



A Cultural Strategy for Albania

Implanting the Cultural Bug

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Philippe Kern

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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1. INTRODUCTION

General information

This report has been prepared as part of a mission commissioned by the Council of Europe to support the Ministry of Culture of Albania to develop its strategic vision.

Albania has a population of 3.2 million people with 28% of the population less than 18 years old. It has a level of GDP per capita at around 70% below the EU-28 average¹. The country was awarded candidate status by the European Union in 2014. The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to the country (support for Key sectors 2014-2020 – € 683 Million). Albania has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1995.

Albania has embarked on a very important reform agenda as part of the pre-accession process in view of joining the European Union. Herewith some relevant economic information that reflects trends related to the culture and creative economy.²

“Albania's economic recovery gained strength on the back of rising investment. Economic growth bottomed out in 2013 but has been on an increasing trend since then, supported by government policies, increased consumer and business confidence and falling interest rates. Real GDP growth was 2.8% in 2015 and accelerated further in 2016....

...Penetration of fixed broadband internet is only 9%, while mobile broadband reached 46% of the population by end 2015. The Albanian economy is dominated by services, but agriculture still retains an important role. In 2015, services accounted for slightly over half of gross value added, followed by agriculture with a share of 22.1%. SMEs play a significant role in the economy. They provide 80% of employment and two thirds of value added in the non-agricultural private sector. Micro-businesses in particular make up a high proportion of the number of companies and account for 43% of jobs....

....In the area of copyright and neighbouring rights, in May 2016, parliament enacted the new copyright law with the aim of fully aligning the law with EU directives. The newly established Market Surveillance Inspectorate is competent to inspect, control and enforce copyright and related rights. Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure on IPR-related infringements are still pending. There is a pressing need to train judges in this area and clarify the competence of the courts in relation to IPR cases.... The number of counterfeit products in the country remains high”
.....

The Ministry released a Facts and Figures report on Culture in 2017³. It gives a catalogue of projects supported by the Ministry in the different cultural fields as well as funding from donors notably in the heritage sector. Statistical information on the cultural industries (publishing, music and audiovisual including games) or creative industries (design, fashion, architecture) and their contribution to the economy, as well as figures on employment are not yet compiled by the Ministry of Culture. This

¹ Source Eurostat June 2017

² Extracts taken from the EC Communication on Albania. Albania report 2016 – Communication from the European Commission in November 2016 (SWD) 16 374 Final.

³ Kultura 2013-2017 Facts and Figures Ministry of Culture

should be remedied with a view to enable the monitoring of the impact of policies and for Albania to contribute to Eurostat (the EU statistical body) data on culture in the future.

Albania continues to play a constructive and proactive role in several regional initiatives such as the South East Europe Cooperation Process, the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the Central European Initiative, the Western Balkans Six and the Regional Initiative for Migration and Asylum. These groupings offer opportunities to develop cultural cooperation projects across frontiers with a view to develop international networking and access funding for the cultural sector.

There is strong cooperation with neighbouring countries Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Diplomatic relations have been normalised with Serbia (on the status of Kosovo) and positive relations are developing with Greece (national minority).

General information on culture policy

The country is multi-confessional with Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic populations. For most of its history the country has been occupied notably for more than 4 centuries by the Turks during the Ottoman Empire. The country gained its independence on 28 November 1912.

Albania is recovering rapidly from 40 years under a communist dictatorship under the rule of Enver Hoxha. At the time, culture policy and artists were at the service of the ideology in the most isolated country in the world that even severed diplomatic relations with fellow communist countries.

Albania participates in some aspects of the Creative Europe programme. It should be highlighted that in its latest 95-page report on the situation in Albania, the European Commission provides only 3 lines on culture (Chapter 26 page 78)⁴. Ignoring the importance of cultural policy as a major factor of economic, social and diplomatic development is short sighted. EU funding (IPA) contributed a paltry EUR 855 000 to heritage projects in Apollonia, Butrint and Lezha.

However the next IPA programme (with funding of EUR 46 million⁵) is prioritizing support for tourism, cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. This is an opportunity for the cultural sector and the Ministry, with its policy strategy, to make the case for strategic cultural investment. This requires an appropriate allocation of human resources and organisations to be able to respond to demand for projects that fit with IPA requirements. Concretely, the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) – as the implementer - will run a scoping mission in Feb-March 2018 to shortlist potential infrastructure projects. It will then draft the Description of the Action by April (first draft) – the plan is to sign all agreements before summer and start implementation possibly in September 2018.

There is strong political will to develop cultural investment in Albania. Edi Rama the current Prime Minister of Albania (since 2013) is an artist, a former Minister of Culture and Mayor of Tirana. Rama

⁴ Albania report 2016 – Communication from the European Commission in November 2016 (SWD) 16 374 Final.

⁵ « The upcoming EUR 46.6 million EU assistance programme IPA 2017 for Competitiveness (topped up by EBRD's loans) aims to increase the contribution of sustainable and responsible tourism to Albania's competitiveness and economic growth. Through a financial support of EUR 20 million, the objective is to develop the potential of SMEs in the tourism sector by exploiting the link between tourism and preservation of natural and cultural heritage and local urban qualification for economic growth....

pursued a career in art, studying in Tirana and Paris. As Tirana's mayor, his urban renewal projects and revival of public spaces filled a gap between the citizens and the state authorities after the fall of Albania's Communist regime. Rama reached out to a number of other artists, including Olafur Eliasson and Anri Sala to help him out in the transformation of the Communist-era grey buildings, reviving the entire capital and its architecture as if to emphasize the opening of the new government towards new horizons. Soon after taking over as Prime Minister, Rama opened the Centre for Openness and Dialogue on the first floor of the government building. It was opened as a space dedicated to arts, culture and politics showing Rama's democratic vision of art as free expression of thought.

The Ministry of Culture in its current form and mission was set up in 2013 at on the initiative of Rama. The Minister of Culture, Mme Mirala Kumbaro, has been in office since 2013. A new law to protect cultural heritage is currently being discussed. The Ministry of Culture is the sole body responsible for policies and strategies for cultural development. It supports around 30 cultural institutions of national importance, regulates the cultural sector and takes measures to protect cultural heritage. A small proportion of the Ministry's budget (EUR 300 000) is open for calls for proposals to support projects proposed by cultural stakeholders in relation to projects or initiatives reflecting the Ministry's priorities. There is no organised body representing the cultural sector nationally. There are however a number of trade associations that can be consulted (notably in publishing and cinema).

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for cinema policy but does not manage public funding devoted to the sector. Close to 70% of its budget is devoted to funding national cultural institutions. It has limited funding to support creation outside traditional institutions.

The Ministry of Culture has programmes of cooperation with a large number of countries including Serbia, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo. There is scope to develop international collaboration and make the country a hub for cultural exchanges in the Balkans, the Ionian Region and beyond. This requires developing infrastructure to welcome artists and creative entrepreneurs as part of mobility programmes (also a priority of EU policy in the years to come) as well as to provide education and training in the field of arts and cultural management. In general, the country needs to develop capacities for the cultural sector to organise and manage a cultural offer complementary to an economy that wishes to be attractive to foreign investment, tourism and talents. Development of management skills in the cultural sector (cultural institutions, heritage sites, culture businesses) is a priority.

The Ministry has a small budget of EUR 13 million (up from EUR 9 million in 2013) representing less than 0.3% of the national budget. It has an administration with 90 members of staff, probably the leanest cultural administration in Europe (for comparison Georgia has a EUR 30 million budget with more than 220 administrators). A Deputy Minister with past experience in managing cultural policy in the city of Pristina in Kosovo has recently been appointed – Valbona Shujaku.

One of the main challenges in relation to cultural policy is to modernize the cultural institutions by adapting them to function under a market economy, with new forms of cultural consumptions, budgetary constraints, the need to internationalise and network as well as to mobilise alternative sources of funding (investors in Albania have yet to be mobilised to support art and culture). The appetite for cultural investment and cultural consumption is to be strengthened and regulation should make investment in the cultural sector by private investors as attractive as possible. The

development of tourism services and the need for a coherent cultural offer to attract visitors as well as investors is an opportunity to develop a public – private partnership. The new law on cultural heritage aims to address this point.

Another challenge relates to the positioning of the State and Albanian municipalities on promoting the emergence of a creative economy largely stemming from cultural and artistic education and practices. Few local policy makers seem to be aware of the potential of culture for economic and social development. It is important to raise awareness on the potential of culture and creative industries in local context. This will help mobilise important resources to monitor implementation of heritage policy for instance (protection of sites) but also to raise funding alongside the State budget.

2. THE BRIEF AND METHODOLOGY

The Albanian Ministry of Culture is working on the development of a cultural strategy with a view to guide policy actions in the years to come, to justify requests for additional budgetary resources as well as to encourage private investment in the arts and culture. The strategy also serves to consult with stakeholders in culture policy whether in the public or private sector to develop a much needed spirit of collaboration and shared understanding on the role of culture that will serve to build a modern Albania that is inclusive, prosperous and forward looking.

The policy objective is to mainstream cultural activities across policy objectives and actions in the context of the National Development Strategy and European Union or other international funding programmes.

This document aims to help the Ministry in writing a comprehensive strategy paper. First, it focuses on the initial analysis of the situation to inform the development of a vision and strategic objectives. Secondly, it lays down the basis of a comprehensive cultural policy strategy. Considering the length and budget allocated to this mission, it is not possible to define the details of proposed policy actions and tools. The framework should however help the Ministry to identify best policy tools in the Albanian context.

The Culture Minister set out the following priorities:

- Increase funding for the arts and culture.
- Increase interest of the population in the arts and culture, develop audiences in museums and cultural institutions as well as develop art education in schools.
- Make cultural heritage sites sustainable.
- Support the development of an independent cultural sector.

The Minister wishes to develop a policy strategy that takes into account the above objectives and support the Ministry's ambition to make culture policy central to Albania's development in line with the National Strategy Plan.

3. GENERAL TRENDS AND CONTEXT

It is important to list contemporary challenges that need to be taken into consideration in the development of the Strategic Plan and to inform the initial analysis:

3.1 Financial constraints:

- Albania's economic and financial situation as well as its indebtedness is affecting public funding capacities.
- EU resources supporting the development of Albania in the pre-accession phase have hardly benefited the cultural sector (heritage protection funding at the level of EUR 855 000). This is less than the American Development Fund or the TICA fund.
- Real estate, as seen in China, is an important lever to direct private investment in culture. The issue should be explored by the Ministry. Making land available against investment in culture infrastructure could be an option to encourage private funding in the arts and culture.
- Tax incentives should be considered to encourage private investment in the arts and culture industries.
- Make use of political interests to support economic development and intercultural dialogue in the Balkans.

3.2 Attractiveness – Albania to become a country of destination

- The cultural offer of Albania and its cities is an important condition to attract foreign investment, tourists and talents.
- Albania has to address its undeserved image and prejudices (corruption, mafia, violence).
- Tirana is competing with a large number of cities in Europe to attract economic activities. To remain competitive the city needs to develop a unique proposition built on local strength and resources. Culture is such an essential resource. The country has yet to make the most of its cultural resources notably local talents who may feel neglected or not sufficiently empowered.
- Most national cultural institutions need heavy renovation spending and additional spaces for archiving (national history museum, Opera House, National Theater, National Library and film archive). This is limiting public investment in contemporary creation.

3.3 Raising awareness on the economic and social value of cultural investment

- Historically there is a lack of trust in public administration thus requiring a careful and consistent approach in developing and implementing policies associating stakeholders and citizens. It is important to associate citizens on heritage development and management with a view to galvanise local support.
- General distrust with regard to the value of culture investment not considered as generating economic and social development to the same extent as other investment (infrastructure). This implies the setting up of good information campaigns aimed at citizens and policy makers (notably in the regions) on the value of cultural investment.

3.4 Benefit from international tourism expansion

- International tourism is expanding with tourists from developing economies (China, South East Asia, Latin America, Middle East, Africa, Russia, Orthodox countries). Albania and its rich cultural heritage as well as its natural beauty enable the country to position itself to welcome quality tourists from Europe and other parts of the world. Culture should be an intrinsic part of tourism policy.
- Quality tourism requires a different unique experience for a place to be distinctive (propose a competitive offer) and generate different types of services and experiences. Albania should characterise its cultural offer to highlight the uniqueness of the place and its people.

3.5 Develop a sustainable local creative economy and retain talents

- Culture and creative industries (CCIs) are exposed to international competition (fashion, design, crafts, music, audiovisual/films, publishing). Albania's cultural industries are constrained by a limited home market (small language area) and its cultural industry infrastructure is weak thus limiting investment capacity in the arts and cultural production. The policy should be geared to build industrial capacity in production and distribution taking into account the opportunities offered by digital technology. Thus, digital tools and platforms, training, financial capacities and international networking are important to help access foreign markets.
- Albanians need to reconnect and value their local artistic productions (contemporary), promotion of local talents should be a priority and mobilise public institutions (cultural institutions, public TV and radio, local authorities, social media).
- It is important for talents and cultural entrepreneurs to network internationally.
- There is opportunity to foster cross disciplinary activities with digital economy and businesses to foster innovation and propose local cultural content to new local digital services.

3.6 Build capacity to enable the cultural sector to express its view and influence policy making

- The cultural sector (CS) is fragmented and financially weak. It is important to support the CS representativeness and give the sector the ability to express their views collectively to defend their interests in relation to policy making. It will also strengthen the hands of the Ministry in its dealings with other ministries.
- Events should be organised with the CS to raise awareness on cultural and creative entrepreneurship and to facilitate networking.
- Fiscal incentives need to be considered to attract foreign investment in the audiovisual sector.

4. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CULTURAL SECTOR IN ALBANIA

The observations stem from a 4-day visit in November 2017 as well as the outcome of a one day workshop with local cultural stakeholders and a peer reviewer (the Vice Ministry of Culture of Georgia – Levan Kharatishvili) on 9 February 2018 aimed at validating the analysis.

4.1 Strengths

4.1.1 Political governance and leadership

- Political will and support at the highest level
- Political continuity and stability
- Well-structured Ministry with clear functions
- Good motivation at management level
- Inter-ministerial coordination on heritage notably with tourism and environment (but also with police and customs), work with education ministry in progress.

4.1.2 Legal framework

- Clear inventory of heritage assets – law soon in place in relation to cultural heritage management (under discussion in the Parliament).
- Good copyright framework – just updated to conform with EU acquis.
- Collective rights management organization in place.

4.1.3 Cultural institutions and management

- Strong traditional cultural infrastructure (30 national institutions and many local cultural centres).

4.2 Weaknesses

4.2.1 Political governance and leadership

- Cultural policy strategy to be developed with a view to access EU funding and include culture in the national strategy.
- Role of regions and municipalities as part of decentralization process to be clarified.
- Dialogue is stronger with cultural institutions than with cultural entrepreneurs.
- Traditional vision of the function of the Ministry of Culture – supporting the arts, institution, heritage, art education in a sectorial approach. No department responsible for culture and creative industries and lack of transversal vision.
- Cultural industries and artists not organized as lobby group to influence policy making.
- Cultural sector too focused on extracting funding from the Ministry not enough on reinforcing the position of the Ministry to influence policies in the country. The cultural sector should develop a more holistic vision of the importance of the Ministry.
- Strategy to access EU funding (IPA) in coordination with national planning and economy /finance ministry in development.
- Audiovisual funding managed by Ministry of Finance whilst policy developed by the Ministry. Little leverage from a cultural policy point of view as audiovisual is a strategic industrial sector.
- Narrative on what Albania stands for and its cultural specificities yet to be developed. How to build on Albania's difficult past to extract what makes this country different and therefore a contributor to cultural diversity.

4.2.2 Legal framework and support systems

- Law on sponsorship not as effective even if Opera House seems to be doing well.
- Access to EU funding made difficult because of legal requirements requested by Albanian administration; consider topping up co-funding requirement imposed by Creative Europe in some situations to encourage leadership and vision (today not possible).
- Collective management organization to improve royalty distribution.
- Little incentives for cultural institutions to develop revenue streams as box office and other receipts are given back to State budget.
- Cultural institutions not entitled to make scientific publications (problem of status).
- No specific policy to support development of culture and creative industries.
- Enforcement of intellectual property law. Level of piracy discourages investment in IP products and services.

4.2.3 Cultural institutions and management

- Extreme reliance on State budget (with little funding) for main cultural institutions.
- Dramatic underfunding (the Ministry's budget and staffing is a third of the budget in Georgia for instance).
- Need for clear criteria and their application for subsidy allocation (e.g. relevance for social/cultural debates and emancipation; audience attention; international recognition; international touring; participation in collaborations, awards; regional co-operation; etc).
- Private consumption in culture is to be developed to attract the younger generation.
- Lack of performance indicators for cultural institutions.
- No flagship cultural event or festivals with international reputation.
- Lack of storage space at National Library, National Film Archive and National Theatre.
- Lack of professional actors (Theatre).
- Lack of training in cultural assets management (no Master Degree in cultural management in business schools or universities).
- Legal framework to incentivise sponsorship, patronage to be developed.

4.2.4 Culture and Creative industries

- Insufficient understanding of the contribution of cultural investment to economic development, job creation or to social cohesion.
- Insufficient dedicated support for local talents and creation (insufficient commissioning – as budget is very low (less than EUR 300 000 / year).
- Distribution infrastructure of cultural product is weak (exhibition, bookstores).
- Culture and creative industries are looking for an interlocutor at government level to help contribute to the modernization of numerous areas of public policy – education, social, entrepreneurship, urban planning.
- Insufficient understanding of the contribution of independent cultural centres, incubators, hubs to the cultural performance and of their potential to retain/attract talents and contribute to entrepreneurship.
- Lack of statistical information on size of the sector and its contribution to the economy and employment.
- Identify technical skills, facilities and training requirements to make Albania attractive to foreign investment in film, games, animation and music (as a low cost production country with a rich landscape and tradition).
- Consider a strategy to support internationalization of creative entrepreneurs and SMEs that have shown potential locally.

- Increase offer for local production (market access) - obligation on TV and radio stations, new media, local festivals.
- Find synergies between museums, heritage sites and creative industries (crafts, design, fashion, jewellery) to sell locally made products.
- Large potential development of visits to heritage sites – increase in visits from 275 000 in 2013 to 550 000 in 2017.
- No film commission in Albania to attract film makers and productions. No fiscal incentives.
- Develop master programs to ensure that craftsmanship is well preserved.
- Limited number of cinema screens to show local and European film productions.
- Regulatory intervention should be considered to support market access of local productions (local films on TV, local music on radio) through quota, investment obligations.
- Ensure CCIs benefit from the development of tourism (contribute to marketing of Albania as a country of destination, given priority to make available products or services).
- Set up a labelling system to reward quality products emblematic of the country's excellence in craftsmanship and creativity as well as gastronomy/ wine.

4.2.5 International

- Albania has suffered from lack of cultural exchanges until 30 years ago, on the other hand the population are hungry for foreign productions to the detriment of local productions.
- The process of European integration is key but not yet exploited to the full (albeit participation in the Creative Europe programme as well as Eurimages).
- National Theatre, other cultural institutions as well as CCS / artists should be encouraged to network at European level and internationally to find co-production partners and distribution outlets.
- Neighbouring countries that are EU member states such as Greece, Italy and Croatia are in a better position to raise funding, important for Albania not to be isolated.
- Albania needs to work out strategic collaboration with European cultural institutes such as the Goethe Institut, British Council or the Institut Français to access EU funding (which they often manage) more systematically or to benefit from training programmes.
- Lack of artist and cultural entrepreneurs “in residence” programmes. A good and cheap way to develop international collaboration and get local artists to travel abroad.
- Important to link up art and design schools as well cultural management programmes.
- Increase policy of collaboration with European countries with experience in heritage protection (France – INRAP) – archiving, documentation.
- Albania and its feature of developing a harmonious multi-faith society to serve as an example and justify leadership in intercultural exchanges in the Balkans as well as with the Mediterranean countries. Exploit Albania's geographical position and cultural experiences.

4.3 Main opportunities

Albania has the opportunity to review the function of the cultural ministry to adapt its tasks to the requirements of the 21st century. The policy should focus on structural impact and support structures (rather than projects) that contribute to the sustainability of goals spelt out in the strategy document. The latter will ensure continuous investment in culture, art and institutions to contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

The following factors will drive policy actions:

- EU funding to support tourism, cultural heritage, entrepreneurship, intercultural dialogue, civil society, heritage and innovation.
- Economic development and culture diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean – Tirana positioned to play a leading role in a region that is a priority of the emerging EU Culture Diplomacy. Albania to take a central role in developing cultural initiatives across frontiers (Italy, Greece, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia).
- Expansion of tourism infrastructure – development of a cultural offer that attracts quality tourism is required. Albania CS to build and benefit from the attractiveness of its coast line and weather. Albania not to become only “an all-in fee” destination and make local population aware of the added value of developing a truly Albanian experience (avoid Dubrovnik or Corfu syndrome).
- Decentralisation: build capacity together with 6 regional directorates and profit from decentralization process to drive cultural investment at local level in compliance with strategy goals.
- Young talents and creative entrepreneurship required to develop local services and attractive products that are in demand (local, authentic products, mobile applications, etc). Young population attracted to work in the cultural sector and that is naturally internationally connected.
- Tirana as a modern capital requires related strong entertainment and cultural offer.
- Diaspora wishing to contribute to the exposition of cultural specificities and local talents. Diaspora with its resources and international experience.
- Local strong self-esteem and curiosity to the outside world.
- Mixed cultures with their authenticities and originalities (yet largely unspoilt by unrestrained capitalistic development).
- The country is cost friendly to produce cultural goods and services – attractiveness remains to be developed in this respect (notably in relation to tax regime – the set up to attract foreign investment in tourism area should expand to cultural sector notably in relation to industries that provide qualified jobs such as audiovisual production).

Importantly there is the opportunity for the Ministry to help define what makes Albania unique and therefore contribute in setting a narrative that includes culture as the main factor that characterises the country. This important work will help raise awareness on the importance of culture in societal development and put the Culture Ministry in a position to be a resource for authorities to manage Albania as a territory of destination considering the priority given to tourism.

The next phase of IPA competitiveness programme is looking for projects that support:

- capacity building,
- awareness campaign,
- infrastructure development.

The cultural sector (CS) is not identified per se by IPA as a priority sector, however, the case is to be made that CS is intrinsically linked to a healthy development of tourism and entrepreneurship or the management of cultural heritage and regional development. As a matter of priority the Ministry should develop capacity to make use of this opportunity with a view to identify projects that fulfil the requirements of the next IPA whilst fitting with the priorities of the cultural strategy. The time frame is short as projects are now being subject to a selection process.

Albania has a well-organized cultural administration (lean and mean) equipped with the motivation level necessary to develop and carry out a Strategic Plan in the years to come. At regulatory level the

Culture Ministry has already set up important building blocks notably in the field of heritage and intellectual property.

For the author of this report the strategy should focus on the following priorities:

- Review the mission of the Ministry to address challenges of the 21st century and address its organisation.
- Review policy tools to achieve policy goals notably
 - o Increase funding
 - o Develop capacity building in the CS
 - o Improve communication on the value of Cultural investment in the national strategy plan.

For a successful implementation a strategy requires the support of the CS, it is important to associate artists, creatives and the cultural sector with the economic and social innovation development plan. It is the responsibility of the Ministry to develop trust with the sector and that it is perceived as supporting the establishment of a creative ecosystem that contributes to artistic expression in the country as well as its dissemination.

A workshop was organised by the Ministry of Culture on 9 February 2018 with local stakeholders to discuss initial findings (SWOT analysis) required to justify the proposed policy strategy. Contributions made at this one-day event and later in writing helped the author to fine-tune and expand this proposal.

The author of this report invites the Ministry and the cultural sector, in its diversity, to set up a process of continuous consultation and collaboration with stakeholders including local authorities. This is crucial with a view to build a consensus on the strategy as well as to ensure its implementation in the years to come independently of political changes. In this respect proposals are made with a view to place cultural policy across political divisions to ensure much needed continuity as effectiveness of cultural policy requires time and perseverance. Cultural investment impacts on the fabric of society and it would be a mistake not to aim at building consensus on Albania's cultural policy.

5. CULTURE POLICY STRATEGY – GUIDELINES

A strategy for culture serves several purposes:

1. It guides policy actions and mobilises policy tools in accordance to set priority goals. It serves to debate the purpose and content of culture policy. It clarifies the missions of the Ministry as well as the national cultural agencies. It determines the relationship with decentralised authorities and the private sector. It informs public opinion and cultural stakeholders. Importantly it puts culture policy in the context of the national development strategy and international technical assistance programme thus enabling the cultural sector to be included in strategic decisions.
2. It gives the opportunity for the Ministry to establish a process of consultation and participation with professionals, policy makers and citizens that serves the elaboration of the strategy as well as its implementation. The Ministry is held accountable for the implementation of the strategy.

3. The strategy serves to justify cultural investment and to develop a list of indicators on which the effectiveness of the policy actions will be judged and reviewed.

Investment in culture is often considered as secondary because of the elitist image of the sector or because spending in culture is perceived as a dispensable cost not an investment in the future that impacts economic and social development. Whilst cultural resources are easily associated with the protection of cultural heritage and the development of tourism, this constitutes a narrow approach on the impact of cultural investment. There is now ample evidence that culture contributes widely to economic development, employment, innovation, knowledge, entrepreneurship, education, social cohesion and diplomacy. Therefore culture influences numerous policy areas. The proposed strategy is aimed at mainstreaming cultural consideration in decision making on a wide range of policy domains notably education, tourism and innovation policy.

Culture is a major contributor to territorial attractiveness. The extent of the cultural offer is key to attract foreign investment, creative talents and give a positive image. It serves in building national confidence by reinforcing the sense of pride and ownership. Culture based creativity is at the heart of the digital, experience and creative economy that determines a country's competitiveness. Culture based creativity relates to non-technological forms of innovation that serve the development of products and services that are creative, aesthetic or provide meanings. Whether citizens or consumers are looking increasingly for the authentic and the meaningful. The cultural sector also drives social entrepreneurship, the sharing economy thus intrinsically linked with the deployment of new services with added value.

Albania has yet to define its originality and what the country is standing for in the concert of Nations. The culture strategy is also about supporting the development of narrative that highlights the country's cultural specificities and how its cultural resources contribute to diversity. The challenge is to make use of the country's past, cultural, political and religious assets to build a future that is inclusive, and serves as an example to neighbouring countries whether in the Balkans or across the Mediterranean. The strategy wished to position Albania at the cross road so that the cultural sector, which plays a key role in strengthening mutual understanding and cultural dialogue, is in a position to benefit from donors' programmes in the region.

5.1 Introduction – The Context informing the Strategy

5.1.1 The importance of the Cultural Sector in economic and social development

At EU level the cultural sector represents 8 million jobs and 4% of the EU's GDP⁶. It is one of the fastest growing sector of the EU economy. The creativity of the sector nourishes copyright industries (audiovisual, games, music and publishing) as well as creative industries (fashion, design and architecture). Entertainment and cultural services support the growth in other fields such as digital technology, tourism or consumer electronics. The sector is a major purveyor of free-lance jobs and gathers a large number of micro enterprises networked and working in collaborative way. They are users and service oriented employing a work force that is highly skilled with a high level of motivation with project-based working routines at the forefront of new employment trends. Flexibility and dynamism characterise enterprises in the sector which develop positive attitude towards

⁶ KEA, The Economy of Culture, European Commission (2006) www.keanet.eu

multidisciplinary and international collaboration. The sector faces numerous specific challenges linked to the lack of scale and size (penalizing promotion and distribution efforts), poor valuation of intellectual property rights, insufficient capital (as financial intermediaries have difficulty appraising financial risks) and difficult market access. These characteristics justify specific policy actions

5.1.2 New trends and cultural policies

The world is changing fast. No one living in the 1990's could have imagined the world we are now living in. It has become a global village - with digital and social media as major tools to shrink space, ease communication and connect people. Affluent younger urban generations are so much more cosmopolitan, using smart phones and tablets rather than television and paper.

Cultural consumption is changing radically for millennials, with more emphasis on social experiences in informal places, stadiums, and at festivals rather than in traditional cultural venues (eg. cinemas, theatres or concert halls). English has become the language of international social interaction. Modernity is about speed, instantaneous reactions, and multi-tasking: Wechat or Messenger rather than Outlook or Gmail. Texting, tweeting and visual communication form the new syntax.

Headquarters of multinational internet media companies are centred around a Californian hothouse – Silicon Valley, the epicentre of future focused talent development and dynamic clustering. California is also the production centre of the world for moving image for international distribution, supplying the world's unrelenting demand for action franchises, the spectacular, and the new. Always the New. Meanwhile, private multinational bluechip companies in the USA (such as Facebook, Google, Amazon, and Apple) and China (Tencent, Alibaba) collect and exploit personal data based on the cultural choices of billions of citizens across the world.

The common ground of younger generations, which was previously built on established national, religious or historical beliefs have become more ethereal, intangible, and temporary. Connections are now built around communities of interest or trending topics. In this digital world, the techno-kings (much-hailed figures such as Steve Jobs, Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk), are the trend setters in areas such as design, architecture and fashion. This designation is shared with a powerful cluster of entrepreneurs, investors, football players and their managers.

Cultural policy has to take into account the influence of new technology⁷. The latter has led to the development of new business models affecting the creative value chain at both production and distribution levels affecting the way cultural goods are accessed and consumed. The local creative sector is evolving in an international context competing with offers from international players capable of accessing world markets increasingly via digital networks. This often undermines the capacity of local companies to reach out to consumers largely because of lack of distribution and marketing muscles. Cultural policy needs to take into consideration these new industrial challenges as well as the importance of consumers as prescribers of tastes and new cultural practices.

Engaging the youth in cultural activities requires new skills and attitude, related to increase social engagement and participatory activities. Building communities of interest is of paramount importance in this new paradigm in which industry mediation is given less importance.

⁷ KEA, Mapping the Creative Value Chain – A study on the Economy of Culture in the Digital Age (2016), European Commission www.keanet.eu

The creative economy is a powerful force in supporting entrepreneurship notably in the digital sector but also in fashion and design. Local creative minds need to be encouraged to experiment and develop new innovative services in particular in the social sphere. The post-industrial economy is hungry for skills requiring imagination and creativity capable of providing meanings and user-centred services. Increasingly in association with universities, local authorities are promoting interactions with the technology sector to enable creative spillovers between technology and artistic disciplines to nourish research and development in science, gaming, virtual reality or artificial intelligence.

It is a world which encourages entrepreneurship and start-up status which values bottom up approaches (grassroots rather than policy led – top down). Individualism and the ‘local’ are nurtured and in demand as a reaction to standardisation and conformism (sometimes to the extreme, such as with Brexit). Digital networks and e-commerce give opportunities for smaller creative structures to reach the world. Culture based creativity is the must-have currency to build differentiation and competitiveness.

Artists, designers, cultural workers and industries are at the heart of these developments, as are taste and mood influencers (music, fashion), creative process managers (collaborative, networked), communication agents or providers of attractive content to a range of service providers in the traditional or digital economy. They are a key tool for social cohesion and are used to address city issues such as migration, racism, and xenophobia. .

Culture is everywhere. It infiltrates our daily life and reaches out well beyond museums, heritage sites or traditional cultural institutions. It can be found in technology hubs, in media clusters to nourish innovation, on city walls (graffiti and murals), local community centres and street festivals which trigger social interactions. It serves to create an aesthetic, an atmosphere and ultimately forms the attractiveness of places. It is the main resource to generate traffic and data exchanges on digital networks (music, fashion, sport). It shapes international brand images. Cultural agents are called upon to challenge scientific and technological research. They question political trends and ideologies, often acting as the main opponent to policies that will ultimately drive divisions and societal barriers.

Another phenomenon relates to the importance of the role played by cities and local authorities in cultural investment. They are increasingly giving value to culture as a way to develop economic activities, attract talents and encourage innovation. Cities are competing for the most valuable cultural offer (including festivals), with a view to attract young entrepreneurs, to bring foreign investment and tourists or to encourage establishment of creative clusters. Cities also realise the importance of the creative sector in reinforcing social links and enabling social cohesion between communities or in providing solutions for resocialisation. The role of local authorities needs to be taken into account with a view to best leverage national cultural policy. Coordination of the various levels of governance involved in cultural investment is an important consideration in the modern policy setting and an imperative in enabling the best possible use of cultural resources in particular in a situation where public funding is scarce.

5.2 Specifics of the Situation in Albania

The strategy is taking into account the specifics of the country. Compared to other European countries the following characterise Albania:

- The level of public funding is exceptionally low (a third of public funding in a country like Georgia)⁸.
- A past in which cultural actors were living in autarcy disconnected from cultural movements and trends.
- The cultural sector is too disorganised to influence policy making and raising awareness on the transformative power of culture and art.
- Weak industrial infrastructure in production and distribution of cultural goods and services.
- The absence of a strong narrative on what Albania stands for in cultural terms.
- The need to reconnect with cultural traditions victims of past ideologies.
- Relatively low penetration of broadband networks (compared to other countries).

6. THE AIM OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY OBJECTIVES – A NEW MISSION STATEMENT

Too often culture is still portrayed as an ornament providing entertainment, a tool to glorify national achievements, or a dangerous activity that threatens the stability or ideology of a political order. The specificities of art and culture are more profound as it enables humans collectively:

- to express local histories and memories thus prolonging and sharing their existence in a universal context,
- to provide critical reflections on reality and the human condition, revealing lies and myths, and challenging perceptions,
- to express imagination and to help us explore our sense of self (“it is an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us”, according to Franz Kafka), promoting individuality and revealing the human, and to manifest beauty.

Cultural initiatives have become one of the main agents for change in society. Cultural investment and cultural workers influence the attractiveness of places (cities), the spirit and morale of people, as well as being the focus of policies whether social cohesion, entrepreneurship, wellbeing, or investment. This influence is largely unknown because such initiatives are rarely branded as cultural. They are often piloted by development or economic agencies as part of innovation programmes, often in the social field or as part of urban regeneration. They are also the result of individual or collective initiatives emerging from collaborative ecosystems independent of any public support, and are often inspired by cultural management processes.

In addition, cultural stakeholders are reluctant to claim credit for such transformation because they are often still evolving on the traditional edges of cultural policy – public subsidy for the arts. This document postulates that art and culture are not only parts of an economic infrastructure like other sectors, but they are also what gives the flavour, taste and relevance to this ecosystem, as they have in fact created it.

Therefore a modern cultural policy is driven by the following needs:

⁸ To provide some comparison, the budget of the Ministry of Culture is equivalent to the budget of a city like Mons in Belgium (100 000 inhabitants). Malta and its 400 000 inhabitants has a cultural budget of 70 million Euros. Serbia devotes 0.68% of its State budget to culture (€90 million in 2017).

1. to support economic activities, and encourage civic pride and entrepreneurship at a time of financial discipline, industry centralisation, technology change, identity crisis and challenging international competition,
2. to support cross disciplinary and transnational interactions to enable creative skills to contribute to innovation,
3. to develop cooperation and mutual understanding for social cohesion and integration in cities and regions, as well as to gain market access and diplomatic influence in third countries,
4. to help cities and regions become more attractive, better governed and resourced to become more risk taking particularly around new commercial or social activities,
5. to build local capacity for the administration to become more user-driven (design-led thinking) or to work proactively with cultural workers and institutions to enable them to contribute their creative skills,
6. to enable the digital generation, to encourage interconnectedness across borders through social media to collaborate and build new transnational connections,
7. to share cultural knowledge and information with citizens and enable them to take part and contribute to the production and sharing of cultural content,
8. to build citizenship, and create tolerant, responsible and democratic societies.

These needs are forcing an evolution of cultural policy:

- at economic level: to adapt support mechanisms for SME's to the specific requirements of creative and cultural industries; to develop better statistical and monitoring tools to support and advocate for the sector; and make places more attractive for creatives, investors and visitors,
- at institutional level: to adapt and modernise intellectual property legislation to suit needs linked to new digital production and distribution; to imagine a new cultural bureaucracy, which recognises its cross cutting impact across many different policy areas,
- at civic level: to utilise culture as a means to create community dialogue, civic engagement and participation; to grow mutual understanding; to recognise new forms of cultural consumption and exchanges often driven by quality social interactions whether virtual or real,
- at education level: to give importance to artistic and creative skills; to develop heritage and reminiscence activities; to encourage access to the city's cultural offer and to generate multidisciplinary; to increase outward focused and peer review-led creative work which leads to enhanced quality and talent retention,
- at innovation level: to take non technological innovation better into account; to establish an ecosystem or environment (through hubs, incubators, living labs, maker spaces...) capable of developing creative skills; and facilitate multi-disciplinary encounters, innovation, social participation and interactions,
- at diplomacy level: to forego traditional cocktail diplomacy aimed at promoting a national culture, and instead develop connections through networks and partnerships, which will support cultural diversity and the promotion of local talents and industries.

The objective of the proposed strategy is to make culture policy relevant to the economic and social future of Albania (and position culture as an integral part of the reform agenda). The policy aims to foster creation (including through artistic education), culture and creative entrepreneurship (innovation and crafts) as well as tourism (Albania as a country of destination because of its cultural offer, heritage and contemporary art) whilst maintaining national excellence in cultural institutions and artistic practices.

The principle is to put the Ministry into a position to strategically mainstream culture in other policy areas with a view to get more visibility, attract funding and achieve more impact. This implies a review of the mission of the Ministry as well as a structural review. This mission did not entail a structural review of the Ministry hence the general considerations on the importance from a strategic point of view to characterise the scope of action of the Ministry as well as the resources allocated to implement a wider agenda and policy priorities.

6.1 The Role of the Ministry of Culture – Mission Statement

The mission of a Ministry of Culture is traditionally described as follows: the Ministry is responsible for the development and the promotion of the arts, cultural heritage, creativity, culture and creative industries as well as national cultural institutions. This responsibility entails:

- Proposing and managing the budget for culture.
- Protection and valorisation of cultural heritage (monitoring, sanctions).
- Fostering art education and access, participation in cultural activities.
- Support the development of national cultural institutions and cultural agencies and control/supervise their management.
- Fund cultural projects and events of national significance and help development of alternative source of funding (public or private).
- Supporting artists and the development of culture and creative industries in Albania and internationally.
- Regulating or commenting on regulations affecting the art and cultural sector (including copyright, decentralisation, support to enterprises, EU regulations affecting culture, tourism infrastructure).
- Enabling the expression of national cultural diversities (languages, minorities, religions).
- Consulting the art and cultural sector (public and private).
- Coordinate and accompany local authorities in the implementation of the cultural strategy
- Create an atmosphere of celebration and fun promoting local artistic excellence.
- Represent the interest of Albania within international institutions dealing with culture (UNESCO, WIPO, EU, Council of Europe).

In addition to these traditional missions this report proposes that the Ministry integrates the following.

- Develop and promote Albania's creative ecosystem (to foster cultural and creative entrepreneurship in the public and private field) by adopting a more holistic approach.
- Generate collaboration within the cultural sector across disciplines, to reach scale, break silos and encourage cross collaboration within the sector as well as between the CS and other sectors of the economy notably the digital economy, sciences and businesses. Albania should set the example of a country enabling cross fertilisation between competences and skills to generate innovation as well as to pool financial resources to the benefit of the creative sector.
- To enable culture to nourish or benefit from other policies (economy, innovation, education, tourism, regional development).

A review of cultural policy is required as the vision of the 21st century must be about successfully mainstreaming culture in other policy areas. This will promote:

- links between innovation and cultural policy - artists and creatives to encourage innovation across the city (Tirana), and to encourage this by linking digital and tech hubs with cultural and creative hubs;
- use of heritage and memory to build self-awareness, self-worth, and social cohesion – this will build strong social values and help combat xenophobia, gender discrimination and extreme nationalism;
- empowerment of people through artist and design-led education, living labs, and co-creation methodologies;
- capacity building to enable quality local cultural expression, audience development, and participation;
- intercultural dialogues and positive, proactive approaches to managing cultural diversity;
- fight against social inequality in urban and rural contexts, by stimulating cultural entrepreneurship and better management of local cultural resources to maximize participation and ownership from citizens.

6.2 Functional Review of the Ministry

In order to be in a position to implement this vision and in consideration of the country's specifics the Ministry would be organised to concentrate on key missions:

- Raise funding in partnership with other ministries as part of implementation of national strategy and donors' priorities (notably the European Union).
- Build capacities to support development of an independent creative ecosystem in Albania (notably develop capacity in arts and business management, review regulation to foster cultural entrepreneurship (including public institutions), attract investment in audiovisual and digital economy, develop cross-collaborations, showcase artists internationally and foster international mobility).
- Coordinate actions with local authorities and pool financial resources in well identified common goals and to ensure that local initiatives are in line with set policy strategy.
- Develop a strong narrative on Albania's cultural resources and the latter's contribution to economic and social development.
- increase investment in arts and culture.

In order to implement the above missions it suggested that the Ministry:

1. Embraces a cross sectoral approach, with the setting up of a department focusing on the development of culture and creative industries. This department would be responsible for organising consultations with the CS in a participatory approach.
2. Set up a strategic department responsible for mainstreaming cultural imperatives in other policy areas, develop strategic partnerships with other ministries with a view to propose joint projects fitting with the policy strategy for funding by donors. This department would also focus on building relationships with local authorities.
3. Strengthen its communication strategy to target the CS and raise awareness on the importance of culture in the development of the country. The communication strategy should encompass the development of a strong narrative on Albania's cultural resources.

4. Set up a department or nominate a person responsible (a “linking pin”) to mediate with universities, businesses, civil society to foster cross collaboration with the CS and stimulate innovation.
5. Set up a direction specifically devoted to the relationship and partnership with national cultural institutions with a view to manage service contracts with such institutions, propose regulation to empower such institutions and monitor development according to set goals.
6. Develop a statistical department in charge of collecting data and evidence on the contribution of the cultural sector to the economy and employment that will serve to justify public investment in culture and document the impact of cultural investment.

6.3 Review of Policy Tools

The principles guiding the review are the development of a strong creative ecosystem. We distinguish 5 different actions lines with specific policy tools aimed at:

- Increasing funding to the CS.
- Building structural capacity for the local cultural sector.
- Improving the regulatory environment.
- Developing a strong communication strategy.
- Supporting internationalisation of the CS.

1st Action Line - Increase funding for the Arts and Culture

Even if the budget has increased over the years the State Budget for Culture in Albania is the lowest in Europe with €13 million annually⁹. There need to be a commitment to increase the cultural State Budget to reach as a minimum the level of 1% of the overall Budget (currently it is just above 0.3%). We propose some ideas to increase funding for the Arts and Culture that would come in complement to a significant increase of the Cultural State Budget.

1. Address underfunding of national cultural institutions

70% of the Ministry’s budget is spent on maintaining and supporting existing national cultural institutions. Efforts have been made to enable those institutions to raise private funding to complement insufficient public funding. Institutions are not encouraged to develop ticket sales and revenues as such revenues are then confiscated by the Ministry of Finance. They are requesting more funds and more financial autonomy. Such autonomy should be granted and regulation should be reviewed to this effect. A contract tailored to the specifics of each cultural institution should be agreed to set objectives and to set the timing of a gradual phasing out of public funding (for instance to reach a maximum of 30% public funding within 7 years). This objective should be matched with the capacity for those institutions to attract private funding with more management autonomy and

⁹ To provide some comparison , the budget of the Albania Ministry of Culture is equivalent to the budget of a city like Mons in Belgium (100 000 inhabitants). Malta and its 400 000 inhabitants has a cultural budget of 70 million Euros. Serbia devotes 0.68% of its State budget to culture (€90 million in 2017). The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport in Kosovo has a €33 million budget (2016).

capacity to manage box office, bars, restaurants, public or private functions, sub-letting as well as sponsorship). The Ministry would remain responsible for the appointment of heads of institutions and the funding of major structural work. Public money saved on the financing of cultural institutions should contribute to the development of an independent creative ecosystem, supporting experimentation and bold cross-disciplinary initiatives in collaboration with cultural institutions that would be invited to spearhead such experimentation.

2. Propose project to the EBRD

As part of the new IPA the Ministry should propose projects without further delay (for instance) to:

- fund infrastructure investment related to cultural heritage (notably refurbishment of national cultural institutions),
- develop training schemes for cultural entrepreneurs and creative tourism,
- develop incentives to support craftsmanship and creative businesses in touristic areas,
- fund a cultural offer capable of attracting tourism (festival) and generating social cohesion,
- support creative entrepreneurship by providing training to young entrepreneurs in incubation,
- develop creative entrepreneurs and artists in residence project (encourage mobility with neighbouring countries),
- transform local community centres in creative hubs facilities (networked and connected, showcasing local talents and productions.
- Set up an international event to network creative hubs in the Balkans and encourage intercultural dialogue.

3. Review Grants Policy

Grant money should be used, through competitive tender, to fund as a matter of priority artistic initiatives that have a structural impact at national level, enabling them to reach scale and critical mass. Ministry of Culture's subsidies should be coupled with co-funding from other ministries supporting innovation to promote cross collaboration and stimulate creative spillovers with science, businesses and technology (consider the setting up of innovation voucher to reward companies calling on expertise from the CS) . Tendering processes and public procurement policy should be reviewed to facilitate access of CS SMEs.

4. Leverage Local Funding

Ministry to partner with local authorities to leverage public money for initiatives that have structural impact (reinforcing cultural offer and cultural infrastructure) notably through affectation of community centres into creative hubs (for instance). Help local authorities to develop Smart Tourism by providing support on marketing the local cultural experience.

5. Leverage funding devoted to supporting peace in the Balkans

Develop as part of Cultural Diplomacy a programme of exchange and mobility with artists and creative entrepreneurs from neighbouring countries (Strategy for the Balkans). Develop agreements with large national cultural institutes that access significant grants (British Council, Goethe, Institut Français).

6. Set a Fiscal incentives scheme

The tax Scheme should aim at attracting foreign and local investment in culture industries (audiovisual, games, music) as well as performing arts. Tax schemes contribute to professionalise the sector which is encouraged to develop proper business plan to pass the scrutiny of “would be” investors. Schemes in European countries show the economic and social value for the country. The absence of incentives is discouraging foreign investment and thus penalise the local service industry including the tourism industry.

2nd Action Line – Build capacity

1. Develop a Master in Arts and Cultural Business Management in collaboration with an Arts university and business schools as well as foreign institutions (develop a curriculum that focuses on cross-disciplinarity (technology , art and business).
2. Encourage international training programmes, artists and cultural entrepreneurs’ residency programmes.
3. Encourage Albanian leadership in submission to Creative Europe calls, cover co-funding requirement in case project lead by Albania is successful (Reward Success).
4. Set up exchange programmes with other European Ministries to enable heads of cultural institutions to learn from good management practices.
5. Develop statistical tools to help measure progress of policies and document impact.
6. Encourage better representation of the sector and increase its lobbying capacity. CS should organise themselves into trade associations with capacity to propose policy actions with a view to become interlocutors with the Ministry.
7. Help transform local community centres into creative hubs. This should help disseminate and encourage cultural practices. Community centres should be networked digitally to foster creative collaborations and experimentation across the country. They should be placed to experiment with art, enjoy cultural production as well as access knowledge in both art and science/technology (library). Heads of creative hubs should be trained in community management and encouraged to develop as fablab or maker spaces (develop international exchange programmes).
8. Help CS (often micro-enterprises) to participate in public procurement and calls for tender.
9. Train teachers (propose a cultural kit) to encourage the practice of Art or access to Art at school.
10. Set up an advisory group composed of CS stakeholders to monitor implementation of the cultural strategy.

3rd Action Lines – Improve regulatory environment

1. Set up framework contract with cultural institutions to set mutual rights and obligations.
2. Set up a tax scheme to attract and encourage investment in cultural production, Albania to become attractive and competitive to produce TV series or movies (labour intensive and skilled jobs). Albania is a low cost production country at a disadvantage with neighbouring countries that offers tax credit schemes to investors.

3. Consider quotas or investment obligations to preserve market access for local productions (in music, audiovisual)
4. Set up a labelling scheme to reward excellence in craftsmanship and local food and design.
5. Consider fixed price for book legislation to help the development of independent bookshops.
6. Review regulation that prevents or hinders the establishment of cultural venues.

4th Action Line - Communication strategy

1. Develop a strong narrative on Albania's cultural resources and specificities.
2. Be active on social media, able to reach out to the youth (subcontract to local creative agencies).
3. Work out a consistent one-year nationwide cultural programme (to promote locally and internationally) and integrate such offer in tourism strategy.
4. Connect with artistic community (powerful opinion maker).
5. Organise regularly an event celebrating creative and cultural entrepreneurship facilitating matchmaking and training.

The communication strategy should serve to raise awareness on the economic and social significance of the cultural investment as well as the objective of developing a collaborative mindset between the CS on the one hand and the business, technology and universities on the other hand. It will also serve to build trust with stakeholders, citizens and other policy departments. It is important to give visibility to the sector's contribution to local economic and social development. Finally it will contribute to improve Albania's image and attractiveness.

5th Action Line – Internationalisation

1. Develop links with cultural institutes notably the British Council, The Goethe Institute and Institut Français which are in a position to access EU funding as well as national funds.
2. Review attendance at international markets and festivals and incentives for industry to attend such international fair. Consider representation in fairs in China keen to partner in Europe.
3. Develop international residency programmes to attract foreign talents.
4. Develop a flagship international cultural/artistic event to showcase talent and to support Albania's quest to become a territory of destination.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The next IPA programme (with funding of EUR 46 Million) is prioritizing support for tourism, cultural heritage and entrepreneurship. Clearly this is an opportunity for the cultural sector and the Ministry,

with its policy strategy, to make the case for strategic cultural investment. This requires an appropriate allocation of human resources and organisations to be able to respond to demand for projects that fit with IPA requirements. Concretely, the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) – as the implementer - will run a scoping mission in Feb-March 2018 to shortlist potential infrastructure projects. It will then draft the Description of the Action by April (first draft). The plan is to sign all agreements before summer and start implementation possibly in September 2018. As a matter of urgency the Ministry should set up a task force to identify projects for funding. This task force should ideally work in partnership with other Ministries that are coveting those funds (notably tourism but also regional development) and use this occasion to establish inter-ministerial collaboration.

Cultural investment is comparable to other forms of investment and is based on the same financial approach of sound management. Like any investment, it presents risks: the return on investment is not guaranteed. However, cultural investment presents some very specific challenges because of its nature.

First, a political risk is undeniable, as the general public continues to perceive culture as superfluous, secondary or the preserve of the affluent. Culture is classed as subsidiary and non-essential. Second, such an investment presents a social risk, as artistic intervention has the potential to challenge perceptions and undermine preconceptions and mental habits. It takes an alternative look at familiar places, with the associated risk of denaturing them and offending sensibilities. This is the danger that results from entrusting the keys and image of a country or a city to the professionals of ‘disruption’, the custodians of viewpoints that may be critical, acerbic, benevolent or off-beat. The political authorities (as well as businesses) have understood the strategic importance of cultural investment, because the disruptive nature of artistic and cultural activity produces economic and social innovation in a way that no other investment can do. By setting the conditions for making cultural policy a key element in a policy of sustainable economic and social development, Albania is in a position to set an example. As a result of political will (very strong in Albania because of the acknowledgment of the transformative power of culture) there is an opportunity to put the cultural dimension at the heart of the national strategy.

Numerous examples show how a cultural investment that is properly managed from a financial viewpoint produces a set of impacts in terms of economic prosperity, jobs or entrepreneurial vocations in the creative economy. Properly integrated into a national development strategy, cultural investment is a source of attractiveness for visitors and investors. When it lives up to local popular expectations, it is also a source of a change in attitudes that generates spirit cohesion, pride and collective aspiration. There can be no development without self-confidence and confidence in the potential of others. Prime Minister Rama set the example when he coloured the dull buildings of Tirana and invited Mme Merkel to consider the impact of artistic intervention on the country.

As such, cultural investment is a highly political matter, because the transformation that is generated is profound. The returns will relate not just to the ability to develop a product or an offering that is capable of gaining market share in the next three or five years with a view to maximising profit. They will be based on the ability of the investment to transform the local habitat, the quality of life, to change minds, to encourage risk-taking and to promote creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. They will also be based on its ability to offer opportunities for greater citizen participation. Such an investment is both physical (involving the promotion of the urban heritage, for example) and emotional (through its aesthetic shock value and the collective experience it generates).

In this respect, cultural investment is unique. The difficulty of measuring its many and various impacts is a source of mistrust. This difficulty arises because the effects are largely intangible compared to those of other forms of investment, and qualitative data (used to measure intangibles such as social effects) do not create the certainty produced by quantitative data. Culture also suffers from the lack of a statistical tool, because of the continuing and excessive preoccupation of statistics with the production of material wealth.

Because the country is starting a fresh, Albania has the vocation to become an example of a cultural investment whose impact extends beyond the protection of the historical heritage and the development of tourism.

ANNEX 1 – Definition

According to the definition of cultural and creative industries (CCIs) proposed by KEA¹⁰, it is important to distinguish between a “cultural sector” constituted of traditional art fields and cultural industries, whose outputs are exclusively “cultural”, and the “creative sector” which gathers the remaining industries and activities that use culture as an added-value for the production of non-cultural products.

Figure 1 visualizes the different categories of activities/sub-sectors covered by the cultural and creative sector.

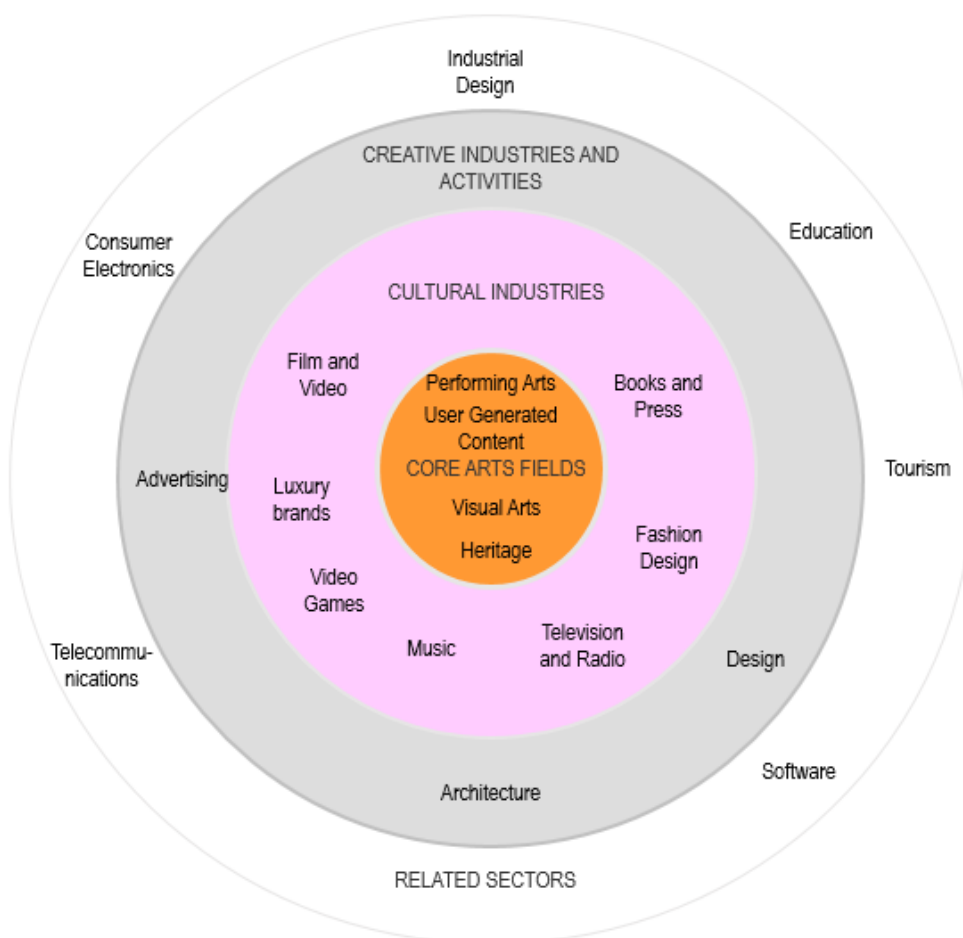


Figure 1 - The cultural & creative sector [image elaborated by KEA]

¹⁰ KEA European Affairs, « The Economy of Culture in Europe », European Commission, 2006

ANNEX 2 - List of people interviewed in November 2017

22 November 2017

Venue: Ministry of Culture

10.00 Meeting with Directors of Heritage Public Institutions

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Valbona Shujaku	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Culture	valbona.shujaku@kultura.gov.al
Kozeta Angjeliu	Director Directorate of Tangible Heritage and Museum	Ministry of Culture	kozeta.angjeliu@kultura.gov.al
Arian Avrazi	Director Directorate of Intangible Heritage	Ministry of Culture	arian.avrazi@kultura.gov.al
Arta Dollani	Director General	Institute of Cultural Monuments	arta.dollani@imk.gov.al
Rudina Zoto	Director	Archaeological Service Agency	rudina.zoto@asha.gov.al
Silva Breshani	Director	National Centre of Inventorying of Cultural Properties	silva.breshani@qkipk.gov.al
Lucjan Bedeni	Director	National Museum of Photography "Marubi", Shkodra	info@marubi.gov.al lucjan_bedeni@yahoo.com
Redi Marku	Expert	National Historic Museum in Tirana	muzeuhistorikkombetar@yahoo.com
Sonila Kora	Expert Directorate of Tangible Heritage and Museum	Ministry of Culture	sonila.kora@kultura.gov.al
Flutura Agaj	Expert Directorate of Policies and Strategies on Culture	Ministry of Culture	flutura.agaj@kultura.gov.al
Marsela Plyku	Head of Unit	Institute of Cultural Monuments	marselaplyku@gmail.com
Klodjana Gjata	Expert	Institute of Cultural Monuments	klodjanagjata@gmail.com

13.30 Meetings with Directors of Books and Libraries Institutions as well as Copyright

Directorate

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Mimoza Hysa	Director Directorate of Books	Ministry of Culture	mimoza.hysa@kultura.gov.al
Persida Asllani	Director	National Library in Tirana	pasllani@gmail.com
Edmond Ahmeti	Director Copyright Directorate	Ministry of Culture	edmond.ahmeti@kultura.gov.al
Lisjana Shanaj	Head of Unit Copyright Directorate	Ministry of Culture	lisjana.shanaj@kultura.gov.al

14.30 Meeting with Art Director, National Theatre of Opera and Ballet; Director of National Theatre; Director of National Center of Cinematography; Director of National Film Archive

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Valbona Shujaku	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Culture	valbona.shujaku@kultura.gov.al
Herida Duro	Director	Ministry of Culture	herida.duro@kultura.gov.al
Iris Elezi	Director	National Film Archive	iriselezi@gmail.com
Illir Butka	Director	National Center of Cinematography	butkailir@yahoo.com
Zana Çela	Director	National Theatre of Opera and Ballet	zana.cela@tkob.gov.al
Hervin Çuli	Director	National Theatre	hervinculi2008@hotmail.com

23 November 2017

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Kujtim Cashku	Head of Marubi Film Academy	Marubi Film Academy	
Meri Kumbe	Professor, musician	University of Arts	
Aulon Naci	Adviser to the Mayor	Municipality of Valon (Vlora)	
Besim Petrela	Head of Art Dept; organizer of Jazz Festival	Municipality of Tirana	
Olson Lamaj			
Arben Papadhopulli	Head of Media Desk (Creative Europe)		Arben_papadhopulli@yahoo.com
Alketa Kurrizo	Artist, curator,	Albanian American Foundation	
Blerina Shalari	Musician	National Competition of Composers	
Ema Andrea Klod Dedja	Actor, curator	MAM Ngo	

Julia Selmani	Head of Unit in the Projects Dept	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
Loreta Berhami	Head	“Pegi” Publishing House
Rubin Beqo Alban Nimani	Artists, managers	“Tulla” Cultural Center
Nilsa Hysi	vocalist of a band	
Lura Elezi –	marketing background- advertising – festival management -	
Daniel Shkurti-	organizer music festivals (theatre metropol pr)	
“Brisi” studio	recording – music producer	
“Xhimi” Studio,	recording – music producer	

24 November 2017

Name	Position	Institution	Contact
Evis Qaj	Director	Prime Minister’s Office- Dept of Strategic Planning	Evis.qaja@kryeministria.al
Rozalba Mejdani	Head of Unit	Ministry of Education	Rozalba.Merdani@arsimi.gov.al>
Renald Petriti	Specialist, Department of Budget Planning	Ministry of Finance	Renald.petriti@financa.gov.al
Vasil Tole	Academic, musician, expert of Intangible Heritage	Academy of Sciences	vasiltole@hotmail.com
Andi Tepelena	Director (member of Independent Scene of Creativity)	“Art Contact” NGO	anditepelana@gmail.com

ANNEX 3 - List of people interviewed in February 2018

Workshop on drafting a draft strategy for culture 09 February 2018, (MK, hall Tefta Tashko)

Participants present in the workshop on the National Strategy of Culture

No.	Name Surname	Institutions	Contacts (Email)	Contacts (Cel)
1.	Iris Elezi	National Film Archive	iris.elezi@aqshf.gov.al	
2.	Jona Xhufi	Institute IP3	jona.xhufi@institutip3.com	0696893246
3.	Jonard Jorgji	Director/Producer	jjorgji@gmail.com	0694063304
4.	Blerina Berberi	EKPHRASIS Studio	blerina.berberi@yahoo.com	0697359255
5.	Persida Asllani	National Library	pasllani@gmail.com	
6.	Tea Çuni	Muzeu Marubi	tea.cuni@hotmail.it	
7.	Erzen Shkololli	National Gallery of Arts	erzenshkololli@yahoo.com	
8.	Luçjan Bedeni	Marubi Museum	luçjan.bedeni@marubi.gov.al	
9.	Majlinda Tafa	National Center of	info@nationalfilmcenter.gov.al	
10.	Besim Petrela	Cinematography	Besim.petrela@tirana.al	
11.	Iris Ferati	Municipality of Tiranë	irisferati@yahoo.com	
12.	Zana Çela	Harabel NGO	zana.cela@tkob.gov.al	
13.	Olsi Sulejmani	Theatre of Opera and Ballet	info@musicballkan.com	
14.	Alda Bërçolli	REKULTURE Center	alda.berxolli@britishcouncil.org	
15.	Eriona Vyshka	British Council	eriona.vyshka@aqshf.gov.al	
16.	Alketa Kurrizi	National Film Archives	alketa.kurrizi@gmail.com	0696212344
17.	Andi Tepelena		anditepelena@gmail.com	0694713329
18.	Anjeza Asameni	AADF		0696227714
19.	Serxhio Haxhiaj	Art Kontakt		0694059117
20.	Danier Shkurti	Theatre of Opera and Ballet		0682686566
21.	Alban Nimani	Theatre of Opera and Ballet	alban.nimani@gmail.com	0697758993
22.	Etleva Demollari	Institute IP3		
23.	Rubin Beqo	TULLA culture center Museum of Leaves TULLA Culture Center	Beqo.rubin@gmail.com	