the share of funds for salaries and the share of funds for museum activities and development (including the purchase of exhibits, renovating the exhibits, preservation and conservation, repair of the building and purchasing new techniques; new construction in general is not done).

The solution of this problem may come from optimum restructuring of the available resources (distribution of state subsidy, etc., priority of the museum programmes and projects, not the staff) and finding extra-budgetary sources of income by additional (including commercial) activities, connected with the subject of activity; by developing museum marketing and advertisement; by reverse use of tax relief and taxes from the museum institutes and activities; by expanding international activities.

The buildings are not sufficient in number and not in good state. The predominant part of the museum buildings are not designed and constructed especially for the purpose of being used as museums. The adapted, old and insufficient material base is an obstacle to introducing modern methods and technologies in the museum activity. Computerization and use of modern information techniques are insufficient. Storerooms have insufficient space and there is a disproportion between exhibition area and storeroom (about 5 million exhibits dispose with 177 280 sq.m exhibition area and 43 681 sq.m. storeroom). Sources of investment may be found in collaboration with museums (including joint actions) with commercial and financial organizations and by rational use of west European Funds for aiding countries in transition.

Need of New Strategy

The museum activities need a general reshuffle in strategy. The main element of a new strategy should be the stabilization of a new national structure of the institutions, and their financing. The new orientation of the museums presupposes: developing new functions - information, management, marketing and advertisement; strengthening the research sector of the museum activities; separating the museums as polyfunctional cultural environments of the settlement with expressed local profile, upgrading to European standards and technologies in the registration, reservation and use of monuments of culture. A favourable effect on the development of the state and municipal museum institutes may be expected from the more intensive development of private museums and galleries, exhibition rooms and antique shops with modern standards and market orientation.

Changes in Funding and Staff Training

The present resources (financial, personnel, material base) for conservation and restoration works may provide for less than 1 per cent of the needs. This insufficiency may be surmounted by: sharply expanding the state subsidy of the existing conservation-restoration workshops; optimizing the activity of the existing

structures; upgrading the qualification of the Bulgarian experts and a more active cooperation with foreign experts.

Training of experts and enhancing their qualification is a complex job due to two main reasons:

- The museum staff work is viewed by the society as inadequate to its real social importance. They are the lowest paid personnel in the sphere of culture and their motivation and stimuli for work are insufficient;

- A specialized training system in museum activities is lacking; this is reflected in the deficit of narrow profile experts. In the future the following should be done: at the newly emerging high schools, qualification and departments of museum management should be set up; special seminars should be organized with competent lecturers; museum experts should be sent abroad for exchange of experience; the work of large global museums should be studied.

During the last years together with the economic difficulties, a serious problem for museum activities was the rise of crime; the blast of treasure hunting, mass production of fakes - mainly coins, icons and small plastics, organized thefts and illegal export of monuments. Due to the contacts with Interpol and the National police offices, some of the stolen works have been returned. For a large part of the disappeared objects, however, there is no information. Due to the lack of legislative regulation, the state knows nothing about the content of the private collections which are frequently filled up with stolen pieces of art.

The problems listed above shape the policy of Republic of Bulgaria - the development of the museum and gallery activities should be linked to the integration processes of Europe by introducing the general measures of the European states in the struggle with the illegal traffic of cultural valuables; by intensifying and deepening of the exchange of information; by developing direct contacts between similar administrative and specialized structures from different countries.

6. SUPPORT FOR CREATIVITY

6.1. The crisis in the artist's status

Today, both in the West and in the East, the prestige, rather than the status of the artist is going through a crisis. To that conclusion came experts at the UNESCO European Symposium devoted to the subject, held in 1992. Though this is a paneuropean crisis, the artistic status crisis is the product of different causes and has different manifestations in the West and in the post-communist world. What are the Bulgarian dimensions of this crisis? In what direction are solutions sought or could be sought?

The crisis in the status of the artist has primarily economic dimensions:

- The number of freelance artists is rapidly increasing. Of the Bulgarian Union of Artists members, 571 hold permanent jobs and over 100 freelance. There is an exceptionally high unemployment rate among filmmakers. Until 1990 roughly 70% of all plastic artists held permanent jobs at publishing houses, galleries, schools, theatres and elsewhere. In 1992 roughly 80% of artists were already freelancing because of job cuts. Because of the changed situation it is becoming harder to secure a permanent income. There is a growing number of artists who are forced to earn a living entirely or partially outside their professional creative area. In response to a survey of artistic status issues, the Chairman of the Bulgarian Actors Union summed up the problems facing his colleagues in the following way: "The young and the recent graduates are taking the brunt of hardship. The general trend in the past 5-6 years is toward a reduction in the incomes of artists, both in salaries and additional income (no film shoots, radio stations forego artistic programming; travelling theatres have almost disappeared because of high transportation costs and low ticket prices - in Bulgaria the theatregoers are the poor - intellectuals and young people."

- As a result of the economic crisis, demand for art work has drastically shrunk. Prices of works of art are increasing in absolute terms but falling in real terms. The prices of materials are rising while the price of creative labour is falling.

Cultural policy comprises a set of measures to counter the crisis in the artist's status (e.g. the passage and enforcement of an up-to-date Copyrights and Related Rights Act). Professional unions also play an active role, facilitating the resolution of some social issues of members such as the granting of free assistance, low interest rate loans, subsidising holiday homes for artists and others).

Coping with the crisis or alleviating its impact imposes certain changes in the vocational art education system. There is a natural link between the artist's status and art education:

- The number of graduates is a key factor on the artistic labour market;
- Subsidising this part of the education system represents a fraction of general art subsidies, hence the ensuing interdependence;
- The quality of training predetermines the competitive strengths of young artists and their ability to adapt to changing labour market conditions.

Bulgaria possesses an advanced vocational art education network. Despite tough competition at entry exams at art academies and specialised art

colleges, it is weaker compared to most European countries. The enrolment rate in this country varies between 12 and 36 per cent whereas the average acceptance rate in Europe is about 10-15 per cent. From the vantage point of the artist's status, the vocational art training system could contribute to balancing the crisis by developing in several directions:

- It is mandatory to develop the system qualitatively rather than quantitatively, as has happened until now. The enlargement of art education establishments would aggravate the need for additional resources to cover maintenance costs and unemployment likewise.

- It is feasible to introduce changes in the syllabus that would ensure the young artists greater flexibility in case of unemployment or part-time employment. Many analysts maintain that artists are subject to higher income risks compared to other professions. This risk is even greater in the so-called post-communist world where the cultural market is in its infancy. Under these conditions the young artist must be prepared to earn an income in his professional field, but also in activities close or remotely related to art.

6.2. Legislation and law enforcement in the area of copyrights and related rights

6.2.1. Updating regulations

Bulgaria undertook the first act of providing legal protection for intellectual property in 1921 by joining the Bern Convention.

The first copyright law was passed in 1951. Though subjected to numerous amendments, the 32 articles of the law illustrate the requirements and philosophy of a specific type of social relations, prioritising the interests of society as a whole when defining copyrights.

This law was repealed in 1993 upon the passing of the Copyrights and Related Rights Act which is a far more sophisticated prescript regulating legal relations in the area of intellectual property. *Compared to the former law, this Act extends the scope and places the widest possible spectrum of copyrights and related rights under legal protection:* the copyright over literary and art work, translations, music arrangements, architectural designs and others; rights over computer graphics and databases, rights related to copyrights relevant to the creation and distribution chain of art work (the rights of performing artists, producers of sound recording and broadcasting organisations). By and large, the law tries to accommodate European legal principles. It also takes into consideration the peculiarities of national law and established artistic practices.

With the aim of harmonising national legislation in the area of intellectual property simultaneously with the processes of integration into European structures, in April 1995, the National Assembly ratified the International Convention for the Protection of Performing Artists, Sound Recording Producers and Broadcast Organisations (1961, Convention of Rome) and the Convention for the Protection of Sound Recording Producers against the Illegal Reproduction of their Sound Recordings (1971, Geneva Convention).

6.2.2. Enforcement challenges

At the outset of changes in Bulgaria the state relinquished its monopoly over the literary market and the audio and video market. The liberalisation of trade and the existence of a certain legal void, as well as the shift in social relations away from these issues encouraged the emergence of the "intellectual piracy" phenomenon on a vast scale. The tens of publishing houses of earlier days became several hundred, instead of the sole state producer of sound recordings and sole video producer and distributor of films and shows, an entire production and distribution network sprang up in the country, the bulk of the produce being illegal. According to incomplete data there are about ten thousand videotheques in Bulgaria which serve a million and 300 thousand owners of VCRs. The introduction of cable TV for satellite TV reception provided a signal to almost two-and-a-half million viewers.

Experience in the enforcement of the Copyrights and Related Rights Act (as part of the functions of a division at the Ministry of Culture conceived specifically for the purpose) outlined some flaws in the legal mechanisms that triggered negative trends. This is primarily valid for texts in Section XIII (Art.97 and Art.98) which stipulate the misuse of intellectual property as an "administrative violation". In May 1995 the National Assembly adopted an amendment to the Penal Code (new Article 172.a.) which defines "violation" of intellectual property rights as a crime, warranting a fine of up to 200 000 Lev and up to three years imprisonment, and in case of a repeated offence - fines of up to 500 000 Lev and imprisonment of up to five years.

The Copyrights Division at the Ministry of Culture, set up in 1994, implemented a set of measures, envisaged by the Copyrights and Related Rights Act and issued several hundred fines warranties over a brief period of time to persons proven guilty of committing violations. In the meantime, the gradually emerging practices of a more regulated market and the impending lack of opportunities in illegal business, as well as the avoidance of unnecessary risk, forced many Bulgarian video and audio record companies to go legal in their business activities by means of licensing agreements with most of the world's leading companies in the respective business. Furthermore, as the legal market extends, and as there are better options, on offer, which meet the ever-growing requirements for quality, diversity, etc., there is a growing tendency to push fakes/initiations off the market.

In order to legalise these relations, the Copyrights Division of the Ministry of Culture drafted express Regulations to certify the right to reproduction and distribution of sound and video recording. This document was adopted by Decree N 87 of the Council of Ministers on April 16th, 1996. The creation of such a data base in the form of a register at the Copyright Division will provide powerful prerequisites to prevent the production and distribution of unlicensed products, it will facilitate early identification if they appear on the market and will prevent illegal export.

6.2.3. Development of the enforcement infrastructure

The creation of an adequate environment within the context of the comprehensive legislative and practical measures requires a permanently

operating training system for the legal enforcement agencies, especially at the initial stage, as is the case. Many seminars were held in Bulgaria over a brief period of time, on topics related to preventing intellectual piracy. Participants came primarily from the distribution and state institution sectors. Most of the scheduled activities centred on training the divisions of the economic police which are the major enforcement body of the legal provisions. The same pertains to a degree to court and prosecution officials where the lack of skills and experience at this stage prevents them from operating with the necessary freedom and independence.

Developing the entire infrastructure in the area necessitates the participation of a wider body of state institutions and interested parties. In this sense, the creation of a Commission for the Protection of Copyrights is pending, drawing on the resources of five ministries and other state and public structures. To this we may add the efforts of the seven Societies for Collective Management of Copyrights, founded in pursuance of the Copyrights and related Rights Act, the Video Distributors Associations, BULAKT - the League for the Protection of Video Producers (with contributions from the MPA - Movie Producers of America, BAMP (the Association of Music Producers, the regional group of IFPI - the International Association of the Sound Recording Industry) and others.

6.3. Tax support

Bulgarian tax law embodies various forms of creative support in the cultural area.

The *Excise Duty Act* (published in the State Gazette 19/1994, amendments 58, 70/1995 and 21/1996) independently treats issues related to excise duty. The Act stipulates the scope, registration terms and cases exempt from excise duty payments. Procedures for excise duty calculation have been defined, as have been accounting requirements. Rates are provided in a separate tariff table in an annex to the Act. The Act embodies the contemporary trends of a gradual increase of indirect taxation in tax revenue totals in budgets.

No excise duty is calculated on the use of goods handmade from silver by master craftsmen. This tax concession facilitates the development of crafts in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The *Value Added Tax Act* (published in the State Gazette, issue N90/1993, N 57/1995 and N 16/1996) reorganises indirect taxation formats, bringing them up-to-date with market economy requirements and international standards.

Unlike the turnover tax, the VAT is a multiphase tax and is calculated at every stage of production and distribution of goods and services. The objective of the Act is to ensure a stable flow of revenue to the state budget along with encouraging the initiative of small businesses.

In compliance with Art.7 of the Act, all deals are taxable with the exception of export deals and tax-exempt deals. Tax-exempt deals, listed comprehensively in Art.9, are deals for the sale of admission tickets to museums, libraries, art galleries, theatres and for educational services. Deals relevant to the sale of books approved by the Ministry of Culture are also exempted for a period of three years after the enforcement of the Act.

The *Income Tax Act* (published in the State Gazette 132/1950, amended extensively, latest amendment in issue Ö33/1996) regulates the calculation of the income tax of physical persons on the basis of annual tax per total income received during the taxable year on an incremental scale.

The Act embodies a set of tax shields aimed at reducing taxable income. So for example, donations benefiting training, cultural, educational establishments, cultural and educational foundations, the restoration of historical and cultural monuments are netted out of taxable income.

The total annual income is reduced by 40% for persons engaged in the liberal professions, in the creation of cultural objects and applied art objects, research and handicrafts practised by folk artisans.

Taxation of legal persons is regulated by provisions in Decree Ö56 for business activities and the Application Regulations for Decree Ö56. Profit tax is calculated on the basis of the profit and loss statement. According to Art.114 the part of profit donated by contract to Bulgarian cultural, academic and educational institutions, foundations, higher establishments of learning and support funds for the victims of natural disasters, for the reconstruction of monuments connected with the historical past of the Bulgarian people, is exempted from taxation.

The *Local Taxes and Duties Act* (published in the State Gazette, N104/1951, latest amendment in issue N 37/1996) stipulates the taxes and duties collected by the municipal authorities and the mayor's offices. The taxes due are building tax and inheritance tax. The buildings of the cultural and educational institutions are tax-exempt. Tax exemption is also valid for property inherited by cultural institutions on budget support and the reconstruction funds for historical and cultural monuments.

Despite the existence of the cited tax shields, the majority of cultural figures maintain that culture should enjoy more substantial tax concessions. It has been said that the limited resources that the state earmarks for cultural subsidies should be offset by tax preferences. The public debate on *what, how much and how* should various cultural activities and institutions be shielded from taxation is among the most heated topics in cultural quarters. Demands for tax exemption, however, clash with the growing budget deficit of the state. For this reason it is highly unlikely that some substantial changes in tax support for culture will be introduced.

6.4. Schools and Art Academies

6.4.1. Higher art education

The beginning was set in 1896 with the foundation of the State School of Drawing which was named National Academy of Arts in 1995. In 1996 it had two departments: of fine, and applied arts, with a total of 17 subjects. The State Academy of Music was founded in 1921. Presently it is called SAM "Pancho Vladiguerov" and has three departments - Instrumental, Theoretical and Composer's, and Conductor's and Vocal, with a total of 27 subjects. A two-year school of drama was founded in 1942 which developed into a State Higher School of Drama in 1948. In 1995 it became the National Academy of Drama and Film Arts "Krastyo Sarafov" with two departments and 20 specialties.

Education of architecture began in the State Polytechnic School in 1943 and now is taught in the University of Architecture Building and Geodesy. Apart from these educational establishments, there is an Academy of Musical and Dance Arts in Plovdiv, with three departments: Pedagogy of Music, of Folklore and of Choreography, as well as a post-graduate qualification and retraining. There is also a Department of Applied Arts at the St. St. Cyril and Methodius University of Veliko Turnovo. The Department of Theology at the same university has been teaching Iconography (icon-painting) since early 90s. Professional education of arts is offered also by some private higher schools set up after 1989. All state universities with departments of pedagogy teach subjects which provide training for music, applied arts and dance teachers.

Art universities were finalised structurally in the 70s. In keeping with the dominant educational precepts at the time, tutoring was based on centrally approved textbook syllabi for disciplines designated by the respective ministries. The financial resources of the art universities were determined by the amount of state subsidies. The quality of training was, as a rule, very good. It was common practice for famous artists - composers, conductors, musicians, directors, actors and painters - to be conferred academic titles, while teaching had the aura of an art. Outstanding results were achieved in musical performance i.e. the "Bulgarian singing school" associated with the name of Hristo Brumbarov. During the years of socialist rule, artists, the students and young graduates of higher art schools were limited in their choice of academic pursuit and creative endeavour in countries universally acknowledged as world centres of the arts. It was believed that the artist was obliged to receive prime recognition in Bulgaria, the USSR and the European socialist countries and only then to be given the chance to "lavish fame on the fatherland" in countries far and near. Very rarely did foreign tutors come as guest lecturers, excepting those from the USSR and the European socialist countries. Altogether, this created isolationism in certain cases and subsequent parochialism and bias, manifest in the preferential treatment of some and neglect of other young artists. This led to stagnation in some of the arts.

The period after 1990 is characterised by a broadening of the horizons due to the general environment in the country and the autonomy granted higher establishments of learning by law, adopted in January 1990. New disciplines and new educational approaches were introduced. Privately funded education became available in addition to official quotas. Today, universities are no longer limited in the number of students they can enroll outside the official quota. The higher art schools are free to choose the subjects in the curriculum, the syllabus and the number of students outside the official quota. They can also establish and use funds for external resources to supplement the state subsidy in order to build facilities, to offer fringe benefits to tutors, to finance other activities facilitating education and creativity, whereas the state exercises control over the university fees and the price of other services. Students and professors enjoy greater creative freedom such as participation in competitions and festivals, concert tours, art exhibitions, postgraduate study and work abroad. These new opportunities are combined with a drastic cut in the state subsidies compared to the years prior to 1990 and in proportion to basic needs. In view of galloping inflation rates, the funding received is reduced up to 30% in real terms.

University fees fluctuate from between 4 to 10 times the average salary for the country.

It is becoming extremely difficult for young people to assert themselves professionally and to generally find professional employment, especially for those with film industry and degrees in the plastic arts, e.g. sculpture, because of the financial difficulties experienced by the relevant institutions. Some of the new disciplines are viewed as a courtesy to political speculation and an attempt to reap financial profit.

Some of the graduates of the higher art schools are forced to seek other fields of endeavour, unrelated to their training. Nevertheless, interest in art education has not declined.

The following tables present a snapshot of the state of three higher education art schools.

Art education - three higher education art schools

Table 1.

Students composition at the Prof.Pancho Vladigerov State Music Academy

Criteria	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
No. students	1003	1003	1003	1082	1102	1002
Candidates/students ratio per annum	3/1	3/1	3/1	3/1	3/1	
State quota		932	894	937	935	815
Privately funded education		37	72	106	126	140
Foreign nationals		24	37	39	41	47
New disciplines						

Source: 'Pancho Vladigerov' SMA

Table 2.

The Personnel structure of Prof.Pancho Vladigerov State Music Academy

Number:	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Tutors	98	146	94	85	90	94
Professors	38	42	50	50	48	47
Asoc.Prof.	48	38	55	59	50	55
Asst.Prof.	49	49	39	35	32	27
Gen.staff	30	27	4	4	4	4
Administration	41	53	40	37	37	36
Symphony orchestra and chamber choir on payroll	73	86	62	56	53	54

Source: 'Pancho Vladigerov' SMA

Table 3.

Krustyu Sarafov NTFAA Personnel structure

Number:	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Tutors total	87	87	87	90	106	103
Prof.	16	24	22	24	24	24
Assoc.Prof.	24	15	25	26	29	27
Asst.Prof.	47	48	40	40	53	52
Gen.staff	103	115	58	103	88	91
Administration	48	45	42	34	21	21

Source: 'Krustyo Sarafov' NADFA

Table 4.
Students composition of the National Art Academy

Criteria	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
No.of state quota students		685	692	699	678	652
Candidates/enrolled ratio per annum	1389/130 10.68/1	678/102 6.64/1	752/110 6.83/1	897/117 7.66/1	736/99 7.43/1	769/126 6.1/1
State quota	125	102	100	105	99	115
Privately funded education			82	108	99	115
Foreign nationals	5	7	10	12	12	11
New disciplines			1			

Source: NAA

Table 5.
Personnel structure of the National Arts Academy

Number:	1993	1994	1995
Tutors	40	25	35
Prof.	45	46	37
Assoc.Prof.	39	37	51
Asst.Prof.	15	31	26
Gen.staff	31	31	31

Source: NAA

6.4.2. Secondary arts and culture schools

Since the end of the XIX century there have been schools of art wood carving and ceramics, and in 1904 a school of music was founded. The State School of Ballet was set up in 1950 (since 1956, a State School of Choreography), and in the 50s, an Art High School in Sofia.

The arts schools system took final shape in the 70s.

There are nine music schools, seven of them teach classical music. The other two music schools are folk music schools where folk instruments and folk songs are taught.

There are also nine art schools. Fine arts are taught at two of them and applied arts at the rest.

The remaining four schools comprise two national schools of culture in the league of humanitarian colleges, the State Choreography School and the Secondary School of Printing and Photography.

The status of the secondary art schools between 1947-1990 was similar to that of universities. They were financed by the budget, they were not allowed legal independence, business activities and private revenues. Staff was employed and laid off by the Ministry of Culture.

With the People's Education Act (PEA) coming into effect in 1991, schools became legal entities. The principles of their operation are regulated by the PEA and the Rules of its Application, as well as by statutory documents of the Ministry of Culture and the schools themselves. Enrollment at the secondary schools of art and culture is based on entrance examinations, without exception. Examinations in the major subject are taken at the end of

each school year and education ends with matriculation examinations: of general education and by subjects.

A proof of the high level of education are the prizes and the laureate titles awarded at national and international competitions, such as: "M. Long - J. Thibaud", "Queen Elisabeth", "Wieniawski", "Paganini", "Cozian", "Svetoslav Obretenov", "Pancho Vladigerov" and others, the "Cicero" Latin language competition in the town of Arpino, Italy, exhibitions in Katanava, Japan, in England, Poland and others.

Those who finish the course with success obtain a diploma which provides them with the opportunity for further studies and professional qualifications, and the right to exercise a profession.

A large part of the arts and culture schools alumni go for further studies to higher education institutions, and most of them (between 70 and 90% for the different schools) throw in their lot with the art academies and creative arts.

The national import of these schools explains the efforts to retain state participation in financing them and the efforts to forge a new commitment, on behalf of the users of graduates, to preserve the quality of education.

The table below elucidates the state of secondary education in the area of arts and culture.

Table 6.
Secondary arts schools

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of schools	22	22	22	22	22	22
in country		15	15	15	15	15
in city		7	7	7	7	7
Types of school						
arts		9	9	9	9	9
music		9	9	9	9	9
others		4	4	4	4	4
Personnel strength						
arts		519	519	519	519	519
music		926	926	926	926	926
others		450	450	450	450	450
No. of students						
arts				2152	1709	1774
music				1696	1241	1153
others				1626	1648	1613

Source: Ministry of Culture

Table 7.
Revenue structure of the secondary arts schools (th. Lev)

Type of revenue	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Budget subsidies						
from Ministry of Culture		47575	94670	137132	194968	299430
from others						1156
own operations						12124
Sponsorship						2218

Source: Ministry of Culture

Table 8.
Cost structure of the secondary arts schools

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Personnel		27915	53536	87847	126603	184950
Overheads		19660	41134	49285	68365	75073
Capital investment	868	8292	28123	32469	24330	39407
Others						15498
TOTAL		55867	122793	169601	219298	314928

Source: Ministry of Culture

Table 9.
School personnel structure

Number:	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Teachers	1308	1308	1308	1308	1312
Gen. staff	434	434	434	434	434
Administration	153	153	153	153	153

Source: Ministry of Culture

6.5. "The brain drain"

The migration which beset the artistic community in Bulgaria after 1989 is not an unfamiliar and unprecedented phenomenon in Bulgarian cultural history. The distant 1945 sparked the chronology of the drama of artistic identity, prompted by political events. As examples of the painful choice of a new homeland in order to preserve creative and, in all likelihood, physical freedom we could cite the emigration of world famous basso Raphael Arie in 1946, followed by prominent music critic Andrei Boukoureshtliev.

To the names of famous painters, musicians, choreographers, script-writers and actors from various artistic circles and with a different motivation to emigrate we may add the names of outstanding authors and literary critics such as Tsvetan Todorov, Yulia Krusteva, Petar Ouvaliev and Georgi Markov who subsequently won world recognition in the West. Artists and performers left Bulgaria compelled by personal reasons and predominantly by social and political ones (sense of hopelessness and doom, disappointment and pessimism, coupled with factors such as too much bureaucracy, lack of spiritual freedom, low pay rates and last but not least, condoning mediocrity and the political "utility" of formal artistic unions).

The loss suffered by Bulgarian culture from this politically motivated "brain drain" were publicised after 1989. It was then that the "intellectual comeback" of the majority of prominent Bulgarian émigrés began.

Simultaneously, a new emigration wave began, generated by the complex processes of the transition to democracy. After 1989, East-West migration experienced moral rather than quantitative changes. While preserving the relatively high rates of cultural exodus (only at the beginning of 1991 two big names in national cinema left the country - F. Trifonov and G. Staikov) emigration causes revolve around the core of pragmatic success. Weighing the

chances of professional success is starting to give precedence to "abroad at any cost".

The characteristics of the Bulgarian transition, the stalling of the structural reform of the economy, the undermining of confidence in institutions, high crime rates and public insecurity seriously affect culture. The continued devaluation of intellectual effort leads to economically motivated personal decisions to emigrate among artists and intellectuals. This shift explains the unprecedented rush to win grants for graduate and post-graduate study abroad.

The reverse trend of returning actors, musicians, script-writers and singers, witnessed by the Bulgarian public in recent years is symptomatic of two phenomena:

- the impossibility to succeed artistically abroad, especially for artists whose main tool of artistic expression is language;

- the ultimate demise of the old romantic idea of escape in the free world.

The current cultural policy relies on maintaining contacts with émigré artists. This would ensure possible reverse emigration. Moreover, these artists could play the role of a uncanny bridge for cultural interaction with foreign cultures.

6.6. Artistic Unions in Support of the Artist

6.6.1 Historical Background

Nature and purpose of artistic unions until 1944

The artistic unions started to appear at a different pace after the Liberation from the Ottoman rule (1878) as voluntary civil trade, artistic and intellectual associations. The approximate chronology of their genesis comprised a fairly large period of time between 1901 and 1934. That process was influenced by the development of the respective field of trade and the accumulation of artists and intellectuals in it, as well as by the official institutionalisation of culture by governmental and official establishments.

During the initial years after the Liberation, the State, by its institutions, took care for the legitimisation of the individual areas of culture in the society. Although traditions existed in literature, publicism, fine arts, architecture, music, i. e. in fields where those traditions were created during the Bulgarian Renaissance, the ideas of trade associations dated back in the 90s of the last century, almost no organised forms of trade and artistic unions had appeared in the country before 1900. As late as after 1900 and particularly after the Balkan War the World War I, when the trade union movement developed, the idea of citizens' establishments parallel to the State ones started to make its way in the different fields of culture.

Clearly provoked by the organisational forms of the emerging trade-unionism, this process could not only be attributed to its trade-union dimensions. It featured a specific mixing of trade-union pathos, attempts of legitimisation of professional self-confidence and criticism for the aesthetic and institutional shapes, already created by that professional self-confidence.

According to the time of its appearance and the condition of the respective art at that time, artistic associations claimed a broad spectrum of

various aims and ambitions. Some of them were established as narrowly trade-union associations with the main purpose to define and protect the specific labour relations appearing with the performance of that particular trade. The associations established before the wars focused on mutual assistance activities, while those established after the wars indicated certain radicalisation of labour claims. Others were defined as associations proclaiming a certain aesthetic platform and mainly uniting their supporters by the manner forming groups following a certain trend or style in art (such as regional association of painters preceding the establishment of the Union of Painters). Still others stated their enlightening and popularising ambitions close to the public forms of education, or were established as public initiatives for the building of a certain institute of art (e. g. societies of painters and musicians). Some of the emerging associations bore the origins of consolidation of a closed artistic elite, which oversaw the aesthetic legitimisation of the works of art in the society. A large part of the unions had their own publications which proclaimed a certain professional conscience. The diversity of aims and functions of the unions remained even after the final establishment of their organisational formation as public establishments.

As institutional bodies, artistic unions not always comprise the entire spectrum of professional or social attitudes expressed by the professionals in the trade. This explains the relative fracturing and sometimes lack of continuity in their existence. Very often parallel establishments appear within the same trade, in other cases a representative part of the professional elite expresses its reservation towards the union, or the union ceases to exist without in any way affecting the internal processes of development in the respective art, nor disturbing its operation as a public institution.

Historical data about the unions until 1944

The association *Musical Supplementary Society* was established in 1901, and in 1903 the *Bulgarian Music Union* was set up, predecessor to the *Union of Musical Workers in Bulgaria*. In 1902, the *Society of Bulgarian Publicists and Writers* was established, converted to the *Union of Bulgarian Writers* in 1913. Its honorary members were renowned Bulgarian Renaissance and post-Renaissance workers of culture. The process of establishment of artistic organisations significantly accelerated after the wars when a large-scale establishment of new, and restoration of some of the terminated association began. Thus, in 1919 the said *Union of Musical Workers* was restored under the name of *Bulgarian Musical Trade Union*, uniting its members from Sofia and the country. The same year, the union split and, after a while, ceased to exist. Restored again in 1926-27 under a new name and with certain organisational and membership changes, it existed until 1936, when it disbanded for political reasons. During the period of its existence, the union published specialised journals and newspapers. In 1919, a new trade union of the left-wing theatrical workers was established under the name of *Union of Actors, Musicians and Theatrical Employees* as a division of the communist labour trade unions. In 1921, a new association of theatrical workers was established, which expressed the attitudes of a broader circle of professionals and was the predecessor of the *Union of Actors in Bulgaria*. In 1924, the Union merged its activity with the

Union of Drama and Opera Actors in Bulgaria and changed its name. Later, it restored its independent activity and recovered its old name in 1929. The Union existed until 1945. The predecessor of the *Union of Bulgarian Painters* called the *Union of Painters' Societies* was established in 1924 as a cultural and educational organisation having united several regional and capital city societies of painters under the idea of creating a fund for the construction of an art gallery. The Union was formally established in 1931 as an official membership of its constituent regional associations. Its main task was to defend the professional and cultural interests of the artists, as well as their civil and political rights. It supervised the production through its artistic board. It organised exhibitions of artists by societies. The predecessor of the *Union of Bulgarian Composers* was established in 1933 under the name of *Modern Music*. It existed until 1944. Its main purpose was to build a national school of composers and attain public recognition for Bulgarian music. It organised concerts, including an annual review called "An Hour of Bulgarian Music" and engaged in publishing activity. With the expansion of the art of cinema and the development of national film production, the *Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers* was established in 1934 as a professional artistic organisation of filmmakers aiming at the consolidation of the professional guild in the field of cinema and the protection of interests of the working professionals. Over this period there are a lot of associations in the field of journalism and periodic press such as Union of Capital City's Journalists, Periodic Press Union and others which are the forerunners of the Bulgarian Journalists Union set up at a later stage, as well as professional associations of engineers and architects such as the Bulgarian Architects Association, the Chamber of Engineering and Architecture, the Union of Bulgarian Engineers and Architects - all of them preceding the foundation of the Architects Union. Article 83 of the Constitution adopted in 1879 and supplemented in 1893 and 1911 has long provided for the liberal legal regime which has regulated the formation of citizen associations in the country, here including professional and creative ones. Under this article "Bulgarian citizens are entitled to association with no preliminary permission, provided that the efforts and funds of such associations do not inflict harm on the state and public order, on religion and good manners." A Schools and Associations Act was passed in 1922 which required registration of associations' statute documents in court and in government bodies, and which banned the use and possession of arms by associations. The legal regulation changed did not change again until 1934 when the Professional Organisations Regulation-Act was enacted followed by the State Supervision Act of 1938 and the Professional Organisations Act of 1941. The said legal acts reflected the changes in the political situation in the country and regulated the conditions of a strict and politically motivated government supervision of professional organisations, which continued till 1945 when a Regulation-Act was passed during the time of regency, countermanding their provisions.

Organisation and status of professional and artistic unions after 1944

After 1944, the organisational structure and membership of the artistic unions entirely changed. The trade-union movement in the country was

swallowed by the trade-union organisation of the communist party *General Workers' Trade Union* whose later successor were the totally state-controlled *Bulgarian Trade Unions*. The *General Workers' Trade Union* (GWTU) organised its societies at the enterprises and imposed an unconditional unified organisational framework of trade-union associations comprising in its field of vision all employees. The first artistic unions established by the communist pattern replicated the same organisational structure. They were established at the institutions and consisted of professional organisations divided into sections by profession and headed by a trade-union committee. By the beginning of the 50s they already had their supreme management bodies - a Central Management with departments and sectors, which co-ordinated their activity with the respective cultural department in GWTU, with the communist party or the section of the respective art in the Government body of culture (the so-called Chamber of People's Culture). The unions retained their autonomy, though at the initial years some of them, such as the established under their new names *Union of Actors* and *Union of Musical Workers* defined themselves as divisions of GWTU and received information, direction and instructions from the communist party and the Government, as well as from the departments of GWTU.

The reformed unions immediately declared their new policy in the spirit of the class intolerance and revolutionary reform. They unambiguously formulated their task to conduct the party line in the development of the respective field of culture.

The unions shaped up as pseudo-citizens' formations through which the party imposed its control in the field of culture and arts. Their status included, in addition to the performance of artistic tasks, which were always reformulated from the standpoint of the ruling party dogma and overloaded with party rhetoric, "the completion of the tasks of trade-union organisations". Among their tasks are the evaluation of the state of the respective art, outlining the trends of its development and care for the artistic realisation and qualification of cadres.

By the beginning of the 70th the Unions became mighty economically powerful institutes. They widely maintained a style of propaganda and representation in artistic processes. All of them had several periodic publications, some possessed own publishing houses. They organised national and international forums and reviews in their respective fields, gave annual awards. The governing bodies of the Unions were carefully selected by party criteria and co-ordinated with the respective departments of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, to become part of the party and state elite. During that period, the Unions emerged as one of the main "intellectual" instruments of party control of the arts. Membership in the Unions was a form of professional legitimisation. It not only guaranteed certain material acquisitions, but also a security of professional realisation. Being outside the respective Union, a man of art in Bulgaria had no chance of publications, participation in exhibitions, etc. At the same time, the adoption and membership in the artistic unions was ideologically controlled. For the entire totalitarian period, the artistic unions operated in a complicated and paradoxical way, as both closed artistic elite and instruments of political power trying to encompass the whole artistic process in their institutional forms.

Funding of artistic unions

Until the beginning of the 70s the financial condition of the *Union of Bulgarian Writers, Union of Bulgarian Painters and Union of Composers, Music Workers and Concerting Artists* was subject to the *Act of Establishment of a Fund of Artistic Support of Art Workers* passed in 1950. With the organisational identification of the remaining unions in the 60s, in the same manner and with the same structure were established the *Fund of Artistic Support of Theatrical and Circus Workers in Bulgaria* (1965) to the Union of Actors in Bulgaria and the *Fund of Artistic Support of Cinema Art Workers* (1961) to the Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers. The new *Artistic Funds Act* was passed in 1971, which overrode the laws then in force. The new law equalised the different artistic funds established by the regulations to the different artistic funds. In addition, its purpose was to update some of the qualitatively determined deductions and to specify new sources of deduction: fees from sales of gramophone records, from receipts of cinema box offices, from filming studios, from tickets sold at the drama and puppet theatres, etc.

The mechanism of funding of the unions was as follows. An Artistic Fund was established to each union. The purpose of the fund was the financial support of the Unions' activity according to the aims defined in their bylaws. The fund was financially independent and money could be only spent on its specified purpose. Members of the fund were all members and member candidates of the respective unions. The fund had its own governing bodies appointed by the union management. The fund supported itself and acquired its funds from the following sources:

- Membership fees in a quantity determined by the management of the respective union
- Certain deductions from the authors' fees of the members of the respective unions
- Receipts from the business enterprises of the respective union, such as publishing houses, production studios of objects of art, etc.
- Certain deductions from the individual sectors of cultural industry: literature published in the country, concert, theatre and opera performance tickets sold, film show, etc.
- Receipts from own property or deposits, the fund property being exempt of taxes, fees and levies
- Receipts from copyrights bought or otherwise acquired
- Receipts from donations, inheritance or state subsidy.

The virtue of that act was to give legal capacity of the Unions to exercise their own business and to maintain themselves. Some of the unions are claiming that they have not been granted any State subsidies. However, the compulsory fees deducted from the individual sectors of the cultural market are a converted form of State subsidising. By unofficial data the approximate ratio between fees acquired from deductions and income from own business was 3 to 1 for certain unions. The economic activity of the unions was performed under the conditions of an economy where there was no real market and no real commercial and business subjects. In many cases the unions had monopoly rights given by the regulations, so they were again favoured by the State through other channels and in other forms.

6.6.2. The state of artistic unions after 1989

Regulation basis

Unions are legal entities defined as non-profit associations. Each Union still has its own Artistic Fund. The legal status of the Unions has been provided by the said, still in force, *Artistic Funds Act (1973)* and by the *Supplement to the Artistic Funds Act (1979)*, as well as by the *Union Bylaws and Artistic Fund Bylaws*, as well as by the general legislation of the country related to the commercial activity. Because of the fundamentally changed political, economic and legal situation in the country, after 1989 there has been regulation contradictions in the Unions' status. A number of newly passed laws have directly ignored or simply made pointless the *Artistic Funds Act*. In order to smoothen those contradiction and make possible their economic existence under the new laws, the Unions are changing their bylaws. In their major part, the new bylaws are registered in court and are adopted by a qualified majority of the assembly of the Union members. The bylaws of the Artistic Funds are adopted in the same manner, but are also additionally approved by the Ministry of Finance.

Structure

The Unions incorporate societies established at institutions, individual members and free artistic professional associations having wished to enter the structure of the Union. No one of the independent formations - regional societies or artistic associations, is given an independent legal status within the Union. The unions settle by mutual agreements their relations with the professional associations established outside them.

Governing Bodies

The governing body of a Union is the General Assembly consisting of the members of the Union. The General Assembly elects an Executive Board of the Union. There are differences at the different unions concerning whether the Executive Board or the General Assembly shall elect the President of the Union, as well as by whose proposal (of either the President or the General Assembly) the remaining bodies shall be elected. A key role among those bodies has the Executive Board of the Artistic Fund. At unions with a well established business activity (such as the Union of Bulgarian Painters) the trend has been that the power is concentrated in the person of the President.

The Executive Board has the following functions:

- Approving the artistic programme of the Union
- Making the budget and distributing funds
- Keeping the funds and property of the Union and managing the production and organisational structure of the Fund
- Offering ideas of legislative solutions of problems in the field of the respective art
- Discussing and approving for implementation the artistic projects of its members
- Establishing and giving awarding prizes
- Making decisions on the social policy of the Union

Purpose

The Unions have made their purpose to *care for the development of the respective art and aid the artistic activity of their members* through social policy and material and information assistance for the implementation of artistic projects.

Activity

The Unions accomplish their purpose by:

- Legitimizing the professional commitment to the branch and protecting the artistic, author, social and professional rights and interests of their members before the State, society and private persons
- Ensuring the recognition of the labour rights of the professionals in the branch
- Representing the interests of culture and the employees of the cultural domain on the national level by promoting ideas of legislative solutions of problems (such as quotas of Bulgarian participation, pension, social and health insurance laws, taxation preference laws and state budget laws)
- Providing an institutional outlet of the branch to the international space by relations with international organisations and access to information
- Intermediating to financial institutions by disbursing funds for the completion of projects ensuring their professional quality, i. e. continuing in a changed form to provide their function of the supervision of the quality of artistic production
- Socially aiding their members through a social policy of low-interest loans, offering the recreational facilities of the Union for using at lower prices, granting aids, supplements to the pensions or providing personal pensions to prominent or socially impeded professionals
- Conducting reviews and national forums displaying the quality of the respective art and providing for the artistic succession between generations.

Property and Funding

The Unions possess property consisting of ownership and other titles on real property and movable property, bank accounts, security, takings and funds. The activity of the Unions have been defined as artistic and economic activity. Since 1989, in order to harmonise the economic activities of the Artistic Funds with the new legislation, they have been transformed to commercial companies. With their operation under the new legislative conditions, certain unions (such as the Union of Bulgarian Painters) have complained about the lack of rules for the relations of the Artistic Fund with the economic enterprises owned by it. Elsewhere, where powerful enterprises of the sector of the Union are not owned by the Fund, as it is the case with the Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers and film studios, voices have been heard for control over the management of their facilities and funds.

The funding of the Unions has been extremely difficult because of the failure to enforce the Artistic Funds Act under the new conditions. Even its part

concerning the payments received by deductions from Union members cannot be enforced. It is now very difficult to track the income of the artists. A number of unions have complained about concealed incomes. More serious is however the problem about the other part of the unpaid contributions, which were once received from the individual sectors of the cultural market. In many areas the market is dominated by private companies, which have no obligations to the Unions. Even the state-owned enterprises of the respective sector are not obliged pursuant to the new laws to make the respective contributions. One should also add the fact that the new legislation treats the Unions themselves as taxpayers, levying not only the profits from their economic activity, but also the receipts from property and rents.

Status of an Artistic Fund

Unlike the unions, according to the legislation in force the fund is not a legal entity. The law has prescribed the Nature of the fund as a specialised monetary artistic and economic fund. The bank account of the fund is defined as a target purpose account. It cannot be spent in any way other than as prescribed by the bylaws and purpose of the Union. According to the new bylaws, by decision of the governing bodies of the Union, the fund resources may be used to establish or participate in commercial companies, limited liability companies or shareholder companies which have the respective subject of activity and conform to the existing law base.

Mechanisms of collection and distribution of fund resources

The collectable fund resources are procured by the way described above. To summarise again, these are: receipts from own economic activities (including receipts of publishing, rents and recreation facilities), interest and other financial transactions, donations and inheritances, subsidies by the Ministry of Culture. The funds are used for new investments, maintenance and repairs of buildings, social benefits, advertising, publications, awards, etc.

Conclusion

All Unions have complained (some more, others less) for their poor financial conditions after 1989. They do not agree with the taxes levied on their property, and undertake certain legislative steps to improve their property and financial condition. In the beginning of 1996 they made an attempt to recover their previous right their property and income to be tax exempt. It is obvious that the reasons for their difficulties are complex. It is however obvious too, that after having escaped from a ghastly system, the Unions have to break with the imaginary forms of self-support and, for the first time, to enter the real economy as independent and venturing economic subjects. Adding the economic paralysis of the country and the devastating inflation rate, the fact of unions' transformation in a new type of organisation relates to the sharp crisis in their identity, both in terms of their position in cultural processes and of their financial stability and autonomy.

*** Reference of the state of the unions: problems, views, prospects**

Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers (UBF)

- Nature, purpose and tasks

UBF is an independent artistic and professional organisation uniting the filmmakers with contribution to the development of the film art in Bulgaria. It protects the interests and free development of Bulgarian cinema, being the representative of its members before organisations, associations and companies having a direct relation to filming and film distribution. UBF assists as a party at the forming of concepts and decisions concerning the problems of Bulgarian film art. The Union protects the artistic and professional interests of its members and works for their labour and legal defence and social insurance

- Governing bodies and structure

The supreme body of the Union is its General Assembly, which is convened biannually and elects the Executive Board, Supervisory Committee and Union President. The General Assembly has the capacity to determine the main trends and tasks in the development of the Union, as well as to introduce amendments or supplements to the Bylaws of the Union and the Artistic Fund. The Union has 10 sections. The professionals in the field of cinema, members of the Union amount to 1,144. Their distribution by sections can be seen from the following table:

Table 1
Artistic make-up of UBF circa 1996

Association	Regular	Male	Female	Associated
Directors	192	147	45	68
Cameramen	168	158	10	60
Script-writers	71	52	19	3
Artists	63	30	33	26
Composers	71	50	21	9
Continuity editors	81	1	80	29
Film critics	87	40	47	1
Cartoon artists	70	48	22	8
Movie actors	102	73	29	0
Legal, economic and technical staff	34	29	5	0
Total	939	628	311	204

The age breakdown of the regular members of the Union circa 1996 is as follows: below 30 - 1.6%; below 40 - 18.3%; below 50 - 31.6%, below 60 - 19.3%, over 60 - 29.06%. (see Table 6.6.2)

* information in this section is based on the corresponding Unions' Rules and on reference of the membership composition, social policy and the Unions' present management' views of the state of the Unions and their problems solution.

Table 2
Breakdown of regular members by age

	1994	1995	1996
below 30 years	11	13	15
below 40 years	136	149	172
below 50 years	251	268	297
below 60 years	167	173	182
over 60 years	286	280	273
TOTAL	851	883	939

The last two years (1994-1996) registered a 1.06% growth in new members. The percentage growth of members below 30 is 1.36 and below 40 - 1.26. Nearly 70% of Union members are in their employment age

- Activity

1. Legal protection

Instead of supporting studios and their employees, filming is oriented to funding individual film projects. Thus the full-time personnel not engaged with production turned to be idle. By unofficial data, unemployment in the sector is over 97.3%. At the very beginning of the reform UBF made an attempt to conclude a frame contract for ensured minimum of wages for the artistic and supporting personnel.

2. Social activity

UBF grants its members free social benefits, short-term and long-term loans at lower interest rates, it supplements pensions up to certain limits and provides monthly benefits to Union members above 75 years of age. A mutual savings fund has been created where members make retirement contributions and are entitled to receive child allowances and sick leave reimbursements. Union members may also use the recreation facilities of the Union.

3. Information activity

UBF publishes the *Kino* journal. It contains materials of the cinema theory and history, cinema critique and sociology of film art. UBF renewed the publishing of the UBF Bulletin, which provides information about Union meetings, the picture of Bulgarian filming and film shows, as well as about international events and news of the world of cinema.

4. Organisation of events and reviews

UBF grants annual awards by respective professional associations. For the recent 5 years, because of the reduced film production, awards were only given two times, for 1990-1993 and for 1993-1995. These awards maintain the feeling of the artist that the profession and artistic standards are still alive.

Union of Actors in Bulgaria (UAB)

- Nature, purpose and tasks

UAB is an artistic and trade-union organisation, uniting the professionals of the field of theatre and representing their interests before private and state institutions. UAB promotes the development of theatre and its confirmation as a cultural institute.

- Union structure and social employment of the professionals in the branch

In 1996 the members of UAB were 1,600. They were united in 8 professional guilds - actors', directors' theatre specialists', scenographers', puppet theatre artists', variety artists', technical and administration employees. The Union is organised by the territorial principle according to the division of former county centres, in 45 union societies. 571 of the *actors*-members of UAB are full-time employed, around 100 are free-lance. There is a certain difference in amount to approximately 25% of the average wage in the income of actors and directors. This is also the approximate difference between the income of the leading actors and their less popular colleagues. In 1996 the average wage of the theatrical artists was 6,100 leva, i. e. substantially less than the average wage for the country.

- Activity

1. Trade union protection

The Union leads a policy of branch contracts in the field of theatre, cinema and television in order that the minimum conditions of employment contracts and the threshold of the minimum wage be negotiated for Union members. At violation of rights of the artists in the branch or at violation of provisions of the employment contracts, the Union administration of UAB seeks optimum solutions for its members, including by undertaking the defence of their rights in a court of law. The Union prepares preliminary uniform contracts of actors, directors and scenographers with the respective employers, thus assisting to the legal and employment orientation of the union members. In the case of a layoff, or partial or full liquidation, UAB offers legal services and defence, as well as at problems related to violations of the Copyright and Related Rights Act.

2. Social activity

The UAB attempt to insure its part-time members in amount to 30% of the minimum wage for full insurance and 20% for only recognizing the length of service, proved unsuccessfull. The Union can only grant benefits to its members who are in difficulty or ill and disburses low-interest loans to those in dire straits. The Union provides preferential prices for the use of its recreation facilities by Union members.

3. Information activity

UAB possesses a library, print shop and is a co-publisher of the *Gestus* theatrical bulletin. Unfortunately, it has been forced to cease its publishing participation in the *Theatre Journal*.^{*} The Union maintains contacts with international theatrical organisations, provides its members with respective information and makes easy their connections there.

- Problems, recommendations and solutions

According to the acting Union management, the main problem is the lack of funds for the theatre in order to operate normally. Its recommendations are:

^{*} the specification here and below is due to the National Theatre Centre

1. The State, represented by the executive power and municipal governments shall take on the expenditure on the maintenance of the buildings of theatres

2. To create regulations, at which natural and legal persons shall have interest to assist economically to the art and the theatre.

3. To watch more strictly for the enforcement of the Copyright Act in its collection part and the funds received by it to be used for the assistance of culture.

Union of Bulgarian Writers

In 1994, The Union of Bulgarian Writers split into two wings, which formed two separate unions - *Union of Bulgarian Writers and Bulgarian Writers Association*. The reference below only concerns one of them because of refusal of the other one to provide information of itself. Meanwhile two more writers associations emerge in the country - the Union of Independent Writers and the Union of Free Writers.

- **Governing bodies and structure**

The Union of Bulgarian Writers is governed by a General Assembly convened annually, which elects the President and Executive Board. The General Assembly approves the Bylaws of the Union and the Bylaws of the Artistic Fund.

The total number of Union members is 503. The age and residence breakdown of members is as follows:

Table 3

Breakdown of members of the Union of Bulgarian Writers by residence and sex circa 1996

Members of UBW	Male	Female	Total
In the capital city	325	57	382
In the country	104	17	121

Table 4

Breakdown of members of the Union of Bulgarian Writers by sex and age circa 1996

Members of UBW	Male	Female	Total
below 40 years	20	10	30
below 50 years	84	18	102
below 60 years	122	15	137
over 60 years	203	31	234
Total number	429	74	503

- **Social activity**

By resolution of the Executive Board, all unemployed persons at the Union are paid three times 1,500 leva, which is approximately 1/? of the

average monthly wage. The pensioners comprising almost 45.6% of the Union make-up, are paid a supplement up to the minimum size of the pension, plus a minimum monthly supplement. 40 ill writers are given a minimum monthly benefit.

- **Recommendations:**

According to the acting management of the Union, the following is necessary in order to solve the problems of writers' creativity and to assist publishing of Bulgarian literature:

1. The State should differentiate the Value-Added Tax according to the type of published literature, so that priority be given to the serious and Bulgarian titles
2. To adopt a sponsorship act, which should stimulate art benefactors
3. The State should ensure preferences for publishers and distributors of Bulgarian authors
4. To help the Union of Bulgarian Writers to acquire its own print shop
5. The Ministry of Culture should introduce proposals to the Parliament for amendments to the Artistic Funds Act in order to make it effective again.

Union of Bulgarian Composers

- **Nature, purpose and tasks**

The Union of Bulgarian Composers is a non-profit association having the status of legal entity. Its main purpose is to provide general assistance for the development of the Bulgarian musical art and its promotion in the country and world-wide. In order to accomplish its purpose the union organises performances of musical works of its members, participates individually or jointly with other organisations in conducting national and international musical events, creates the basis for the printing and distribution of the works of Bulgarian composers, assists the copyright protection for its members, provides social and legal support to them, takes care for the growth of young talents.

- **Governing bodies**

The governing bodies of the Union are: General Assembly, Executive Board and Supervisory Board. The General Assembly elects the President of the Union and all other governing bodies. It has the competence to adopt the Bylaws of the Union, the plans of its activity and the annual budget. It possesses a legislative initiative, it establishes and gives awards, discusses the social problems of its members.

- **Activity**

1. **Organising concert events**

The Union of Composers organises the annual review "New Bulgarian Music", cycles of first-run performances of works by Bulgarian composers in the capital and the country, author's and jubilee concerts (86 for 1993-1996). The

Union participates in the organisation and financial promotion of performers of Bulgarian music in a number of national competitions. It takes care for the distribution of Bulgarian music by publishing compact discs and actively participating to the media in their interest to Bulgarian music.

2. Trade-union activity and public activity

The Union has prepared a Bulgarian Culture Protection Bill, *with the view to offering it to the bodies of legislative initiative*. With respect to the violation of the Bulgarian composers' copyright by the Bulgarian National Television, the Union has expressed its concern to its management a number of times. The Union collaborates successfully with the Ministry of Culture and the *National Centre of Music and Dance* and receives financial support and assistance from there. The Union has implemented 4 projects together with the NMTC for 1994-1996: 2 Bulgarian first-night performances, establishment of an information centre of Bulgarian composers' works and "New Bulgarian Music" Review.

3. International activity

The lack of funds impedes the international exchange and the implementation of many ideas. Nevertheless, concerts of Bulgarian music are performed abroad, too - lately in Salzburg, Vienna, Moscow, Athens. A number of Bulgarian composers have won international awards in the recent years.

4. Information activity

Together with the *National Music and Dance Centre* the Union has published a catalogue of the more important symphonic works by its members in order to submit it to the conductors of symphonic orchestras. By financial reasons the Union failed in its intention to publish an Informational Bulletin of the Union.

Union of Bulgarian Music and Dance Workers* (UBMDW)

- Character, objectives and tasks

The UBMDW is a trade-union and creative non-profit organisation of workers in the field of music and dance: professional performers, pedagogues, publicists, disseminators and presenters of musical and dance events. The Union is a legal person. As a trade-union organisation, the UBMDW protects its members' rights and interests in the fields of employment, social security and in assisting their creative work. As a creative organisation, the UBMDW promotes the development of Bulgarian musical culture and enhancing its role in society's intellectual life. The UBMDW achieves its objectives and tasks by:

1. Offering new bills or amendments to existing laws to bodies and institutions entitled to legislative initiative;
2. Leading negotiations and signing agreements with government institutions, employers and their organisations.
3. Organising protest movements of solidarity;

* authorship of this material belongs to the National Music and Dance Centre

4. Carrying out social and qualification activity, as well as economic activity through its creative fund, in compliance with the requirements of the Non-Profit Persons and Families Act.

- Management bodies and structures

The Union's supreme body is the Congress which is summoned once in three years. The Congress elects a management board, a chairman, vice-chairman and a general secretary, as well as the auditing commission members. During the period between two congresses the Union activity is managed by the management board. The Executive Bureau is an executive body of the management board which resolves all new issues arising from the Union current activity in the line of the congress decisions.

The presidency is a collective body of the Union, which operates between the sessions of the Congress, the Executive Bureau and the Management Board. The Auditing Commission accounts to the Congress only.

- Activity

1. Trade-union

The UBMDW is an autonomous organisation with structures all through the country. It has been a CITUB member since 1993 and has its representative in the CITUB Coordinating Council and as such it takes an active part with the negotiations with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in determining wages in the field of culture, and lecturers' fees tariffs. The UBMDW has its representatives in the MC branch councils of music and dance arts and the arts schools.

The UBMDW provides rest for its members in its recreation facilities.

The UBMDW moves proposals to the parliamentary commission of culture through the MC about solving the problems of professionals from the branch.

The UBMDW provides assistance in solving legal and employment problems of its members.

2. Creative

Together with the National Palace of Culture-Sofia, the UBMDW organises a series of concerts in four genre areas. The concerts aim at introducing bright musical talents from among young performers.

The UBMDW organises simposiums with international participation in order to acquaint Bulgarian musicians with their foreign counterparts' experience.

The UBMDW organises celebrations of eminent musicians and dancers of all genres, as well as of music and dance teams celebrating their round anniversaries.

The UBMDW is one of the active participants in the establishment of a Balkan culture network which is to activate creative workers' relations from these countries.

In relation to completion of round anniversaries, for high creative achievements and considerable contribution to the Bulgarian musical and dance culture the UBMDW awards the following prizes: Gold Lyre, Silver Lyre

and Brinze Lyre. The Union also awards prizes for active trade union activity. In 1996, together with the National Music and Dance Centre, the Union began to award 10 prizes annually for top achievements in different genres of music and dance arts.

3. Social

The UBMDW has submitted a proposal to the MC to provide personal pensions for eminent music and dance workers with low incomes.

The UBMDW allocates one-time money aids for those of its members whose living conditions are poor and incomes, low. The UBMDW helps its old members to be admitted to the House of Veteran Workers of Culture.

4. Information

The UBMDW publishes Musical Horizons Magazine. This is a specialised publication of music and dance which provides rich information of events in Bulgaria and abroad.

5. Relations with the MC

The UBMDW has successful cooperation with the NMDC at the MC. There are annual branch agreements which become effective in the regulatory documentation which is being prepared by the NMDC for the music and dance institutions. In 1995 and 1996, together with the NMDC, the Union implemented two projects: publication of music note material for brass bands and a programme of having professional musical teams adapted to the tasks of new public realities.

Union of Painters (UBP)

- Nature, purpose and tasks

The Union of Bulgarian Painters is a non-profit association established according to the principles of voluntary individual membership and free election. The purpose of the Union is to contribute to the development of Bulgarian culture by developing the arts and art critique in the country and by promoting them in the country and abroad. The Union accomplishes its activity by reviewing and supporting the implementation of the artistic appearances and projects of its members, by protecting their copyright and interests before state and local authorities and institutions, as well as international organisations, by providing information to members about significant events and forums, both national and international, and by assisting them in establishing artistic contacts.

- Governing bodies and structure

The Union is governed by a General Assembly, Executive Board, Operative Bureau and Supervisory Committee. It comprises 17 sections whose members are divided by specialities: murals and monumental art, sculpture, wood-carving, fine arts, graphic art, metal and leather, design, conservation and restoration, caricature, graphic design, interior decoration, Section 13 (young artists with alternative concepts), textile, ceramics, scenography and art critique. The total membership of the UBP currently is 2,620. The activity is

assisted by an Expert Council and two committees to the Executive Board, dealing with exhibitions and social activity.

- Activities

The years 1992-1993 were marked by a crisis in the activities of the Union and the beginning of a change. The accumulated unnatural limitations and deep distortions in the criteria for membership in the Union and exhibition participation formed the basis of the crisis, as was the total subordination of Union activities to ideology; the disrupted communication with the public; the financial constraints; the lack of a stable market for art objects. The main trends of the change having occurred in recent years were primarily in the field of exhibitions, social and informational activities of UBP.

1. Exhibition activities

There have been efforts in two directions to attract artists back to the UBP and the public into the galleries: to promote the incentive of the artists themselves to participate in exhibitions and to improve exhibition galleries. The Union organises national, collective and individual, retrospective, commemorative and specialised exhibitions. In 1993 it organised 56 exhibitions, in 1994 - 53, in 1995 - 61 exhibitions.

An important component in its artistic activity are the plain aires which were initiated 1994 and were sorely missed in the preceding years. In 1994 there were 9 plain aires and in 1995 - 8.

2. Social activity

The UBP supports its members and their families in several ways: single amount support, monthly support, interest-free loans, grants for the children of deceased artists, provision of studios for artistic work. The sum total of support and benefits paid to members by the Union amounts to: 1993 - 44,480 leva, 1994 - 225,800 leva, 1995 - 274,200 leva; and the sum total for the three years was 544,480 leva. In 1993, the Greater Sofia Municipality granted the Union 11 studios to be used by artists. The issue of personal pensions for artists is a difficult one. The latter are granted by the Council of Ministers on the proposal of UBP and with the agreement of 4 ministries: those of Culture, Finance, Social Welfare and Justice. The system is ponderous, the road is long and there have been cases of artists who did not survive the procedure. 8 personal pensions were granted in 1993, UBP has submitted a proposal for 12 pensions in 1995, with only 2 of them realised so far.

3. Informational activity

This is carried out by the Information Centre for Plastic Arts at UBP which publishes a monthly newsletter. The information covers both current events in the artistic life in the country and international exhibitions, salons, contests, etc. It also publishes addresses of significant international programmes: annual exhibitions, biennials, triennials, symposia, plain aires, studios, grants, etc. This helps to open, if not a door to walk through, at least a window offering a view of the wide world of art which for almost half a century had been out of reach for the majority of Bulgarian painters.

4. Funds

The resources for the maintenance of UBP and those available to it are provided by the *Artistic Fund*. Funds are also provided by the recently established fund called Support for Art in Bulgaria at UBP.

The Artistic Fund at UBP has the objective of promoting the overall development of artistic activity in the field of fine arts. This objective is fulfilled by:

- Providing materials and facilities for the development of the artistic process;
- Promoting the achievements in fine arts;
- Providing moral and material incentives to artists through contests, awards, bonuses;
- Supporting the work of individual artists by means of grants, postgraduate studies, artistic trips etc.

The resources of the Fund may be used to support not only artists in need but also their families and heirs; the support may be in the form of lump sums and interest-free loans for UBP members. The table below shows an overview of this type of costs of the Artistic Fund and the ratio of this cost compared to total costs in the last three years:

Table 5
Cost structure of the Artistic Fund

	1993	1994	1995
Support for artists	2400	548,400	33,500
Loans to artists (interest-free)	-	91,000	51,000
UBP subsidy	470,327	5,409,201	4,702,800
Artistic Fund total costs	6,702,080	12,576,300	12,892,126

Source: Account of the Artistic Fund of UBP

The *Support for Art in Bulgaria Fund* (SAB Fund) at UBP was created by resolution of the Executive Board of 27.01.1993 to commemorate the centennial of the establishment of the first Society for the Support of Artists in Bulgaria. It is not a legal entity and is run on a separate account. Its objective is to co-ordinate the activity and the charity, donor and artistic undertakings of the state-owned, public and private organisations, commercial companies and all other legal and natural persons that benefit Bulgarian painters. Its subject of activity is to accept, preserve and manage works of art and other receipts, obtained for payment or free of charge by UBP. The main tasks of the fund are:

- Organising collective and individual events, including promoting the donations made;
- Organising and running charity exhibitions and auctions of objects of art performed through the Artistic Fund of UBP;
- Raising funds in order to establish an award fund for grants, competitions and awards;
- Supporting artists, members of UBP of different generations;
- Maintaining continuous contacts with donors and strictly observing their will;

The following activities were carried out in 1993-1995 with the assistance of UBP:

- The SAB Fund organised 29 exhibitions in the country,
- It gave 51 awards of the total amount of 638,570 leva;
- 9 grants were given;
- The amount allocated for the support of international, national, sectional, collective and individual exhibitions, including artistic project aids, amounted to a total of 806,000 leva.

The total amount spent on awards by UBP, the SAB Fund at UBP, the Artistic Fund of UBP and the enterprises run by UBP for the three years (1993 to 1995) was 935,610 leva. Although the sum is relatively insignificant it nevertheless started the Union art promotion programme. As the economic crisis in the country has deepened, the award fund of the UBP has dwindled and in 1996 it allocated the token amount of 10,000 leva.

5. Relations with the Ministry of Culture

Contacts are effected through a special centre. The subsidy of the Centre is allocated in a proportion of 55% for museum activities and 45% for galleries and fine arts. The State policy priorities consist in the preservation of existing cultural objects of value, rather than on the art being currently created; moreover, compared to other arts (such as the cinema), fine arts has been allocated much less of the resources and attention of the State. Since 1898, the Ministry of Culture has awarded prizes to painters for the first time in 1996; there is a profound need for this type of support, particularly in view of the limited prize money available at the Union itself. On the other hand, in the recent years the Ministry of Culture has completely cancelled the practice of purchasing art objects by contemporary Bulgarian artists. This has created the impression of complete lack of concern on the part of the State. The danger of omitting an entire period in the development of fine arts in the national art collections is a real one. In 1994 the Collegium of the Ministry endorsed regulations for the purchase of objects of plastic arts and recommended the establishment of a fund for the purchase of art objects by contemporary Bulgarian artists for the total sum of 500,000 leva. This project has not been implemented as yet.

• Problems

Complicated and contradictory processes are observed in the area of plastic arts, having a negative impact on the economic status and moral image of artists working in this field. Among the most crucial are the following:

- The decline in the demand for art objects reduces opportunities for ensuring a steady income

- The extremely limited financial resources of the Union of Bulgarian Painters reduce chances of providing adequate support to members in need of such support

- Private galleries are facing enormous difficulties and cannot rely on State subsidies

- There is a lack of trained art dealers that cannot facilitate the growth of a developed market for Bulgarian plastic arts well as its penetration of international markets
- Commercialisation generates distorted criteria and alterations of the system of virtues
- The structure and dynamics of the fine art market are deteriorating, preventing the majority of artists from integrating in the new environment
- Most of the artists committed to artistic quests and experimentation are left in isolation, deprived of moral and financial support.

7. THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

7.1. The cinema

7.1.1. The aims of Cultural policy in the cinema

State of the film industry

Until the 1989 start of political and economic reform film production was a state monopoly under centralised management. State film distribution created an artificial market for indigenous films by purchasing them. This ensured a high level of production, albeit at a loss to the exchequer. Behind the volume of production stood ideological *diktat*, overt and subtle forms of party censorship and the *etatist* 'rearing' of an artistic elite. This uneconomical and unnecessary inflating of film production and the lack of market mechanisms resulted in production facilities and staff training disproportion which placed Bulgarian cinema in great difficulty during the crisis years.

Post-1989 national cinema policy priorities

After 1989 arts policy towards the cinema aims to create marketable output and market distribution partly helped by the state. *Priorities* are:

- *legislative reform* to free personal initiative and lay down a legal basis for the existence of film production under market conditions
- *structural reform* to close ineffective state production and distribution companies and permit the transition of effective companies into independent entities
- *financial reform* to introduce a new system of partial state finance with the decisive participation of independent private producers
- *harmonising* Bulgarian cinema law and institutions with European law and institutions.

Thus the new model of film production introduced in 1991 aims to transform the ineffective old one by injecting market principles, while retaining as much as possible the scale of indigenous output during a period of recession. The model is based on involving independent film producers in financing, and substituting private indigenous and foreign capital for the inevitable drastic cutbacks in state film subsidies.

7.1.2. Sector legislation

Pre-1944 cinema legislation, though piecemeal and unsystematic, tried to define the place of the country's nascent film industry. Along with a number of regulations on technical parameters for film technology and picture houses, this legislation settled the institutional control base of the cinema and the taxing of picture house takings. The most exhaustive such instrument was the *1930 Cinematography Act* which addresses the cinema as an artistic and educational activity and lays down the basis for a public control body over it, as well as tax relief for Bulgarian films.

After 1944 and the imposition of a totalitarian regime with its centralised administration and economy the first step towards state ownership over the

industry came with the *1946 Cinematic Arts Act* with its state monopoly over film import, export and distribution. State monopoly was finally installed by the *1948 Cinematography Act* which nationalised the entire film industry in Bulgaria by creating and institutionalising the structure and activity of state film producers and distributors. This Act, amended to permit cinema demonopolisation, remains in force to date.

After 1989 there was a *thorough legislative reform* to destroy the state monopoly, ensure management decentralisation and prepare transition to market structures by guaranteeing the inviolability of private property. These changes form the overall framework of change in cinema legislation and regulation.

Indirect legislation

Among the major instruments affecting cinema reform are the 1991 Commerce Act which defines film making as a commercial activity; the 1993 Rights of Authors Act; the repeal of Article 1 of the 1948 Cinematography Act in order to destroy the monopoly on film production and distribution in the country; the 1992 Economic Activity of Foreign Persons and Protection of Foreign Investment Act which lays down the basis of company restructuring in all fields including the cinema; and the 1993 Value Added Tax Act and 1994 Excise Duty Act laying down aspects of corporate taxation, including that of cinema companies.

The Bulgarian film industry considers the 1992 Restitution Act and 1992 Customs Duty Act financially burdensome. The former creates a basis for property restitution (the land on which the Boäna film studio stands, state cinemas, Union of Bulgarian Film Workers' [SBFD] rest homes). The latter creates unfavourable import duties on film production requisites. Neither does the VAT Act provide any preferences for the taxation of trade agents' cultural activity in the field of film production and presentation.

Direct legislation

Among legislation directly affecting the cinema the *changes in sectoral management and company structure and finance are most significant*.

1991 saw the decision to close the state monopoly company *TSO Bulgarska kinematografiä* and the creation of a *National Film Centre (NFC)* as the conduit of state cinema policy. According to the *NFC Articles of Association* the Centre is funded by the Ministry of Culture and has these main functions:

- subsidising film and audio visual arts production, distribution, and projection
- tabling proposals for administrative regulations
- registering and categorising films and audio visual arts products
- developing technical production and screening standards for films and audio visual arts products
- stimulating the development of the Bulgarian cinema by holding reviews, festivals, and prize awards.

The NFC discharges its articulated duties with the aid of a state subsidy, the major part of which is earmarked for film production. Apart from the subsidy the

Centre receives revenue from fees, rent and interest. The proportion of subsidy in Centre income is decisive (see table 1).

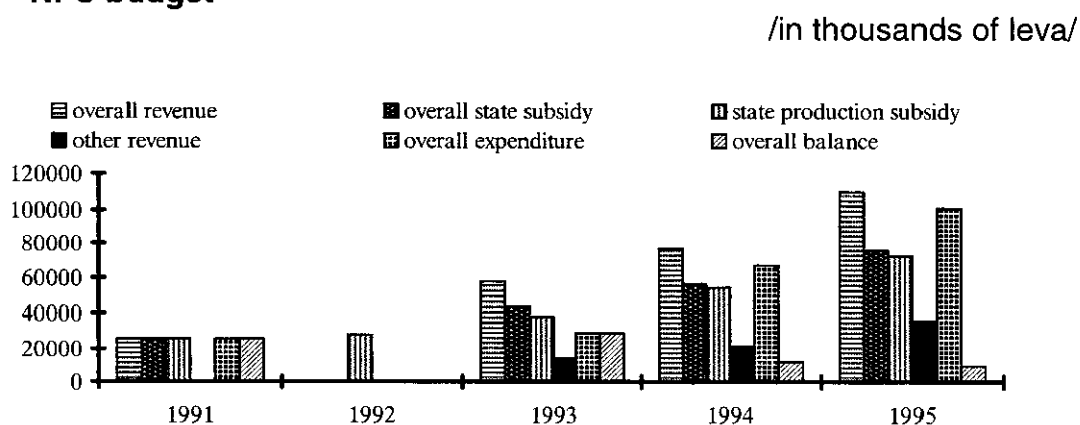
Table 1
NFC budget, 1991- 1995

/in thousands of leva/

year	revenue			expenditure	balance
	total	state subsidy	other	total	total
		total	earmarked for production		
1991	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0
1992	n.a.	n.a.	28,000	n.a.	n.a.
1993	56,967	43,523	37,700	28,462	28,505
1994	76,937	56,447	54,000	65,725	11,212
1995	109,979	75,050	72,000	101,030	8,949

Source: Ministry of Culture audited accounts, 1991-'95

Graph 1
NFC budget



The proportion of film production subsidy in the NFC budget exceeds 90% of the total (see table 2).

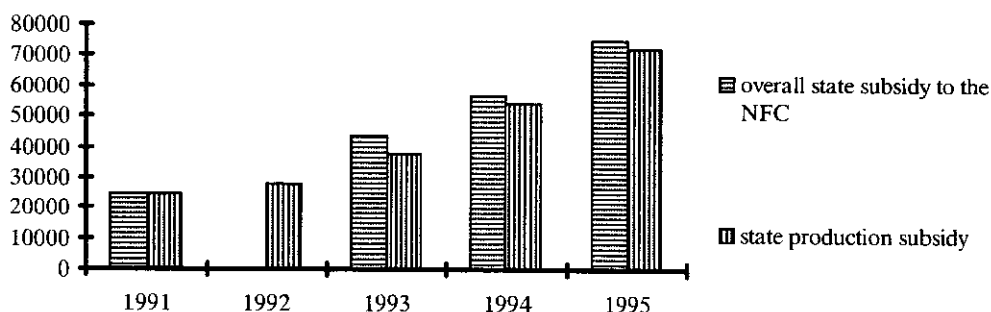
Table 2
Ratio between NFC state subsidy and proportion earmarked for film production

/in thousands of leva/

year	NFC state subsidy	
	total	proportion earmarked for production
1991	25,000	25,000
1992	n.a.	28,000
1993	43,523	37,700
1994	56,447	54,000
1995	75,050	72,000

Source: Ministry of Culture audited accounts, NFC

Graph 2
Ratio between NFC state subsidy and proportion earmarked for film production



The state subsidy affords the Centre very limited scope in supporting film distribution or publicly promoting cinema by arranging forums or prize awards events.

The NFC set up three national committees: one for feature films, one for documentary and science cinema, and one for cartoon films. They review submissions for state financing in their areas and disburse the subsidy. National committee members are appointed by the Minister of Culture under set quotas for his nominees and nominees of professional and creative associations representing the sector.

State subsidy is distributed between the different genres at the ratio of 75% for features, 12.5% for documentaries and science films, and 12.5% for cartoons. NFC rules specify that subsidy shall cover only part of a film's budget. The balance shall be financed by the film's producer and may consist of Bulgarian or foreign capital.

7.1.3. Structure and condition of companies in the sector

Film production

Compared with 1986 when the country had five state film production companies, by 1994 their number (including private entities) had grown apace (see table 3).

Table 3
Number of film production companies*

year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
number	5	5	5	5	5	6	16	31	29	21

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, Statistical Yearbook, cinema, television, video and new media, 1996

* 1995 data is under NFC reference

The number of producers listed in the Unified National Register exceeds 160. The freeing of personal initiative has permitted a decentralisation of film

production and its relative preservation given the impossibility of supporting full-cycle film production companies.

But it must be stated that many producer units are inactive while those which are or have been active are unable to ensure continuity. A trend emerging in the course of reform has been the weakness of film output structures, none of which has succeeded becoming established as a lasting producer¹. Private Bulgarian film producers still lack independent financial muscle to ensure self regeneration within predictable and stable, albeit small, bounds. Its main characteristics are: low level investment with irregular financial sources and small volume of output.

To this must be added that no producer unit owns a film production facility. Production facilities remain almost entirely in the former state-subsidised film studios. Despite precedents in which film technical services have been offered by independent companies the process remains very slow.

At the same time the state studios and their technology are in very straitened circumstances. The lack of a proper production cycle leaves their facilities underutilised and the now traditional long term unemployment in the sector results in the deskilling of many highly specialised professionals.

To complete projects started under the old financial mechanism, in the first two years of reform the studios received *additional* state subsidy. This amounted to 59% of NFC subsidy provided under the new mechanism and caused controversy, being seen as internal rechanneling of public funds. After the studios' restructuring as a public limited company and their registration as an independent producer, they were placed on an equal footing with other producers clamouring for subsidy. Despite this, some professionals in the sector insist on a separate state subsidy conduit, independent of the NFC.

Film distribution and screening

Since 1991 *the number of private film distributors has grown continuously*, rendering state distributors uncompetitive. 1994 saw the winding up of the state film distributor and the foreign sales organisation *Bulgariä film*. Film distribution is now entirely in private hands, with twenty companies in the sector (*European Audiovisual Observatory, Statistical Yearbook: cinema, television, video and new media*, p 77).

In contrast with distribution, *screening remains almost entirely a state activity*. According to National Statistics Institute (NSI) data, in 1994 private cinemas made up 5.6% of the total, with a downward trend. Even where the Restitution Act has returned refurbished and modernised cinemas to former

¹ On the other hand, the NFC holds a different view of the private film producing companies' stability. The Centre stresses that time must pass both for gathering experience and establishing professional contacts with foreign funds and producers, and cites the 1995-'6 participation of five private Bulgarian producers in different phases of three films each. Hence the NFC view that "facts speak of five companies with a stable presence in film production, with a trend to this number reaching eight to ten." The facts that the companies in question did not take part in the full production cycles, and that these were coproductions, speak for themselves.

owners, they are used for other purposes which offer faster and less uncertain rental incomes.

Bulgarian National Film Library (BNF)

After the nationalisation of film production, a State Museum of Cinema was founded in 1948, which collects film copies from the film network and the national film distributors, traces and keeps posters, photos and materials of the cinema history.

In 1958 a State Film Archives was established, by Order of the Minister of culture, as a department under the State Cinematography and subsequently renamed to Bulgarian National Film Library. In 1959 the film library became a member of *FIAF*. Till 1991 the BNF existed as an organisation within the system of the Creative Economic Association *Bulgarian Cinematography*. In 1995 the film library received the status of a national institute of culture with a

Decree of the Council of Ministers, fully financed by the MC.

Nowadays the BNF has at its disposal over 15 000 film titles, over 40 000 copies, 10 000 books, 35 000 posters, magazines, advertising materials. The BNF hosted the 1966 and 1977 *FIAF* congresses.

The NFC Rules contain an obligation to submit to the BNF a copy of all Bulgarian films made with a state subsidy. In the Council of Europe the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture supports the adoption of a European convention to safeguard the audiovisual heritage.

The most serious problem faced by the BNF is the building of a modern film depository which is now at the initial stage of construction. It is also necessary to purchase specialised film-library equipment. An extremely large-scale project of transferring the old films from a nitrate (inflammable) cine-film onto an acetate one is in progress, which has received a minimum financial support from UNESCO. For all these activities the BNF and the MC are looking for additional funds from European organisations.

Table 4.

The BNF budget for 1991 - 1995

/in thousand of Leva/

year	revenue			total	expenditure	balance
	total	state subsidy	from main activity		total	total
1991	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1992	2123	1770	316	37	1789	334
1993	3185	2470	668	47	2338	837
1994	4820	3660	764	396	3550	1270
1995	11651	8569	2853	229	8860	2791

Source: Ministry of Culture audited accounts 1991-'95

7.1.4. Sector financing

Film production financing

The crisis in Bulgarian film production coincides with a general economic slowdown which predates 1989. In subsequent years it has grown in keeping with the economic crisis gripping the country. The ability of the state to sustain the previous level of film production has reduced drastically. 1991 saw a 2.1-

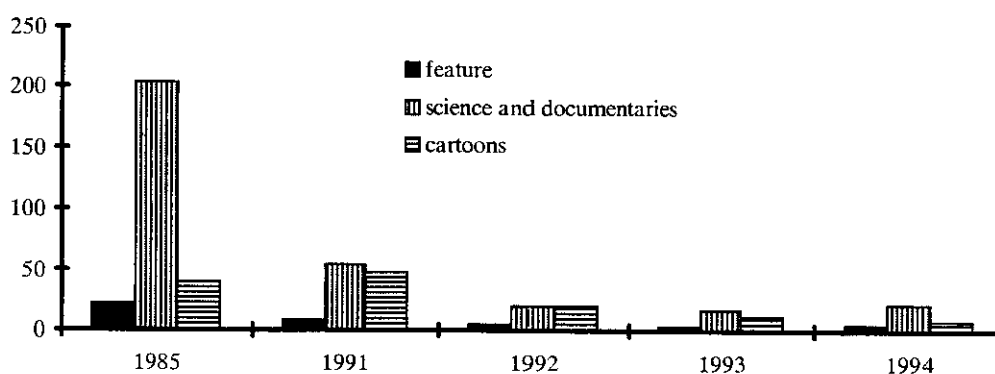
fold drop in feature film production and a 3.8-fold drop in documentaries and science films compared with 1985. After 1992 the trend affected cartoons, with a four-fold drop by 1994 (see table 5).

Table 5
Number of Bulgarian film productions

by type	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
feature	21	9	5	4	5	7
science and documentary	204	54	19	16	22	34
cartoon	40	48	19	12	9	3

Source: NSI; feature film data and 1995 data is under NFC reference

Graph 3
Number of Bulgarian film productions



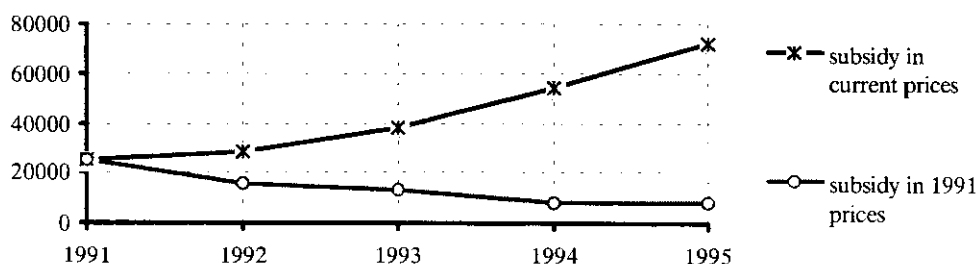
Inflation during 1992-'6 has drastically undermined real state finance. Despite the apparent rise in subsidy, in real terms its extent has reduced. Compared with 1991, 1992 subsidy was down by 37.6%, in 1993 it was down by 48.7%, and 1994 — by 66.9%. In 1995 the level was retained at 66.8% (see table 6).

Table 6
State film production subsidy and the effect of inflation

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
subsidy in current prices (thousands of leva)	25,000	28,000	37,700	54,000	72,000	85,000
subsidy in 1991 prices (thousands of leva)	25,000	15,608	12,823	8 276	8 304	n.a.
index of change, 1991=1	0	-37.56%	-48.7%	-66.89%	-66.79%	n.a.

Sources: NFC, NSI

Graph 4
Dynamics of state film production subsidies



Sharpest year-on-year falls were in 1992 and 1994. 1995 subsidy kept pace with the preceding year (see table 7). On the background of the drastic overall cut in film production the 1992 and 1994 falls did not read across directly to film output since the NFC was using up previous years' accumulated balances (see table 1).

Table 7
Dynamics of state film production subsidies

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
in relevant year's prices (thousands of leva)	25,000	28,000	37,700	54,000	72,000	85,000
in previous year's prices (thousands of leva)	25,000	15,608	23,002	24,335	54,176	n.a.
year-on-year percentage falls	0	-37.56%	-17.85%	-35.45%	+0.33	n.a.

Sources: NFC, NSI

After 1992 the number of indigenous feature films has remained relatively stable (see table 8).

Table 8
Number of feature films completed with Bulgarian participation, 1992- 1995
(bracketed: films completed entirely with private Bulgarian or foreign capital)

year	1992	1993	1994	1995
total films	5	4	5	7
100% indigenous	3(1)	3(1)	4(1)	0
Bulgarian majority cross border coproductions	2(1)	1	1	4(1)
Bulgarian minority cross border coproductions	0	0	0	3

Source: NFC

During 1992-'4 three films a year were produced with partial state subsidy. In 1995 the state financed another five films of which three, being minority coproductions, are not deemed Bulgarian despite giving work to Bulgarian facilities and specialists. The balance of the bill not covered by state subsidy

was paid by the European Eurimage programme funds and CNC and private Bulgarian capital.

The number of films produced without state subsidy also remains steady at one a year. The exception was 1992 with two films. Essentially these films are financed by private Bulgarian capital. There are two exceptions: the first with some European programme funding, and the second with some international private capital. In both cases Bulgarian capital predominated.

Bulgarian film production owes much of its existence to international coproductions which account for almost half of all output in the years under review. In 1995 coproductions accounted for 100% of all films made in Bulgaria (see table 8). They offer the only possibility of attracting foreign capital in film production and finding wider international markets for products with Bulgarian participation. Of the 11 international coproductions, ten had CNC and Eurimage participation. In order not to jeopardise these extremely important advantages, a beneficial subsidy regime is tolerated. According to the NFC the regime is retained by its new Articles despite the ending of 'automatic' Bulgarian subsidies for cross border coproductions. In evidence the Centre cites the large number of such productions during 1995-'6.

Although only five of the 21 films were made entirely with private or international money, their budgets are usually considerably higher than the average for state-subsidised films. For instance, the 100% private film in 1992 was almost twice as lavish as the most expensive among the others. 1995 gives an even more drastic example, with the 100% private film (budgeted at US \$3m) being seven times dearer than the dearest of the other films. This may turn into a long-term trend, orientating private productions entirely towards European standards.

Due to insufficient and in places conflicting data we cannot determine the precise ratio between different sources of finance. Excluding state subsidies which retain dominance (see table 9), there is still no discernible set ratio between other sources of finance.

Table 9

Feature film subsidies, maximum subsidy given to a feature, average budget and proportion of state subsidy in the average budget

/in thousands of leva/

year	1992	1993	1994	1995
feature film subsidies	21,000	28,275	40,500	54,000
greatest subsidy granted to a single feature	3 500	6 500	8 500	13,300
average feature budget	7 217	9 694	12,734	19,898
percentage proportion of state money per feature film	48%	67%	67%	67%

Source: The NFC stance on continuing the reform in the Bulgarian cinema

It appears that film production in the country is at the mercy of random factors. European programmes and private money sporadically cover the proportion of budgets left unfunded by the state. The proportion of Bulgarian National Television (BNT) is minor. With its own studio and own budget for Bulgarian productions, it prefers to invest in documentaries. Attempts to get

BNT to allocate budget quotas for Bulgarian feature film production have met with resistance. The 1996 Electronic Media Act provides for such quotas.

Financing film distribution and cinemas

- Film distribution

A sizeable drop (47%) in films hitting screens was only recorded in 1991. From 1992 to '94 premieres stabilised to reach a 1994 level of just 13.5% less than 1986. In practice film distributors have kept up the number of features hitting the screen by significantly increasing the proportion of American films at the expense of 'other and European' titles (which in totalitarian years meant primarily Soviet films).

Table 10
Origin of first-time-release feature films (1986-1994)

year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
indigenous	23	22	17	21	20	13	4	7	5
Germany	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
France	9	8	3	7	6	5	21	8	6
UK	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	0	2
Italy	6	5	7	7	3	0	4	2	3
other European	101	103	108	78	75	35	17	2	6
total European	144	142	140	118	108	56	47	19	22
US	7	10	13	14	24	28	99	100	123
others	19	23	13	13	19	6	10	5	2
total	170	175	166	145	151	90	156	124	147

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, cinema, television, video and new media in Europe, p 78

- Motion picture theatres

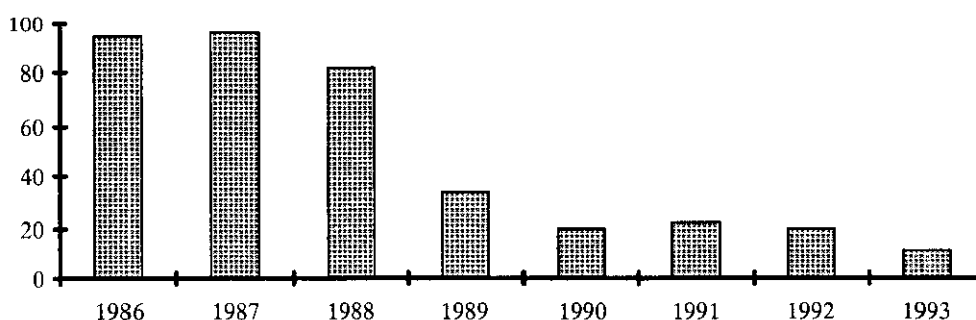
According to NFC opinion, the sharp drop in admissions is caused by the 'economic crisis and the fall in living standards on the one hand, and the development of pirate cable networks and pirated videotapes on the other.' Between 1986 and '91 viewers dropped 4.2-fold. By 1993 the drop had grown to almost nine times (see table 11).

Table 11
Cinema admissions 1986-1994

year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
	94.50	96.10	81.50	33.70	19.60	22.00	19.50	11.08	n.a.	11,4

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, cinema, television, video and new media in Europe, p 88

Graph 5
Cinema admissions 1986-1993



Average *per-capita* trips to the picture house during 1994 also fell by approximately the same amount (see table 12).

Table 12.

Average admission by inhabitant 1986-1994

year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
	10,55	10,71	9,07	3,80	2,25	1,54	2,28	1,31	1,44	n.a.

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, Statistical yearbook: cinema, television, video and new media in Europe, p.89

According to the NFC, 'due to their reduced number and the drop in ticket sales, cinemas would be at the verge of survival if they relied on core activity alone. All cinema proprietors in the country are forced to develop side activities in order to cover rising costs. Staff has been cut to the bone and apart from the odd exception) receives the lowest possible pay. Most cinema proprietors make losses, have poor equipment and impossible overheads.'

Table 13.

Number of screens 1986-1994

1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995*
3268	3266	3268	3069	1790	441	319	114	156	163

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, Statistical yearbook: cinema, television, video and new media in Europe, p.85

* 1995 data is under NFC reference

Graph 6
Number of screens

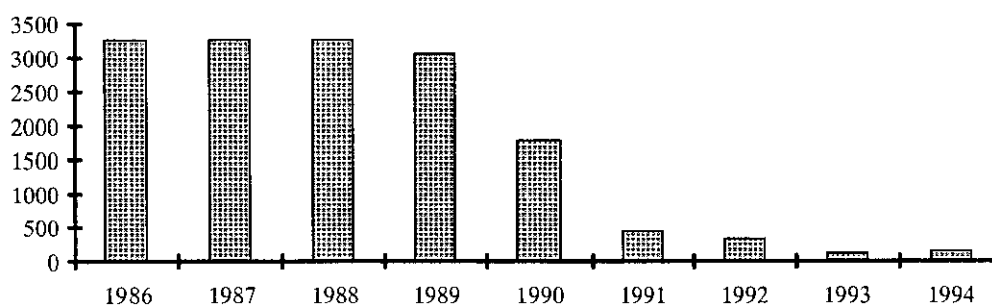


Table 14
Number of seats 1987-1994

1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995*
693436	n.a.	392010	96579	114529	69564	75910	79910

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, Statistical yearbook: cinema, television, video and new media in Europe, p.86

* 1995 data is under NFC reference

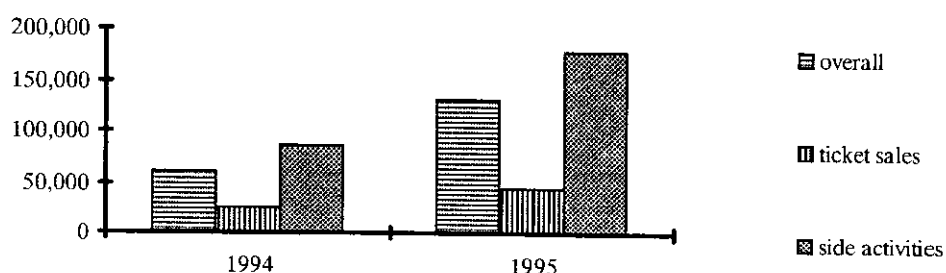
Cinemas do not receive any national or municipal budget subsidies or donations. The proportion of revenues from side activities like rents, cafes, *et c*, is about one third (see table 15).

Table 15
Cinema revenues, 1994-'5

	/in thousands of leva/	
	1994	1995
ticket revenue	61,000	132,000
side activity revenue	26,000	46,000
total	87,000	178,000

Source: NFC

Graph 7
Cinema revenues in thousands of leva



Due to the overall negative state of the budget, cinemas have no investment opportunities and hence no way to improve their chances of survival through refurbishment or technical improvement, going multi-screen, improving the standard of cafeterias, shops and video game arcades.

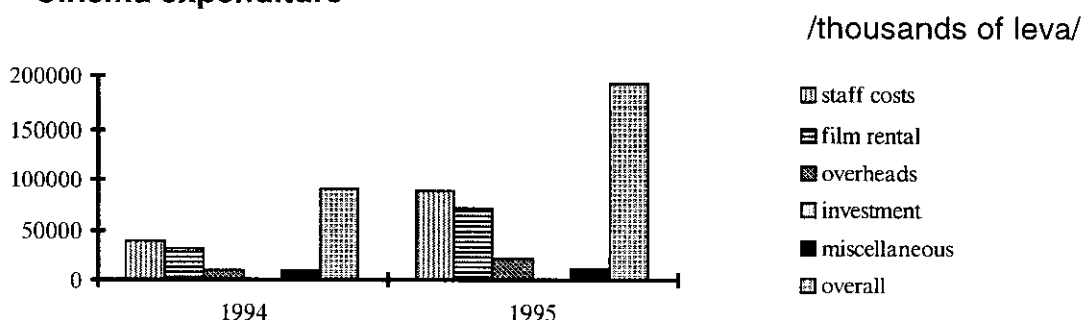
Staff costs in 1994-'5 exceed film rental and projection costs by a fifth (table 16).

Table 16
Cinema expenditure

	/in thousands of leva/	
	1994	1995
staff	40,000	88,000
film rental	31,000	71,000
overhead	10,000	21,000
investment	0	0
miscellaneous	9000	12,000
total	90,000	192,000

Source: courtesy NFC

Graph 8
Cinema expenditure



7.1.5. Challenges and solutions

Film production challenges

- spiralling inflation
- absence of defined state and private capital
- lack of a donor tradition
- ineffective legislative incentives to potential donors

Motion picture theatre challenges

- disadvantageous contracts with distributors
- lack of subsidies for promoting and screening Bulgarian films
- a need to refurbish cinemas and increase screen numbers

Film production solutions

Developing additional sources of institutional finance:

- participation by national and private TV companies under a 30% protection quota for Bulgarian films
 - additional state funds including a Bulgarian cinema fund and a Bulgarian Cinema Protection Act
 - laying down a regulatory basis for private film and video producers to finance Bulgarian films through taxes on box office revenues, video tape sales and rental, and blank videotape sales
 - encouraging funding through new legislation

Motion picture theatre solutions

- refurbishment of existing cinemas and increasing their number
- seeking successful formulas for restructuring cinema companies, possibly through mergers into larger resulting entities.

7.2. Book publishing

7.2.1. The road of change

Book publishing began to develop in Bulgaria after the Liberation from Turkish domination in 1878 when the first publishing houses appeared and the foundations of legitimate book publishing were laid. With the exception of periods of war, the overall trend is one of steady growth and diversification of output. The number of titles grew from 933 in 1889 to 2284 in 1940. Book publishing and distribution were almost entirely private at the time.

After the Second World War and with the establishment of totalitarian rule, the Decree on liquidation of private publishers (1948), the Printing Act (1949) and the Regulations for book publishing by state and public organisations (1949) actually destroyed the model of liberal private book publishing. A set of regulations stipulated centralised state planning, reporting and control of national book publishing. The overriding principles of state publishing policy were ideological in essence while artistic principles were present at best partially and economic ones were entirely disregarded. The main trend was an increase in the number of titles and print volumes - the 3369 titles with a total print of 30,244 thousand in 1960 increased to 4379 titles with a total print of 58,943 thousand in 1988. Nevertheless, by published books per one million of the population Bulgaria is far behind the industrialised nations: 486 in Bulgaria in 1988, 2225 in Denmark (1984), 8141 in Finland (1984).

The access to books was facilitated by centralised state distribution and the sustained low prices due to state subsidies for book publishing. *The major drawbacks of book publishing* understandably derived from the subordination of publishing to ideological dictate:

- censorship which led to limitations of genre and subject matter by manipulating access to world information and cultural processes;
- an artificial book market stressing the supply side and disregarding real demand.

After 1989 book publishing underwent *fundamental changes*. They were sparked off primarily by getting rid of the state monopoly on publishing and the emergence of private publishers. Changes found expression in the appearance of a free book market. The flourishing of publishing achieved in the conditions of a serious economic crisis can be explained by the financial appeal of publishing for entrepreneurs (minimum initial investment, quick return on investment) and the cumulative unsatisfied reader demand.

7.2.2. Publishing houses

In 1988 there were 27 state and some 100 institutional publishing houses. Twenty five of these publishing houses were located in Sofia and only two in the country. They operated on budget support and fulfilled annual publishing plans, endorsed by the State Press Committee.

Private publishers mushroomed after 1989, continually growing, from 180 in 1991 to over 980 in 1994. About a third of the private publishing houses were located in the country.

State publishing houses (including institutional ones) numbered 130 in 1994. They are independent business units and do not receive state subsidies but use state-owned facilities. Currently three state publishers are being privatised.

7.2.3. Book output

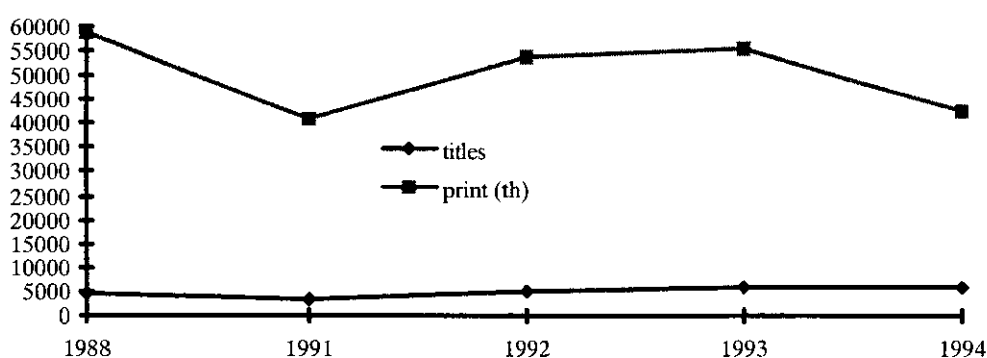
The trend after 1989 is one of a growth in published titles. The year 1994 registered an all-time record high in Bulgarian publishing.

Table 1
Prints and titles

year	titles	print(th.)	books and monographs per capita
1988	4379	58943	6.6
1991	3260	40880	4.6
1992	4773	53677	6.3
1993	5771	55356	6.5
1994	5995	42746	5.1

Source: Book Publishing and Press, 1994, NSI

Chart 1
Prints and titles



If we take 1988 as a benchmark (the year preceding the beginning of democratic change in the country), the titles published in 1991 dropped to 74.4 but in subsequent years it steadily grew to reach 135.3% in 1994. The dynamics reflect the financial and professional consolidation of private publishers and the gradual adjustment of state publishing houses to the market environment. Bulgaria lags behind industrialised European countries in the number of titles (8360 published titles in Austria in 1988, 12698 in Switzerland, 8621 in Hungary). The decline in print runs in the face of an increase in titles, typical of publishing world-wide, is evidenced in the number of books and pamphlets per capita of the population.

The growth in published books is primarily due to the efforts of private publishers: 68.6% of the total title output in 1994 and 69.3% of total print runs.

Table 2.

Books and publishers

books and monographs	1988	1991	1993	1994
State and institutional publishers				
titles	4379	2432	1516	1255
prints(th.)	58493	26629	14479	11249
Private publishers, companies, foundations				
titles	-	733	3448	3641
prints(th.)	-	13551	39109	29634
University publishers				
titles	-	-	453	603
prints(th.)	-	-	1066	975
self-sponsored				
prints(th.)	-	-	354	426
prints(th.)	-	-	702	888

Source: Book Publishing and Press, 1989, 1992, 1994 and 1995, NSI

The business activities of private publishers introduced positive changes in the territorial distribution of book publishing. While in 1988, 85.5% book titles and pamphlets and 93.8% of the total print came out in the capital, in 1994 this index decreased by 65.5% and 78.9% respectively.

7.2.4. Structural dynamics

The changes that occurred in publishing after 1989 strongly affected the structure of published books in several ways:

- changing the weighted average of different books and pamphlets in relation to total output;
- changing the original/translated titles ratio;
- changing the relative proportion of translated titles from different languages.

Table 3.

Books and monographs by target readers

target	1988		1991		1993		1994	
	title	print	title	print	title	print	title	print
general/political	293	1407	16	154	941	177	47	105
science	706	1723	380	834	548	1591	792	1907
popular science	704	6414	596	7500	799	5411	679	3215
professional	448	2001	295	1037	419	1865	182	495
education	1054	16030	835	8743	1089	14411	1124	11281
fiction	560	16373	669	1275	1972	21109	2054	15786
children and adolescent	250	10743	167	4081	474	7183	429	6029
official/documentary	79	664	46	348	73	356	63	385
reference	285	3528	256	4528	356	3253	555	3543
TOTAL	4379	58943	3260	40880	5771	55356	5925	42746

Source: Book Publishing and Press, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995, NSI

Chart 2

Dynamics of the number of titles

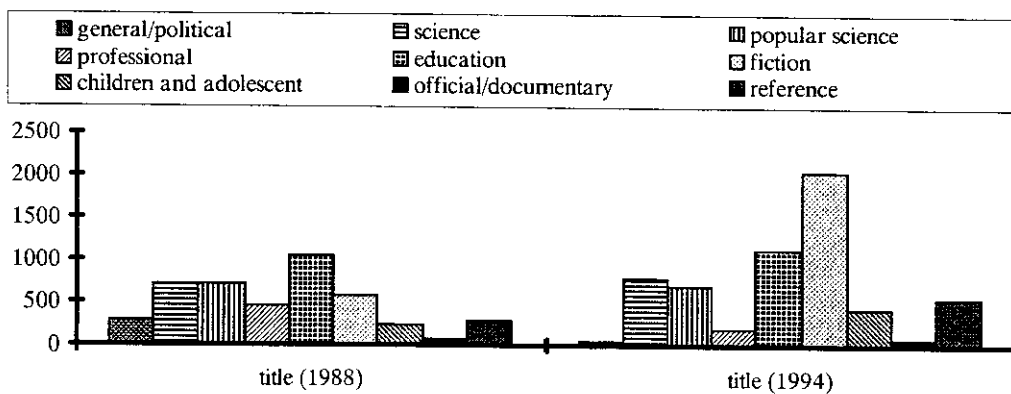
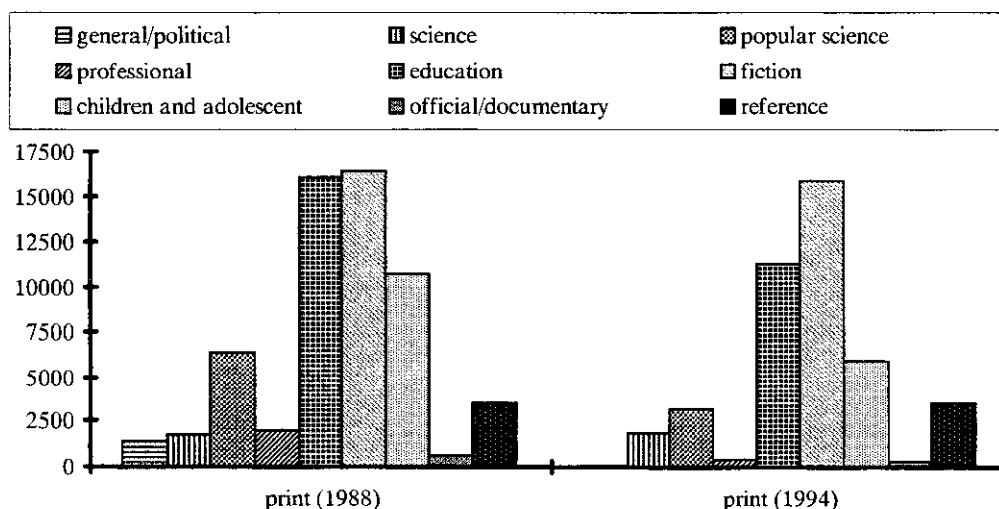


Chart 3
Dynamics of print

/in thousands/



A steady trend is in evidence, that of fiction dominating the publishing business. While fiction accounted for 12.8% of titles and 27.8% of total prints in 1988, in 1994 the figures stood at 34.7% and 36.9%. The considerable growth comes as a response to reader demand for contemporary fiction by foreign authors.

The same growth rates are exhibited by children's and adolescents' books. The proportion of children's and adolescents' books registers an increase from 5.7% in 1988 to 7.2% in 1994. This growth is mainly due to translated literature.

The third trend is the reduction of the relative proportion of titles and prints of general reading and political literature - from 6.6 in titles and 2.4% in prints in 1988 to 0.07% in titles and 0.2% in prints in 1994. The data reflects the cancelled large-scale publication of Marxist and Leninist writings.

Reference titles also increase their relative proportion - from 6.5% in 1988 to 9.4% in 1994, while retaining total print figures.

Following 1989 we witness a steady trend in the changing original/translated books ratio in the overall body of books. The relative proportion of translated books keeps growing - from 20% in 1988 to 34.4% in 1993 and 33.3% in 1994. With respect to total prints, figures jump from 31.5% to 49.9% respectively. The increased relative proportion of translated books is accomplished by the publication of books and monographs for a diverse reading audience. This shift is a reflection of the gradual opening of Bulgarian culture to the world. The relative proportion of titles and prints of translated books from English, French, German and other languages increased while that of translated books from Russian dropped.

Table 4
Translated literature by the language of the original

	1988	1991	1993	1994
English				
titles	71	244	1185	1270
print(th.)	4108	7802	18152	14722
German				
titles	48	79	163	166
print(th.)	2145	2577	1896	1163
French				
titles	23	76	241	190
print(th.)	1165	2611	3883	2058
Russian				
titles	192	56	65	74
print(th.)	4011	1206	534	479
Other languages				
titles	544	148	329	270
print(th.)	7151	1719	3082	1780
TOTAL				
titles	878	603	1983	1970
print(th.)	18580	15915	27342	20202

Source: Book Publishing and Press, 1989, 1992, 1994, 1995, NSI

The relative weight of translated books from Russian dropped from 21.8% in 1988 to 3.7% in 1994, while over the same period the proportion of books translated from the English increased from 8% to 64.6%, from the French from 2.6% to 9.6%, from the German from 5.4% to 8.4%. The same trend is also observable in the total print of translated literature from the respective languages. This drift mirrors the natural curiosity regarding European artistic and cultural achievements and the desire to understand developments in science, technology and information science, paralleled by a tantamount subsiding in reader interest in translations from Russian (the result of previous saturation). At this stage the Bulgarian book market is developing at fast rates and is still strongly impacted by the economics of the transition period.

7.2.5. Book distribution

In the years of totalitarian rule book distribution in Bulgaria was a state monopoly and was carried out centrally by powerful book distributors which owned substantial fixed assets - warehouses, transportation, bookstores. In actual fact, books were delivered to every small village. After the changes in 1989 private book distributors appeared alongside the private publishers. Today, book distribution is handled by 28 state and some 132 private companies. Territorially they are situated as follows: about 40 in the capital and some 120 in the rest of the country. The salesmen and publishers meet at the already established wholesale book market. Unfortunately the advertising of forthcoming publications is not yet popular. Rarely catalogues are published to this end.

Despite the proliferation of companies, at present book distribution lacks in quality. The problems derive from inefficient management and utilisation of assets by the state companies and from the economic instability of the private firms.

Retail sales are generally effected on street stalls in the towns since some of the bookstores were restituted after 1989 and the rest were privatised. A third part (municipal and state-owned) were leased out which resulted in a change of their core business. According to a representative survey of publishers in the country, carried out in 1995 by BBSS GALLUP INTERNATIONAL, 9% of the publishing houses use own distribution channels to sell their books, 17% use the services of state distributors, 23% use private distributors and 51% use both. The data suggests the need for state support in book distribution and a sensible privatisation program. Privatisation procedures for 36 warehouses, bookstores and book kiosks were initiated in 1995.

The development of book publishing after 1989 makes it possible to map out both the positive impact and the problems awaiting solution. The main positive changes can be sought in the following:

- greater diversification of book output;
- unfolding of a free book market;
- communicating to the Bulgarian reader the latest world developments in science, culture and technology;

The main problems derive from:

- imbalance between the publication of commercial success and quality books;
- deterioration in the quality of published books (translation, editing, graphic design, printing etc.)
- copyright violations;
- disregard for national historical and contemporary writings;
- limited access to book produce (comparatively high prices because of growing production costs and falling purchasing power).

Most of the problems have a common source - financial and economic considerations take precedence over cultural decisions in publishing. This is possible because of marginal reader demand.

7.2.6. Book support

State policy in relation to book publishing rests on the principles of pluralism, freedom and non-interference in the creative process and equal opportunities for all businesses operating in the area of artistic creation, production and distribution of books. The implementation of this policy is entrusted to the National Book Centre established in 1991. The latter is a specialised budget-support division of the Ministry of Culture which has a legal entity, non-profit making, organisational status.

Its main functions are:

- promoting the development of national writing;
- assisting the creation and publication of quality writing in the areas of fiction, literary theory and critique, philosophy, the arts and art theory, human and social sciences;

- facilitating international contacts and the exchange of ideas and values pertaining to writing.

The National Book Centre initiated and launched the *Book Support* program. It makes available grants for publishers for specific projects selected through tenders. Initially, the subsidies were allocated by three national commissions in the following fields:

- contemporary Bulgarian literature and literary heritage;
- Bulgarian humanitarian and reference editions;
- translated humanitarian writings.

Separate quotas for children's books and debuts were introduced in 1995 in order to boost the competitive advantages of these slighted genres. The commission for the translation of humanitarian writings has been tasked with screening and subsidising translated classics.

As of 1996, the National Book Centre has been working on a new program - *Literature and the Future* - which intends to render assistance to literary periodicals, on the basis of tenders, and also to supply library and community club depositories in the country with new Bulgarian titles.

Table 5
Subsidised books count

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Total number of subsidised books	105	112	145	97	119
Bulgarian fiction and heritage	41	53	67	47	74
Translated humanitarian	31	33	41	27	20
Bulgarian humanitarian and fundamental studies	33	26	37	23	25

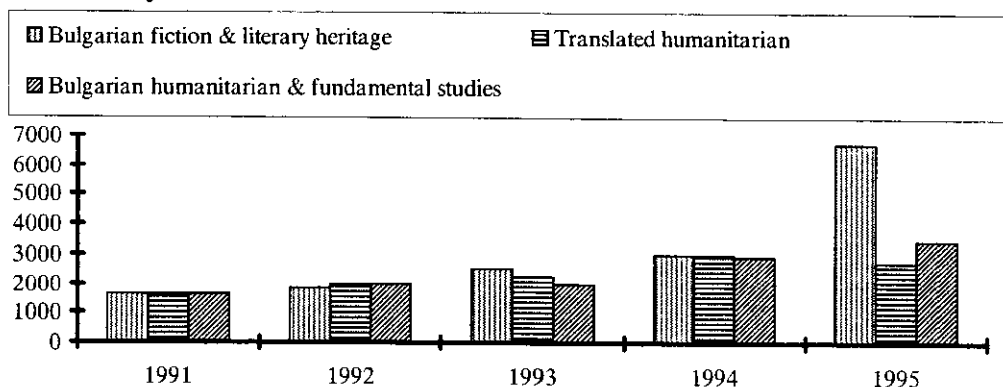
Source: National Book Centre at the MC

Table 6
Subsidised publishers

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Subsidised publishers total	36	34	64	55	-
state	16	15	18	13	36
others	10	2	5	2	-
private	10	17	41	40	35

Source: National Book Centre at the MC

Chart 4
Subsidy amount



Source: National Book Centre

Table 7
Dynamics of the subsidies

	subsidy in current prices	subsidy in preceding year prices	subsidy in 1991 prices	chain rates of change in %	base rates of change in %
1991	4 918	4 918	4 918	0.0	0.0
1992	5 746	3 203	3 203	- 34.9	- 34.9
1993	6 716	4 098	2 284	- 28.7	- 53.6
1994	8 905	4 013	1 365	-40.2	- 72.2
1995	12 954	9 747	1 494	+ 9.5	- 69.6

Source: MC

Chart 5
Dynamics of the subsidy for books

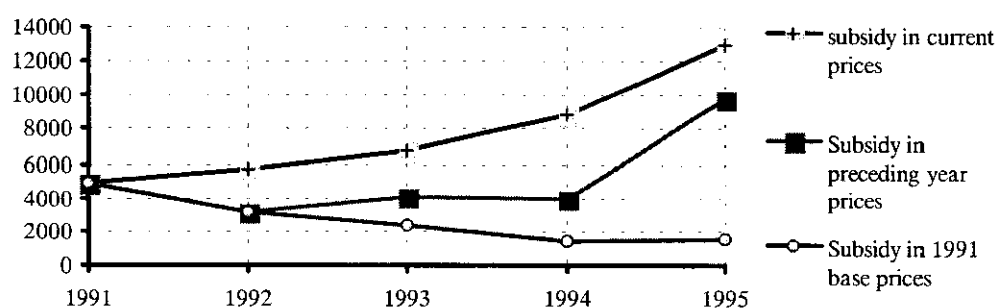
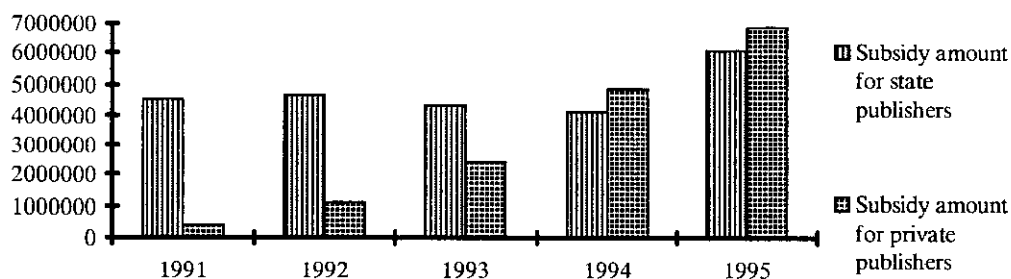


Chart 6
Subsidy amount for state and for private



The above data outlines a growth trend both in the relative proportion of Bulgarian titles in fiction and literary heritage (from 39% of all subsidised titles in 1991 to 62.2% in 1995) and in the amount of granted subsidies (from roughly 30% of all subsidies between 1991-1994 to roughly 50% in 1995).

At the same time, a downward trend in the relative proportion of translated humanitarian writings is noticeable, falling from 28% between 1991-1994 to 16.8% in 1995.

Another valid observation is the decrease in the proportion of subsidised titles in Bulgarian humanitarian writings and fundamental studies from 31.5% of all subsidies in 1991 to 21% in 1995.

The increase is accounted for by the inclusion of children's books and debut writings in section one, and the policy of supporting the development of national literature.

The decline in translated humanitarian books and in Bulgarian humanitarian and fundamental studies is caused by the reduced number of such titles submitted by the publishers for the tender, perhaps anticipating the limitations of the reading audience for this type of book.

The book support program provides incentives for the publication of quality books at affordable prices and is very popular with the publishers.

Another avenue for the implementation of state support for book publishing is the greater accessibility of books: through measures for more effective marketing across the country; through legislative acts for the reduction of import duties on paper, revocation or cutback of VAT on book produce, tax shields for investment in publishing and so on and so forth, which would effectively cut book prices. Unfortunately in 1996 VAT was raised from 18 to 22 per cent and thus books became even more expensive.

Publishing in Bulgaria is developing at very dynamic rates today, spurred on by the voracious appetite for books of a society for which book reading has been a traditional pastime, as the audio-visual media was underdeveloped during the decades of totalitarian rule.

7.3. The press

7.3.1. Dynamics of the press in a period of change

The press was the first to adjust to changes in the country. During the transition to a market economy we witnessed a veritable newspaper "boom".

A review of the dynamics in the development of the press elicits the following signs of change:

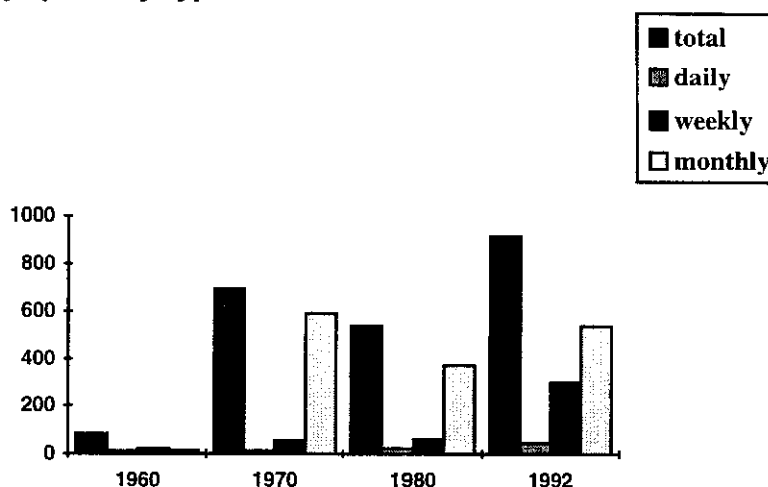
- Increase in the number of published papers;
- Subject matter structure;
- Contents and graphic design;
- Location;
- Publisher characteristics.

Changes in the number of published papers and magazines

Table 1
Newspapers

Year	Total titles	annual circulation	per capita
1960	83	602813	76.6
1970	692	816720	96.2
1980	477	902179	101.8
1990	540	1098632	122.2
1991	727	519718	57.9
1992	917	616030	72.1
1993	928	654187	77.2
1994	1059	611358	72.4

Graph 1.
Newspapers by type



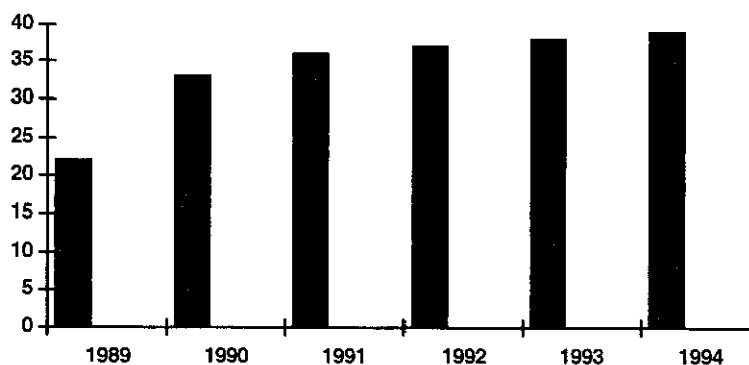
We are witnessing a constant and stable growth in the number of titles and 1994 marks a peak since 1960.

Compared to 1989, the number of newspapers has increased 3.5 times.

Over the same period circulation has considerably dwindled - by 31.7%, because of the changed market conditions which affect the circulation policy of the publishers.

This is paralleled by a rush of newcomers. In 1989 there were 25 new editions, while in 1994 they were 434 or an increase of 17.4 times. The majority were newspapers, founded in 1992 - 444 titles, i.e. an average of 1-2 new papers a day. The market mechanisms determined the brief lifespan of many of the newspapers. This process was accompanied by a consolidation and the emergence of newspaper organisations. There is a trend of a better informed readership. Single circulation per mille of the population in Bulgaria - there are 172 dailies per mille. This is 1.6 times less than in Hungary, 1.9 times less than in Romania and Denmark, 2.3 times less than in Austria, 3 times less than in Sweden and Finland. By this criteria Bulgaria is ahead of Poland and Italy. (The highest index is recorded in Liechtenstein - 700, and the lowest is in Moldova - 45).

Graph 2.
Magazines in tens



Between 1990-1994 there was an increase in the number of magazines by 40.5% while newsletters and periodicals showed a decrease. This was mainly due to the financial difficulties experienced by institutes and the many closures of research units, the reduction in the activities of many state enterprises, the steep and constant increase of printing services prices and production costs.

The annual circulation of magazines and periodicals also showed a downward tendency: magazines fell by 72.2% and periodicals by 76.3% compared to 1989.

Location

The location of the publishers is a criterion which elicits important conclusions about the changes underway in recent years.

- In 1985 there were 286 newspaper and periodicals publishers in Sofia and 186 in the rest of the country.* In 1990 there were 197 publishers in Sofia and 343 in the rest of the country.

- Between 1991-1994 the capital city/country ratio still favoured the country.

Table 2.

Newspapers by type

newspapers in 1992	title	issues	annual circulation(th.)	single circulation(th.)
total	917	27338	616030	10456
national	401	12372	521670	8637
local	462	14912	94166	1625
1994				
total	1059	31220	611358	11882
national	378	12671	470961	7040
local	590	18458	140109	288

- The leader among country regions in the number of papers still is Sofia where 399 papers came out in 1994, i.e. 37.7% of the total number, whereas in 1989 this ratio was 12.1 points lower.

- The other 8 regions bring out of print a total of 590 titles against 200 in 1989 that is a threefold increase.

- Local newspaper are gaining in importance. They have increased threefold since 1989. This is indicative of the need for local publications to deal with local issues.

- The opposite trend is observed in the case of magazines, newsletters and periodicals.

Subject matter structure of newspapers

Table 3.
Newspapers by double digits

Double digit rating	1989	1991	1993	1994
TOTAL	301	727	928	1059
breakdown:				
politics, economics	-	-	81	85
religion, theology	1	9	15	18
law	1	14	19	13
culture	-	-	20	16
medicine	1	5	16	26
games, sports	5	14	29	64
children's, teenage	8	25	32	21

- The firm establishment of free expression, pluralism of opinion and the multiparty system resulted in the sizeable increase of periodicals in the politics and economics section. Compared to 1989 their number has increased 5.3 times and their circulation - 18.1 times.

- The market-related changes led to the emergence of business and advertising publications.

- Publications on religion, mainly featuring material about the Catholic and Evangelist churches, also appeared on the market.

- The upward trend in newspapers dealing with health and folk medicine persists. They have increased 26 times compared to 1989.

- There is also an upsurge in periodic publications devoted to the supernatural - about 220 of them.

Ownership in publishing

- The first private publishers were registered in 1989 and they soon outnumbered state-owned ones. Currently, private publishers of periodicals are about twice as many as the state-owned. This trend is most vividly illustrated by papers, where institutional newspapers are three times fewer than private papers.

- Magazines and other periodicals offer a different story. This is due to their nature, as publications catering for institutions, institutes and ministries.

- A growing trend is the focusing by publishers on specific priority areas.

- Most of the private periodicals centre on social and political topics and also dwell on economic, legal, healthcare, education and technology issues.

- A process of consolidation of ownership in the hands of a few owners is in evidence, a concentration of financial resources in order to increase published titles.

- Emergence of newspaper cartels

- the emergence of newspaper cartels is usually accompanied by a weakening of competition on the single newspaper market.

- the danger of curtailing the readers' options of exposure to more and diverse viewpoints. The weaker the competition on the market, the greater the danger.

- the concentration of the bulk of newspapers in the hands of the same people can create the very real threat of courting profit at the expense of quality.

7.3.2. The change - features and problems

Demonopolisation of the right to publish

The liberalisation of the right to publish generated:

Emergence of the *private press* as the first tangible breakthrough in publishing monopoly

- political cleansing and search for scandal as an easily marketable topic come as a rule.

- private papers, with all attendant survival hardships, create true pluralism and the prerequisites for openness to the public in the future.

The emergence of a press soliciting *political pluralism* contributes to nascent liberal society.

The *formal structure* of the system differs considerably from the structure of the mass media in the preceding period. The private publications that appeared became viable competitors of the official press without any serious legal barriers.

With respect to *functions and contents* - pluralism and transparency. There is still marginal concern about the third sector - the building of a liberal society in Bulgaria.

Changes in the *control mechanism over the mass media*.

Problems

Having allowed a certain degree of development of the private sector, the state continues to hold the monopoly in the media arena, in as far as it controls investment in the press and is the owner of the biggest printing facilities.

Data from sociological studies reveals the dilemma: *intense use of the press/insufficient approval and trust*.

On the one hand we have thematic pluralism; freshening up of language, discussion of taboo topics, coexistence of diametrically opposite views, separation of facts from commentary.

On the other hand, contents and language sink to profanity, the facts of life are sacrificed for the breaking news, bad news is the priority. In this way, entire categories of readers, values, ideation areas are left out of the scene.

The press is one of the sectors most seriously *affected by economic hardship*, even by the slightest rumble in the economy. The price of paper has increased several times since 1991. Printing costs have gone up severalfold. These factors have meant the death of some publications or the acceptance of compromise such as smaller circulation, volume, format and periodicity.

7.4. Electronic media

7.4.1. Radio

Historical overview

The first programme transmissions using 'special apparatus' (equipment added to wireless telegraphy sets) in Bulgaria were recorded at the start of the Twenties. In 1925, the *Radio Balkan* Company was incorporated and sought a radio transmission licence. In 1927 the Bulgarian Parliament passed the *Radio Act* whose Article 2 states 'Radio shall be a state monopoly as regards transmitters and associated equipment'; private programme producing was permitted, however.

After adoption of the Prague Plan for radio frequency allocation in Europe in 1929, the *Rodno Radio* Union was set up and began transmitting in 1930 under the provisions of the Second Regulations of the 1930 Radio Act. At that time Bulgarians could listen to some fifty European stations and the number of wireless sets was growing apace.

A powerful new transmitter able to cover most of Bulgaria was opened on 24 March 1934 and *Radio Sofia* was launched as the station's official name.

Until 1989 Bulgaria had Bulgarian National Radio and five regional radio stations. The latter transmitted a few hours of local output and then usually retransmitted one of the national programmes. The national radio had four programmes: *Horizont*, a round-the-clock music and news station; *Hristo Botev*, a predominantly arts and news station; *Orfey*, an FM literary and music station and *Znanie*, an educational station. *Orfey* and *Znanie* closed after 1993 and *Hristo Botev* went round-the-clock. National Radio also transmits foreign programmes.

State radio output before 1989 was strongly politicised and, despite official denials of censorship, programme making and transmission were under the strict control of administrative and party authorities.

In 1993 radio receivers in Bulgaria stood at 450 *per mille*. This indicator places the country in line with a number of European countries: Greece at 416, Austria at 618, the Czech republic at 631, Poland at 439, Hungary at 617, Spain at 311, France at 890, Sweden at 879, former Yugoslavia at 207, Romania at 202, Russia at 338 (*source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1995*)

State radio financing

The nominal value of Consolidated National Budget subsidy for culture and the National Radio for 1990 and 1992-'5, and radio's relative proportion of the whole is shown in table 1.

Table 1

National Radio subsidy and its proportion of the culture budget

	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
Consolidated Budget culture spending	497	1 655	2 253	3 543	5 164
National Radio subsidy	51	239	336	550	793
Percentage proportion	10.3 %	14.4 %	14.9 %	15.5 %	15.4 %

Source: Ministry of Finance

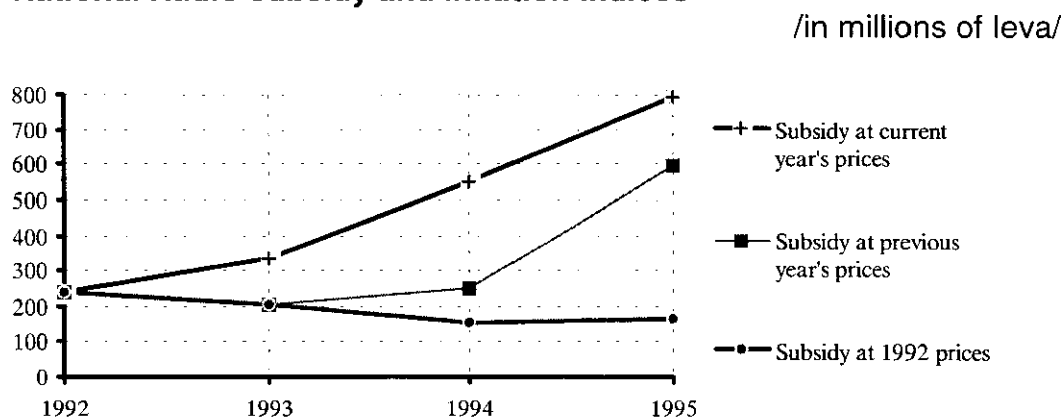
Table 2
National Radio subsidy and the effects of inflation

/in millions of leva/

Year	At current year's prices	At previous year's prices	Year-on-year percentage change	At 1992 prices	Percentage comparison with 1992 prices
1992	239	239	nil	239	n. a.
1993	336	205.00	- 14.2	205.00	- 14.2
1994	550	247.86	- 26.2	151.22	- 36.7
1995	793	596.69	8.5	164.08	- 31.3

Source: Ministry of Finance

Graph 1
National Radio subsidy and inflation indices



Current state of the radio network

Apart from the four National Radio programmes: *Horizont*, *Hristo Botev*, *Bulgariä* (broadcasting abroad) and *Efir Sofiä*, there are 47 private radio stations in Bulgaria. Licences issued by the Postal and Telecommunications Committee define transmission frequency and transmitter power. Of the private stations only *Darik* is a national network reaching almost half the potential national radio audience. Upon receiving due licences, *Darik* opens 8km range transmitters in a number of large cities. Ten private radio stations are active in Sofia and its environs.

A 1991 government decision permitted the transmission of five world radio stations in the Bulgarian FM range: *Radio Free Europe*, *BBC Radio*, *Deutsche Welle*, *The Voice of America* and *Radio France International*.

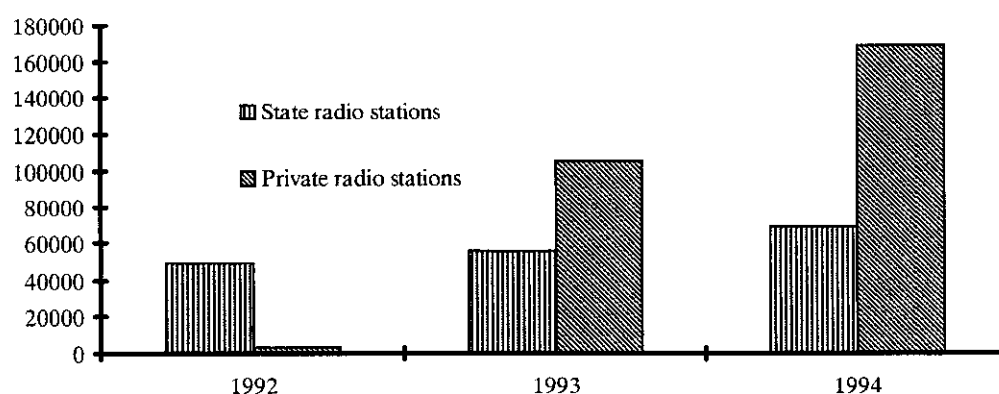
Transmission duration during the 1980-'92 period (when the first private radios appeared) show practically no change. The situation changes radically after the launch of independent transmitters.

Table 3
Transmission duration

Year	Total hours	State service hours	Private services (hours and percentage proportion)
1992	52,833	49,539	3294 (6.2%)
1993	161,278	55,579	105,699 (65.5%)
1994	237,483	68,974	168,509 (71 %)

Source: National Statistics Institute (NSI)

Graph 2
State and private radio stations' transmission hours



Hours of private radio station transmission have grown 51 times since their 1992 launch, while their proportion of total hours grew from 6.2% in 1992 to 71% in 1994. Thus over two-thirds of Bulgarian transmissions in 1994 were by independent radios.

Programme range of Bulgarian radio stations

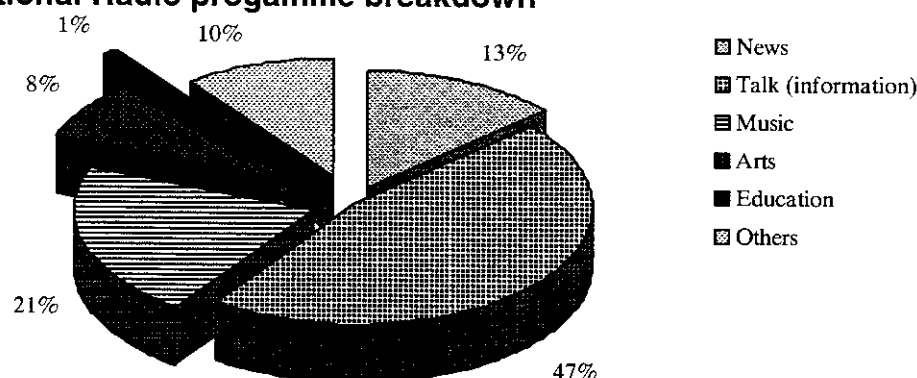
Here is the structure of the 35,720 National Radio airtime hours in 1995:

Table 4
National Radio programming by genre

	hours	proportion
total	35,720	100.0%
News (information)	4704	13,2 %
Talk (information)	16,611	46,5%
Educational	382	1,1%
Arts	2835	7,9%
Commercials	174	0,4%
Drama	281	0,7%
Music	7506	21%
Religion	482	1,3%
Sports	317	0,8%
Miscellaneous	558	1,5%
Unclassified	1 870	5,2%

Source: National Radio (NSI classifications)

Graph 3
National Radio programme breakdown



Data suggests that National Radio is trying to retain its core function as an information source (59.7% of airtime). Information is chosen so as to be of interest to a national audience distributed among all regions of the country.

Compared to programme structures of other national or public radio stations in Europe, information occupies a large proportion of Bulgarian National Radio transmissions: 42.9% in 1993 compared to 6.9% with its Hungarian equivalent, 24.7% in the Czech Republic, 12.5% in Austria, and 22% in Italy (source: *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1995*).

Many of the independent radios launched after 1992 took the road to the established programme diet of commercial radio. The patterns are almost identical: music and information at a ratio of approximately nine to one. Over the years they have pegged their programming image either on a musical form (rock, disco, dance *et c*) or by focusing on a particular audience segment. Among music-led radios *Klasik FM* stands out as the only Bulgarian classical music station. It transmits on the *Radio Free Europe* frequency and is received in almost 70% of the country. Of the 16 daily airtime hours, five are given to *RFE* news and documentary transmissions and the remaining 11 — to classical and traditional jazz music.

The independent network of *Darik Radio* is an exception among music-led radios, being established as an alternative to National Radio in news-led political journalism. In 1994 an American institute for the study of East European media called the radio the country's 'information leader'. *Darik* has its own style for information and comment programmes. Open to the broadest range of opinions from politicians, public figures and listeners, *Darik* corresponds to the needs of a pluralistic open society.

Created just four years ago, Bulgarian independent radio emerges as vital and dynamic. It is attracting the erstwhile monolithic monopoly state radio audience. The positive developments in the Bulgarian 'air' are *pluralism*, *alternatives*, a wider programme *choice*, and healthy *competition* both for advertising revenue and in the pursuit of audiences.

7.4.2 Television

Television until 1989

The first official TV broadcast in Bulgaria took place in 1954 with the showing of a 15-minute film, *A Zaporozh'ye Cossack beyond the Danube*. Television was established as a national institution under a 1958 decision, with the first direct transmission being on 7 November 1959 and official launch coming a month later. Television was then part of the Bulgarian radio structure.

Initially broadcasts were once weekly, then two days a week. There was one live transmission and a film. News lasted five minutes at first, later gradually extended. With the passing of time, separate departments like children's, youth *et c*, appeared. Regional TV centres opened in Plovdiv in 1971, Varna in 1972 and Ruse in 1973.

Starting in 1973, Soviet TV was also transmitted to Bulgaria. Colour TV arrived in 1974. 1975 saw the launch of a second channel with 205 hours of airtime, with evening viewing hours added in 1977.

Under conditions of censorship and a closed society, until 1989 television was given 'important organising, ideological and political, propaganda and educational functions' to use the contemporaneous jargon of the ruling Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP).

The televisual monopoly

Despite the post-1989 process of change and restructuring in the media, Bulgarian National Television (BNT) with its two channels *Kanal 1* and *Efir 2* retains its monopoly. Under a 1990 parliamentary decree the National Television and Radio Committee split up into 'two separate and equal national and non-party institutions': Bulgarian National Television (BNT) and Bulgarian National Radio (BNR). Since 1991 BNT was under the purview and administrative control of the Television, Radio and Bulgarian Telegraph Agency (BTA) Parliamentary Committee. The Radio and Television Bill was adopted on 5 September 1996. The Constitutional Court has repealed 15 textes from the Radio and Television Bill, as result of which it is effective but cannot operate.

Organisationally BNT remains an arm of the state. In staff numbers and sales turnover it remains the country's largest media organisation. Recent years' frequent changes of Directors-General resulting from regular switchbacks in society and politics as well as parochial motives, have not helped the development of a long-term television strategy. This gives rise to some haphazard programming, lack of continuity, and financial and organisational instability.

Despite no longer being unique, BNT remains the largest medium in range and audience reach. For most Bulgarian viewers, it remains the main source of information and entertainment.

Table 1
TV channels daily reach (1994 - 1995)

	National	Sofia
	1994	1995
Kanal 1	78,9	81,6
Efir 2	43,6	49
Nova TV	1,5	27,3
Cable	1,1	5,1
Others	16,9	16,1

Source: Statistical Yearbook- cinema, television, video and new media in Europe 1996

Table 2
TV audience market proportion, 1994-1995

Channel	Daily proportion		Prime Time	
	Sofia 1995	National 1994	Sofia 1995	National 1994
Kanal 1	55,5	66,4	60,3	67,9
Efir 2	22,5	24,9	22,3	28,5
Nova televiziã	10,7	0,5	12,1	0,2
Cable	3,5	0,6	2,3	0,3
Others	7,8	7,6	3	3,1

Source: the Sova-5 social surveys agency

Financing

BNT is financed both by the state and from commercial airtime sales. The basic revenue source is the national budget. But due to the general economic uncertainty and high inflation this source is insufficient. The budget financing couldn't cover all media expenses. By 1995, absolute-value BNT subsidies had grown 12.3-fold *versus* 1990 (table 2). The proportion of BNT subsidy compared to culture spending grew from 18% in 1990 to 21% in 1995.

Table 3
Bulgarian National Television subsidies

	/millions of leva/				
	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
Arts spending in the consolidated budget	497	1655	2253	3543	5164
Television subsidy	90	316	426	748	1114
Percentage proportion	18 %	19 %	18 %	21 %	21 %

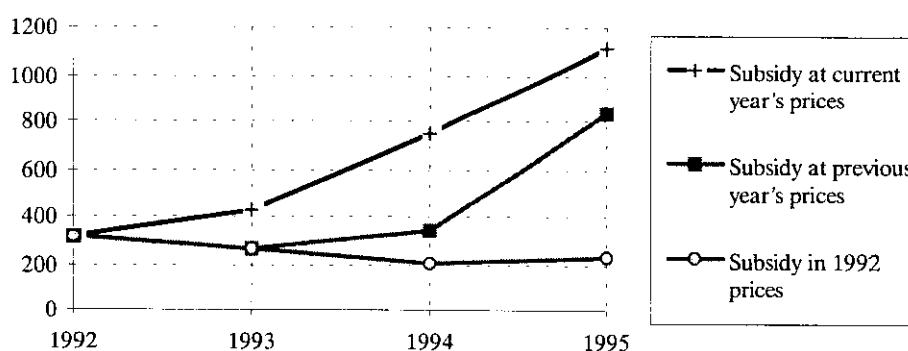
Source: Ministry of Finance

Table 4
BNT subsidies and the effect of inflation

	Subsidy at current year's prices	Subsidy at previous year's prices	Year-on-year inflation growth percentage	Subsidy in 1992 prices	Subsidy index, 1992=100%
1992	316	316	100	316	100
1993	426	259.9	- 17.7	259.9	- 17.7
1994	748	337.1	- 20.9	205.6	- 34.9
1995	1114	838.2	12.1	230.5	- 27.1

Source: Ministry of Finance

Graph 1
BNT subsidy dynamics



Television licence fees are traditionally trivial, symbolic even in today's economic conditions.

The third revenue source is advertising. A large part of television production is sold under coproducer's contracts. The state media faces the basic question what should public broadcasting do in times of rapid social, political and economic change to justify its existence.

BNT is experiencing difficulties in reforming itself due to:

- powerful political and administrative pressures
- admixing of private economic interests as a result of the open or covert privatisation of programmes
- lack of organisational and financial stability.

These hindrances are decisive as regards television's progress towards reform and its transformation into a public institution with a relatively independent strategy: one which discharges the public need for openness and information. The trend is for the state form to evolve into a public and legal one. This would afford BNT greater independence in pursuing its own agenda.

Programming

Answering the cultural questions posed by the consequences and dislocations of the growing information avalanche we are experiencing over the past few years is difficult. A sustained trend to an increase in indigenous and

foreign programmes is becoming apparent. The proportion of indigenous productions was highest in 1994 (table 5).

Table 5
Television programming

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Total	6248	5998	6933	6560	7178
of which in colour	6248	5998	6930	6495	7178
indigenous	3356	3537	3743	3203	3902
foreign	2010	1785	2360	2715	2618
repeat showing	882	676	830	588	658
channel one	4246	4167	4457	3748	4394
channel two	2002	1831	2476	2758	2748

Source: Statistical Yearbook 1995

Programme proportion data for 1990-'94 show a two-fold drop in educational programmes and a near-three-fold drop in drama. Commercials have increased almost eight times, arts — almost twice, and entertainment is up from 2864 hours in 1990 to 3463 in 1994 (table 6).

Table 6
Television programming by type

1. Television programming by type	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Total	6248	5998	6933	6506	7178
Information	1396	1419	1771	1852	1168
News and current affairs	1368	1393	1648	1433	832
Others	28	26	123	419	336
Educational	211	197	319	86	85
Arts	116	140	229	109	253
Religion	-	-	21	18	31
Commercials	18	44	73	114	159
Entertainment	2864	2446	2965	3050	3463
Drama	109	43	25	27	32
Music	487	490	194	188	758
Sports	338	378	842	678	585
Others	1930	1535	1904	2157	2088
Children's	665	613	702	644	807
Others	978	1139	853	603	1212

Source: Statistical Yearbook 1995

According to BNT's Marketing Office, BNT 1995-'6 broadcasts included

- 60.2% Bulgarian productions, and
- 39.8% foreign productions, of which 18% European.

The foreign programmes relative proportion is highest for films and film series. On the other hand Bulgarian production is located mainly in information telecasts, topical and cultural publicism (literary - artistic - cultural material),

documentaries. BNT produces more political telecasts than commercial broadcast.

Commercial channels

The past five years saw the first Bulgarian commercial TV channels. They are yet to go nationwide, being broadcast only in some large cities. Their basic revenue source is advertising. This circumstance will secure them a bigger presence at the media market in years to come. But the market motive cannot be counted on the fulfil at national, informational and cultural needs that broadcast media could serve.

The two metropolitan private services: *7 dni* and *Nova televiziä* between them enjoy some 30% audience proportion. During 1995 cable operators in the capital merged to form *Sofiä kabel*. This channel has a 16% audience proportion in Sofia. At some viewing times commercial channel viewers exceed those of BNT's *Efir 2*. Some 15% of Bulgarian viewers are connected to cable and satellite networks. In Sofia the proportion is 25% (source: the MBMD social surveys agency).

Being at the stage of identity shaping and seeking, some private channels are unable to create own programmes and so broadcast mainly foreign products. Practice shows that they are adopting winning formulas or copying foreign programmes wholesale. The trend is for private television to cater to the expectations, interests and mind-set of mass audiences and concentrate on entertainment. Proponents argue that commercial television does better than public television at meeting the needs of entertainment in society.

Commercial television lacks equality with its state equivalent for three reasons:

- while BNT is subsidised, it can also sell airtime while private broadcasters rely entirely on sales
- private broadcasters still lack national coverage
- there is a considerable difference in broadcast signal strength.

The main source of variation comes from the different types of media ownership.

In future we may expect private TV to continue competing with BNT, thus helping further restructure and decentralise the televisal landscape. BNT will be contested both in the fight for more audience proportion and advertising, and in the right to cover public events live.

Television coverage

BNT *Kanal 1* covers 99% of the country's area, and *Efir 2* — 89%. BNT has four regional windows: Ruse, Varna, Plovdiv and Blagoevgrad.

There is one national cable operator *Globo*. Regional channels include: *Nova televiziä* with a 15% coverage, *Sofiä kabel*, *7 dni*, *Rent TV* and five cable channels.

Cable network extension is proceeding piecemeal. Problems arise from the intertwining of multiple pecuniary interests and unclear legal provisions. At

present a large part of operating cable operators are not licensed while other, licensed ones, are not on the market. Local private firms control a growing number of local cable networks. Media market is strongly limited.

The Council of Ministers *Posts and Telecommunications Committee* disburses the monopoly over radio and television frequencies by granting access to radio and television frequencies and controlling cable networks. Through frequency licensing, the executive branch of government retains the ability to affect independent networks. Many of the cable networks in existence have yet to be licensed and made legal. In addition, licenses already granted are subject to review.

The foreign channels terrestrial received on Bulgarian territory are: CNN, TV5, Channel 1 of the Russian Public Television.

Three and a half per cent of the Bulgarian population watches mainly Turkish programmes which arrive both by satellite and from the Edirne transmitter which is received cross-border.

Table 6
TV channels daily reach 1994-'5

	National	Sofia
television channels	1994	1995
Kanal 1	78,9	81,6
Efir 2	43,6	49
Nova televiziä	1,5	27,3
Cable	1,1	5,1
Others	16,9	16,1

Source: the MBMD social surveys agency.

7.4.3. The legal status of electronic media

Articles 39, 40 and 41 of the 1991 *Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria* guarantees the right to express an opinion and to diffuse such opinion by the spoken or the written word or through sound or through image or by other means'. Also guaranteed is the right 'to seek and receive and diffuse information'.

The monopoly of state media in Bulgaria was *de facto* repealed by *Council of Ministers Provision Number 114 of 1991* which delegates frequency or national cable network licensing to the Posts and Telecommunications Committee. Prior to the enactment of the Electronic Media Act, direct control over the media was discharged by the *Parliamentary Television, Radio and BTA Committee*. Acting under *provisional powers* (which also governed the electronic media itself), the Committee was widely considered to have rather a questionable status. In December 1995 the Constitutional Court removed a number of clauses from the Temporary Powers as unconstitutional. They applied both to the Parliamentary Committee and to the National Television and Radio.

A 9 January 1992 ministerial ruling created the *Provisional Council for Radio and Television Channels*, tasked with accepting and reviewing

applications for radio and TV services, cable radio and TV systems, and creating licensing procedures.

The final deed under which the Posts and Telecommunications Committee issued telecoms licences dates from 3 May 1996: Order Number 10.

On 18 July 1996, after sharp debates with the opposition, the Parliamentary majority voted to put the *Radio and Television Bill* on the statute books. Under Presidential Decree Number 271 of 1 August 1996 the Bill was returned for additional debates, being voted through without change on 5 September.

After the Constitutional Court was approached by 74 deputies of the opposition, the constitutional judges repealed unanimously 15 basic texts from the Radio and Television Act, as a result of which it is effective but cannot operate, unless revised.

The repealed text refer essentially to:

-the constituting and powers of the National Council of Radio and Television (its formation by quotas of the parliamentary political forces and its rights to impose forcible administrative measures on media). According to the Constitutional Court the said Council cannot interfere in the content of programmes and programme schemes of electronic media. The judges recommend that the formulation "budget-supported independent body" is used when addressing the National Council of Radio and Television, instead of the formulation "state body" stipulated in the law.

-the requirement of unbiased presentation of facts in journalist commentaries. The Constitutional Court believes that a commentary is always subjective and a journalist has the right to express his opinion.

-the restrictions referring to who can broadcast radio or television programmes. Under the Constitution "Everybody can disseminate information".

-the ban on private electronic media's making political propaganda on their own behalf. This ban remains effective only for the BNT and the BNR as national media institutions.

7.4.4 Media policy priorities

The Ministry of Culture has not developed a concept of work with media and its structure lacks a team or department for institutional coordination of joint activity or cooperation with electronic media, although their presence as powerful channels of cultural influence is strongly felt.

Several basic media policy tasks are discernible both for the short and the long term:

- decentralisation of communications
- creating quality national radio and television programmes
- stimulating the emergence of a greater variety of TV and radio programmes
 - supporting creative programmes and alternative current affairs coverage
 - supporting media freedoms and society's right to be informed
 - developing media legislation

- reaching a relative balance between state and independent electronic media sectors.

7.5. The sound recording industry and market

After 1989 the state lost its monopoly over the production and marketing of audio-visual recordings. The liberalisation of trade and the existence of a legal vacuum cultivated "intellectual piracy" in the audio-visual industry and market which assumed ominous proportions and contributed to the overly unfavourable image of our country in the world. Bulgaria produces CDs in Stara Zagora (state plant) and at two other plants built in the last two years. They are exported (often illegally) to many countries. The situation is gradually being put under control after the passage of several important acts and regulations and the ratification of international conventions.

The Copyrights and Related Rights Act, adopted in 1993, is a modern code that specifies legal relations in the area of intellectual property, aspiring to European legal canon. It broadens and extends protection over an optimal range of copyrights and related rights, among them the rights of performing artists, sound recording producers and broadcasting organisations.

The *amendments to the Penal Code* (new Art.172a.) adopted in May 1995 by the National Assembly contribute to the protection of intellectual property rights by qualifying "violation" of intellectual property rights as a crime, imposing heavy sanctions (a fine of 200,000 Lev and up to three years in jail and for a recurrent offence - a fine of 500,000 Lev and five years in jail)/1/.

In April 1995 the National Assembly ratified the *International Convention* for the protection of performing artists, sound recording producers and broadcasting organisations (1961, Rome Convention) and the *Convention on the Protection of Sound Recording Producers* against unlawful reproduction of their records. (1971, Geneva Convention).

The Copyrights Division at the Ministry of Culture created in early 1994 introduced a set of measures in pursuance of the Copyrights and Related Rights Act and issued several hundred sanction warrants to persons proven guilty of offences (1).

As a consequence, many Bulgarian sound recording companies legalised their operations by signing licensing agreements with leading companies:

- *WVG* was the first major recording company to sign a licensing contract with Ara-Audio-Video;
- *Sony* have signed an agreement with Vitosha for the distribution of recordings;
- *PolyGram* and *Warner* have signed licensing agreements with *Virginia* and *Orfei* respectively;
- *EMI* plans to sign an agreement with a local distributor in 1996;
- *Orfei*, established in 1994, will be producing and distributing the products of *WVG* in Bulgaria.

There are independent companies in Bulgaria which have appeared in the last few years: *Folktone* specialises in folk music; *Mega Music* (unrelated to the eponymous Danish company); *Riva Sound* and *Gega*. The latter is a

Bulgarian-French partnership and specialises in classical, religious and folk music with 75% devoted to Bulgarian music.

The expansion of the legal sound recording market, the more stringent quality and variety requirements etc., coupled with severe measures against violations may gradually push counterfeit products out of the market.

Decree N 87 of the Council of Ministers was issued in 1996 and envisaged procedures for the verification of the right to reproduce and distribute sound and video recordings. It also strengthens the authority of institutions tasked with protecting copyrights and official bodies responsible for the observance of the law and the application of its provisions.

Bulgarian authors established their own society in 1992 called *Musicautor* whose main objective is management and protection of the rights of authors during live performances of their music and on recordings. *Musicautor* acts as an agent to 1000 Bulgarian composers and authors and authors from over 90 countries on the grounds of mutual representation agreements signed with 34 kindred societies world-wide. The Bulgarian Society acts as an exclusive representative of foreign authors on the territory of Bulgaria. Society revenues from copyrights proceeds have increased from \$134,327 over the 17 months between 1993-1994 to \$220,131 in 1995. /4/

The Bulgarian Association of Music Producers (BAMP) at the IFPI was founded on January 7th, 1996 as a regional subsidiary. The producer companies *Mega*, *Virginia* and *Sofia* joined the association and the membership of *Orfei*, *Ara* and *Vitosha* is pending. The intention is to incorporate all legally operating producers.

In March 1996, Sofia hosted a meeting of Bulgarian organisations, IFPI and representatives of the biggest world recording companies which are exhibiting a growing interest in Bulgaria. Observers forecast a Bulgarian market comparable in size and value of sales to that in Greece. Data provided by the Bulgarian subsidiary of IFPI - BAMP, published in the *Financial Times* (13.03.1996) presents the record market in Bulgaria in this way:

Table 1
Legal record sales 1994-1995

	(quantity in millions)	
	1994	1995
cassettes	0.8	1.36 (+70%)
CDs	0.04	0.045 (+12%)
Value(\$million)	1.5	3.0 (+100%)

/The percentages in brackets reflect the increase against the preceding year/

Table 2
Pirate sales 1994-1995

	/quantity in millions/	
	1994	1995
cassettes	5.0	4.5 (-10%)
CDs	0.47	1.1 (+134%)
Value(\$millions)	7.1	15.0 (+111%)

/The percentages in brackets reflect the increase or decrease against the preceding year/

The strict observance and enforcement of adopted laws and regulations in the sound recording industry and market and the stringent imposition of legal sanctions will rid the market of illegally produced and distributed sound recordings. Stricter customs regulations would quash the illegal exports of Bulgarian-made CDs and cassettes. This is the road to the gradual integration of Bulgaria in the European and world sound recording industry and market.

8. CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

8.1. Chitalishte (reading clubs)

8.1.1. Purposes and tasks

Reading-clubs are the oldest and most typically Bulgarian of cultural institutions. They date from the middle of the last century and are progenitors of today's arts such as the theatre, music, libraries and museums, as well as broader national cultural expressions such as social cohesiveness, a liberal spirit and pluralism.

In post-Liberation Bulgarian culture Reading-clubs achieved results of especial importance and became established as indigenous centres of culture and education which reinforce national consciousness. Integral part of a trinity which also includes Church and School, Reading-clubs were places of spontaneous artistic expression and centres of autonomous cultural life in every Bulgarian settlement. The totalitarian period saw a policy of placing Reading-clubs under centralised control. Regardless of that, healthy tradition allowed Reading-clubs to retain their democratic principles and independence to a large extent. Since the 1989 start of market reform Reading-clubs have followed the general trend of trying to find a place in the new economic and social environment and civic society, and to reclaim their independence and autonomy. The economic crisis has restrained their vigour and faced them with difficult problems of financial straits, ageing equipment, poor staff professionalism and training, haphazard choice of governors and commercialisation attempts.

The foregoing circumstances determine the definition of purpose and priorities for Reading-clubs:

- to defend their special cultural status as centres of public cultural self-governance at local level, serving the public's needs to find cultural expression and to socialise through the arts
- retaining their position as centres for the expression and safeguarding of traditional culture and folklore
- legal redefinition of their status and activity in line with a market orientated civic society as a guarantee of competitiveness in the arts marketplace
- especial attention to staff training in the new idiom of arts management
- winning the interest of young people through new activities and interaction with schools.

8.1.2. Reading-clubs as a system

The following bodies comprise the sphere of Reading-clubs:

- the Ministry of Culture through the National Reading-clubs, Libraries, Amateur Arts and Regional Arts Policy Center (NCQBLT). This discharges oversight, methodology and financial assistance functions.
- similar functions are discharged by municipalities' culture departments
- Reading-clubs are legal entities with elected Governors

- Relations between Reading-clubs Governors and local councils are on the basis of dialogue and mutual coordination on an equal basis. Local and regional arts events are scheduled and carried out jointly

- Reading-clubs and arts personalities on the National Expert Council and the National Reading-clubs Council mediate between Reading-clubs and central government

Table 1
Reading-clubs numbers, capacity and dynamics

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Number of Reading-clubs					
total	4297	4255	4246	4246	4228
urban	541	555	549	549	546
rural	3756	3700	3708	3700	3682
Number of Reading-clubs libraries		3806	5762	3751	3727
total library stock (thousands of volumes)		37423	37232	37115	36996
library lending (thousands of volumes)		17911	16733	17042	17826
registered readers (thousands)		1115	951	925	906
Number of Reading-clubs cinemas	1676	n.a.	94	55	42
cinemagoers (thousands)	8173	n.a.	362	88	49
Number of courses and amateur arts events		52501	57311	53420	59759
participants (thousands)		197	201	191	203

Source: NCQBLT

During 1992-'94 Reading-clubs numbers declined somewhat mainly as a result of closures in villages. Despite the fall in readers library lending increased. The number of cinemas fell sharply due to the restructuring of the cinema system. Filmgoers fell sharply too. Foreign language and amateur arts courses grew, as did attendees.

Funding

Reading-clubs budgets comprise municipal money and direct revenue. The Ministry of Culture Board, and now the NCQBLT, disburse money for individual Reading-clubs to mark local anniversaries, meet urgent commitments or implement arts projects.

Table 2
Reading-clubs revenues by source

(thousands of leva)

Revenue source	1991	1992	1993	1994
Total	77 221	264 676	384 028	571 632
exchequer subsidies	43 063	215 208	303 452	443 109
direct revenues		13 790	22 104	34 991
sponsorship	3 627	6 777	9 235	14 983

Source: Ministry of Culture, Finance and Economics Office

Table 3
Reading-clubs spending by type

(thousands of leva)

Expenditure type	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
Total spending	61 047	264 437	351 648	500 049	730 303
salaries and insurance		111 932	172 114	345 462	480 891
core activity				148 163	190 627
investment				6 424	55 527
arts events and amateur arts	9 754	14 534	18 101	103 287	
Reading-clubs' proportion of total arts spending	12.2%	15.9%	15.6%	14.1%	14.1%
Reading-clubs' proportion of municipal arts spending	34%	39.6%	39.3%	38.1%	37.1%

Sources: Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Culture Finance and Economics Office

Table 4
Reading-clubs spending on amateur arts

(thousands of leva)

	1991	1992	1993	1994
Expenditure	6502	10213	12481	71125
amateur arts proportion of total Reading-clubs spending	14.2%	3.8%	3.5%	14.2%

Source: Ministry of Culture, Finance and Economics Office

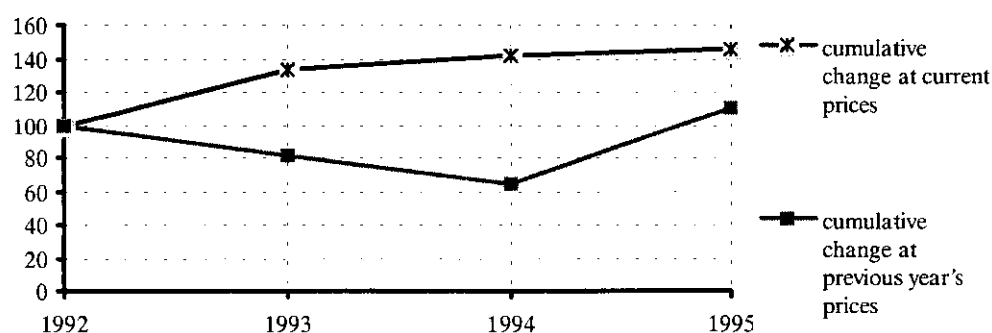
Table 5
Reading-clubs and amateur arts spending dynamics, 1992-1995

(millions of leva)

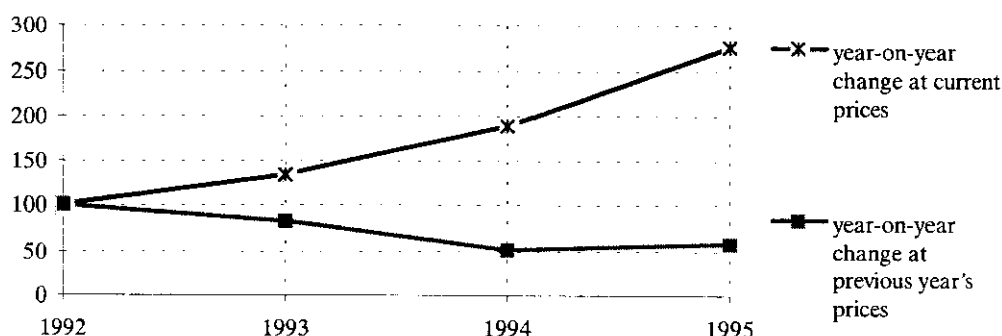
	1992	1993	1994	1995
Subsidy at current prices	264	352	500	730
subsidy at previous year's prices	147	214.7	225.3	549.2
year-on-year change		133.3	142	146
year-on-year change at previous year's prices		81.3	64	109.8
subsidy at 1992 prices	264	214.7	137.5	151
year-on-year index	100	133.3	189.3	276.5
index, 1992=100	100	81.3	52	57.2

Source: Ministry of Finance

Graph 1
Reading-clubs and amateur arts subsidy cumulative change



Graph 2
Reading-clubs and amateur arts subsidy indexed change



Reading-clubs revenues are essentially exchequer subsidies. But despite their modest 8-10% proportion direct revenues and sponsorship have grown in recent years.

Reading-clubs account for 14-16% of total, and 37-40% of municipal culture spending. Although spending shows nominal year-on-year increases, the purchasing power of funding has declined, with the notable exception of 1995. While nominal spending between 1992 and 1995 has grown by 276.5%, accounting for inflation shows a drop to 57.2%; the 730 mln.BGL given Reading-clubs in 1995 is equal to 151 mln.BGL at 1992 prices.

The greatest proportion of Reading-clubs spending goes on staff. While mean salary and social insurance bills in 1994-'5 came to 44-46% of all exchequer arts spending and 50-51% of municipal arts spending, for Reading-clubs the proportion was 66-69%. Keeping core activities going came to 26-30%. 1994 saw a jump in spending on the arts and amateur arts. After the significant fall of 1992-'3, in 1994 amateur arts' proportion leapt from 3.5% to 14.%.

Being independent, Reading-clubs may increase spending on the back of increased direct revenues from core or subsidiary activities.

Staff

Table 6
Reading-clubs staff by educational attainment

Number	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
degree level	5271	4906	4130	2260	2465	3390
secondary/specialist secondary	11,740	10,600	9766	9666	10,254	10,296
primary	2636	2331	3100	4372	4400	4380
other (including college-level)	4312	4263	3770	2982	3331	3200

Source: NCQBLT

N. B.: no data regarding staff educational attainments and qualifications was collected or kept between 1991 and 1994, and no numbers or sociological analyses of such staff were logged. During 1995 the Ministry of Culture restored a bank of such data concerning 1600 Reading-clubs. Table 5 data is derived from this source and factored up using more detailed surviving records from Ruse and Loveq oblasts, as well as by comparable statistical analysis, to represent the nationwide situation.

Largest group among Reading-clubs staff remain people with secondary and specialist secondary education. The number of graduates grew by 50% in 1995 compared to the preceding year: a clear sign of redeployment in the face of unemployment. Until 1985 the Committee for Culture ran a comparatively well structured staff training and development system for Reading-clubs personnel. This took two basic routes: short and medium term courses, and longer term education in subjects like librarianship, public arts management, folk arts, applied arts, et c. at specialised secondary schools or colleges. The system stopped functioning after 1989. Some *ad-hoc* attempts at organising mainly short-term courses under Public Reading-clubs Union auspices by regional Reading-clubs Councils stand out.

8.1.3. Legislation

The 1927 Public Reading-clubs Act put Reading-clubs under Ministry of Public Education control. Towns of up to 10,000 were limited to one Reading-clubs. The Ministry set up the Reading-clubs Council chaired by the minister. Each town and village had to run a Reading-clubs fund for upkeep purposes. The fund included 50 decares of land granted from state landholdings in the vicinity of each settlement by the Central Office of Farming. Reading-clubs funds and profits were freed of tax. The Ministry set up a Public Reading-clubs Fund managed by the minister to help Reading-clubs in poor areas. The Ministry also helped Reading-clubs with books and subsidies. Every council had to grant suitable land for the building of Reading-clubs premises, and to assist construction.

The 1941 Public Reading Rooms Act limited Reading-clubs to one for every 20,000 inhabitants. Towns exceeding that total had to have a Reading-clubs Council. The Supreme Reading-clubs Council kept a list of compulsory books and updated it triennially. Reading-clubs Members were full, associate, charity and honorary. Boards of Governors called biennial activists' meetings to discuss furthering Reading-clubs aims. As in the 1927 Act, the Ministry of Agriculture and Official Property granted Reading-clubs up to 50 decares of state land. Population centres without Reading-clubs were to collect Reading-clubs requisites and open public libraries where conditions permitted. The Prosveta i kultura Fund was set up at the Supreme Reading-clubs Council to encourage Reading-clubs and arts development.

The 1945 Reading-clubs Administrative Act defines Reading-clubs as free and democratic institutions for disseminating arts and education among the public. Public Reading-clubs and their Unions were put under the Ministry of Propaganda. The Supreme Reading-clubs Council had to call Reading-clubs and Reading-clubs Unions national congresses. With the minister's permission Reading-clubs could mortgage real estate except those building which housed the library, reference room and hall. All Reading-clubs were made members of County Reading-clubs Unions.

The 9 October 1996 Public Reading-clubs Act

After the Copyright Act, the Public Reading Rooms Act is the second piece of arts legislation adopted during the years of democratic transition. Several Bills were debated and dropped between 1991 and 1996, as well as

being discussed in Reading-clubs circles and the arts media. The new Act is an example of the practical effect of public discussion on legislation. The greatest improvements adopted as a result of public discussion are these:

- Reading-clubs are explicitly defined as traditional and self-governing Bulgarian cultural and educational associations in populated centres
- Apart from core Reading-clubs activity the Act permits subsidiary activities, as well as corporate membership by associations, cooperatives and companies. Reading-clubs are given *gratis* possession of premises and real estate, their title to real estate including land is restored, they gain the right to a 50 decare allotment from municipal lands, and they are freed from all local rates and national taxes and duties on core activities and property linked to such core activities. This protection and encouragement under the Act makes possible an *economic strengthening of Reading-clubs*
- The Minister of Culture's rights over Reading-clubs' properties, and his right to intervene in Reading-clubs autonomy are exercisable only upon judicial approval. Also provided are a National Reading-clubs Council as a consultative body, and Reading-clubs' right to associate in Reading-clubs Unions for the defence of their interests.

In this way the new Public Reading-clubs Act manages to agglomerate most legislative features which have stood the test of time, and combine them with modern liberal principles of arts development.

8.2. Libraries

8.2.1. Purposes and tasks

In Bulgaria libraries where books are collected, kept, organised and lent are *traditional, numerous and widely used cultural institutions*. Library infrastructure is intertwined with Reading-clubs, schools and colleges and has acted, since the end of the last century, as a basic cultural development and education element. After 1944 the library system was extensively developed and used according to central planning principles. *Today it needs restructuring* to retain and utilise valuable experience and resources while shedding ineffective organisational patterns. Local and international experts have made systematic studies, analyses and assessments of libraries in recent years. Their conclusions confirm libraries' potential for functioning in a modern way. This modernisation of libraries and redefinition of their aims needs to be two-fold: *legislative and technological*.

The need for a new legislative framework for Bulgarian libraries arises from the evolution of a democratic society and information growth. Amid social change libraries have to attain and maintain the status of modern information and cultural centres. To be satisfactory, legislation has to provide conditions for liberalisation and the encouragement of economic independence and enterprise, as well as financial backing for libraries. It must also direct efforts at integrating their resources in a national libraries fund.

Introducing modern information management and equipment into libraries is a basic condition for realising both their consumer potential to the maximum, and for integrating their resources into the worldwide information exchange.

Libraries' current state and needs formulate these *practical goals*:

- proactively to seek ways of interconnecting libraries and make the concept of a national libraries fund a reality
- to create an automated, telecommunications-based *integrated libraries system*: the phased completion of the Automated National Libraries Information Network (NABIM)
- to strengthen and develop *local level service* by turning provincial general-access libraries into cultural centres of a wide spectrum of educational initiatives and artistic activity
- to introduce staff training aimed at creating *a modern library manager culture* dedicated to reader service and offering assistance to research.

8.2.2. The library network

The network of libraries *comprises*:

- *the Sv Sv Kiril i Metodiy National Library*: a separate entity at Ministry of Culture funding which: collects and keeps all information media; runs the Bulgarian Letters Archive; participates in inter-library lending; issues bibliographical registrations to all indigenous publications; carries out research into library management, bibliography, book and documentary heritage conservation; offers expert services to other libraries; and is the main NABIM centre
- *Five central science libraries* offering subject-specific library services and conducting research, consultancy and methodology functions. They are funded by the bodies which run them
- *Higher educational establishment libraries* specialising in educational texts and serve students, lecturers and scientists. They are funded by the relevant establishment
- *26 regional libraries* which run general library services and local history research, as well as coordinating and aiding libraries in their region. They are funded by local authorities
- *Reading-clubs libraries* offering general public library facilities to local people and schools. They assist smaller local libraries and are local authority funded
- *City libraries* which offer local-area library services, run branch libraries and assist Reading-clubs and school libraries. They are local authority funded
- *School libraries*
- *Specialised libraries* at scientific institutions, collections, museums, churches and other bodies
- *Special needs libraries* for people with disabilities, visually challenged people, prisoners, *et c.*

The Ministry of Culture is collating a national libraries register, to include all libraries with over 4000 titles. *National management* falls to the Ministry of Culture through the Libraries Office of the NCQBLTRK. This is assisted methodologically by the National Library.

A non-governmental organisation with an ever greater recent input into library matters is the *Library and Information Workers' Union* which has

nationwide coverage. A non-governmental body with binding competence on libraries is the Council of Large Libraries' Directors which runs specialist subcommittees.

Table 1
Number, holdings and dynamics of Bulgarian libraries

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Number of libraries					
total	9800	8854	8587	8367	8166
metropolitan			636	597	579
urban	4500	3890	3697	3516	3403
rural	5300	4964	4890	4851	4763
readers (th.)					
total	3426	2437	2297	2178	2140
metropolitan			343	315	324
urban	2431	1733	1633	1536	1526
rural	995	704	664	642	614
volumes (th.)					
total	113,963	118,567	118,112	100,558	100,370
metropolitan			43,919	27,112	27,658
urban	89,799	93,465	92,951	75,556	75,552
rural	24,164	25,102	25,161	25,002	24,818
Lending (th. of volumes)					
total	54,481	40,259	37,174	37,027	38,235
metropolitan			7336	6786	6904
urban	41,942	31,153	28,199	28,030	29,159
rural	12,539	9106	8975	8997	9076
Staff		6844	6723	6646	6567

Source: NSI

N. B. 1. Metropolitan data is included in urban data. 2. Staff numbers include only full-time librarians. Total library staff is 9196.

Figure show a *drop in library numbers* from 9800 in 1985 to 8166 in 1994. Being due in most cases to closures of unviable libraries with low stocks and equipment and poorly trained staff, this does not give cause for undue concern. An analysis of libraries shows 41% with under 4000 titles and thus falling into this very group. 32% of libraries have between 4000 and 10,000 titles and therefore offer a baseline service. The remaining c26% are the country's mainstream libraries with prospects for further development. However, some closures of specialist scientific libraries with big collections and qualified librarians have adversely affected the national library service.

The 1985 to 1994 period has also seen a *drop in readers and lending*. This is explained by the difficulty of supplying libraries with new titles. Acquisition funds were low even before 1989, and have subsequently taken a several-fold drop in both nominal value and purchasing power. Purchases of Bulgarian literature are at a third of normal levels and foreign literature, inasmuch as any at all is available in libraries, is largely donated and thus not necessarily in line with needs. Subscription budgets for foreign periodicals do

not permit even a critical minimum of titles. This leads to an outflow of readers who are disappointed by inadequate library information services. In turn this outflow hits not just library service improvement and development but also the introduction of new ideas into education, science and technology.

The sharp deficit of new information media, especially as regards big regional and specialist scientific libraries, is forcing an activation of contacts with outside bodies, charities, associations and individuals. As a result, the National Library, central science and regional libraries, and individual Reading-clubs libraries have received books, periodicals, computers and reprographic equipment. *The Automated National Library Information Network, NABIM*, launched in 1992, is the library service's centrepiece new technology and modernisation project. NABIM encompasses key libraries at national and sectoral level: those whose collections are of especial importance to national information supply. NABIM's first stages were funded entirely by the Open Society Foundation. During 1992-1995 essential processes were automated in 75% of critical libraries. Some inter-library links foreseen in NABIM are also now live, for instance the National Library catalogue bibliographic descriptors carrier. NABIM library links and access to international information networks will go live when the planned software installation at the NABIM centre in the National Library is completed. NABIM is the most important and palpable cultural reform measure in the Bulgarian library service. Through it, Bulgarian libraries are preparing to participate in international information exchange through the Virtual Library concept. Libraries' technological advance has impacted basic quantity indicators for the past two years. The system as a whole has stabilised and the largest libraries are showing an increase. This is due both to growing information needs and to information sources' reducing affordability.

Funding

Depending on proprietor, libraries get money from either the Ministry of Culture (as is the case especially with the Sv Sv Kiril i Metodiy National Library), or from councils, institutions and higher education bodies.

Table 2

Libraries' revenues by type

(in millions of leva)

Revenue type	1988	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
subsidies:	13	19		78	108		237
-from the Ministry of Culture	4	8	15	24	29	45	72
-from municipalities	9	11		54	79		165
direct revenues				5	10	18	
sponsorship				9	20	78	
total	13	19		92	138		
libraries' proportion of total culture spending	2.6%	3.8%		4.7%	4.7%		4.5%

Source: Ministry of Culture, Office of Finances and Economics

In recent years some 70% of library budget subsidy is disbursed by councils. Library spending (excluding Reading-clubs and school libraries) accounts for 4.5 - 4.7% of national culture spending. Direct revenues and sponsorship show a growth trend. The Open Society Foundation is the main sponsor of large libraries as regards technology, technical literature acquisition and librarian training.

Table 3
Libraries' expenditure by type

(millions of leva)			
Expenditure type	1992	1993	1994
total expenditure	247	363	558
salaries and social insurance	149 (60%)	238 (65%)	345 (62%)
core activity	70	87	150
miscellaneous	28	38	63

Source: Ministry of Culture, Office of Finance and Economics

The spending structure of all libraries (including those at Reading-clubs and in schools and colleges) *shows a primacy of salary and social insurance bills*. Money budgeted for acquisitions, technology, and activities such as library development, is negligible. To pay for such essential needs libraries have to seek side sources. On the background of a general cash deficit the lack of money for renewal and replacement is libraries' most critical problem.

Table 4
National Library revenue and expenditure

(millions of leva)					
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Total revenue	16	24.2	28.8	44.7	67.7
subsidy	15.2	19	24.4	34.7	61
core activity	0.7	1.9	2.6	3.3	5.4
miscellaneous		3.3	1.7	6.6	1.2
Total expenditure	14.9	22.7	26.6	41.5	64.2
salaries and insurance	5.5	10.4	14.4	20.3	43.6
core activity	8.9	9.9	12.1	21.1	
balance	1	1.4	2.1	3.2	3.5
National Library proportion of Ministry of Culture budget	4.4%	4.2%	3.4%	3.1%	3.5%

Source: Ministry of Culture, Finance and Economics Office

Being a national cultural institution, the Sv Sv Kiril i Metodiy National Library is alone in being directly funded by the Ministry of Culture. Spending on it occupies three to four per cent of Ministry budgets, with a reducing trend. The proportion of direct income from core and subsidiary activities, services and donations is growing. In 1991 it was 4.3% of overall revenues, growing to 21.3% in 1992 and 22.1 in 1994. Some 70% of direct National Library income is from publishing, photocopying and reader registration fees. Expenditure shows a rough unity between staff pay and activity spending, with a gradual growth in the latter. Between seven and nine per cent of all spending is earmarked for development and staff motivation. In 1993 - 1994 - 1995 the Library received subsidies specially for book and periodical subscription acquisitions of 6.6 mln. BGL, 11mln. BGL and 6.3mln. BGL respectively. But even in 1993 this sum was barely a third of that needed.

Library staff

Degrees in librarianship are granted by the specialised Departments of Librarianship at the Sv Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia and the Sv Sv Kiril i Metodiy Higher Technical College. Semi-higher education in the subject is available at the Institute of Librarianship in Sofia which reports to the Ministry of Culture. In the past short courses ran by the National Library also issued librarianship qualifications.

Table 5
Library staff by function

	1994
Librarians	6567
scientists	62
data processing staff	52
managerial staff	40
technical staff	705
others	1770
total	9196

Source: Ministry of Culture

8.2.3. Legislative provision

The first Bulgarian legislation affecting libraries dates from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and has an ad-hoc character: the 1897 Printed Matter Depositions Act, the 1909, 1921 and 1924 Public Education Acts, the 1920 Affordable Public Libraries Act, the 1927, 1941 and 1945 Public Reading-clubs Acts, plus Byelaws and Regulations for Sofia and Plovdiv libraries. These covered the work of certain types of library or certain library functions and are no longer of value to libraries.

The Deposit Act has played a continuous role throughout the history of Bulgarian libraries. It enjoins Bulgarian publishers to deposit samples of all printed matter at the National Library. The Act has gone through three editions (1920, 1925 and 1945) and has as its aim the creation and regular updating of an archive of Bulgarian letters. During 1976 the Act was replaced by Decree No 1367 for the Deposit of Printed and Miscellaneous Matter which stipulated a new compulsory floor of 20 examples. Problems solved through this include helping the National Library's international exchanges and augmenting regional and sectoral libraries.

After 1944 questions of library functions, activities and management were settled by legislation. Two Council of Ministers Decrees, from 1957 and 1970, pertain to the creation of an uniform libraries system.

Even though it remains unpublished, Decree No 2 of 1970 has had a great effect on library development for over two decades. It played a positive role for its time, being in strict tune with the then-regimented and highly centralised administrative structure of the country. The Decree imposed an

organisational structure on libraries which to a large extent ignored tradition and denied libraries the ability to act jointly, stunting their initiative.

Since 1990 the Ministry of Culture has, together with leading library experts, tabled several proposals for Library and National Library Bills. This is an attempt to regulate libraries' social, financial and administrative status, distribute their functions and efficiently coordinate their interaction as part of a national system. The Bills have not been included in Parliamentary agendas.

A 1994 Council of Ministers Decree defined the status of the St. St. Cyril i Metodius National Library as part of the community of national cultural institutions.

Council of Ministers Decree No 19 of 1996 attempted to regulate different libraries' status and their integration in an effective national network. After a short time it was repealed by Decree No 165 due to changes elsewhere.

Currently the libraries system effectively lacks a legislative framework.

8.3. Music and dance

8.3.1. Entities and management

Public music, in its contemporary mode of concerts and performances, began in Bulgaria before 1878. Institutions had to wait until after Bulgarian independence, when the first symphony orchestra and opera company were formed and the first conservatoire opened.

Up until 1944 the state kept only one symphony orchestra, one opera, one conservatoire and one academy of music. The Union of Bulgarian Singers' roll listed 160 Acapella amateur choirs. Most big cities had symphony orchestras and chamber music groups which formed the core of provincial artistic life.

After 1944 music, along with other art, entered a phase of extensive expansion. The number of national philharmonias and orchestras grew to 15 and there were nine operas. Twelve national and county folk song and dance ensembles were created.

Musical life was managed in a highly *centralised* fashion during that period. Every music or dance group had to have its repertoire approved by various administrative structures at the Committee for Culture: the then-instrument of national arts policy. Contemporary requirements feature compulsory inclusion of Bulgarian or Soviet works.

Both music and dance groups and impresario/commercial organisations were *directly and completely funded by the exchequer*. Their entire revenues were rolled back into the exchequer which then paid salaries. This was in fact the principle of the entire system of institutes and organisations during the command economy period.

Music and dance continued under the centralised model until the close of 1992. It depended almost entirely on the state for funding. Constant subsidy cuts forced managements to pay most of the money given in salaries. Whatever was left was insufficient to maintain the vast collection of props. Money for genuine creative work was even shorter.

After 1989, attempts were made to avoid over-centralisation and bureaucracy but thorough structural reform is still to come. A 19 July 1993 Council of Ministers Decree created an entity called *the National Music and Dance Centre* at the Ministry of Arts as an instrument of arts policy in music and dance. In 1996, another cabinet decree removed the Centre's separate identity.

The Centre's *functional specification includes these core functions and tasks:*

- to assist creativity and development and help the distribution of Bulgarian music and dance
- to stimulate the diffusion of Bulgarian music and dance specimens of excellence, both heritage and contemporary
- to monitor and analyse the state of Bulgarian music
- to prepare and table that part of Ministry budget pertaining to music and dance
- to oversee and document the spending of national subsidy disbursements
- to monitor the husbanding of national property
- to table rulemaking proposals
- to create and manage an Uniform Register of Entities in music and dance
- to contact and liaise with official and unofficial bodies and organisations, groups and artists at home and abroad
- to perform music and dance information services.

Two Experts' Committees with consultative powers sit at the National Centre: one for music and one for music performing.

Sixteen regional Muzika agencies are active outside the capital to organise musical life at a local level. They are self-supporting.

8.3.2. Music and dance entities

Numbers, structure and distribution. Bulgaria has 15 symphony and philharmonic orchestras, of which eight are national and six provincial. Also national are the six operas and one comic opera theatre, as well as the Arabesk ballet studio. Of 12 folk ensembles, two are national and the rest — municipal. No information exists about municipal opera and symphony groups, amateur formations, independent private groups, choirs and variety performers. NSI (the National Statistics Institute) does not collect such data.

National musical formations are based in the capital and some of the largest cities. Their number has remained unchanged in the years of transition, as have municipal groups' numbers. Bulgaria is seen as rather 'saturated' musically, being at the forefront of European countries in terms of musical groupings.

Staff. An analysis of music and dance formations' artistic and technical staff shows no significant changes over the past five years. The rather high numbers of artistic managers stands out. Possibly this includes administrative staff.

Table 1
Artistic and technical staff of state opera and comic opera companies

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Soloists	194	194	188	176	176
choristers	393	394	389	372	372
orchestra players	507	509	500	481	481
ballet dancers	237	237	229	221	221
artistic managers (directors, producers <i>et c</i>)	117	116	112	108	108
technical staff	741	735	725	654	654

Source: National Music and Dance Centre

Table 2
Arabesk Ballet Studio

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
dancers	21	21	21	21	23
artistic managers (directors, producers, <i>et c</i>)	4	4	4	4	5
technical staff	9	9	9	9	9

Source: National Music and Dance Centre

Table 3
State folk ensembles

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Soloists	38	36	35	34	34
dancers	83	85	88	87	87
orchestra players	47	47	45	41	41
artistic managers (directors, producers <i>et c</i>)	22	22	22	22	22
technical staff	20	20	16	16	16

Source: National Music and Dance Center

Table 4
State symphony orchestras' artistic and technical staff

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Orchestra players	495	490	490	483	483
artistic managers (directors, producers <i>et c</i>)	62	62	60	59	59
technical staff	50	50	48	45	45

Source: National Music and Dance Center

8.3.3. Funding

National music and dance formations are largely Ministry of Culture funded. The exchequer foots the bills of eight national symphony orchestras (philharmonias), six operas, a comic opera, a ballet studio, a national choir and two national folk song and dance ensembles.

National music companies' revenues. Since 1991 national companies have been free to develop own revenues to complement exchequer support. But subsidiary income remains too low to positively affect finances. They stem

largely from letting premises and various contracts. Orchestra and opera sponsorship is rather limited.

Table 5
State opera and comic opera companies' revenues

(thousands of leva)

Revenue type	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
subsidies					
- Ministry of Culture	42,407	62,111	85,286	151,118	20,202
- municipalities	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5050
- miscellaneous contracts	4039	6503	3274	20,599	39,496
direct revenues	866	2551	4727	8042	n.a.
sponsorship	n.a.	n.a.	13,615	n.a.	n.a.
total	47,312	71,165	106,902	179,759	25,476

Source: Ministry of Culture, Finance and Economics Office

Table 6
State symphony orchestras and ensembles' revenues

(thousands of leva)

Revenue type	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
subsidies					
- Ministry of Culture	18,894	28,876	37,027	64,255	107,207
- municipalities	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
- miscellaneous	1276	3010	3118	10,946	26,792
direct revenues	704	1033	1505	3755	7359
sponsorship			3966		
total	20,874	32,919	45,616	78,946	141,358

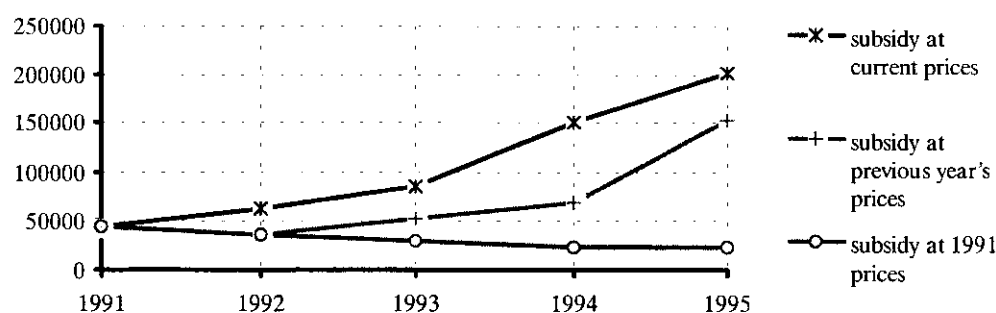
Source: Ministry of Culture, Office of Finance and Economics

Exchequer subsidy for the opera has grown considerably in nominal terms between 1991 and 1995. But accounting for inflation shows a constant year-on-year drop in subsidy, except for the last year (1995) where it increased by 0.6%. Overall, inflation over the period has cut the value of the subsidy by 45%.

Graph 1

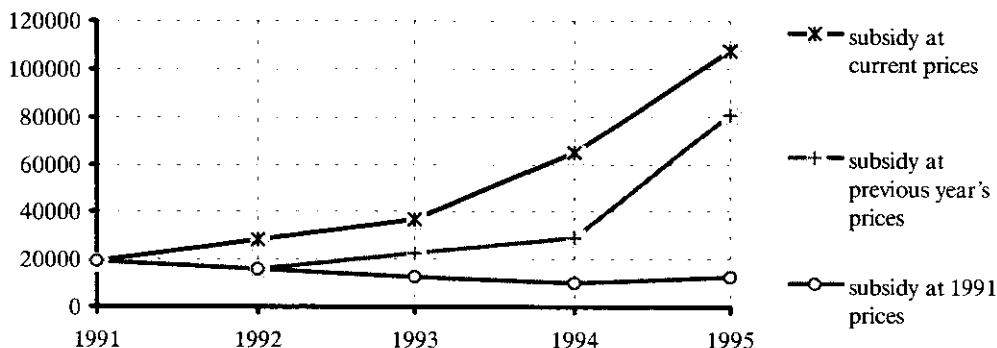
State opera and comic opera companies' subsidy dynamics

(thousands of leva)



The situation of orchestras and ensembles is similar. Nominal subsidies are up but in real terms they have fallen every year except 1995 when they rose significantly (25.5%). Accounting for inflation since 1991 shows a constant drop in subsidy.

Graph 2
State symphony orchestras' and ensembles' subsidy dynamics
 (thousands of leva)



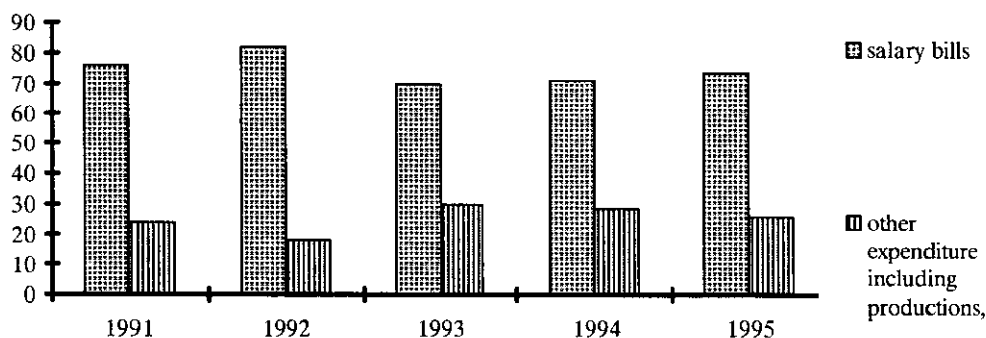
Companies' expenditures. Operas and orchestras' expenditure goes mainly to pay artistic, technical and managerial staff: some 75% of total spend. A quarter is spent on current expenditure, of which no more than 10-15% is for creative purposes: productions, soloists', directors' and producers' fees. No investments are made and this threatens to render performance premises and halls uninhabitable within a short time.

Table 7
State opera and comic opera companies' expenditure
 (thousands of leva)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Staff	33,757	57,167	78,866	119,103	181,973
current expenditure	9564	11,949	33,592	48,401	6411
investment	-	-	-	-	-
miscellaneous	1200	506	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
total	44,521	69,622	112,458	167,504	246,089

Source: Ministry of Culture Office of Finances and Economics

Graph 3
Relative proportion of salary and other expenditures of opera and comic opera companies (per cent)



It is notable that the greatest dip in creative funding came in 1992 (17.9%). In other years, between seven and ten per cent more than that has been available.

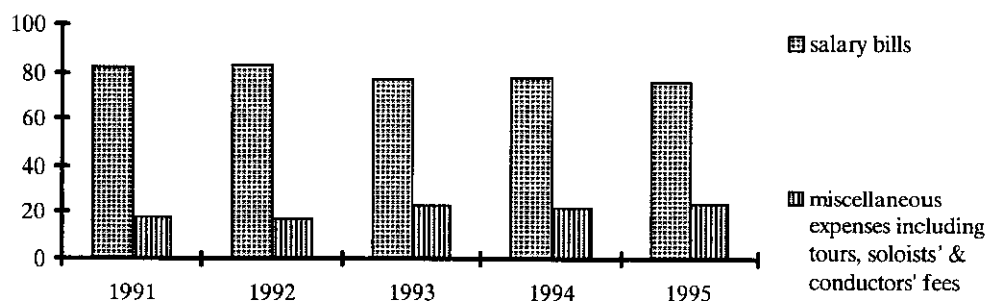
Table 8
State symphony orchestras' and ensembles' expenditure

(thousands of leva)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Staff	15,404	26,657	34,750	54,357	98,374
current expenditure	3262	5366	10,385	15,548	30,565
investment					
miscellaneous	20	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
total	18,686	32,032	45,135	69,905	128,939

Source: Ministry of Culture, Office of Finance and Economics

Graph 4
Relative proportion of salary and other expenditures of symphony orchestras (per cent)



Symphony orchestras show a state similar to operas. The least money for soloists and conductors was available between 1991 and 1993. Following years saw this money grow to an average of 23%.

Project finance. A new element in national arts policy is the disbursement, through the National Music and Dance Centre, of a modest projects assistance sum. Projects are presented to two National Centre committees: on music and on performing art. The 1994 sum was leva 4.5 million; in 1995 it was lv7m. In 1995 the performing arts committee aided 25 projects. Of them, six were to musical formations at exchequer support. The balance of 19 were for festivals, contests, opera productions and musical and educational concerts. The formations aided were orchestras, choirs and folk groups at municipal support and the Muzika agency which is self-supporting. The same year, the music committee financed 17 projects of which two for state-subsidised entities (commissions for Bulgarian music performances). The rest was disbursed mainly for concerts, festivals and Bulgarian music contests, Bulgarian opera productions, issuing compact discs with Bulgarian music, and helping folk groups.

8.3.4. Musical entities' effectivity

If we compare performance totals and average number of performance goes between 1989 (the last command economy year) and the period we are looking at, 1991-1995, we would see a falling trend in both indicators. Performance tours have ceased or fallen drastically. They require extra finance which formations lack and cannot raise. Average visitor numbers have also fallen. But the comparison with 1989 cannot be regarded as telling, since the 'number of visitors' indicator was padded out with sales of tickets to students

and conscripts (normally entire performances would be bought *en-bloc* and almost nobody would turn up). Such accounting tricks are not performed post-1989 because neither the military nor schools can afford to buy performances or concerts, even at the lowest of prices.

Tables below show visitor dynamics, number of events and average bookings:

Table 9

Opera performances and visitors

year	visitors (thousands)	performances	average box office
1989	708	1194	593
1991	350	884	396
1992	358	1094	341
1993	315	799	394
1994	252	615	409
1995	254	740	343

Source: Ministry of Culture Office of Finance and Economics

Operas are notable for the overall fall in performances. The exception is 1992 which gets closest to 1989. Average box office takings have fallen too. The greatest fall is in absolute visitor numbers: significantly down every year.

Table 10

Symphony orchestra concerts and visitors

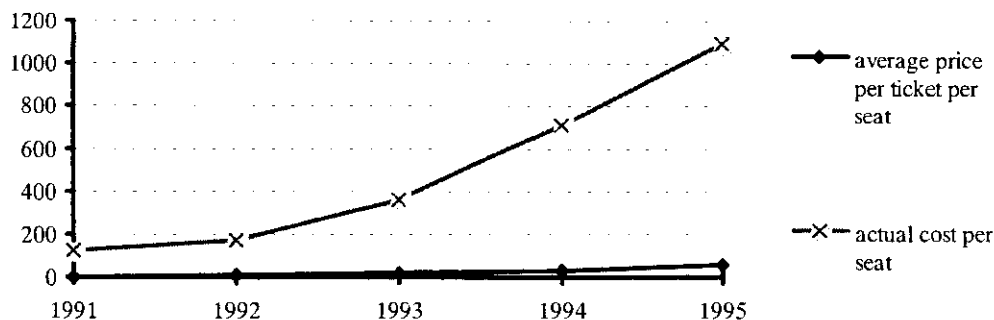
Year	visitors (thousands)	concerts	average box office
1989	230	600	383
1991	254	534	476
1992	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1993	222	551	403
1994	258	894	289
1995	291	616	472

Source: Ministry of Culture Finance and Economics Office

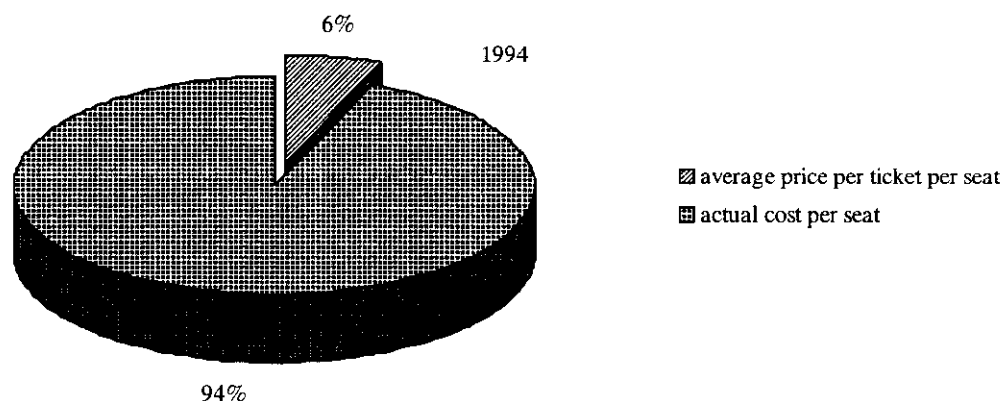
The situation of orchestras is somewhat different. The real growth of all indicators is obvious: visitors, concert numbers and average box-office.

Of interest too is an analysis of the price of an opera ticket and the actual cost of a seat at the opera. The discrepancy is not surprising: it exists everywhere. If we follow the dynamics, we note a slight increase in the proportion met by opera-goers.

Graph 5

Comparative proportion of opera ticket price and actual cost, per one seat

Graph 6
Comparative proportion of symphony concert ticket price and actual cost, per one seat



An analysis of the genuine effectiveness of music and dance formations is difficult, depending as it does not only on the quality of musical events but on public disposable cash and interests: both in very short supply right now.

8.3.5. Problems and prospects

Numerous challenges are faced by national arts policy in music and dance. Solutions lie along the following lines of action:

- a continued process of decentralisation and seeking autonomy for individual formations
- funding to be dispensed at municipal level or to be mixed (national and municipal)
- competition in music and dance production and distribution to be encouraged
- an increase in the National Music and Dance Centre's ability to influence music and dance development by subsidising projects.

8.4 Theater

8.4.1 Historical Notes

The first theatrical performances in Bulgaria were staged at the community cultural centers in Shumen and Lom in 1856. The outset of the Bulgarian theater is a result of the artistic ardor of the founders of the community cultural centers during the Bulgarian national revival period. After the liberation from the Ottoman rule (1878) the theater followed the lines of development of the new Bulgarian state. The state undertook the financing of the theatrical art. The first grant for the formation of a Bulgarian theatrical troupe was given in late 1881.

In 1888, the theatrical troupe OSNOVA was founded in Sofia. On January 1st 1892 the SALZA I SMYAH troupe was set up, which was renamed

to People's Theater in 1904. A modern theatrical building – the National Theater Building – was built up in Sofia and ceremoniously opened in 1907 to meet the needs of this troupe, which had already gained professional recognition.

In 1942, the *Law on Theaters* was passed in Bulgaria, and this law included precise regulations on the structure and management of the theaters. According to this law, the theaters had mixed-type financing provided by the state and the local municipalities. In addition to the district and municipal theaters there were also private theaters and theaters with the community cultural centers. This law also determined the statute of the theatrical education, provided by the theatrical school of the National Theater, supported by the Ministry of Education.

The above law was repealed on June 27th 1949, when a *Decree on Theaters* was issued. The new law referred only to the theaters run by the state and excluded the possibility for the existence of other kinds of theaters, which were stipulated under the previous law. Although both the concepts and the principles laid in this decree have become outdated and have been out of use for long time already, it is still the only law in force which is related directly to the theatrical art.

8.4.2 Lines of Change

After 1989 the cultural policy of the state in the theatrical area has been directed towards:

- *Decentralisation* - establishing real autonomy of the theatrical organisations;
- Achieving an *optimum structure* of the theatrical network;
- Introduction of new *subsidizing mechanisms*, which – in addition to providing the finances for the personnel of the theaters – will also stimulate the creative efforts. Multiplication of the financing schemes for the theatrical activities, which will also lead to new requirements in terms of management of the theaters;
- *Increasing the social effect* of the theatrical productions and wider promulgation of the theatrical activities;

The *new management model for the financing of theaters*, which the governments have been trying to implement since 1989, outlines the following areas of activities of the state authorities:

- New structure and allocation of the state subsidies, which will increase the responsibility of the theater-makers in the process of preparation and realisation of the theatrical products;
- Application of competition principles in the financing of individual theatrical projects, on the basis of equal opportunity for all theatrical organisations: state-run, municipal and private theaters;
- Active involvement of the local authorities (municipalities) in the financing of the theatrical institutions;
- Diversification of the theatrical network through stimulation of the existence of theaters with various legal positions: state-run, municipal, cooperative and private theaters;

- Increasing the social effect of the theatrical productions by way of wider public communication: by increasing the number of the so-called “open stages” (guest-performances by theatrical troupes, presenting accomplished theatrical products);

- Stimulation of the creativity through application of corrective market measures and search for new sources of financing;

1. Effective use of the existing theatrical facilities.

2. The state exercises its management authority in the area of theatrical culture policy through the activity of the *National Center for Theater* (NCT) of the Ministry of Culture, established on the basis of Decree #23 of the Council of Ministers (1991), and Decree #139 of the Council of Ministers (1993) as a non-profit legal entity with the Ministry of Culture. The legal status of NCT as a legal entity was revoked in 1996. According to its statutes, the main functions of NCT are as follows:

1. 1. Assisting the development of the national theatrical culture, as well as the staging of Bulgarian dramas.

3. Developing projects related with the legal provisions in the theatrical area, the results of which are submitted by the Ministry of Culture to the competent legislative bodies.

4. Determining the priorities in the establishing and operating of the theatrical network.”

The major tasks of NCT include the following:

“Preparation of *Section THEATER* of the draft budget of the Ministry of Culture; allocation of the budget resources among the theatrical institution which are run by the state; statements on the priorities in the process of construction and use of the theatrical facilities, which are financed through the budget of the Ministry of Culture; cooperation with the national authorities, institutions and local authorities, non-governmental organisations and individuals, for the purpose of development of the theatrical art; organising, assisting and coordinating national and international theatrical forums, festivals, symposiums ... exchange of theatrical ideas, teams and individual theater-makers; information activities in the area of the theatrical art.” /Statutes of the National Center for Theater/.

Two specialised commissions are functioning with the National Center for Theater: the National Expert Commission for Dramatic Theater and the National Expert Commission for Puppet Theater. The *National Expert Commissions* make statements on the allocation of the resources for the theatrical activities and the subsidising of the theatrical projects.

8.4.3 Legal provisions in effect in the theatrical area

The activities of theaters comply with legal regulations which refer to a wider area of artistic activities.

The Copyright Law and the other relevant laws regulate the position of the artist as an author, equally with all the authors in the other areas of culture. The author's rights are acknowledged for any person who “performs, sings,

plays a musical instrument, recites, dances, plays, directs, conducts, comments or performs in another way a composition, a circus item or a variety show item, as well as a puppet-show item". The law guarantees the protection of the rights of a wide circle of artists and excludes any restricting qualifications.

The *Law on Local Self-government and Local Administration* (promulgated in State Gazette, #24/1995, #49/1995, #65/1995) guarantees the right of the municipalities to make decisions on the cultural issues pertinent to the their territory. Article 54 determines the right of the municipal councils "to assist financially the municipal and other enterprises, whose activities are related with the satisfying of public needs".

Decree #23 of the Council of Ministers (dated February 18th 1991) determines the characteristics of the *non-profit-making organisations in the area of culture*, which "satisfy certain cultural needs and produce no profit". This decree determines the possibility for these organisations to be run by the state, municipalities, cooperatives, public, individuals, foreign legal and natural persons, as well as the transformation, reorganisation and winding up procedures. This decree enables the organisation of this kind to follow their independent policy in terms of both artistic activities and management and financing issues.

Decree #194 of the Council of Ministers (dated September 15th 1994) determines the organisation formula of the "open stages" and lists the theaters which will follow this scheme. This decree ensures the subsidies for the formation of artistic troupes for the purpose of particular theatrical productions, and encourages the exchange of theatrical productions between different theatrical stages.

The *Law on Value-added Tax* continues the existing tax-exemption policy for the theaters, and Article 9, Subparagraph 11 determines the "sale of tickets for museums, libraries, zoos, botanical gardens, art galleries and theaters" as "tax-free deals".

Article 19 of the Regulations for application of the Law on Value-added Tax specifies that the VAT exemption refers to the tickets for theatrical /dramatic, satirical, puppet, musical and ballet/ shows.

8.4.4. Description of the theatrical network in Bulgaria

The state-run theatrical network was built up on a territorial basis: approximately 1/3 of all theaters operating in the country are based in Sofia, and all large cities (former regional administrative centers) have their own theatrical buildings and troupes.

The structure of the state-run theatrical network has not been changed since 1985. In some cases there is obvious discrepancy between the theatrical facilities in certain cities (large theatrical buildings with maintenance and financial difficulties) and incommensurable potential theatergoers' attendance.

Based on a decree of the Council of Ministers (1994), the National Theater in Sofia was awarded the special status of a national cultural institute.

As a consequence of its status this theater is among the highest priorities of the Ministry of Culture and is financed in accordance with a special scheme.

Some of the theaters, which are very important for the cultural life of the capital city, are subsidised by other organisations. Theater *Sofia* and theater *Vazrazhdane* are run and financed by the municipality of Sofia. The *Theater Of The Bulgarian Army*, one of the most distinguished repertoire theaters in Bulgaria, is financed by the Ministry of Defence.

Until 1989 in Bulgaria there were no private theatrical institutions. At the end of 1992 there were 7 operating private theaters with a total of 544 seats, 500 performances per year, attended by a total of 53,592 theatergoers. In 1995 the number of private theaters increased to 10. These theatrical formations, which differ significantly from the state-run theaters, are often set up for the purposes of particular theatrical projects, the troupes have no permanent members, and they are very mobile, performing on different stages.

The *number of performances* per year of the dramatic theaters, after the drastic decline in 1991 (by 38.8% as compared with 1985), has been showing a stable trend of gradual increase. A similar conclusion can be drawn for the *number of tickets sold (level of theatergoers' attendance)*, which decreased by 2,7 times in 1991 as compared with 1985, although this indicator has also been characterised by a trend of slight increase during the last years.

The data referring to the number of performances made are more optimistic as it has been increasing since 1991. The number of performances made in 1994 increased by 16% as compared with 1991.

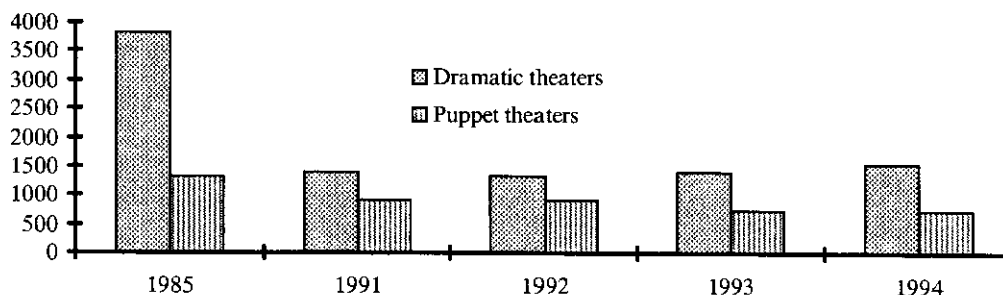
Table 1
Number of theaters and the capacity of theaters in Bulgaria

	/dramatic and puppet theaters/				
	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Number of theaters					
- Total	56	69	68	72	77
- in Sofia		25	24	25	25
Kinds of theaters					
- dramatic theaters	37	48	47	51	55
- puppet theaters	19	21	21	21	22
Seats					
- dramatic theaters	18 328	19 051	19 634	19 634	20 300
- puppet theaters	3 698	3 836	3 948	3 948	3 538
Number of performances					
- dramatic theaters	10 423	6 382	6 140	6 959	7 398
- puppet theaters	6 585	5 532	5 947	5 609	5 777
Number of tickets sold (in thousands)					
- dramatic theaters	3 816	1 394	1 336	1 378	1 534
- puppet theaters	1 314	891	887	745	740

Source: National Institute of Statistics

Chart 1
Number of tickets sold by dramatic and puppet theaters

/in th./



The number of performances in the theaters which are subsidised by the budget has remained almost unchanged during the last years, whereas the level of theatergoers' attendance (number of tickets sold) has been slightly decreasing. Obviously, the trend of slight increase in the total number of performances and tickets sold, which has been observed, can be attributed to the other kinds of theatrical organisations (municipal and private theaters).

Table 2

Number and capacity of the dramatic and puppet theaters, which are run by the state and financed by the Ministry of Culture

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of theaters						
Total	54	54	54	54	54	54
-in Sofia	7	7	7	7	7	7
Number of seats	22 887	23 582	20 770	20 770	20 770	20 770
Number of performances		11 914	12 087	10 258	10 369	10 463
-dramas		6 382	6 140			5 119
-puppet shows		5 532	5 947			5 344
Tickets sold (×1,000)		2 285	2 222	1 803	1 850	1 814

Source: National Center for Theater

The social effect of the theaters can be illustrated by some indicators, shown in the tables below:

Table 3

Number of performances per theater

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Dramatic	282	133	131	136	135
Puppet	347	263	283	267	263

Source: National Institute of Statistics

As illustrated by the above data, after the drastic decrease in the number of performances per theater in 1991 (by 51% as compared with 1985), this indicator has remained almost unchanged since 1991.

Table 4

Number of tickets sold (theatergoers' attendance level) per theater

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Dramatic	103 138	29 056	28 434	27 006	27 892
Puppet	69 182	42 420	42 216	35 487	33 623

Source: National Institute of Statistics

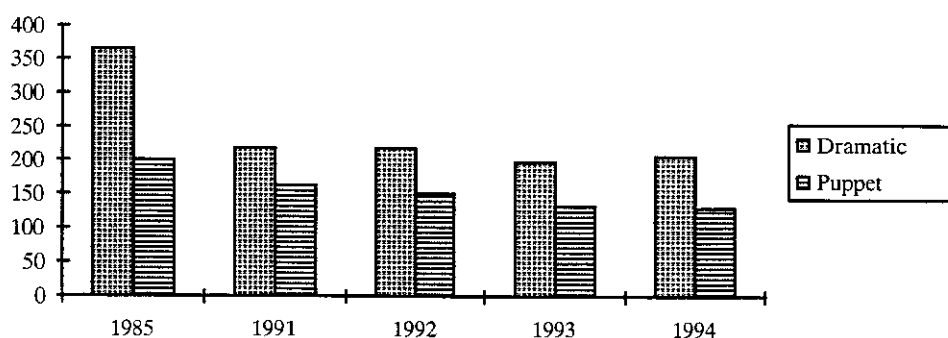
The number of theatergoers in the dramatic theaters has drastically decreased since 1990 (decline of 3.5 times in 1991 as compared with 1985), and the data for 1991 show almost unchanged level of attendance per dramatic theater. The level of attendance in the puppet theaters in 1994 has decreased by 21 % as compared with 1991, and 2.1 times as compared with 1985.

Table 5
Average number of tickets sold per performance

	1985	1991	1992	1993	1994
Dramatic	366	219	218	198	207
Puppet	200	161	149	133	128

Source: National Institute of Statistics

Chart 2
Level of theatergoers' attendance of dramatic and puppet theaters



The decrease in the average theatergoers' attendance per performance was most significant in 1991 as compared with 1985 (a decrease by 40% for dramatic performances and 19% for puppet performances), and the trend of decline continued for the puppet theaters even after 1991 (in 1994: 20% less as compared with 1991). This indicator for the dramatic theaters has been changing insignificantly since 1991.

8.4.5. Financing of the theaters run by the state Breakdown of profit and costs

Table 6
Profit of the state-run theaters, which are subsidised by the Ministry of Culture

Profit	Total	Breakdown of profit by source (x1,000 BG Leva)		
		Subsidy from the state budget	Operating profit (tickets sold)	Others (sponsorship, interest)
1991	81 128	69 823	5 519	5 786
1992	134 468	108 984	9 836	15 648
1993	188 070	146 391	16 361	25 318
1994	295 878	224 729	32 441	38 708
1995	449 842	311 617	63 519	74 706

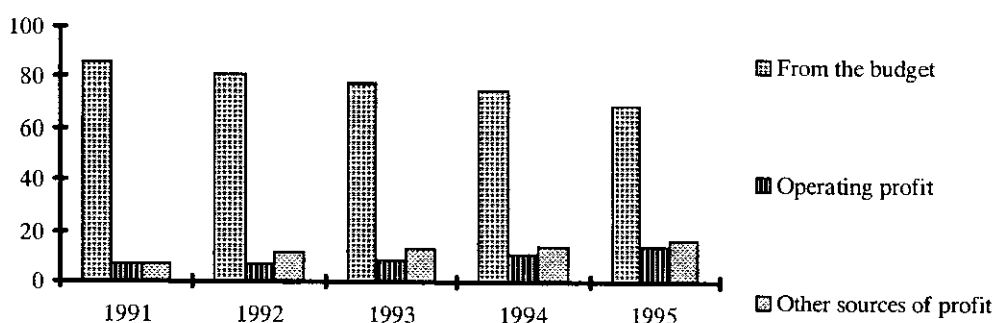
Source: Ministry of Culture

The *relative share of state subsidies* in the total profit has been showing a slow and stable trend of decline, viz. 86% in 1991; 81% in 1992; 77.8% in 1993; 75.9% in 1994; 69.3% in 1995. The *relative share of the operating profit* (profit from tickets sold) has increased from 6.8% in 1991 to 14.1% in 1995. The *relative share of the other sources of profit* (interest, rent from leased property, sponsorship, etc.) has increased from 7.1% in 1991 to 16.6% in 1995.

Chart 3

Breakdown of profit of the state-run theaters

(in percent of total profit)



The above data on the profit in terms of BG Leva show an absolute increase of the corresponding amounts. In terms of *real profit*, however, (which takes into account the rate of inflation during the above period of time), *the subsidies for the theaters from the state budget have decreased significantly.*

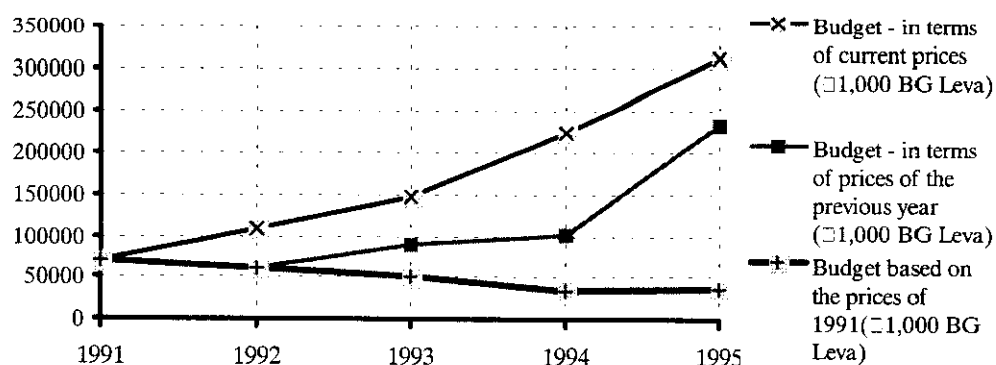
Table 7

Budget subsidies for theaters in the period 1991-1995

Year	Budget - in terms of current prices (×1,000 BG Leva)	Budget - in terms of prices of the previous year (×1,000 BG Leva)	Chain rates of changes (in %) - in terms of prices of the previous year	Budget based on the prices of 1991 (×1,000 BG Leva)	Basis rates of change (in %) - in terms of 1991 prices
1991	69 823	69 823	0.00	69 823	0.00
1992	108 984	60 749	- 12.99	60 749	- 12.99
1993	146 391	89 317	- 18.04	49 792	- 28.68
1994	224 729	101 274	- 30.82	34 441	- 50.67
1995	311 617	234 474	4.33	35 937	- 48.53

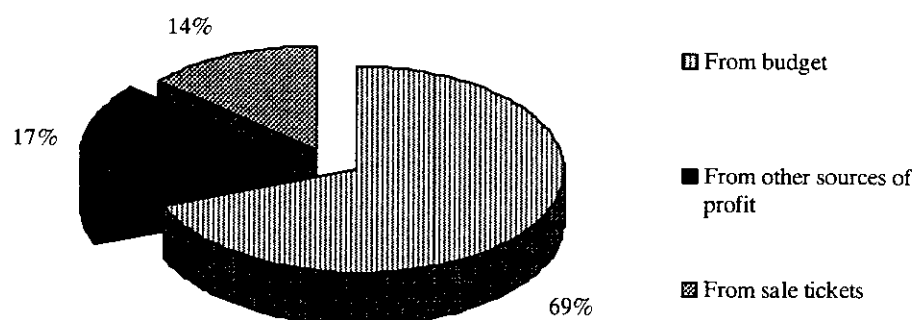
Taking into account the chain and basis indexes of inflation, it can be seen that the real value of the state subsidy for the theaters has been constantly decreasing during the above period of time.

Chart 4
Budget subsidy for the theaters



The average cost of one seat in a theater is much higher than the price of the ticket. The average real cost of one ticket in 1995 was 226 BG Leva, 69% of which were covered by the state budget, 17% - by other sources of profit (interest, rent, sponsorship), and 14% were attributed to the sale price of the ticket.

Chart 5
Breakdown of the cost per ticket



The breakdown of profit and cost of all Bulgarian theaters (including those financed by the Ministry of Culture) in 1994 can be illustrated as follows:

Table 8
Profit of the theaters (dramatic and puppet) in Bulgaria in 1994

Profit	From budget	From tickets sold	Total /including others/
Dramatic theaters	214 864	31 664	285 434
Puppet theaters	39 284	7 938	54 960

Source: National Institute of Statistics

As illustrated in the above table, the relative share of the profit from tickets sold is 11% for the dramatic theaters and 14% for the puppet theaters.

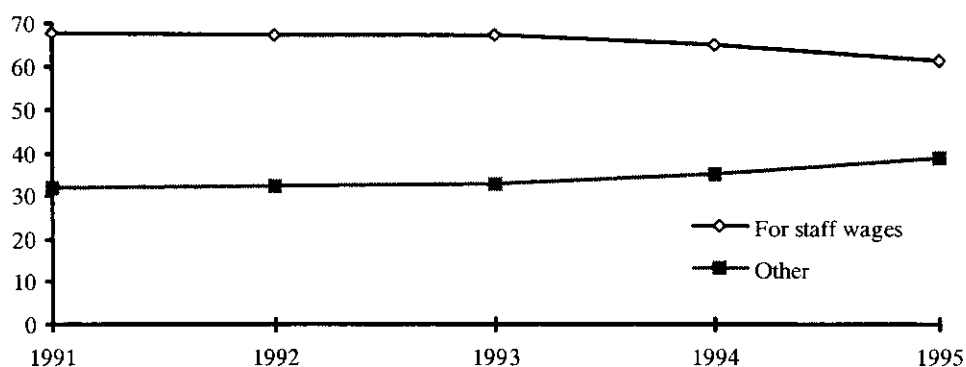
Table 9
Cost of the theaters run by the state (×1,000 BG Leva)

	Total	Wages and Social Security Taxes	Others
1991	73 626	50 033	23 593
1992	125 618	84 716	40 902
1993	183 112	124 261	58 851
1994	267 185	173 043	94 142
1995	422 074	258 122	163 952

Source: Ministry of Culture

The data in Table 9 show that a considerable relative share in the total cost is attributed to wages (labor cost) and social security taxes, and that this relative share stayed almost unchanged until 1994 (approx. 68%). This relative share decreased to 64.7% in 1994, and to 61.1% in 1995. If this trend remains unchanged in the future, it will be a positive indicator for the development of the theaters.

Chart 6
Breakdown of costs of the state-run theaters in the period 1991-1995



New forms of financing

One of the tasks of the National Center for Theater is to develop and implement a mechanism of *subsidising individual theatrical projects*. The allocation of the state subsidy abides by a model which aims at increasing the responsibility for the creation and realisation of the theatrical product. The allocation of the state subsidy is discussed by both specialised commissions: the National Expert Commission for Dramatic Theater, comprising 9 persons, and the National Expert Commission for Puppet Theater, comprising 5 persons. The members of the commissions are appointed on the basis of representation quotas, including representatives of the Bulgarian Union of Actors, the Bulgarian Theater Association, a financial expert, as well as representatives who are appointed by the Minister of Culture.

In a situation when the profit of the theaters from their own sources are of crucial importance, the support for individual projects aims at compensating for the significant trend towards mercantile products. Therefore, the experimental and "non-profit-making" projects, which are very important for the

artistic position of the theaters, should have a priority. All kinds of theatrical organisations – state-run theaters, municipal, private and cooperative theaters – have equal opportunity to apply for state grants.

The grants allocated to individual theatrical projects during the last years have been as follows: 1994 - 2,457,000 BG Leva; 1995 - 6,090,000 BG Leva. The total amount in 1995 was 2.5 times larger as compared with 1994. In terms of relative share, these grants correspond to 1.1% (in 1994) and 1.9% (in 1995) of the total subsidies given to the theaters by the Ministry of Culture.

8.4.6. Personnel potential of the Bulgarian theater

The breakdown of the personnel in the theaters subsidised by the Ministry of Culture is shown in the table below:

Table 10

The theatrical personnel in the state-run dramatic and puppet theaters

	1994	1995
Actors	1 223	959
Artistic management	155	107
Technical personnel	1 316	1 839
Total	2 694	2 905

Source: National Center for Theater

The above data indicate a departure of the artistic personnel (actors and artistic managers) from the state-run theaters – in 1995 their total number has decreased by 23% as compared with 1994. Taking into consideration the position of the actors in the state-run theaters, which is characterised by insecurity and low payment, it is obvious that these artists try to find new areas for their personal activities.

The theatrical artists in Bulgaria are united in the *Union of Actors* - an artistic trade union, representing the interests of its members before the employees and the state institutions. The union has 1,600 members, organised in eight professional guilds. In Bulgaria there are 45 local organisations of this union.

The Bulgarian Union of Actors has ascertained the alarming tendency towards continual decline of the economic position of the artists - decrease of their personal income as a result of the devaluating wages (which are low anyway) and the deficiency of professional assignments (there are no film productions and almost no radio and TV movie productions; the tours of the troupes are hindered by the high transportation cost and the low prices of the theater tickets). Moreover, the situation is aggravated by the lack of tax exemptions in the cases of sponsorship in the area of culture.

8.4.7. Priorities in the cultural policy of the state in the theatrical area. Forms of implementation

The National Center for Theater and the Bulgarian Union of Actors are currently working on a draft *Law on Theater*. This law will regulate the group of issues related with the functioning, structure and financing of the Bulgarian theater. The draft law will be discussed by the Public Council for Theater and will be submitted to the Commission for Culture with the National Assembly at the end of 1996.

One of the major sectors of the reform taking place in the theater is the *decentralisation of its management and financing*. This implies active involvement of the municipalities (local authorities) in support of the theatrical institutions. The Law on Local Self-government and Local Administration of 1991 entitles the municipalities to work in this direction. Agreements for joint responsibility have already been concluded between some theaters and municipalities, stipulating the following financial schemes of support for the theaters: 50% from the state subsidy, 30% from the municipal subsidy, and 20% from the theaters' own resources. Eleven dramatic theaters and 1 puppet theater, based in different cities in the country, have already concluded such agreements. The goal of this process is the gradual assignment of the support for the theatrical organisations to the municipal budgets, whereas the subsidies from the state budget will play only a stimulation role for the artistic activities. The state subsidy will be allocated to productions, tours, festivals, etc.

A special decree of the Council of Ministers (#194 of 1994) regulates the model of financing and management known as "*Open Stages*". This model ensures a subsidy for the formation of dynamic artistic troupes on individual projects. It also creates an opportunity for the audience to see a variety of high-quality guest performances. This aims at encouraging the diversity and volume of theatrical productions on different stages. One dramatic and four puppet theaters are based on this principle. The intention is to expand the application area of this statute, although its principles should be further elaborated. This model is certainly a challenge for the management of the theaters as well.

The *subsidising of artistic projects* in the theatrical area is an established practice. The priority in the competitions for grants are given to experimental and non-profit-making projects. The absolute volume of the subsidy has been increasing: in 1995 the total subsidy increased by 2.5 times as compared with 1994.

The search for alternative forms of financial assistance for the theater in addition to the state subsidies is manifested in the activities of the private *Foundation Idea for Theater*. This foundation was founded in 1991 as a non-profit-making organisation for the purpose of aiding original ideas in the area of stage arts. The foundation's main activities aim at facilitating the contacts between Bulgarian and foreign theaters; stimulating the participation of Bulgarian troupes at international theatrical forums; informative and popular activities related with the trends in the international theater; organisation of international meetings, seminars, theatrical activities. The Idea for Theater foundation has supported over 100 projects so far, in connection with individual productions, guest performances by foreign troupes, grants for individuals. A *Theatrical Almanac* was issued by this foundation in cooperation with the

Bulgarian Union of Actors. In 1995 the foundation organised the International Theatrical *ECOFEST* in the city of Sliven as one of the events of the *Kaleidoscope* program of the European Community.

A *restructuring of the theatrical network* is expected within the framework of the state cultural policy in the theatrical area. According to the existing schemes, the subsidies are allocated to the theatrical troupes and buildings and not to the theatrical activity. It is necessary to establish a network, which comprises various theaters - municipal, cooperative and private theaters, whose theatrical projects will be aided using various resources.

The long-term intentions of the National Center for Theater include:

- Setting up a fund called *Bulgarian Theater* for the purpose of assisting non-standard artistic plans and gifted young people;
- permanent integration of the Bulgarian theater into the European theatrical activities, as well as cultural exchange of artists and productions;
- devising new ways to stimulate the Bulgarian dramaturgy and the staging of Bulgarian plays;
- Step-by-step modernisation of the technical facilities in the Bulgarian theaters.

9. YOUTH, SOCIAL CHANGES AND CULTURAL TRENDS¹

We are witnessing not only a *new* generation, as every new generation bears the potential for innovation, but a *different* generation. The difference results from the conditions under which the socialisation of young people is achieved. While for the preceding generations socialisation was accomplished under the conditions of stable value systems, at present it occurs in an environment of a wholesale crisis of value systems when the old ones have been destroyed and the new ones are germinating. The gist of the matter is that new values and standards of today initially take shape precisely among the young generation, in the absence of the traditional mainstays and normal stability of the value system of society. This is a generation of the transition, a *generation that is the medium of transition*.

On the one hand, the crucial difference between the current socialisation environment and socialisation formerly lies in the generation approximation. Young people have aged in their attitudes and thinking. On the other hand, the generation gap has become radical, fundamental. They fall into different value spheres. The young today are a generation that superficially differs very little from their parents and at the same time the world in which they live is a world apart - a world of new ethics and new attitudes.

By and large, a very ambiguous picture emerges. On the one hand, the young are a social strata with the most potent chance and capabilities to upgrade and to adjust to a society in transition. On the other hand, this is the most threatened social group. The pros and cons of our social reality today are doubled when considering the young generation. More specifically, in any social area it is precisely among the young that we encounter extreme phenomena engendered by the volatile processes underway in Bulgaria. There is an educational boom among the young and again, an unprecedented illiteracy. The young have been granted actual (utilised by them) access to world culture and the same generation exhibits a cultural "depravity" and rampant quasi-cultural consumption on an unprecedented for Bulgaria scale. The young engage in sports far more than before and yet many of their peers destroy their health on a frightening scale in more than one way, currently "hip" in the country. And so on and so forth.

9.1. Youth and education

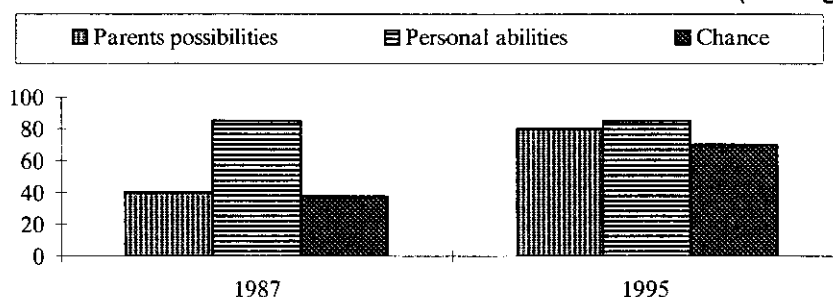
Education as a need. Social changes highlight the fact that there is an increase in the desire to obtain university education. We are witnessing a curious change in the attitudes of generations. In 1987 the older generation was characterised by a greater esteem for higher education compared to young people. In 1995 attitudes reversed: it was the young now who held higher

¹ The text features the results from representative for the country empirical sociological studies of young people, conducted in 1986, 1987, 1990 and 1995 (the so-called "Barometers"), as well as semi-standardised interviews conducted on the classified samples from different social and age groups. The synopsis was completed in December 1995 by a research panel headed by Prof. Dr. Peter-Emile Mitev, commissioned by the Committee for Youth and Children with the Council of Ministers. For the purposes of the current cultural policy review, the revised version of that synopsis was prepared by Dr. Lazar Koprinarov.

education in considerably higher esteem compared to their elders. The explanation may be found in the tougher competition on life's battleground. "Those of my generation who will survive are the cold-blooded and the egoists. They must speak foreign languages, be literate and learn their lessons at school" (interview with a youngster). The picture is equivocal. On the one hand, new and substantial opportunities for success have emerged even for those without university diplomas. On the other hand, education assumes a new meaning precisely in the new environment of opportunities in life's struggle. *Factors in education.* The picture of changes is astounding and overall negative (Bar graph 9.1.1). Periodic surveys of the attitude of university students allows us to locate definitively the change in time (Flow chart 9.1.2).

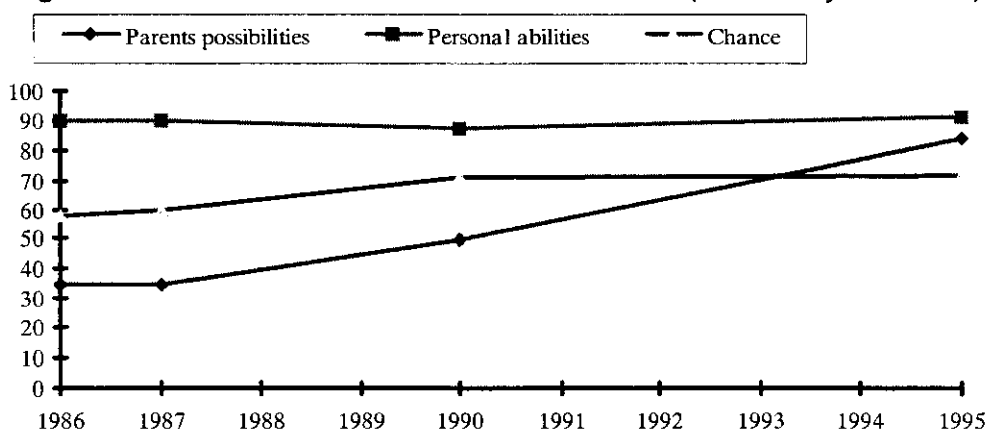
Graph 9.1.1

Which of the following factors is of considerable importance in receiving the education of one's wishes? (Young people)



Graph 9.1.2

Which of the following factors is of considerable importance in receiving the education of one's wishes? (University students)



The social potential of the parents in 1986 and 1987 was two and a half times less important compared to the weight of personal abilities. Today they are almost at a par. The sharp increase in the role afforded chance and the lucky breaks in life is even more indicative. Studies from the 80-s show that Bulgaria's young, unlike the young in other countries, rely overwhelmingly on lucky breaks in life. Today this trend persists and has even been aggravated.

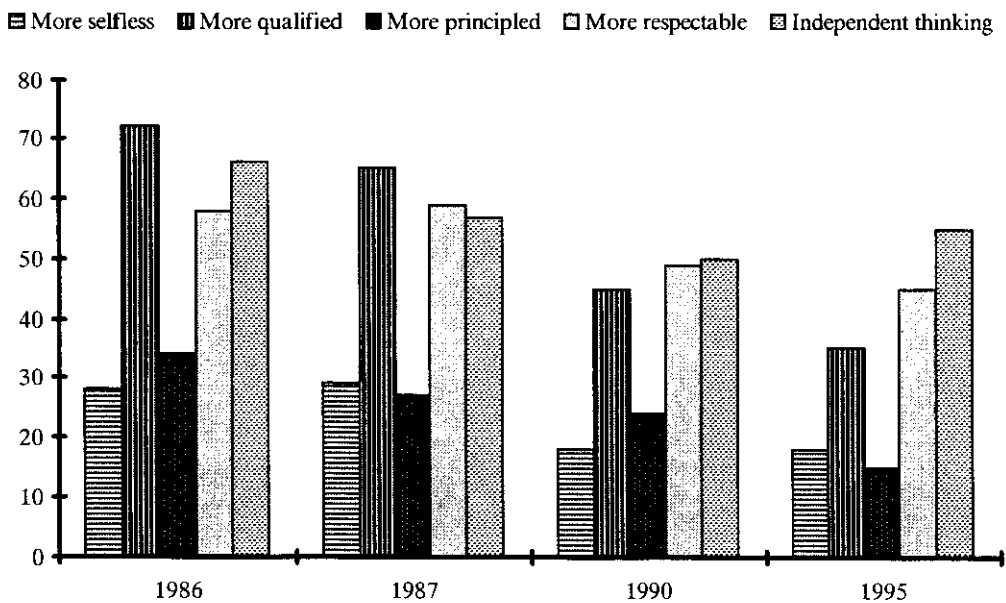
Attitude to teachers

Among the most disturbing facts established by the survey is the considerable loss in image suffered by the teaching profession, both in the eyes

of the young and of the older generation. In only a single instance does the majority of the young discern advantages for today's teachers: with respect to independent thought.

Event in that respect, however, the positive assessment of teachers by the preceding student generation stood higher (Graph 9.1.3.). Clearly, the dividing line in the recent history of the country is directly associated with the increasingly inauspicious attitude to teachers.

Graph 9.1.3.
The image of today's teachers compared to their predecessors
University students



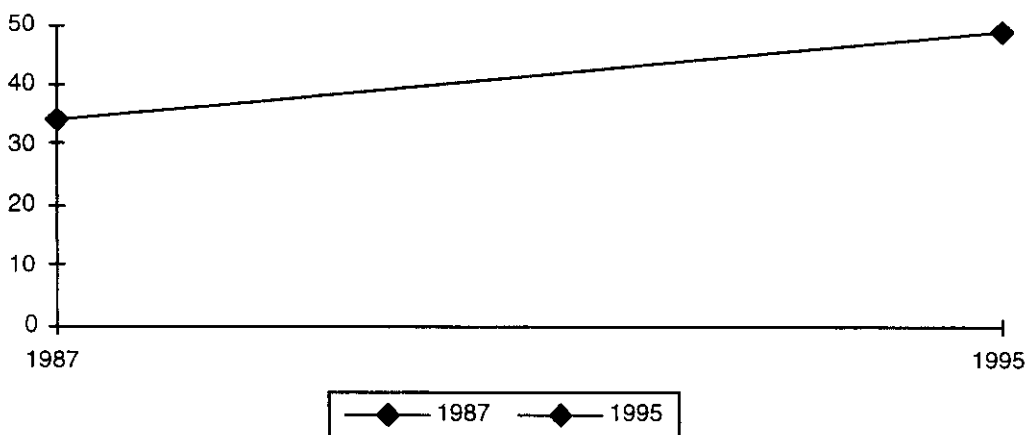
9.2. Relations between the generations

Barometer '95 shows a warming up in relations between youngsters and their parents.

Graph 9.2.1

Have you clashed with your parents?

Reply: "I have not had serious clashes"



While in 1987 a third of the young people had had serious disputes with their parents, today this is true of only half of them. At the same time, the structure of pressure points is reproduced, clashes are primarily caused by daily chores, attitudes to life, education and informal behaviour. We may discern in this the cause for the current calm in the family circle. In 1990 the young and their parents were divided by conflict of a political and perceptual nature; the structure of conflicting situations changed drastically. In 1986 only 4 per cent of university students had reported conflicts with their parents for political reasons. In 1990 - 89 per cent had experienced that. In 1995 - 0.6 per cent! At the same time the incidence of conflicts arising from everyday problems remain relatively steady (in 1986 - 41 per cent, in 1990 - 49 per cent, in 1995 - 45 per cent). In this respect too we are witnessing the consequences of a subsiding political phase of the changes. The political causes for generation conflicts have abated concurrently with it. During the new economically accentuated stage in the transition new dependencies emerge between the two generations. The replies to the following question are representative: "Would you say that without the help of your parents and relatives you personally would be unable to find a proper job, succeed professionally and ensure a sufficient income for your family, solve your housing problem and provide for and raise your children?". The negative replies by the young have increased with respect to every facet of life. Their sense of dependence on their parents has increased. The housing issue is of notable magnitude: every other young person believes he/she cannot resolve it without parental assistance. Only 16 per cent give positive replies without the proviso "at the cost of extreme efforts". Expectations of parental assistance in providing for and raising children have doubled.

The changes in the way of thinking of the young in the new environment are exemplified by their views on independent living, away from parents. Eight years ago the replies of the young overlapped with those of the elderly: after marriage. Today there is a shift in views and the young most often reply: "After getting a job". The psychological heritage of paternalism is declining. The desire of the young to *live independently* has increased. Simultaneously, *the need for parental assistance* has also increased. This contradiction is one of the key issues in the youth medium today. The individual need for independence and the actual space available for independence diverge. Compared to the recent past, the *individual need* has increased while the *actual prospects* have dwindled.

The relatively conflict-free relationship between the young and their parents must be attributed overwhelmingly to the fact that parental attitudes have also changed, compared to the 80s. The trends correspond to those associated with the young: by and large, a liberalisation has occurred. It would be difficult to imagine the present-day dialogue between the generations if parents today provided replies analogous to those of their predecessors. There is a difference: today's parents are yesterday's young or else the generation which, in fact, has been the standard bearer of the new, more liberal outlook of the last twenty years.

Another circumstance has likewise had an impact. The period of political and conceptual conflicts between the generations has evolved into a

divergence of values. The generations nowadays do not confront conflicting situations largely because they revolve in *different value orbits*. The young view the older generation with a certain disdain. Asked to evaluate the attitude of the young to the older generation we were given indicative answers: "Greatly changed. Radically different compared to 6-7 years ago. But today the elderly do not play any role in life and for this reason the young treat them with indifference in most cases, and in many cases with scorn or pity" (interview with a student, aged 18, Sofia). "I have an old grandmother who raised me and brought me up. She is ailing now and crushed mentally by hardships in life. We must understand and respect them because they have suffered from a political system and are confused now by the new one. However, my friends and fellow students do not think so. They are vulgar and offensive toward the elderly" (interview with a girl student, aged 18, Sofia). Such sentiments cannot serve as generalisation tokens but we cannot disregard them. The relationship between generations is characterised by new economic and lifestyle bonds and an intensifying but concealed implicit distance.

9.3 The values crisis

Over a period of less than ten years the attitude of the young toward the social systems of socialism and capitalism has changed twice radically. If we employ the classical terminology of German philosophy we would obtain the following picture: *Thesis: the socialist system* has an advantage (according to data from Barometer '86 and Barometer '87 socialism is superior on all counts, varying between 55 to 80 per cent).

Antithesis: capitalism has an advantage (Barometer '90 displays a fundamental reversal in the social system appraisal; capitalism is at an advantage which varies within comparably similar boundaries.)

Synthesis: confusion (according to Barometer '95 the answer "I don't know" predominates on all counts within approximately similar boundaries.)

There are sufficient grounds for maintaining that the collected data is not typically Bulgarian. A survey conducted in Poland in 1994 by the CEBOS state agency revealed that the Poles cannot define the society they live in. According to some it was still a socialist society, others maintained it was a capitalist society, and still others - the majority - had no clear idea what to call it.

The conceptual confusion affects not only the "earth" of the social fabric but also the "heaven" of religion. Asked if they believe in God, a quarter of the young people give the strange and unusual reply of "I don't know, I am not sure". In all truth it must be said that as early as 1986 there were young people who answered in the same way - both yes and no.

We must refer to something else too. In 1987 the young replied that they believed in God more frequently than their elders. In 1995 however, a complete reversal was observed - the old were more religious than the young. Barometer '90 showed that during the radical phase of the transition, conflict erupted in families between the young and their parents over religious attitudes, something unprecedented earlier and not found since then.

The replies of "I don't know" are observed in relation to decisions on diverse ethical dilemmas.

9.4. Cultural trends

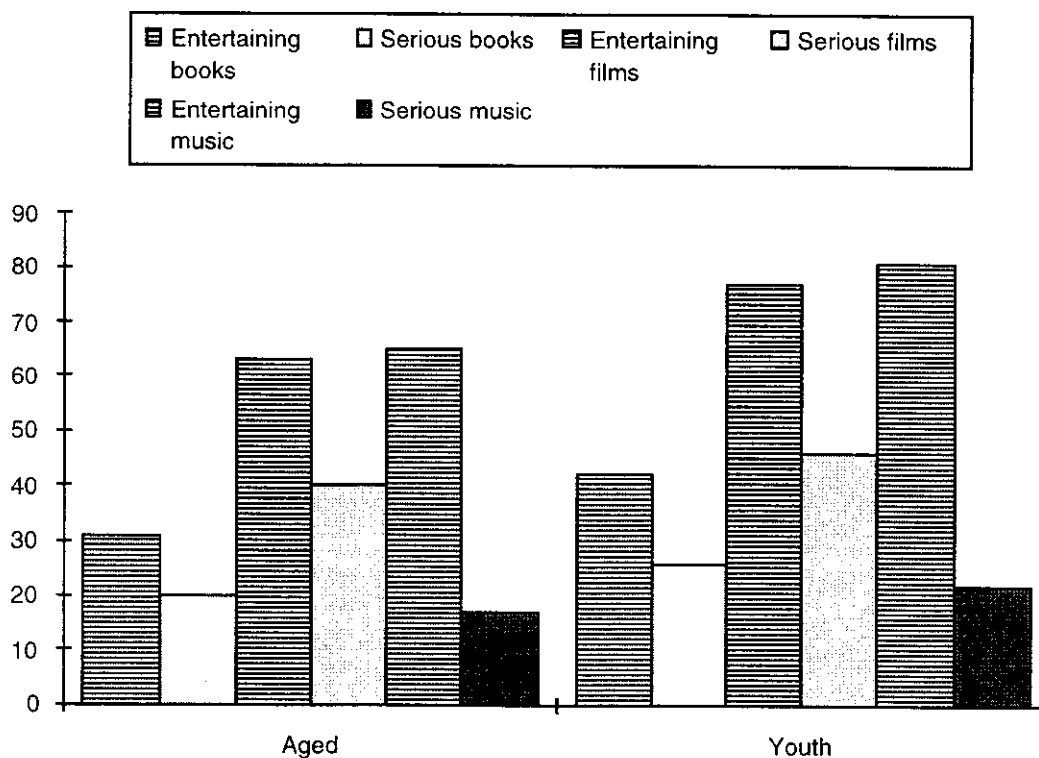
Attitude to formal and light entertainment genres. Research shows that interest in light entertainment dominates overwhelmingly compared to the so-called academic genres in the areas of literature, films and music, climaxing in a ratio of four to one. A similar disparity is observed among the older generation but is less unequivocal (Graph 9.4.1). This is a consequence outlined and elucidated by a specific appreciation of art. Compared to the 80s, the affinity of today's young to art as entertainment has increased, affinity to classical art has remained intact at a lower level and predilection for art that boldly addresses life's problems has declined substantially. In 1978 the young were conditioned to expect *social art*, in 1995 they expect *entertainment and amusement* (Graph 9.4.2).

We can perceive in this fact a new social situation where the young are submerged in a sea of mass culture. The indicator: "If you decide to go to the movies and can choose among films of which you only know their nationality, a film from which country would you choose?" The majority of young people (51 per cent) chose the USA, the world leader in action and thriller movies, unlike the older generation who most often replied "Bulgaria".

Nevertheless, the fact that this choice was made does not, in itself, mean that the younger generation prefers lighter entertainment.

Graph 9.4.1

What do you read, view and listen to in your leisure time?



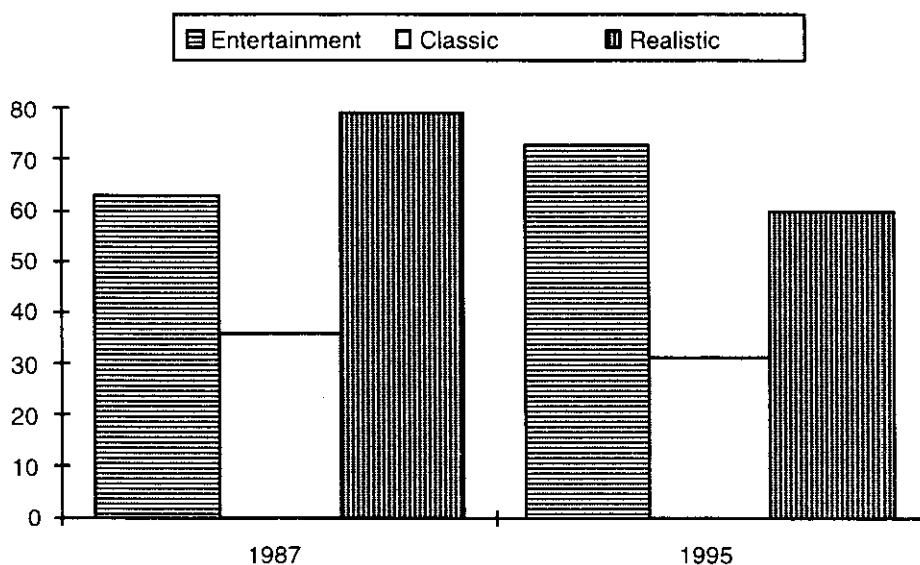
Graph 9.4.2

People have different opinions about art and culture. Personally, which of the following do you support?

A. Art must primarily offer entertainment and amusement.

B. In order to fully appreciate art one must essentially strive to communicate with classical art.

C. Strong emotions are stirred by art that boldly addresses crucial issues in life.



Attitude to Bulgarian and foreign art.

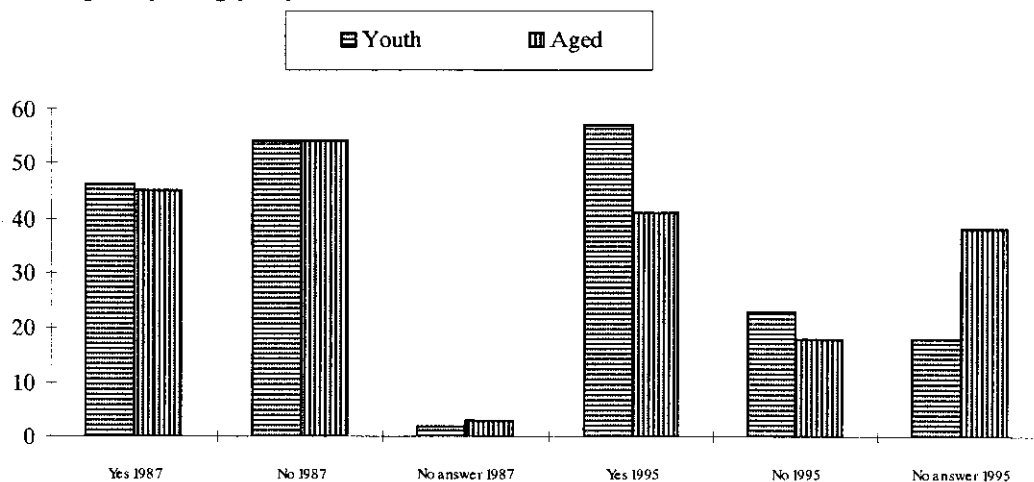
A significant fact established in the 80s was the alienation of young people from Bulgarian culture. Apparently they encountered *issues* of concern to them far more often in books, films and music from other countries. Only in relation to drama were preferences evened out. Today the advantage of foreign art with respect to books and films has been retained but interest in contemporary Bulgarian music and song is on a par. while theatre productions based on Bulgarian playwrights win out.

Attitude to the mass media.

Changes in this area are significant and idiosyncratic:

- The young have acquired a new attitude to *the press*. Earlier, the majority answered in the negative when asked if they found newspapers in Bulgaria attractive and interesting for young people. Today, they answer in the affirmative. The attractiveness of magazines is even greater.

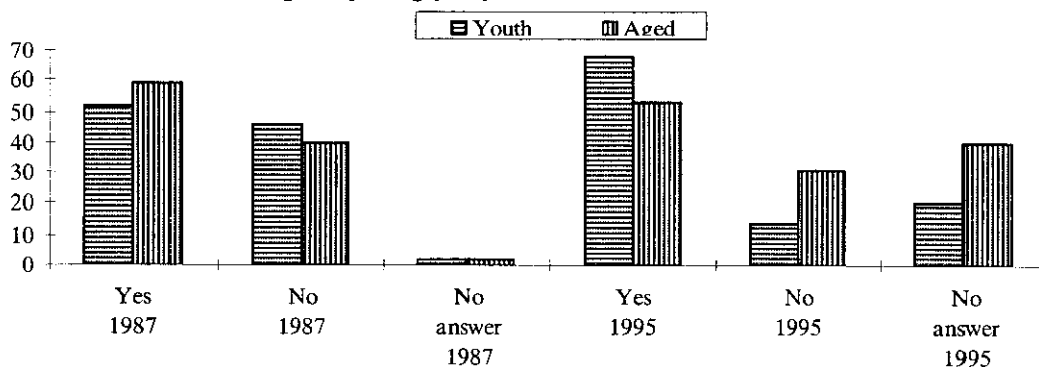
Graph 9.4.3
Do you believe that newspapers in Bulgaria are sufficiently attractive and interesting for young people?



- *Radio broadcasts* have registered the greatest success. They are considered attractive and interesting by of two thirds of the young people. The survey also outlined what they listened to most frequently: Bulgarian private radio stations.

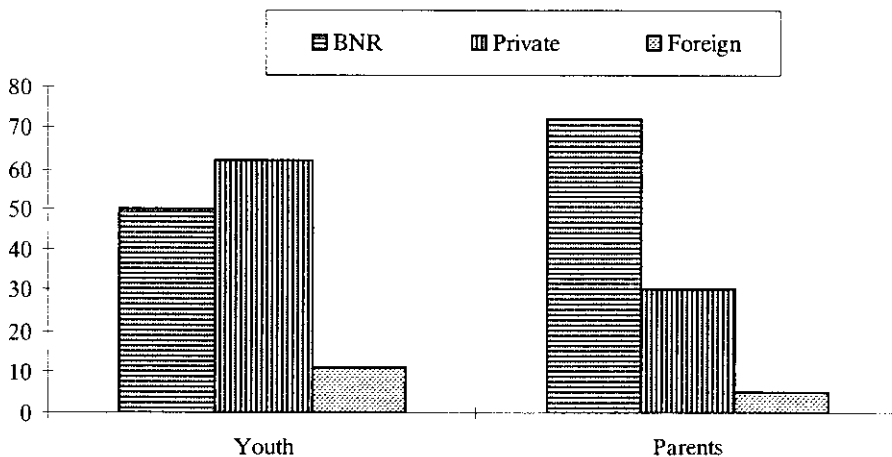
Graph 9.4.4

Do you believe the programmes of radio stations in Bulgaria are sufficiently attractive and interesting for young people?



Graph 9.4.5

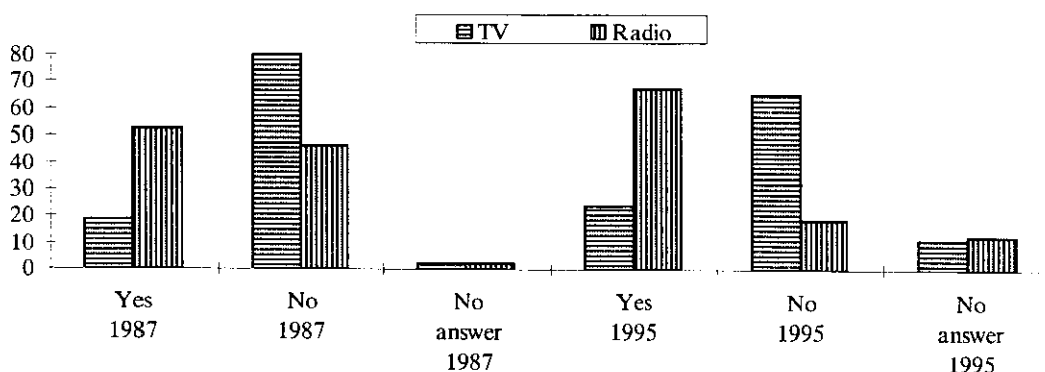
What radio stations do you listen to?



- Television has improved its rating, but only slightly. It is considered attractive by only 24 per cent of the young people as against 19 per cent in 1987. The structure of the surveyed TV programmes is essentially different from radio: Bulgarian National TV predominates (72 per cent view it "often"). There is considerable interest shown in cable television (23 per cent watch it "often" and another 15 per cent "rarely"). Turkish television displays surprisingly high ratings; they surpass the percentage of ethnic Turks living in the country.

Graph 9.4.6

Comparative attitude to radio and TV programming



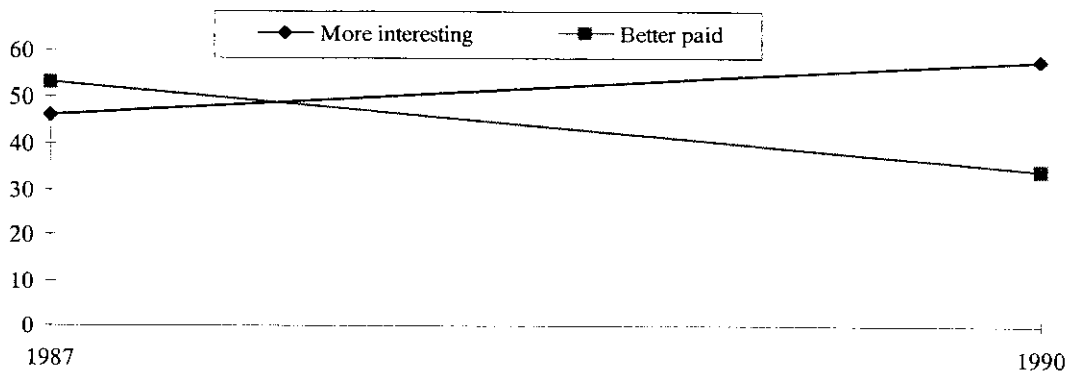
Historically, post-war generations have always had a lengthy, difficult and peculiar fate. In this respect the young living today on the ruins of the "cold war" will be no exception. It would be naive to endeavour to "create" or "shape" the new generation. It would be excruciatingly irresponsible and even unethical if the new elite of the nation fails to generate a unitary, long-term, intelligent and financially sound approach to the "new young generation" of Bulgaria.

Addendum:

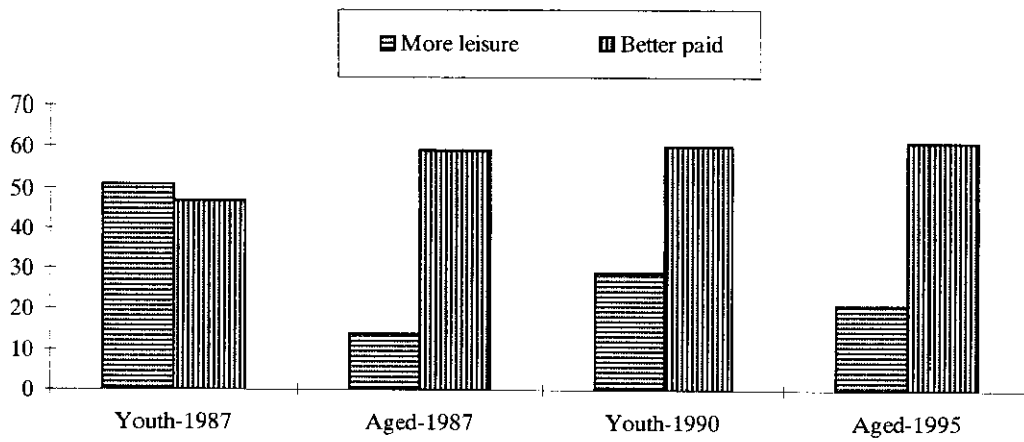
Job preferences

Graph 1

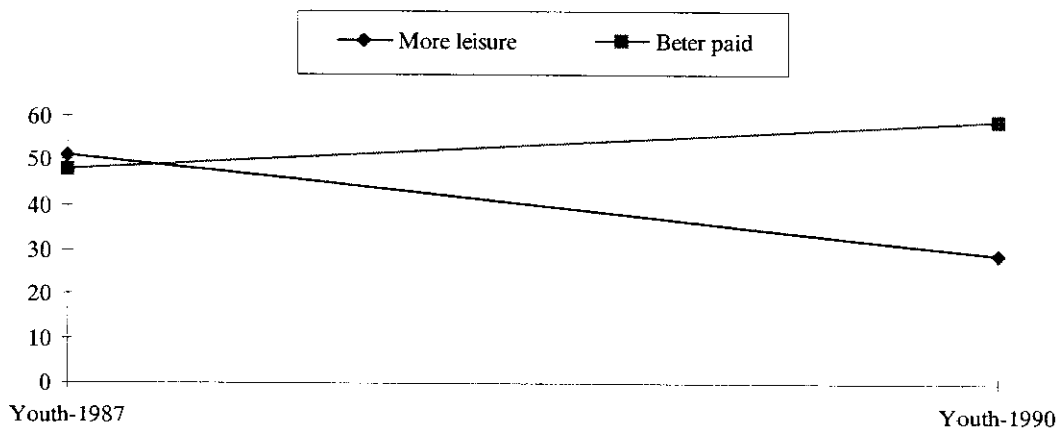
Better paid or more interesting



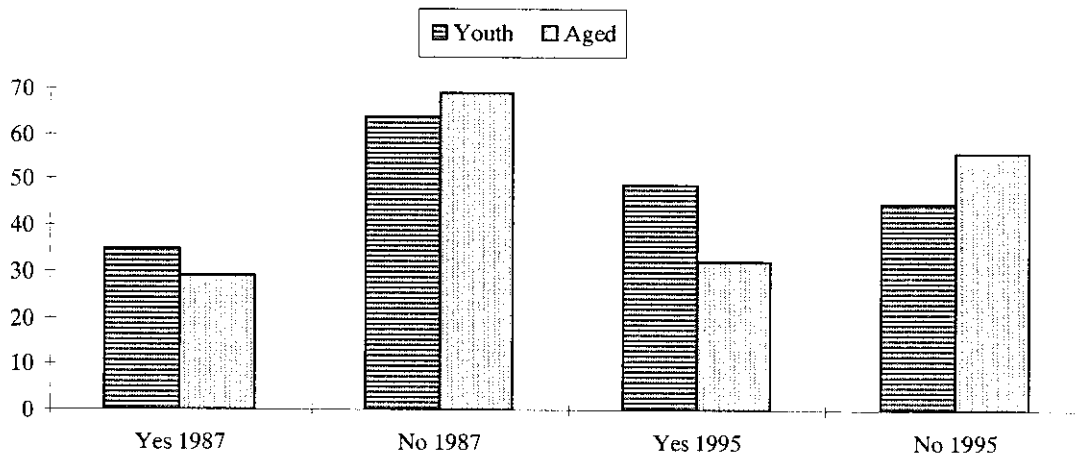
Graph 2
Better paid or with more free time



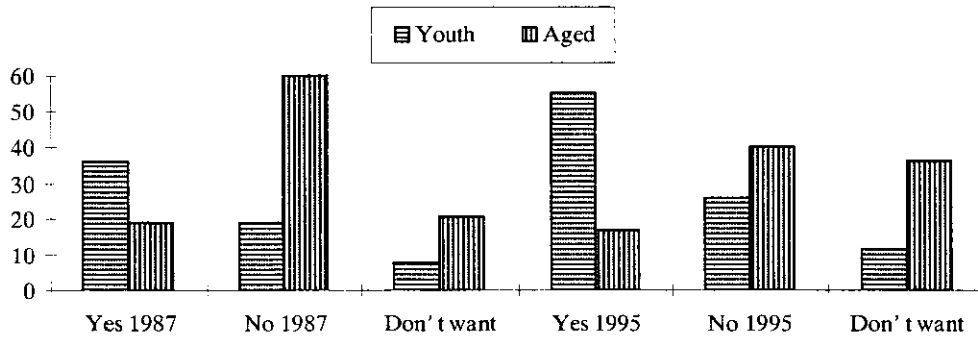
Graph 3
Better paid or with more free time



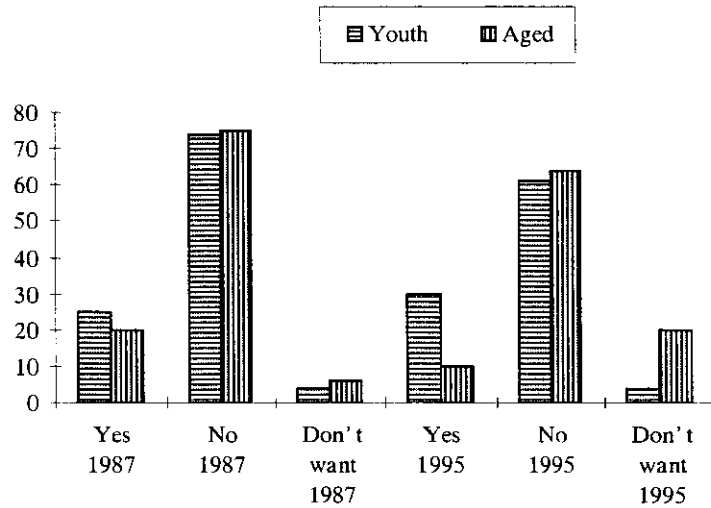
Graph 4
Do you have the opportunity to spend your leisure according to your wishes?



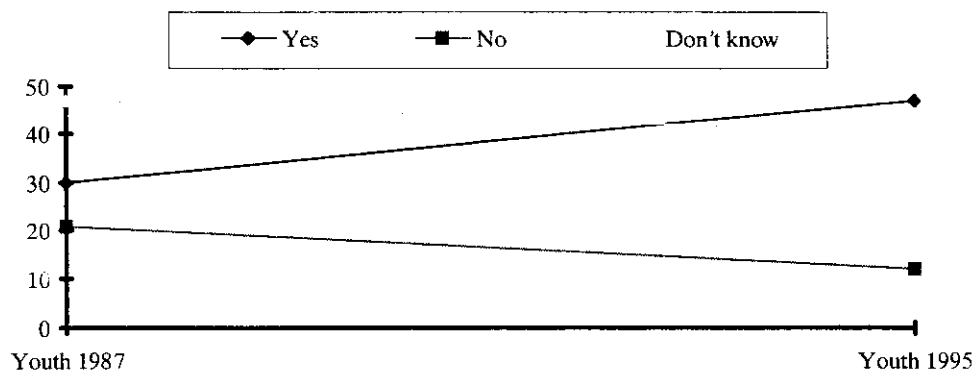
Graph 5
Do you have the opportunity to engage in sports?



Graph 6
Do you have the opportunity to travel?



Graph 7
Do you believe we shall live in a better world in 30 years' time?



10. CHANGES IN CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

10.1. The effect of de-nationalisation of the cultural sector

With the adoption of the new Bulgarian Constitution in 1991 private ownership became an inviolable right. It gained equal legal status with state, municipal and joint ownership. This text statutorily liquidates the monopoly of the state in the sphere of culture. Conditions were created for removing the burden of total ideological and political control on the arts, cultural industries and forms of cultural participation.

The new agent - the private owner who ever more tangibly introduces market principles in culture - is taking an active part in the development of the infrastructure, as well as in funding and management. The private theater, the open municipal stage, the private art gallery, the private impresario house and producers' companies are appearing in the sphere of traditional arts. *The most impressive changes are observed in the cultural industries.* Private radio and private television, satellite and cable TV, private sound and video recording companies, private distribution companies of audio and video cassettes and CDs, private video rental shops have appeared and are functioning very successfully. Private book publishing and the private press (newspapers and magazines) have scored a boom in quantity. The private sector encompasses the larger part of design and fashion, photography and advertisement, architecture, show business and the business with antiques. Increasingly more private schools, private teachers and free (non-state) universities are including art education in their programs. The products of foreign cultural industries, as well as printing and copying communication technology are freely entering the cultural market. Forms of private and joint (private and state) financing have appeared in the funding of culture. Cultural projects have started being funded. Private and public nongovernmental foundations, as well as the figures of the private sponsor, advertisement agent, donor, patron and collector have emerged on the scene. State cultural institutes have gained the status of independent juristic persons, with the right to engage in self-support objects.

Private enterprise during the 1990-1995 period was a much more active agent in cultural changes than the state or and the municipal administrations.

At the same time, the delay in passing a new cultural legislation, the instability of the financial and banking sector, the large tax burdens, high inflation, the slow pace of privatization, the trends towards a renewed centralization of the funding and management of culture, the inertia of the near past, the lack of professionalism and experience, etc., place private enterprise in the cultural sector in a tight spot. The cited factors are a reason for the strong commercial orientation of private enterprise which, with minor exceptions, has turned to activities and production guaranteeing quick profits.

A characteristic feature of private enterprise at the moment is that it has settled almost exclusively in the niche of the existing cultural deficit, created mainly due to the ideological considerations of communist rule. Its other specific is that private enterprise tries to eliminate the deficit mainly by circulating products of the cultural industries.

A positive feature is the orientation of the Ministry of Culture, private business and local authorities towards joint financing and organisation of mega-cultural events. They are carried out in towns and villages attractive for tourism and their audience does not consist of professionals and connoisseurs only but also of chance public of holiday-makers, tourists and people attracted by the advertisement and agiotage about the event. Examples are: the international film festival "Love is craziness" and the national film festival "The Golden Rose", both carried out in Varna annually; the summer and winter meetings of arts "Apolonia" (in the towns of Sozopol and Smolyan), the Rousse musical weeks (town of Rousse); the Sofia musical weeks; the international festival "Golder Orpheus" (seaside resort Sunny Beach); the international television theatre "The Golden Chest" (town of Plovdiv); the international ballet-dancers' competition (town of Varna) and lots of other biannuals, happenings, folk festivals, etc.

10.2. Changes in leisure structure

An important role in the formation of cultural participation is played by the amount and way of utilization of leisure. In the situation of economic crisis, the employed use an increasingly greater percentage of their leisure time for extra work as a condition for extra income, additional training or retraining, etc. The unemployed have plenty of leisure, but this is a time used for looking for any kind of work for subsistence or retraining. Pensioners, too, have a lot of leisure on their hands. But due to their greatly limited incomes, as well as natural age factors, a large part of them are excluded from active participation in culture as either professionals or amateurs.

The demographic crisis is an extremely important factor in the structural and quantitative changes in cultural participation. A strong influence is exerted by the ageing and decrease of the Bulgarian population, called forth by the still continuing negative birth-rate which started around the mid-80s, as well as by the large-scale youth and ethnic emigration of Bulgarian citizens at a fertile age. It is logical to assume that, all other conditions being equal, the decrease of the population and its ageing have a strong impact on cultural participation in two directions:

- the absolute number of individuals and groups taking part in cultural processes is decreasing;
- the number of people with passive social behavior, including passive cultural participation, is increasing.

A widespread thesis is that the massive drop in population incomes is the main reason for the shift of cultural participation from the forms of vigorous action to the forms of passive consumption. Mass impoverishment is indeed the important factor for the changes in cultural participation. Citing this fact as the sole reason would be an erroneous explanation, however. It puts the start of the crisis at the wrong time. By ignoring the significance of the demographic changes, which started more than a decade ago, the start of the cultural crisis is shifted to 1989 and is attributed to the start of the transition. Shifting the start of the cultural crisis causes it to be speculatively tied solely to the democratic and economic processes of the period of transition.

10.3. The structure of cultural consumption

A representative sociological study conducted in 1994 among the inhabitants of Sofia and of eight other large cities (cultural centers with developed cultural infrastructure) outlines the picture of *urban cultural consumption* and its structure according to activities and interests. The favorite and most practised leisure activity is watching television (70.53% of the respondents), 15.94% prefer watching video, and 20.18% listen to music (radio, audio cassettes, CDs, etc.). Another 37.44% prefer reading as a leisure activity.

Slightly more than half the respondents prefer to spend their leisure outside the home. Among the people spending their leisure outside the home, 14.03% usually visit friends, 10.10% practise sports, 14.63% visit some of the urban cultural institutes, 6.16% attend sports events, 10.29% visit restaurants, cafes or discotheques. Some 12.11% devote their leisure time to further their education, 15.24% do extra work, 5.35% pursue a hobby and *only 2.93% engage actively in art.*

The urban population is well-disposed to cultural institutes. The study established that no matter how often they do or do not visit cultural institutes, citizens rate them highly, stressing the importance of cultural institutes as a source of prestige for the city, the country and the national culture in the eyes of the world. Whereas opera houses, museums, concert halls and art galleries are left in the background of personal preferences, the same institutes head the scale of prestige. *The difference between the ideal and real value attitude to cultural institutes* is also seen in the attitude to the way in which they are funded. The respondents reply that they are inclined to personally support with donations the institutes which they need and personally value. At the same time, they consider the funding of prestigious urban city institutes to be the sole concern and obligation of the state. In their real cultural consumption they pay for what they genuinely need. In group identification and the ideal group image of urban and national culture, however, the "high arts" institutes top the hierarchical ladder. This is also true of citizens who perceive cultural institutes merely as a part of the urban landscape.

In the realized change in the structure of cultural consumption *literature and reading regain their previous status as a leading leisure activity.* In a representative national sociological study conducted in 1995, 13% of the respondents claim that they read every day, 12% - two to three times a week, 9% once a week, 13% much more rarely. The sum total of readers in the first three groups is almost identical to the percentage of readers established in 1994. Simultaneously *a reduction in the possibilities of buying books and enriching home libraries* is observed. The number of people buying books is the same in both studies. But their purchasing power is reduced and they buy increasingly fewer books. In 1991, for example, 6% bought books almost every week, 19% at least once a month, 16% a couple of books during the year. In 1995 the same group of buyers of books shrank respectively to 3%, 13% and 15%.

The presentation of the real picture of cultural consumption at the present stage is rendered difficult due to *the outdated statistical instruments for the registration of this consumption*. The pluralization of interests and the respective orientation to a different structure of cultural participation are still not accounted for according to new statistical indicators. For example, it is not known what percentage of income is spent on audio cassettes and video rentals, cable television, computer games and software, studying languages and computer literacy, etc. The lack of accurate information about these and other new cultural services creates a false impression of the real cultural participation of the contemporary Bulgarian.

10.4. The pluralization of aesthetic tastes

A *growing differentiation in the aesthetic tastes* of the population has been observed in recent years. This process is discernible especially among young people. The exceptional pluralization of the interests, tastes and values shared by young people is evidenced by the results of the sociological study of the value orientations of Sofia's 16 to 26-year-olds, conducted in 1995. 289 of the total 498 respondents cited 114 film titles they liked best during the first quarter of 1995. The list is headed by *Forrest Gump* with 62 answers - a film chosen by Sofia's youth a few months before it won the Academy Award for best motion picture of the year. It is followed by the films *Queen Margot* (20 answers), *Speed* (19), *The Mask* (8), *Wuthering Heights* and *Dirty Dancing* (6 answers each). Several films are cited by 5 and 4 respondents, all others by one respondent.

The big disparity in the answers is accounted for by:

- new access to and diversity of distribution channels (the cited films are not only watched in movie theaters, but also on video, satellite and cable TV);
- repertoire wealth in film distribution (diversity in titles, rather than in the mass circulation of copies as prior to 1990);
- big diversity in the tastes and interests of young people; moreover diversity which is not at the expense of lowered artistic standards and criteria.

Asked about the book which impressed them most during the last three months, 266 young people cited 201 book titles. The rich choice of titles offered on the book market is reflected in the great disparity of young tastes and preferences in books. They range between every genre and author. Pluralism is also evidenced by the fact that there are no significant statistical preferences for a given title. The book in top slot - *Menschliches Allzumenschliches* by Friedrich Nietzsche - is cited only by 5 persons, i.e. merely 1.88% of the respondents. There is a noticeable preference for translated English language literature, as well as a rare mentioning of books by Bulgarian authors - only 9 Bulgarian writers are mentioned.

Table 1

The books having most impressed Sofia's youth during the second quarter of 1995. /Only the books names by 5, 4 or 3 persons are cited/

Title and author of book	Number of respondents
Menschliches Allzumenschliches, Nietzsche	5
King Rat, James Clavell	4
The Chamber, John Grisham	4
Not Without My Daughter, B. Mahmudi	3
A Pelican at Blandings, P.G. Wodehouse	3
Diary of a Genius, Salvador Dali	3
Il pendolo di Foucault, Umberto Eco	3
The Fraternity of the Stone, S. Grouev	3

Source: Cited study

The next 32 books are cited by two persons, the remaining 169 titles by one person each.

Similar disparities are also observed in the assessment of the most important events in Bulgarian history (391 answers spread over 26 events) and in world history (400 answers - 61 events); of contemporary Bulgarians whom young people admire (275 answers for 105 names), as well as of foreign personalities esteemed by young people (339 answers for 139 names). These figures reveal the dynamics and significant change in the present-day cultural participation and knowledgeability of Bulgarian youth. Today's young people are not restricted in their choice. They do not have any scruples about prestige and are not afraid to state their tastes and preferences. The football player Hristo Stoichkov is placed next to President Zhelev, the pop singer Madonna next to President Clinton. The cultural consumption of young people is strongly individualized both as a choice of art works and aesthetic criteria for their evaluation.

10.5. Artistic Education in the Secondary School. Children and Juveniles' Creative Work.¹

The presently operating syllabi envisage a substantial amount of time for artistic education. The proportion of arts (music and fine arts) in the school curriculum at the initial stage of education is 17.2%, in the junior secondary, 8%, with a total percentage for the primary education, 12.1.²

"High-school students study optional subjects like aesthetics, history of civilisation ..."³

Possibility of education in arts is given also by the compulsory choice training (CCT) which is 2 hours weekly up to grade 9, 5 hours in grade 10, 11 hours in grade 11 and 17 in grade 12. The extracurricular forms of education include extended tuition in arts up to grade 8 and specialisation in grades 9 - 12. Till grade 8 the extended arts programme includes 4-hour weekly tuition in

¹Writing of the present material would have been impossible without the invaluable assistance provided by Eika Andreeva and Jennie Lambreva from MOST, to whom the author expresses profound gratitude, neither would it have been possible without the assistance rendered by Alexander Yosifov, Tsvetanka Petkova and Victoria Ivanova from the same ministry.

² White Book of Bulgarian education and science. S., 1992, pp 21-22

³ White Book of Bulgarian education and science. S., 1992, p 30

fine arts or music (with an hour for a musical instrument) and a compulsory hour of choreography given for both arts. The extended arts syllabus contains subjects like colour knowledge, history of fine arts, drawing, singing and musical instruments. Formed predominantly at a municipal level, the artistic groups of music and the fine arts schools provide serious possibilities for students' contribution. It is the concern of most municipalities to develop this kind of extracurricular artistic education and they allocate considerable funds to finance it.

In the former district centres there is usually one class per region specialising in arts. The exception to this rule are the traditional centres of artistic crafts and the municipalities which provide special conditions for education. A department of carpet industry has been established in Chiprovtsi, of wood-carving in Dren, an icon-painting class in Gorna Oryahovitsa, integrated with the University of Veliko Turnovo.

Admission to an arts department is based on a contest and those who finish with success can take a matriculation examination in arts as a first special subject. Although most students trained in the department go on to further studies, only a very small part of them choose the artistic work as a profession.

A national system of activities and extracurricular forms of education has been built in which the creative work produced by students and teachers receives publicity and a possibility of assessment.

A review of secondary-school mixed choirs is carried out in Sliven, choral days, in Shumen, in the town of Smolyan there are Orpheus days of children's folklore, in Yambol - a national event of young musical instrument performers, and in Tvurditsa, a review of folklore games and traditions.

Sofia is the host of a national exhibition and a round table, of a school students' creative work review with the assistance of the UBA; Veliko Turnovo is the host of an exhibition of the teacher-artists' creative work, as well as of their students.

All specialised fine arts classes make an active use of classes in the open air as a form of education. Most popular are those organised in Ambelino, Asenovgrad District, in Plovdiv (on the topic of ancient Plovdiv).

The numerous prizes received at international competitions and festivals - Neerbelt in Belgium, Shankar - India, Okinawa - Japan, in Israel and in the Republic of South Africa, are a testimony to the serious results achieved in education and creative work.

10.6. Development of amateur arts

10.6.1. Historic development and basic shares

The origins of amateur dramatic groups are linked with the activity of the Bulgarian reading clubs. During the National Revival period amateur dramatic groups formed a basic part of the cultural activity of these unique cultural

enlightenment organizations. The first theatrical performances were staged and amateur dance and music ensembles came into being in them during that time.

During the following historic periods, too, amateur dramatic art continued to be directly linked with the activity of reading clubs. Mainly reading club amateur cultural activity was developed in the general system of the amateur movement in Bulgaria until 1960. After 1960 amateur dramatic art started developing in schools, too, and later also in trade union cultural centers. This is how the *three main centres* of amateur dramatic art were formed: *reading club, school and trade union*.

Reading club amateur dramatic art accounted for the biggest proportion until 1972. During the following years amateur dramatic art at school became the leader (with regard to the number of groups and participants in them).

After 1990 trade union amateur dramatic art was liquidated due to the discontinuation of the activity of the cultural centers of enterprises and because the trade unions stopped funding cultural activity. During that period school amateur dramatic art also strongly declined. Reading club amateur dramatics regained its leading role.

10.6.2. Trends in the development of amateur art

- Amateur dramatic art experienced critical processes of a sharp reduction in the number of teams, participants and visitors to events. During the last two years the system has been stabilized and a *slight increase* in the main indicators is being observed.

- Reading club amateur acting teams formed the basic part of amateur dramatic art groups, expanded in a rich genre structure. *Groups linked with folklore have been most numerous* during the last two years: of the 5,099 groups existing in 1994, 1,642 were devoted to authentic folklore, and folk dance ensembles numbered 943. A growing interest in folk culture is being observed. It is reflected in the increase in the number of participants in the 7th National Folklore Fair in the town of Koprivshitsa in 1995 in which 17,800 performers from all over the country took part.

- *The creative manifestations* of amateur art teams *have been increasing* during the last two years (every team has an annual average of 9.5 public performances to its credit, compared to 5.6 in 1985).

Until 1989 the system of the artistic manifestations of amateur ensembles was encompassed by the national festivals organized by the Amateur Art Center with the Ministry of Culture. Every festival covered a period of five years during which different stages were held: festivals at the level of village, municipality, district towns, regions and a closing stage in Sofia. The main art genres - music, dance, theater and folklore - were present in the festivals. Festivals were in the nature of competitions, sifting out the weaker teams. Amateur teams were awarded medals, and the participants in the final stage in the respective genre were made "laureates".

This system of classification no longer exists after 1990. The municipalities organize their own cultural events: festivals, competitions, exhibitions, etc., depending on cultural tradition, expediency and financial possibilities.

At present the system of presentation of authentic folklore teams is most fully preserved.

10.6.3. Forms of assistance for the development of amateur dramatics etc.

Amateur dramatics is supported by the municipalities and the Ministry of Culture.

The *municipalities* make various efforts to aid the development and establishment of the forms of amateur dramatics and folklore:

- The wages of salaried art leaders are formed and paid by the municipal budgets.

- The municipalities maintain the facilities of reading clubs in which amateur groups are working; they set aside funds for costumes, stage props, instruments, etc.

- Financially and methodically they support the major cultural manifestations of teams and individual performers.

- They prepare and conduct training courses and seminars for the training of art leaders engaged in amateur art.

- The municipalities and reading clubs prepare and stage concerts, exhibitions and reviews of the different genres of amateur dramatics and folklore.

- They coordinate the creative manifestations of amateur dramatic groups in the municipality.

- They financially support the participation of amateur dramatic groups at national and international level.

Through the *National Center for Reading Clubs, Amateur Arts and Regional Cultural Policy* the Ministry of Culture performs a number of important functions in the development of amateur dramatics:

- Study and analysis of the state and processes of development of amateur dramatics and folklore.

- Financial support for important national and regional projects in the sphere of amateur dramatics and folklore: fairs, festivals, exhibitions, reviews, etc.

- Coordination and support for staging international festivals, competitions and reviews in the country.

- Support for the activities of creative artists and amateur groups by teams of specialists in the respective genre.

- Maintenance and realization of forms of state-to-state cooperation in the sphere of amateur dramatics and folklore (state plans for cultural exchange, state-to-state projects of UNESCO and other nongovernmental organizations).

- Coordination between state, public, economic, creative, scientific and educational institutes and foundations for stimulating the development of amateur dramatics and folklore.

11. INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

In the development and implementation of its policy in the sphere of the international cultural co-operation and exchange, the Republic of Bulgaria is guided by the following principles:

a. Commitment - the international cultural policy is an integral part of the foreign policy of the country, as a factor of its dynamics and simultaneously as its result and priority.

b. Reciprocity and equality - the regulations for bilateral and multilateral cultural co-operation to be concluded on mutually favourable basis.

c. Pragmatism - the content of the international cultural commitments taken on by Bulgaria to conform to the needs of Bulgarian culture and be aimed at the expansion of the Bulgarian cultural presence abroad.

d. Decentralisation - the decentralised cultural exchange determined by the autonomy of Bulgarian cultural organisations allows to establish direct contacts and agreements with foreign partners, to increase the number of subjects of the international cultural co-operation and to promote the participation of local authorities and regional structures in this process, to diversify the sources and mechanisms of its funding by attracting alternate sources of funding.

The international cultural policy of the Republic of Bulgaria is directed towards the achievement of the following objectives:

a. Deepening of the international understanding through cultural dialogue and mutual acquaintance between different cultures.

b. Representing the best achievements of Bulgarian culture abroad and respective acquaintance of the Bulgarian community to world culture samples.

c. Integration of Bulgaria to international cultural structures and organisations (regional, interregional and worldwide);

d. Increase of the market of Bulgarian cultural production

e. Caring of Bulgarian cultural heritage abroad.

f. Strengthening the cultural contacts and communicating with the Bulgarian colonies and minorities abroad.

The Republic of Bulgaria has evolved its interrelationship with other countries on a bilateral and multilateral base. The bilateral and multilateral co-operation are equally valuable for the international cultural policy of our country; they are mutually connected and mutually complement without any favouring of one type of co-operation against the other one and without any doubling.

11.1. Bilateral Co-operation

Bulgaria maintains bilateral cultural relations with more than 50 countries all over the world. The main instrument of bilateral cultural co-operation are cultural agreements and the adopted on that base programmes of cultural, scientific and educational exchange or protocols of direct co-operation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria and its analogues abroad, as well as the activity of the cultural institutes based on a specifically entered bilateral agreements of their legal status and functioning.

a. Updating the agreement and legal regulations of the bilateral cultural co-operation.

Bulgaria has signed cultural agreements with more than 50 states, the large part of which were concluded 30 or more years ago. The political, social and cultural realities having changed for the elapsed period required to update the content of those basic regulations. The Ministry of Culture is the originator and one of the contractors of this process, making proposals for the "Culture" sections in those agreements. For the recent few years Bulgaria has renewed its cultural agreements with Russia, Slovakia, Hungary. Signing new agreements with Egypt, Romania, Czech Republic is forthcoming.

b. Signing cultural agreements with emerging states or states with which we have no such agreements.

During the recent few years, mostly because of the disintegration of the USSR and Yugoslavia, new independent states emerged on the political map of the world. Bulgaria has had traditional connections with many of them. Therefore, our country proceeded to conclude cultural agreements with the newly emerged states. The agreements with Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Kirgizstan, Georgia, Armenia, Croatia, Slovenia were already signed or agreed. First steps were taken to the regulation of cultural co-operation with the Baltic states and the Czech Republic.

On the other hand, contacts were established with countries with which up to then no cultural relations were maintained but there was a mutual interest and good will for these contacts to be established and developed as in the case of the South African Republic and Australia, with which cultural agreements are to be entered into, as a beginning of an active cultural co-operation.

Enlisted below are the bilateral cultural agreements since 1989:

1. The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Albania for Cooperation in Culture and Science, signed in 1991.
2. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Armenia, signed in 1994.
3. The Agreement for Cooperation in Education, Science and Culture between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Belarus, signed in 1993.
4. The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Georgia for Culture and Science Cooperation, signed in 1995.
5. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Kirgizstan, signed in 1994.
6. The Agreement for Cooperation in Education, Science and Culture between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Moldova, signed in 1993.
7. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Poland, signed in 1993.
8. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Bulgaria, signed in 1993.

9. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Slovak Republic, signed in 1994.
10. The Agreement for Cooperation in Science, Education and Culture between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, signed in 1994.
11. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of the Ukraine, signed in 1992.
12. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Science and Education between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Croatia, signed in 1995.
13. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Korea, signed in 1994.
14. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Republic of Bulgaria and the State of Israel, signed in 1991.
15. The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for Cooperation in Culture, signed in 1996.
16. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the French Republic, signed in 1996.
17. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the United Kingdom, signed in 1991.
18. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Hungary, signed in 1994.
19. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, signed in 1996.
20. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of Venezuela, signed in 1993.
21. The Agreement for Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the South African Republic, signed in 1995.

All new cultural agreements concluded between the government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the governments of various foreign countries envisage cooperation in a new environment: most agreements are with newly-formed countries resulting from recent geopolitical changes.

In essence the agreements are rather broad frameworks, non prescriptive as regards bilateral cultural relations development. Bulgarian cultural presence abroad is determined in more pragmatic and concrete terms by bilateral Programmes for cultural, scientific and educational exchange.

c. Developing and implementing particular and realistic programmes of cultural, scientific and educational exchange.

The specification of the cultural agreements through these programmes, renewed at each three years, provides state guarantees of a comparative wide and intensive exchange and co-operation. They form, on the other hand, the basis and outline the particular dimensions of the equal treatment of the participants in the bilateral exchange. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria prepares the "Culture" sections in them and is responsible for its fulfilment.

d. Developing and signing of direct bilateral agreements of co-operation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria and its foreign counterparts, as well as between Bulgarian and foreign cultural organisations and institutions.

Lately, the Ministry of Culture is oriented to signing of direct protocols or agreements of co-operation with its counterparts abroad. These agreements, compared to the programmes mentioned above, only envisage the cultural exchange and are more operative, more effective. Such protocols spanning two or three years have been signed with Hungary and Slovakia, signing of such protocols is imminent with Ukraine and Moldova.

The Ministry of Culture, on the other hand, encourages establishing direct contacts and concluding agreements of co-operation between Bulgarian and foreign cultural institutions, e.g. between individual libraries, theatres, etc.

11.1.2. Priorities by regions

a. Europe

In accordance with the general orientation of the foreign policy of the Republic of Bulgaria, a natural direction of the international cultural co-operation are the European countries. In accomplishing that co-operation especially emphasises bilateral cultural relations and exchange with the countries that are **members of the European Union, with the countries associated to the Union, with our Balkan neighbours, with the new European states having become independent after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.**

Bilateral cultural relations with **Balkan countries** have a particular significance for the Republic of Bulgaria due to the country's natural geographic position in the middle of the Balkan region. The stable cultural influence the country enjoys in the region is not simply due to an accident of geography. The historical circumstance that our territory has always been the scene of a rich cultural life is reinforced by the foreign policy aim of Bulgaria today to be a stabilising factor in the turbulent Balkans. This finds particular expression in Balkan cultural co-operation.

The Republic of Bulgaria has stable cultural relations with the Republic of Greece, the Republic of Turkey, Romania, and is currently developing its links with the Republic of Albania particularly actively. Our traditionally good contacts with these countries are threatened only by the big financial challenges we face.

A statutory basis for cultural co-operation between the Republic of Bulgaria and the countries emerging from the collapse of former Yugoslavia has been laid in place. Bilateral intergovernmental agreements for co-operation in culture and education have been signed with the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia, and an agreement is also due to be signed with the Republic of Macedonia. Bulgaria promotes the stabilisation of cultural links with these countries by tabling and signing Programmes for co-operation in the Arts, Education and Science.

Bilateral cultural co-operation with Balkan region countries also adds momentum from the widening network of direct contacts between Bulgarian cultural

institutions and their equivalents in the relevant countries. The number of bilateral events is also growing, and their form and content improving.

b. Asia and Australia

Those countries of the region have a priority in the cultural co-operation, which took the economic commitment to the changes in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, such as **Japan** and the **Republic of Korea**. Bulgaria also considers very important its cultural relations with traditional partners of the region, such as **India** or **China**.

c. The Middle East and Africa

Our cultural co-operation with **Israel**, **Egypt**, **South Africa**, **Kuwait** is of special importance. The restoration of the cultural exchange with the Arab states would also contribute to our economic co-operation.

d. Northern America

Activating the cultural relations with **USA** is of priority significance. Efforts are being exerted to enliven our cultural co-operation with **Canada**, moreover a substantial Bulgarian colony was formed there.

e. Latin America

We maintain, within our financial capabilities, co-operation with traditional partners such as **Mexico**, **Argentina**, **Brazil**, **Cuba**, **Peru**, **Colombia**, **Venezuela**, etc.

d. Bilateral cultural exchanges in 1994, 1995 and 1996 in figures*

1. Personal exchanges under bilateral programmes (approximate; for countries with the most active bilateral relations)

1994: seconded c. 700 people of whom:

570 to cultural events

109 to seminars, conferences and delegations

18 to post graduate studies;

received c. 60 people of whom:

32 to cultural events

12 to seminars, conferences and arts events

15 to post graduate studies.

Note: the number of seconded people is inflated by the participation of over 200 people in the Days of Bulgarian Culture in Japan.

1995: seconded c. 535 people of whom:

481 to cultural events

32 to seminars, conferences and delegations

21 to post graduate studies;

received c. 55 people of whom:

32 to cultural events

* These statistics are based on Ministry of Culture archive entries. The numbers concern countries with which Bulgaria has the most active arts exchange: Germany, Austria, Italy, Japan, Russia, France, Belgium, Spain, the USA, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, and some others. The numbers include approximate Bulgarian participants in international festivals and contests.

21 to seminars, conferences and arts events
2 to post graduate studies.

1996: seconded c. 585 people of whom:
543 to cultural events
14 to seminars, conferences and delegations
28 to post graduate studies;

received c. 175 people of whom:
148 to cultural events
24 to seminars, conferences and arts events
4 to post graduate studies.

Note: the number of received persons is higher due to the many participants in the British Culture Days in Bulgaria.

The number of persons seconded abroad considerably exceeds the number received. This is because seconded persons are financed not only by the Ministry of Culture but most often by sponsors, while reception funds are solely provided by the Ministry of Culture.

11.1.3. Cultural institutes abroad

The Republic of Bulgaria has eight cultural institutes abroad established before 1989 - in Berlin, Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna, Moscow, Prague and Rome.

Normative basis. In principle, the establishment and activity of the Bulgarian Cultural Institutes abroad is regulated by inter-governmental bilateral agreements, which Bulgaria has signed with Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, as well as with France, Great Britain, Spain. Based on these agreements there are a number of institutes operating in Sofia - the Goethe Institute, the Czech Cultural Institute, the Slovak Cultural Institute, the Hungarian Cultural Institute, the Polish Cultural Institute, the Russian Cultural and Information Centre, the French Cultural Institute, the British Council; the opening of a representative office of the Spanish cultural institute "Servantes" is imminent. An agreement of exchange of cultural institutes between Bulgaria and the USA is being prepared, taking into account that it is the third year of active operation of the American Cultural Centre in Sofia.

Signing similar agreements with Italy and Greece is imminent. The first of them will enable the opening of an Italian Cultural Representative Office in the capital of Bulgaria, on the one hand, and will regulate the activity of the Bulgarian Academy of Arts and Culture "Boris Christoff" in Rome, which has been operating for almost a decade. Bulgaria has given a special meaning to the agreement with Greece and is ready to open its own cultural centre in Athens immediately after it is signed.

A painful issue for the Ministry of Culture is that, although there are adequate normative regulations, Bulgaria has not been able to open and maintain the activity of its own cultural institutes in the capital cities of France, UK, Spain. Thus, although formally observed, the principle of reciprocity, which is fundamental at the preparation of agreements of the status and activity of cultural institutes appeared to

be practically inapplicable. We still hope to be able to make use of the concluded agreements and to put the beginning of operation before the end of the century and to put a beginning of operation, though on a more humble scale, of our Cultural Institutes in Paris and London.

In the search for alternate financial sources for assisting the activity of Bulgarian cultural institutions abroad, some proposals of sponsorship for Bulgarian cultural centres from foundations, associations and partnerships, including foreign ones (e. g. from the Republic of Korea), for the establishment of cultural centres by groups of friends of Bulgaria (in Kazakhstan and Hungary), etc.

Financing and support. All Bulgarian Cultural Institutes abroad are financed by the Exchequer under the budgeted expenditure of the Ministry of Culture. Recent years have seen attempts to find additional sources of finance for the Institutes' work: sponsorship, Bulgarian language tuition fees, et c. Some Institutes run shops selling Bulgarian art products: video and audio recordings, books, albums, CDs, paintings, icon replicas, decorative arts items, newspapers and magazines, et c. This commercial activity also provides additional finance. The annual turnover quota on Institutes' shops is some USD 200,000 per Institute.

Staff. Seconded from Bulgaria, Bulgarian Cultural Institutes' personnel has been seriously cut back. In most cases the establishment includes a Director, an Assistant, and a Book Keeper. Occasionally temporary or part time staff may be employed in accordance with local legislation.

Premises. Only three of the Ministry of Culture's eight offices abroad are housed in Bulgarian sovereign properties: Palais Wittgenstein in Vienna, the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Budapest and the Bulgarian Academy of Art and Culture in Rome. All other Bulgarian Cultural Institutes occupy rented premises. Rent forms the major share of their expenditure, making financial support for them much more burdensome.

Activities. The main purpose of the Bulgarian cultural institutes abroad is the worthy representation of cultural life of our country abroad. Their activity includes organising events at all genres of art (exhibitions, concerts, dance shows, theatre performances, cinema shows, reciting, etc.) at conferences, colloquia on cultural problems, maintenance of libraries and reading rooms, information activity, organising language courses, development of Bulgarian studies, etc. Special attention is also paid to the establishment and maintenance of contacts with local governmental and non-governmental cultural organisations, as well as to the contacts with Bulgarian colonies.

1. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Berlin

Premises: rented accommodation in central Berlin.

Status: while two German states existed, the BCI was based in Berlin under the agreement between Bulgaria and the GDR. In 1988 a similar agreement was signed with the FRG and provided for the opening of a Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Munich. After German reunification the Munich document remained in force, amplified by a special amendment to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for Cooperation in Culture, signed 19 March 1996 in Sofia. BCI activities in Berlin are completely reciprocal with those of the Goethe Institute in Sofia.

Staff: a Director, two Assistants and a Book Keeper.

Financing: financed by the Exchequer.

Activity: organising exhibitions, seminars, round tables, concerts, theatre productions by visiting Bulgarian theatre groups, children's programmes, et c. Many events are organised jointly with German bodies, for instance the Berlin Senate. There is a trend to take activities beyond the borders of the German capital.

2. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Bratislava

Premises: a large rented building in central Bratislava; landlords are the City Council.

Status: the Bratislava BCI was created under the now superseded Agreement between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The division of the CSFR into Czech and Slovak republics requires the signing of new agreements regarding the Bulgarian Cultural Institutes in Prague and Bratislava.

Staff: a Director, an Assistant and a Book Keeper.

Financing: by the Exchequer, supplemented by income from the Institute shop.

Activity: exhibitions, concerts and theatre events, assisting Bulgarian participation in international events in Slovakia, symposia, et c. Many activities are jointly run with the BCI in Prague and Palais Wittgenstein in Vienna.

3. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Budapest

Premises: Bulgarian sovereign property, the building was acquired for BCI needs. There is a separate rented shop.

Status: the Budapest BCI was created under a bilateral cultural centres agreement. A new version of this agreement is in preparation and will be signed shortly.

Staff: a Director and an Assistant.

Financing: financed by the Exchequer and supported by shop sales.

Activities: all normal BCI activities as listed above; joint activities with other cultural institutes in Budapest are actively sought, as are activities with the Hungarian-Bulgarian Friendship Society and the Club of Bulgarians in Hungary.

4. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Warsaw

Premises: based in a building owned by the Artwoj Foundation, created by the Polish Ministry of Defense. Under an agreement, the BCI was granted rent-free accommodation for ten years until 2001 under special conditions. This agreement was unilaterally changed by the Polish side, forcing the BCI to pay rent.

Status: status is governed by the cultural centres agreement between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Poland. A new Cultural Centres Legal Status and Activities Agreement is tabled for discussions with the Polish side and awaits subsequent signing at government level.

Staff: a Director, an Assistant and a Book Keeper.

Financing: financed by the Exchequer and partly from shop revenues.

Activities: in principle similar to that of other BCIs, but in practice activity is rather low.

5. Palais Wittgenstein, Vienna

Premises: housed in Bulgarian sovereign property which is a Cultural Monument in Vienna.

Status: Palais Wittgenstein has the status of a broad annex to the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria at the Republic of Austria. It is governed by the 1973 Agreement for Cooperation in Education, Science and Culture. After drafting and signing of a bilateral intergovernmental agreement on cultural institutes' legal status

and activities, the status of Palais Wittgenstein will be made equal to that of other BCIs.

6. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Prague

Premises: housed in central Prague rented accommodation with gallery and shop facilities. A move to another building, to be used jointly with the Club of Bulgarians in the Czech Republic, has failed due to problems originating entirely from the Bulgarian side.

Status: the BCI in Prague was set up under the Agreement with the former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, updated after the country's division and due for signing.

Staff: a Director, an Assistant and a Book Keeper.

Financing: supported by the Exchequer, sponsorships and shop revenues.

Activities: primarily exhibitions on BCI premises. Other events are organised in outside venues: concerts, theatre shows, participation in international arts events, et c. The Prague BCI has a broad network of contacts with various Czech bodies which are coopted in the organisation of Bulgarian events.

7. Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Moscow

Premises: accommodation is rented, with annual rent reviews increasing outgoings year on year. The principle of reciprocity is not observed here: the Russian Cultural Institute in Sofia is housed in a building granted in perpetuity by the Bulgarian nation.

Status: created under the provisions of the still valid old bilateral cultural centres agreement as updated to reflect new realities; a new agreement is due for signing.

Staff: a Director and an Assistant.

Financing: financed by the Exchequer.

Activities: the Institute's own activity is limited by shortage of funds, most of which are deployed to pay the rent. Episodic participation in big Bulgarian events in Russia, such as the Bulgaria Days in 1996.

8. Bulgarian Academy of Art and Culture, Rome

Premises: housed in a building under Bulgarian sovereign ownership, purchased with a donation by world famous opera singer Boris Christoff.

Status: the Academy does not have the status of a Bulgarian Cultural Institute. It is based upon the covenants of the donation which was approved by Decree of the President of the Republic of Italy. The Bulgarian side has prepared a draft intergovernmental agreement on the status of cultural institutes which has, after approval by the Bulgarian government in 1995, been submitted to the Italian side.

Staff: head of Academy.

Financing: entirely at Exchequer expense.

Activities: four young Bulgarian opera singers annually study in Rome at the Bulgarian Academy of Art and Culture under, in recent years, an Italian Tutor and Assistant Tutor.

In prospect: the discharging of other activities similar to those of Bulgarian Cultural Institutes abroad is also being prepared.

11.2. Multilateral Co-operation

Multilateral co-operation has been primarily related to the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria in different governmental and non-governmental organisations concerned with cultural activity and exchange.

The integration of Bulgaria to the European intergovernmental organisations is a political priority for our country, hence the priority significance of our participation in the European cultural Structures and institutions.

11.2.1. Council of Europe

Bulgaria has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1992 merely, but it is recognised in this oldest European institution. In the field of culture our country actively co-operates in the Committee of Culture, the Committee of Cultural Co-operation, the Committee of Cultural Heritage and the Committee of Cinema to the Council of Europe.

The following directions and programmes of the CE are priority ones for Bulgaria: the programme of analysis and evaluation of national cultural policies, the co-operation in the sphere of film production, the programme of the book and libraries, the cultural European routes, the programme of preserving the cultural heritage, the programme of assistance technical and consulting assistance to the new members of the CE.

The Seminars on various problems of culture in the period of transition to a democratic social practice and market-oriented economy organised in our country with the assistance of the CE, as well as the participation of Bulgarian artists and cultural workers in significant European events, round table discussions, colloquia under the auspices of the CE have contributed to a high degree for speeding up the process of reforms in the field of culture.

Special attention should be paid to our participation in the European Fund of co-productions called "Euroimages" with the purpose of creation of Bulgarian film productions co-operated with other countries and the promotion of the Bulgarian national film production, as well as the operation of three film show theatres, which were established with the support of "Euroimages". Another large-scale project promoted by Bulgaria is the establishment of a European bookshop in Sofia under the auspices of the CE, which we hope to accomplish in the next few years.

Especially valuable to us is the expert assistance granted by the CE for the evaluation of the Bulgarian legislation in the field of culture, as well as the possibility we were given for an analysis and evaluation of the national cultural policy, the result of which is the present work.

11.2.2. European Union

After coming into force as of the 1st of February, 1995 of the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Bulgaria, of the other part, the activity on our integration in the Union in the field of culture acquired a priority significance for the Ministry of Culture.

The cultural collaboration of Bulgaria with the EU is related with our participation in the cultural and audiovisual programmes of the Union, as well as with the opening up of the Phare programme for Bulgarian culture.

In 1994 Bulgaria joined for the first time a Community cultural programme - that was the pilot version of Kaleidoscope Scheme. In the framework of this

programme Bulgaria received financial grants for implementing different artistic projects with an European dimension amounting to 84 240 ecu for 1994 and 123 440 ecu for 1995.

1996 proved to be a turning point both for the performance of Community Programmes in the field of culture and audio-vision, and for the participation of the associated countries in them. On one hand, availing itself of the competencies provided by Article 128 of the Maastricht Agreement and summarising the past experience, the European Union proposed this year new versions of cultural and audio-visual initiatives - Media II Programme as a follow-up of the previous Media I Programme; Kaleidoscope Programme which replaced Kaleidoscope Scheme that functioned until 1995; Raphael Pilot Programme which is coming to replace Cultural Heritage Programme. By virtue of the Additional Protocols to the Europe Agreements¹ concluded, on the other hand, the associated countries, and Bulgaria in particular, have the opportunity to participate in the above-mentioned programmes, together with the other member-countries, on equal basis.

What our past experience and our views on the future participation of Bulgaria in the Community Programmes for Culture and Audio-vision:

Media II Programme, foreseeing measures for stimulating audio-visual production and dissemination in European scale, is a real challenge for us, since Bulgaria will join an audio-visual initiative of the European Union for the first time. Viewed from other perspective, Media II turns out to be one of the first programmes where Bulgaria should also undertake respective financial commitment, paying its national contribution for participation. These circumstances would require a more serious and longer preparation for our joining this programme. For the time being, we have succeeded to form a national co-ordinating body, chaired by the Minister of Culture, to complete a survey of the Bulgarian audio-visual landscape, to conduct the initial official discussions with the European Commission in relation to our incorporation in the Programme.

We show a great interest in **Raphael Programme**, which supports the efforts for preservation and valorisation of cultural and historical heritage of the Old Continent. Bulgaria is among the five countries in Europe richest in cultural monuments. Therefore, all modes of co-operation in this field have a top priority in the Bulgarian cultural policy. After subsidies received by Cultural Heritage Programme of the EU in 1994 and in 1995 for restoration and conservation of Saint John the Baptist Church, built in 12th century, and the Princely Palace built in 17th century, several more Bulgarian projects have successfully applied for financial support from the pilot version of Raphael Programme in 1996: Conservation and restoration of the medieval church of St. George in Sofia (106 000 ecu), Advancing knowledge of the development of neolithic civilisation in Europe (190 000 ecu), Europe in Sofia exhibition (30 000 ecu), as well as two other projects to be realised for "Thessaloniki - Cultural capital of Europe 1997".

Perhaps the most popular till now cultural programme of the European Union in Bulgaria is **Kaleidoscope**, which promotes cultural and artistic initiatives with an European dimension. In the past two years, well reputed cultural events such as Varna Summer International Festival, Sofia Musical Weeks, the Meeting of the

¹ The Additional Protocol to the European Agreement between the European Communities and their Member-States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part, was ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria on 12 June 1996.

European Cultures for Peace on the Balkans, the International Biennial, etc. were held in our country. We were prepared to submit a dozen of new projects for 1996, but we were informed that similarly to Media II the access to Kaleidoscope would require payment of a national contribution.

We are expecting as well the approval of **Ariane** Programme for Translation and Literature Works, though we take into consideration that our possible joining to this Programme would involve not only exercising of certain rights and use of preferences, but also undertaking of financial obligations.

Bulgaria is the first among all Eastern and Central European countries, recipients of financial grants under **PHARE Programme**, where restructuring and development of the cultural sector would be assisted by the European Union through PHARE Programme. Bulgaria has already developed the first PHARE Cultural Development Programme and we are expecting the same to become operational in 1997.

The programme will support the processes of cultural development in Bulgaria by means of provision of technical assistance, material support, training facilities and direct project grants with a view to enhancing the long-term strategy of the sector as a whole and the reinforcement of cultural ties between Bulgaria, EU institutions and the Member States. The support measures, amounting to 2 million ecu, will be allocated to the following areas:

- Programme management, including steering, implementation, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities.
- Establishing and functioning of an Euro-Bulgarian Cultural and Book Centre in central Sofia to include a book-shop, reading room, meeting rooms, information centre, art gallery and cinema/video centre. As a physical focus for Bulgarian/EU cultural cooperation, the Centre will serve as a highly visible point for information dissemination on cultural activities and provide facilities for conferences, workshops, exhibitions, films.
- Institutional strengthening - this sub-component will provide support for training, work experience and material assistance for the development of arts administration and the management of arts and cultural institutions including financial management and planning.
- Setting up of an EU-Bulgaria Arts Development Fund which on a co-financing basis, will extend grants to appropriate projects and initiatives after due selection and endorsement procedures.

11.2.3. UNESCO

As a country with affluent cultural traditions and extensive international relations, Bulgaria has actively worked in the programmes and initiatives of UNESCO since the creation of the organisation. The priority tasks in our cultural co-operation with UNESCO complement and enrich our activity in the cultural exchange with the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Significant trends of the Bulgarian co-operation within UNESCO are:

- Protection of cultural heritage and, particularly, of the seven Bulgarian cultural monuments contained in the List of World Cultural Heritage
- Saving of film heritage
- Creating a data base of authentic Balkan folklore
- Development of cultural pluralism and inter-cultural dialogue

For the recent years, within the programme "World Decade of Cultural Development: Bulgaria was an initiator, organiser and co-ordinator of a large-scale multi-discipline European projects entitled "The Blue Danube". It provides the production of a comparative study on the cultural policies of the Danubian countries, the result of which is to be published soon, as well as a discussion and sharing experience on the problems of privatisation and funding in the sphere of culture.

The cultural project "The Blue Danube" illustrates the effort of Bulgaria for the creation of a Danubian cultural space. The Danube has been a natural economic and cultural corridor of Europe, Therefore Bulgaria has promoted and implemented a number of initiatives of cultural interaction of the Danubian countries ("The Blue Danube" within UNESCO, participation in the project of the Council of Europe called "Danubian European Cultural Space") and intends to continue working in this direction.

11.2.4. Balkan cultural co-operation

The Republic of Bulgaria is an initiator and active participant in a number of multilateral forms of Balkan arts cooperation.

The biggest initiative of this kind is the 1996 Greek proposal for the launch of a Balkan Cultural Network. The idea is to create a non governmental organisation functioning with the support and participation of arts institutions in all Balkan countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The tasks of the Balkan Cultural Network are to encourage dialogue and cooperation in culture within the Balkan region by exchanges of information and cultural products and the pursuit of joint cultural projects.

A step towards launching the network is to build national networks or core networks covering the entire spectrum of culture, and their subsequent merger in a Balkan network which is expected in 1997 as part of the European City of Culture programme for Thessaloniki.

The first of a series of preparatory meetings for the Balkan Culture Network was held in June 1996 in Sofia. This saw the tabling of these specific proposals, all of which the Bulgarian side is pursuing:

1. creating formations emblematic of Balkan cultural cooperation such as a Mixed Balkan Youth Choir, a Balkan Youth Symphony Orchestra (students and senior school students) and a Museum of Balkan Folklore;
2. holding Balkan festivals for the theatre, cinema, and music; organising a travelling modern Balkan visual arts exhibition;
3. holding contests for young Balkan music directors, contemporary Balkan playwrights, young Balkan talents;
4. holding seminars, conferences, and round tables for libraries and museums, the restoration and preservation of cultural relics and old library manuscripts;
5. preparing an annual culture calendar of national and Balkan events;
6. creating a structural financing fund — the Balkan Culture Fund — and a Balkan cultural exchange to ease contacts between Balkan artists and impresarios.

In the meantime, the First Balkan Wind Music Festival held in Greece (Veria, 12—18 September 1996) with Bulgarian participation, marked the first practical step towards the creation of a cultural network in this sphere.

A Balkan plan for regional cultural cooperation will be proposed by Bulgaria to the Council of Europe Culture Committee. This would ensure prior coordination of

initiatives from Council of Europe member countries, thus guaranteeing regional importance and enhanced effectiveness to such projects.

11.2.5. Other international organisations

Bulgaria actively co-operates in a number of non-governmental international organisations such as ICOMOS, ICCROM, ITI, ICOGRADA, etc. This has been recognised by the fact that Sofia hosted the General Assembly of ICOMOS in 1996.

Attention should be paid to the full participation of our country in the Movement of countries sharing the French language, which creates possibilities and a mechanism of participation in the programmes of the various forms of Francophone cultural co-operation.

So far, the most significant project through the Francophony is the establishment of the Francophonic Institute of Administration and Management (FIAM) in Sofia. Bulgaria is a member of the Francophonic Agency of Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCTC), but its participation in it should be activated after the creation of regional Francophone space in Eastern Europe.

Bulgaria would like, on the other hand, by its Francophone initiatives and projects, to ensure the real support of countries such as France, Belgium and Luxembourg for the cause of the European integration of our country, as well as to activate its cultural exchange with Canada and particularly with Quebec, as well as with some African countries.

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