Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

As already mentioned, the Youth Board of Cyprus runs the "Youth Initiatives [1]" funding scheme which subsidizes young people and youth NGO's, youth clubs and local youth councils to utilise their own projects in different areas. Three of those areas are: Cultural Interventions, Innovation and Creativity Projects and Book Publishing.

Furthermore, the Department of Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth offers various funding opportunities [2] to either professionals in the field, NGO’s, local authorities or general public, such as:

- TRANSIT SCHEME Enhancing mobility in the field of visual arts: Participation to Hospitality Programs of Artists Abroad
- Culture Programme, Sub-programmes:
  - "Popular Culture", Scheme for supporting Activities for the conservation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Traditional Tourism
  - "Visual Arts" Scheme for supporting Visual Arts and Development
  - "Cinema" Scheme for supporting Cinema Activities, Cinema Education and Training
  - "Music" Scheme for supporting Activities for Music Development
  - "Literature" Scheme for supporting Literary and writing Activities
  - "Dance" Scheme for supporting Activities in the field of Dancing
- "Theatre" Scheme for supporting of the Theatre Creation and Development

- Support of Cultural Bodies for the Coverage of the Promotion, Communication and International Networking Needs
- Annual Grants Program for Natural Persons for their participation in cultural events/programs/activities
- Enhancement of periodical Cultural Publications
- "Terpsichore" (Τερψιχόρη) - Programme for the enhancement of Creation and Research in the field of Modern Dance
- Cultural Decentralization Program (The program aims to promote cultural decentralization through a series of quality activities taking place in rural communities)
- Editorial series with title Studies on the Modern Culture of Cyprus

The Department of Theatre Development of the Cyprus Theatre Organisation, has been engaged in ways and projects that broaden and promote theatre activity in Cyprus, in cooperation with other bodies and social groups.

The main activities of the Department of Theatre Development are the following:

- Subsidisation of performances by theatre companies which are active in Cyprus
- School theatre - Organisation of the Pancyprian Theatre School Games and workshops for teachers
- Amateur theatre - Organisation of the Pancyprian Festival of Amateur Theatre
- Organisation of Masterclasses for various theatre disciplines
- Collaboration with non-governmental organisations and groups for the promotion of activities for theatre
- Financial support of organised groups that have among their objectives the development of theatre (Cyprus Centre of the International Theatre Institute, Actors Union of Cyprus, Cyprus Playwrights Society etc.)
- Provision of information to prospective students, parents, professionals, organisations interested in the theatre in Cyprus, educational institutions, organised groups etc.

**Disseminating information on cultural opportunities**

The main information provider to young people in Cyprus are the Youth Information Centres operated by the Youth Board of Cyprus. Therefore, information on cultural opportunities is disseminated through the Centres who are located in every city of the non occupied by Turkey part of the island. To reach out to all young persons, the Centres collaborate with the local schools, clubs and authorities who also run cultural services departments. Moreover, The YIC are the multipliers of Eurodesk Cyprus (also run by the Youth Board of Cyprus) which is responsible for the European Youth Portal, thus disseminating youth targeted information on cultural opportunities and initiatives online.

The Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth have also initiated the Portal of Cultural Information programme which is incorporated in the creation of a national network of cultural information. The Portal presents artists’ profile, their creative works and covers the areas of Visual Arts, Cinematography, Music, Writing and Performing Arts.

There is also the Cyprus Music Information Centre (CyMIC) established in 2008 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youthand the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra Foundation with the aim to
become the primary provider of specialized information, publications and music scores about the whole range of Cyprus music.

**Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people**

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth either through the educational system or through the Cultural Services Department promotes awareness of the national and European cultural heritage.

As of 1st January 2011, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth participates in the Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe and the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) of the Council of Europe established in April 2011.

In 2017, Cyprus and Denmark hosted the European Capital of Culture institution. Aarhus was the city in Denmark that shared the title with Pafos in 2017. The management committee of the European Capital of Culture competition in Cyprus was the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus. The Programme of Events of Pafos2017 was built around three basic themed programme lines: Myth and Religion, World Travellers and Stages of the Future.

The Cultural Services promoted a large number of activities in the domain of Popular Culture. Financial support was given in the framework of the new programme CULTURE: sub-programme Popular Culture-Support of activities of traditional culture as follows:

1. Subsidisation of traditional music and dance groups with respect to their participation in events of a traditional character in Cyprus and abroad.

2. Encouragement of dance teachers and students to attend seminars in Cyprus and abroad.

3. Subsidisation of festivals by rural communities and areas with the aim to achieve decentralization.


During 2017, the Cultural Services continued to lease premises in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca and Pafos in order to house associations that serve the letters and the arts. The associations use the Houses of the Letters and the Arts to hold assemblies, meetings, visual art exhibitions, literary events, film projections, theatre rehearsals, etc.

In its efforts to offer educational help to Greeks living in other countries, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth has proceeded with the following:

- Provision of books and other educational materials to all Greek schools and other Greek organisations on request.

- Educational camps for children of the Greek of Diaspora. The camps offer educational programmes related to the Greek language and culture.

- Provision of educational support to repatriated Cypriots and Greeks of Diaspora through
programmes offered within the schools as well as by the Adult Education Centres. These programmes offer free Greek Language courses to both children and adults.

- Teaching of the Greek language to children and teachers of the Greek Orthodox schools in Jerusalem.

There is a plethora of cultural activities taking place in schools. One of the targets for the School Year 2016-17 was the exploitation of the cultural wealth of all European residents and the emergence of the common elements and the diversity of European cultures through cultural actions within the framework of the European Capital of Culture "Paphos 2017". The involvement of students in activities and other events within the context of events held during “Paphos 2017”, Cultural Capital of Europe can be obtained through the **2017 Annual Report of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Sport and Youth** [8].

During the Maltese as well as the Estonian Presidencies of the European Council, a plethora of important issues were put forward and the Cypriot side developed very intense action and participation in formulating issues, such as the Work Plan on Culture, the Council Conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage and the European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018).

Within the framework of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and UNESCO’s focus, KEE UNESCO in co-operation with the ASPnet National Network Coordinator, prepared a two-year action programme: "Global Citizenship and Education for Cultural Heritage" (2018 - 2019) which included: Training of Teachers from UNESCO Associated Schools in the use of modern teaching methods for Cultural Heritage, the 41st Pancyprian Symposium of the UNESCO Network Associated Schools and participation of the UNESCO Cyprus Associated Schools in workshops about creating short documentaries.

The Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO operates under the supervision of the State as exercised by the Minister of Education and Culture through the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth provides the Commission with funding for its organizational needs and the promotion of its programmes. The Commission actively promotes the implementation of the UNESCO Conventions and Programmes in Cyprus in conjunction with all Ministries and Government Services, as well as with Non-Governmental Organisations the activities of which are related to those of UNESCO, in other words, education, culture, social studies and humanities, natural studies and communication and information.

The [Cyprus Research Centre](https://www.cr腧e.gov.cy) (C.R.C.) was founded in 1964 with the aim of enabling Cypriot and overseas scholars to research the history and civilisation of Cyprus and to have the conclusions of the relevant research published on a systematic basis. The C.R.C. has a specialised library covering the history and civilisation not only of Cyprus but also that of Greece, Europe and the Middle East in general.

There is also a [Creative Europe Desk in Cyprus](https://cyprus.culturereport.eu) aiming at providing assistance to cultural and creative agencies regarding the Creative Europe Programme. The Desks are designed to:

- Provide information about and promote the Creative Europe programme in their country;

- Assist the cultural and creative sectors in relation to the programme and provide basic information on other support opportunities;
- Stimulate cross-border cooperation within the cultural and creative sectors;

- Provide assistance regarding the cultural and creative sectors in participating countries;

- Support the Commission in ensuring proper communication and dissemination of the results and impacts of the programme;

- Ensure the communication and dissemination of information concerning funding awarded to and results in a participating country.