

**KEEP ON: Effective policies for durable and self-sustainable projects in the cultural heritage sector**

**P3 – Municipality of Paggaio**

**Essay on the effects of COVID-19 crisis in the implementation of the addressed Policy Instrument, lessons learned and examples of confronting such a challenge as the COVID-19 pandemic**

**KEEP ON: Αποτελεσματικές Πολιτικές για διάρκεια και βιωσιμότητα έργων που υλοποιούνται στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς**

**Έκθεση σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις της κρίσης COVID-19 στην εφαρμογή του εξεταζόμενου εργαλείου πολιτικής, διδάγματα και παραδείγματα αντιμετώπισης μιας τέτοιας πρόκλησης όπως η πανδημία COVID-19**



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## About the Deliverable

This document reports the effects of COVID-19 crisis in the implementation of the addressed Policy Instrument, lessons learned and examples of confronting such a challenge as the COVID-19 pandemic.

### [The Deliverable and the Action Plan of the KEEP ON project for the Municipality of Paggaio](#)

It is related directly to the Action 1 of the Action Plan of Paggaio, named ""Upgrade of the supplementary actions of the Conference on local history of Paggaio"", as this institution was also severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (an online version has completely different characteristics, without the networking and direct communication of lecturers and audience/participants, eliminating the involvement of the local community, etc..

It is also linked to Action 3 ""Upgrade of the cooperation with the International Hellenic University (Department of Management Science and Technology) and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment) for continues improvement and support in relative studies (measurement of socio/economic impact and other indicators)"" as the assistance of the two (2) Knowledge Carriers will be asked (without additional cost for the project).

The essay will contribute to the improvement of capacity and knowledge (the Municipality and the Stakeholders).

### [The Deliverable and the use of lessons learned](#)

The lessons learned, will become tools in the planning toolkit of the Municipality for the design of the next policy instruments and allocation of funds for cultural projects, with the KEEP ON approach (projects that are feasible after the end of their public funding). Such tool is considered to be very precious after the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## [The Deliverable and the addressed Policy Instrument of the Municipality of Paggaió](#)

The activity complies with the general objective 2.4.2 "Upgrade of cultural institutions and activities of the Municipality and organising of new events of local, national and international scope" of the measure 2.4 "culture, tourism" of the addressed Policy Instrument of the Municipality of Paggaió "Strategic Planning of the Operational Programme of the Municipality of Paggaió".

### Introduction

Cultural Heritage and labour market in cultural heritage were severely affected by the pandemic. It is important to examine how the execution of the Policy Instrument and especially the measures related to Cultural heritage was done during the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects (in terms of policy, actions, finances, etc.), if the lessons learned contribute to better planning and also assessing better risks, etc.

Such report is considered precious for decision making and better future planning, especially knowing the high potential risks (climate change and others).

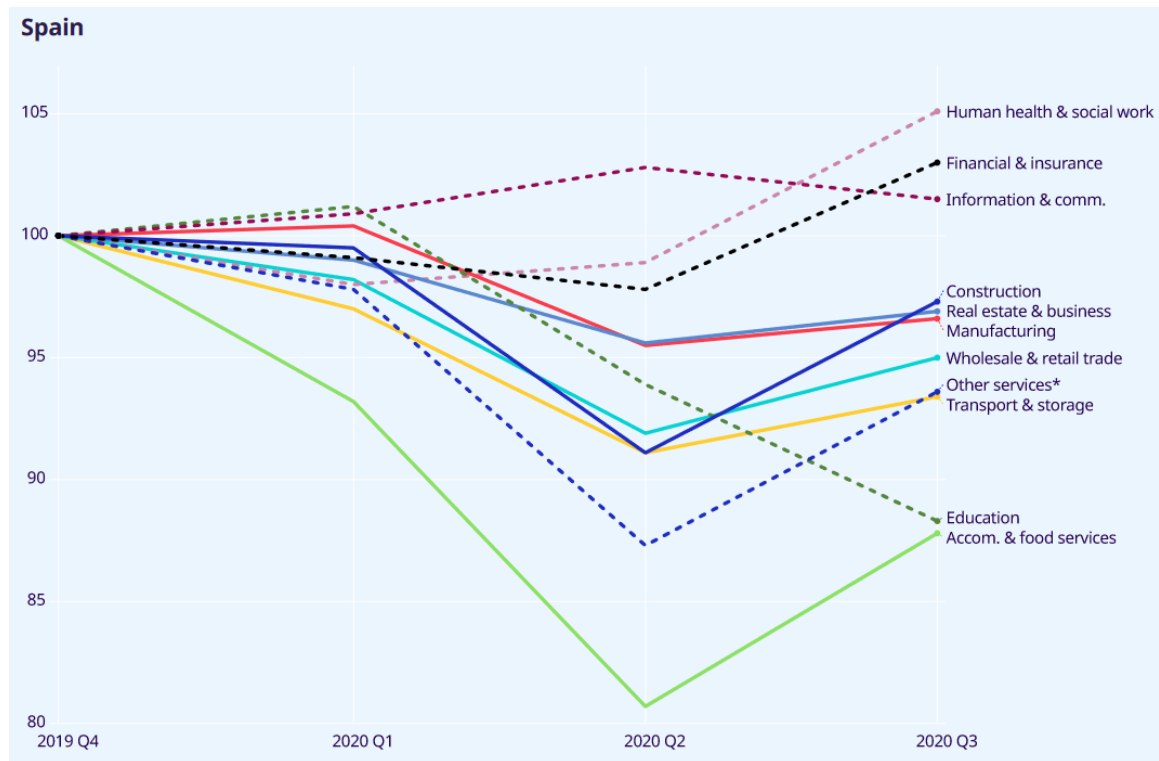
This documents elaborates briefly on the literature review and then it reports on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis in cultural heritage enterprises, the employability, the of the people working in the cultural heritage sector, the public spending on the conservation and maintenance of cultural heritage monuments and the support on intangible cultural heritage, the addressed Policy Instrument of the Municipality of Paggaió and brings up some case studies of confrontation of challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. It ends with the lessons learned and the conclusions.

### Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent measures for minimizing the spread of the novel coronavirus, had significant impact on the local, regional and national economies, people, enterprises and national budgets. *"The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic*

(COVID-19 pandemic) has altered the social and economic reality worldwide” (Vouloutidou *et al*, 2021). As the tourism industry plays a significant role in the local development, the consequences of the severe measures of lock down and other severe measures were significantly negative, in terms of turnover and job positions.

According to ILO (2021), the employment per sector was shaped as follows in 2020 in Spain<sup>1</sup>.



As Vouloutidou *et al* (2021) found in their research, the national revenues from travel receipts in Greece, fell from 18.179bn€ in 2019, to 4.280bn€ in 2020. The same authors presented that the decision to cease temporarily the operation of several businesses, affected 219.283 enterprises (15,1% of all enterprises in Greece). That included 84,4% of enterprises operating in sector of accommodation and food. The tourism turnover per Regional Unit in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, according to Vouloutidou *et al* (2021), was reduced from 2019 to 2020 as follows:

Drama            -47,82%

<sup>1</sup> Indicative example of a European country.

Evros	-64,59%
Thassos	-71,34%
Kavala	-57,39%
Xanthi	-49,66%
Rodopi	-55,99%

“The cultural and creative industries (CCIs) have been among the first sectors to shut their doors and they will be among the last to reopen. Large parts of the sector depend on human congregation. As a result, venue and site-based activities, such as theatre, live music, festivals, cinemas and museums, have been hit particularly hard”. (UNESCO, 2021).

Since the beginning of the novel coronavirus outbreak, it was recognized that **“Along with the tourism industry, the OECD<sup>2</sup> has identified arts, entertainment and recreation as among the sectors most at risk due to the impact of containment measures.** Other sectors most at risk include manufacturing of transport equipment, construction, wholesale and retail trade, air transport, accommodation and food services, and real estate services.” (Travkina and Sacco, 2020)

The Gross Value Added (GVA) which is produced by the cultural heritage related activities, had fallen due to COVID-19 over 2020, by a rate between 30% and 40%. Far more than any other industry. All countries (excluding China), suffered severe conditions and losses in the cultural heritage, as reported by UNESCO (2021), which further states that the losses in employment were also huge (e.g. -55% decline in Philippines to the low -13% in New Zealand).

As reported by ICOM<sup>3</sup> and Gaballo (2021), even in Spring 2021 (second year of the COVID-19 pandemic), the situation was worst (slightly) in comparison to the early autumn period, although inconsistently between different continents, leading to large progress of the digitalisation and promotion of visual contents. As per the findings of Gaballo (2021), the employment in museums was reduced in all pandemic waves, with further negative impact, including museums with laid-off employees’ number increasing continuously from 5,8% in May 2020 to 9,6% in May 2021, thus 1 in 10 museums had to lay off employees due to the pandemic, while 15% of the freelancer professionals in the field were laid off in Spring 2021 (compared to 20% in Spring 2020). The overall percentage of

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<sup>2</sup> OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

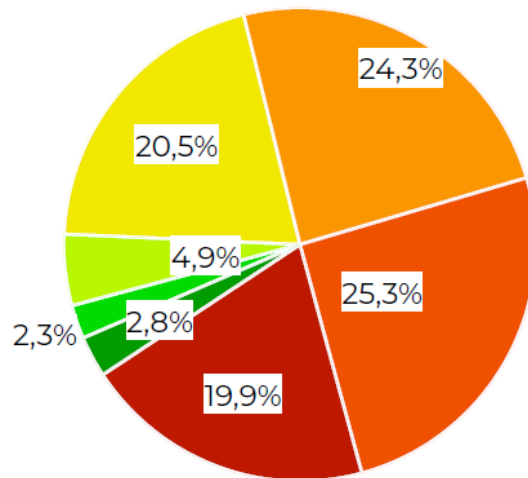
<sup>3</sup> ICOM: International Council of Museums

museums in lockdown was near 95% in April-May 2020. At the same time, as reported by Gaballo (2021), consultant professionals for museums (highly skilled specialists) who manage their income mainly from this business<sup>4</sup>, were 32% in Spring 2021, compared to 57% before the COVID-19 pandemic, a real alert. In Spring (2020) near 13% of museums worldwide had closed permanently, while that rate fell to 4% in Spring 2021, however the problem remained significant due to lack of funding. All that caused further limitations to culture access and the overall societal living.

Regarding the revenues, the findings of Gaballo (2021) showed loss of 44% in Spring 2021, compared to 32% in Autumn 2020, while the loss of visitors in 2020 was as follows:

### What percentage of visitors did your museum lose in 2020?

- <10%
- <25%
- Up to 50%
- More than 50%
- >75%
- >90%
- The visitors increased in 2020

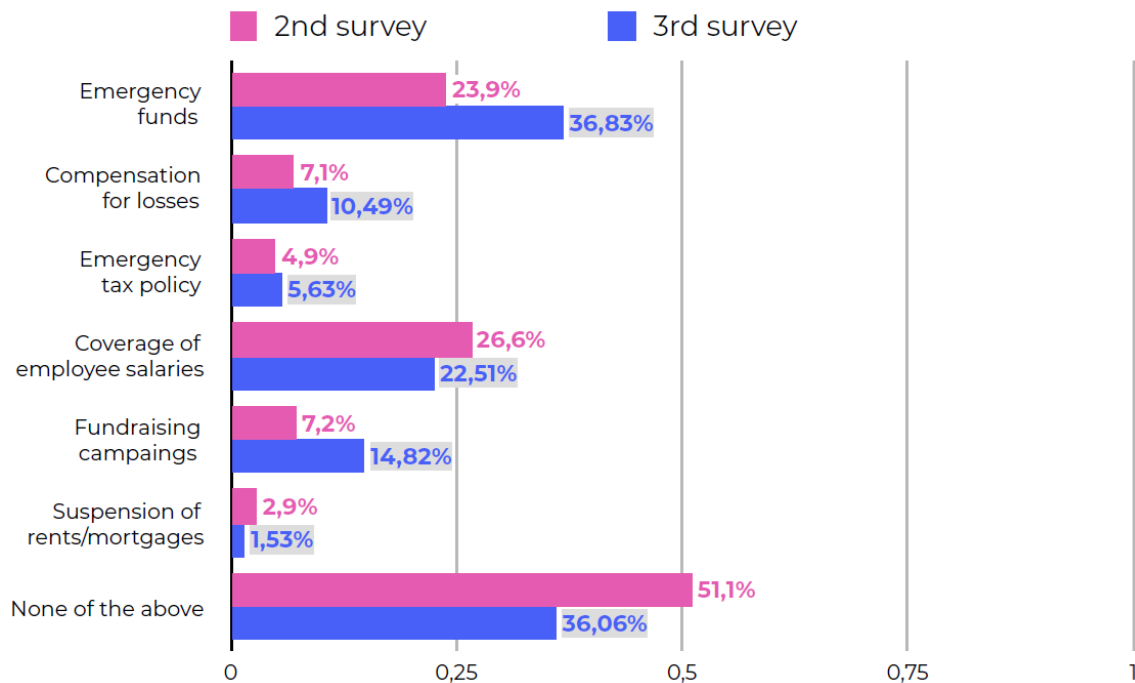


It is important to realise the access to other means of finance during that COVID-19 outbreak:

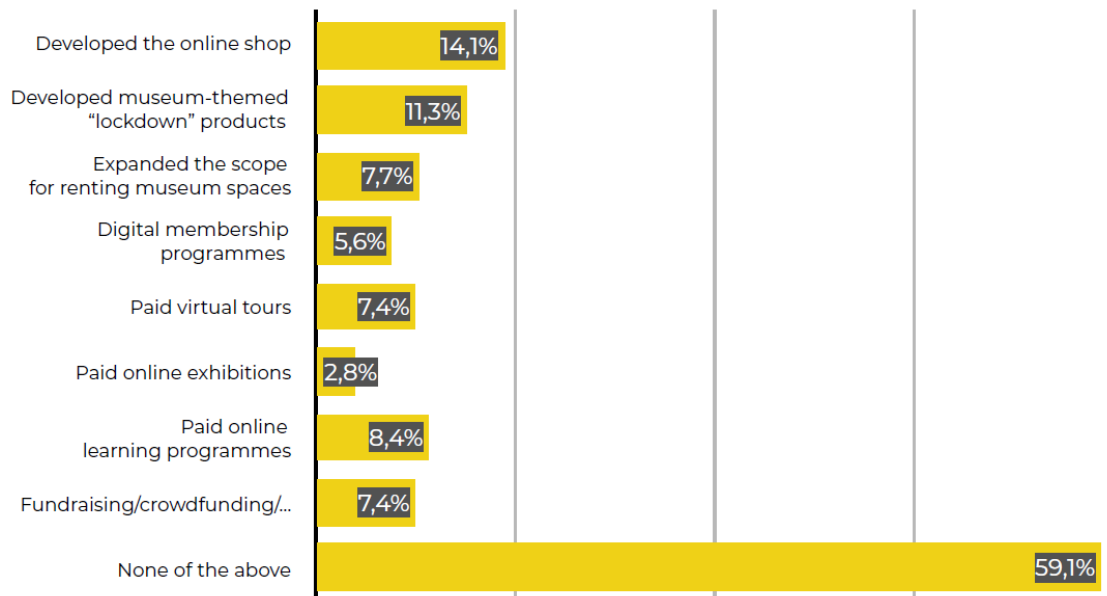
<sup>4</sup> Income more than 50%.

### Did you have access to any of the following forms of financial support?

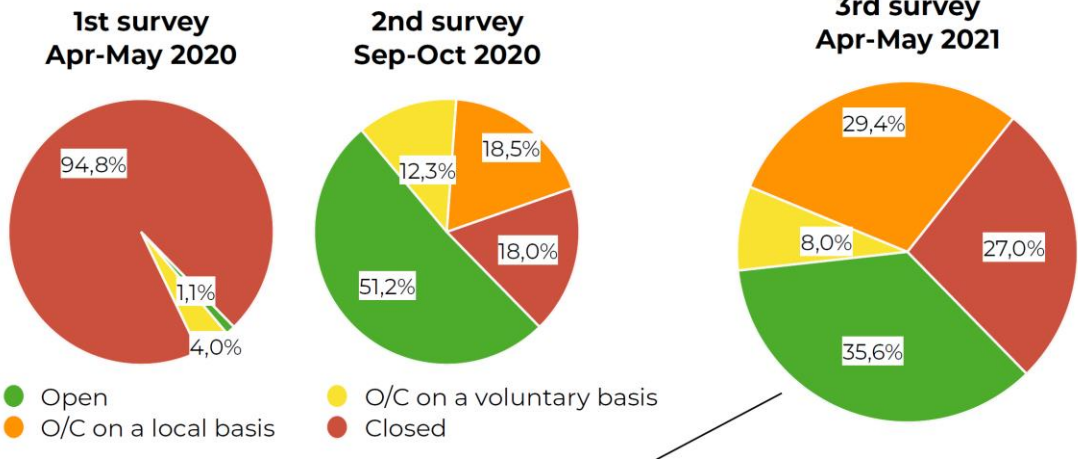
(multiple choice question)



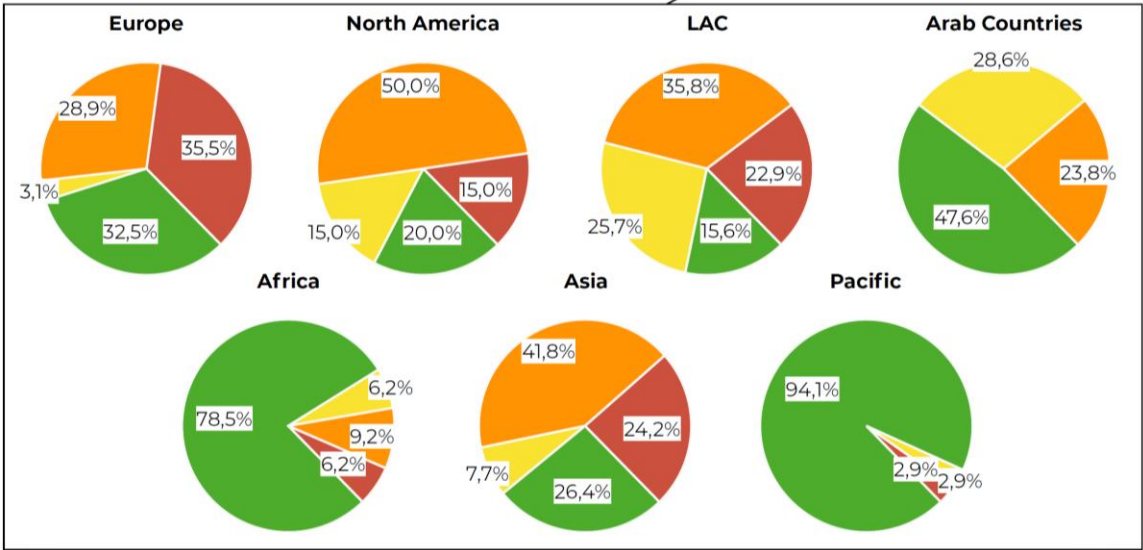
### Has your institution experimented with new ways of generating income?



The closing of museums in 3 surveys of ICOM and Gaballo (2021) worldwide, is presented below:

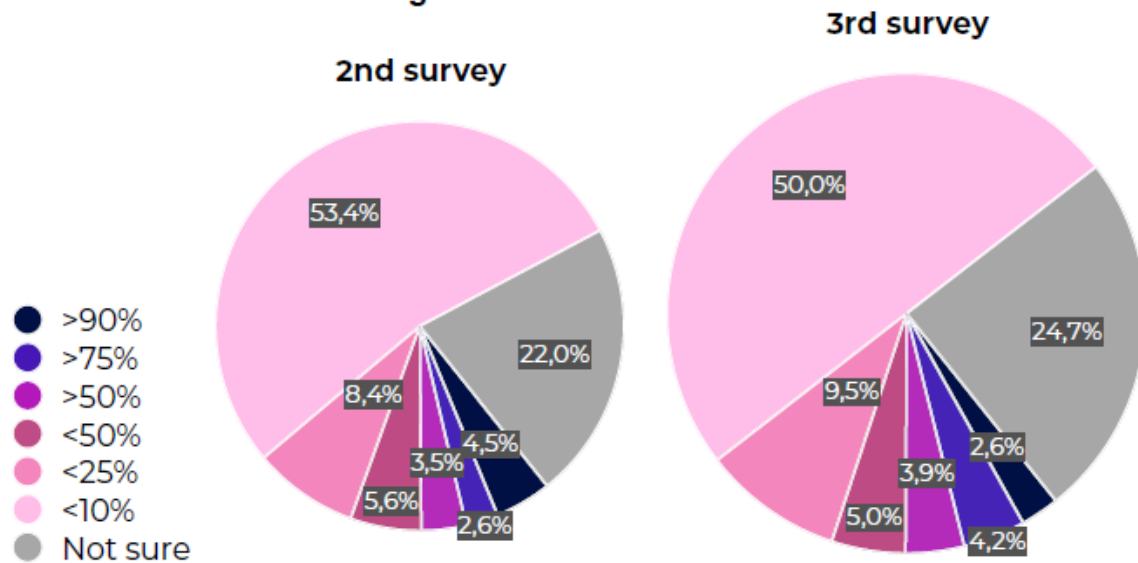


3<sup>rd</sup> survey results per region:



Regarding the reduction of job positions, the results of ICOM and Gaballo (2021) were as follows (2<sup>nd</sup> survey September – October 2020, 3<sup>rd</sup> survey April-May 2021).

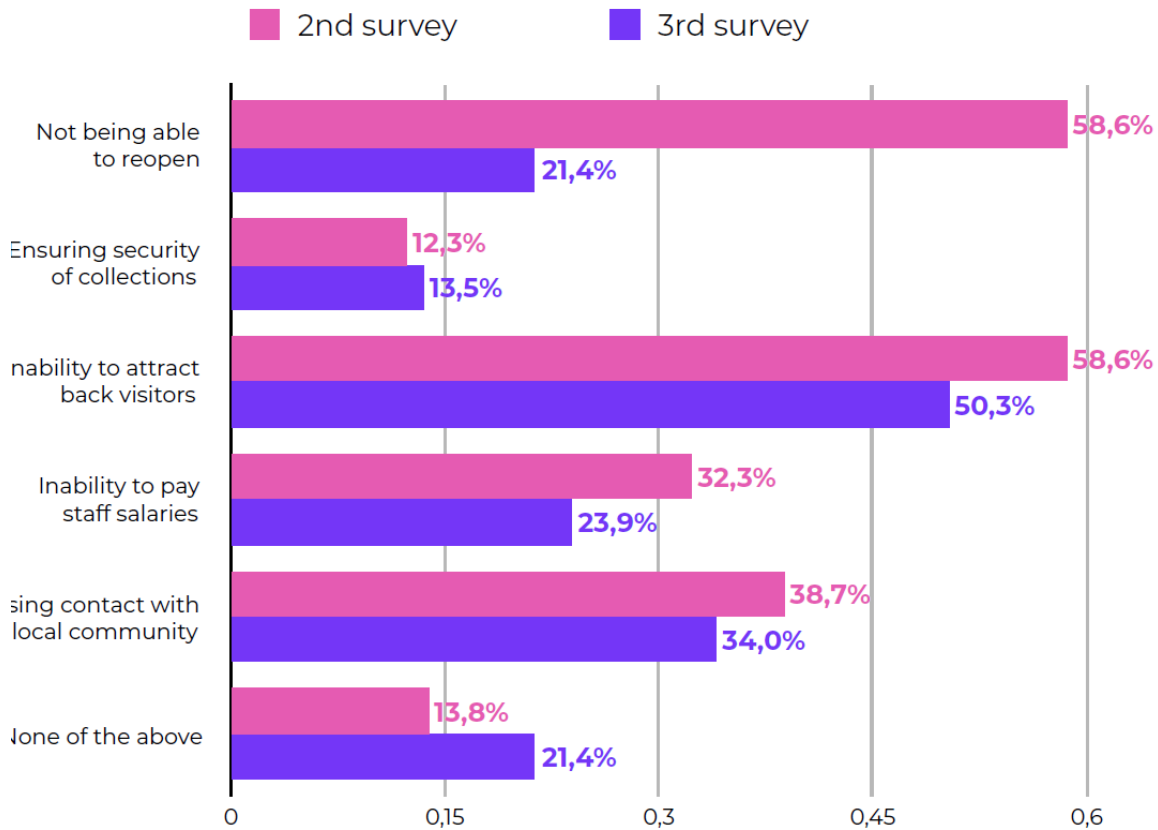
**What percentage of the staff has been laid off or furloughed?**



According to ICOM and Gaballo (2021), the business models of museums is not that easy to be changed, especially under time pressure, such as the COVID-19 outbreak period. The large survey of ICOM and Gaballo (2021), raised two main problems: (i) “the maintenance of crime prevention systems and the control of the environmental conditions”.

Furthermore, the surveys had interesting findings regarding the perception of the (staff) museums about the threads for the future:





Carrigan (2020), in the *Art Newspaper*, reported that the creative industry was sinking to all-time lowest levels during the novel coronavirus outbreak. Losses were estimated by that time to be “2.7 million jobs and more than \$150bn in sales of goods and services for creative industries nationwide, which range from film and fashion to fine and performing arts” (Carrigan, 2020). According to the author, musicians and singers were hit severely, followed by authors and writers and then actors, while in the USA, over 123,000 job positions were eliminated for painters, sculptors and illustrators and over 390,000 job positions for photographers. However, according to Seman (2020), as cited in Carrigan (2020), claimed that “the Covid-19 crisis offers an opportunity to look at how the creative industries operate in the US and the existing policy directed towards them”, who further added “Perhaps this is the time to incubate a ‘Creative Economy 2.0’ across the United States that is inclusive, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral”.

Cultural Heritage has been severely hit by the COVID-19 outbreak, because of the measures to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus and because of cuts in funding, in order to use it for the health emergencies. “The COVID-19 crisis has impacted every dimension of the cultural heritage value chain: from research to conservation and

protection, and from outreach to training and education. The observations resulting from this consultation are categorised as follows: 1) Implications for personnel and security of jobs; 2) Implications for security of heritage sites, contents and visitors; 3) Socioeconomic implications; 4) Cultural implications; 5) Financial implications; and 6) Implications to ensure proper communication and keep networks alive.” (EUROPA NOSTRA, 2020).

According to World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) (2020), as cited in EUROPA NOSTRA (2020), in June 2020, the estimation for the tourism sector in Europe was for losses of appr. 14million to 29million tourism jobs due to the health crisis, while according to Montalto *et al* (2020), in the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, the estimation for the cultural and creative jobs in Europe, being at risk due to the COVID-19 outbreak, was 7 million jobs.

According to Ludel (2021), in an article in the *Art Newspaper*, in New York, over 65% of posts in the creative sector were lost, while nearly 24% of the workforce in Los Angeles had been cut (almost 110,000 jobs). As reported by Otis (2021), “Throughout the state, fine and performing arts saw nearly 16,000 jobs lost, entertainment and digital media saw over 128,000, the fashion industry saw nearly 23,000, and creative goods and products saw nearly 6,000” (Ludel, 2021).

According to PPMI and KEA European Affairs (2021), in a European Commission report, funded by the Creative Europe programme, the performing arts suffered most from the pandemic. According to Rebuilding Europe (<https://www.rebuilding-europe.eu>), as cited in PPMI and KEA European Affairs (2021), they lost 90% of their turnover, while in some countries with higher part of the arts in the market<sup>5</sup>, the shock was higher than the average. The financial damage in the Theatres mainly depended on their business model and the financial support of the governments. Indicatively, according to Dati SIAE (2020, as cited in PPMI and KEA European Affairs (2021) report, in Italy, the theatrical activity lost 70.71% of admissions compared to 2019 and reported a 78.45% reduction in box office spending.

Vecco *et al* (2022), reported in WIPO<sup>6</sup>, that creative industries and creators weren’t able to plan and implement proactive strategies as the magnitude of the impact of the novel coronavirus outbreak was not known, thus in practice there were only reactive strategies to that challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors pointed out that **“Technology made the resources available to a higher number of consumers, lowering the entrance**

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<sup>5</sup> According to Rebuilding Europe (<https://www.rebuilding-europe.eu>), the average of performing arts in Europe is 4% of the CCS market (CCS: Cultural and Creative Sector), while in Hungary that rate is 10%.

<sup>6</sup> WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization.

**barriers of the sector concerned.** The pandemic produced a **disruption in the consumption habits** of all population segments as they could not attend the venues physically. Those with lower virtual literacy were penalized, usually old people or very young children/pupils -having a lower virtual literacy were more penalized. Even with the online availability of research material, in some countries researchers did not have strong internet connections to download data or they could access only the abstracts and not the full articles. Lack of **E-resources both in research and in teaching made regular online activities very difficult.** This impact was particularly high in less-developed areas of the globe.”

In a project report by Ottone *et al* (2022), for UNESCO and the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi (DCT), it was found that by any standard, COVID-19's effects on the cultural industry have been catastrophic. The worldwide culture sector's GVA<sup>7</sup> decreased by 8% in 2020, while the overall GVA of the global economy shrank by 3%. Considering only sectors of the culture sector that depend on in-person interactions, the industry's GVA fell by 25%, a decline that was eight times bigger than the global average for the entire economy. Furthermore, according to government estimates, COVID-19 has had a major negative impact on the income of cultural workers and organizations, with losses ranging from 20% to 40%<sup>8</sup>. In 2020 alone, it led to the loss of 10 million jobs, with those on temporary contracts and project-based employment suffering the most. That was reflected to an estimated 750 billion EUR decline in Cultural and Creative Industries global GVA. Numerous physical productions and performances, transmissions of living heritage and cultural practices, celebrations and festivals, residencies and exchange activities were canceled, postponed, or changed as a result of the closure of cultural venues and physical distancing restrictions implemented to stop the spread of the new disease. Reopening has been a slow, uneven, and expensive process. Short-term obstacles that still exist include staff sickness, hygienic regulations, event capacity restrictions, and a refusal by some audience segments to return to cultural facilities. However, “broader shifts are also evident in the cultural value chain, from production to consumption, and in distribution to access” (Ottone *et al*, 2022). Particularly in the Global North, the COVID-19 epidemic has sped up the digitisation of the cultural sector. Global royalties and digital channel revenue reached approx. 2.7 billion EUR in 2020, accounting for more than 25% of the industry's total revenue. Many museums did change how they presented their collections, collaborating with other organizations to curate digital exhibitions, broadening their online channels and content, and providing services like education on digital platforms.

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<sup>7</sup> GVA: gross value added

<sup>8</sup> UNESCO (2021).

By producing live digital events and streaming archival content online, festivals have been able to expand their reach and stay connected to their consumers. Video-on-demand (VoD) and streaming services have played a significant role in this progression. The cultural heritage industry has embraced digital technology as well, looking into novel approaches to broaden and deepen access to both tangible and intangible cultural treasures.

Regarding Cultural Heritage, in EU-27<sup>9</sup>, “44% indicated that they lost up to EUR 1,000 per week, 31% lost up to EUR 5,000 per week, 18% lost up to EUR 30,000 per week and 8% lost over EUR 50,000 per week. The big museums lost between EUR 100,000 and 600,000 per week. Museums in touristic regions looked at an exceptional income loss of 75-80%. Within this last category, museums in capitals were among the most affected by loss of income, with an average loss of around EUR 40,000, in comparison with a EUR 20,000 loss in urban areas and EUR 5,000 in rural areas” (IDEA Consult *et al*, 2021), while the impact was not that severe for the staff of museums, with similar state for religious heritage institutions. 80% of the museums and 83% of the religious heritage institutions increased their online presence (exhibitions; virtual tours; communication).

Zestanakis (2023), reported that in summer 2020, the people in Greece had changed their lifestyle and social distancing was in place. That affected significantly also the events (measures plus reluctance of socialization) and cultural performances, even during lockdown being off.

To summarise the consequences for cultural organisations, artists and professionals in culture around the globe, five categories are highlighted, as per Ottone *et al* (2022):

1. Weakened traditional revenue streams and funding;
2. Disruption to jobs and livelihoods;
3. Disruption of the cultural and creative value chain;
4. Increased at-home participation in cultural activities;
5. Negative impact on diversity of cultural voices and access to cultural work.

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<sup>9</sup> In a representative sample of around 1,000 museums across the EU-27.

## Report

### Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on cultural heritage organizations and enterprises

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on public cultural heritage organizations in several ways. Some effects are as follows:

- Closure and reduced operations: Many public cultural heritage organizations, such as museums, libraries, archives, and historic sites, have had to close their doors to the public or reduce their operations significantly to comply with public health guidelines. This has resulted in lost revenue, reduced staffing, and delayed projects and exhibitions.
- Decreased revenue: The closure and reduced operations have led to a decline in revenue for many cultural heritage organizations, particularly those that rely on visitor admissions, donations, and fundraising events. This has made it difficult for them to sustain their operations, maintain their collections, and invest in new initiatives.
- Delayed projects and exhibitions: The pandemic has forced many cultural heritage organizations to postpone or cancel planned projects, exhibitions, and events. This has disrupted their programming schedules, prevented them from showcasing their collections and research, and limited their outreach and engagement with the public.
- Increased digital engagement: In response to the closure and reduced operations, many cultural heritage organizations have increased their digital engagement with the public. They have developed virtual exhibitions, online resources, and social media campaigns to keep their audiences engaged and connected with their collections and programs.
- Changes in workforce and working conditions: The pandemic has also affected the workforce and working conditions of cultural heritage organizations. Many employees have had to work remotely or adopt new safety protocols, which has required significant adjustments to their work routines and practices.

Especially for the area of intervention the following were also observed.

Public Organisations in Cultural Heritage in Greece, faced serious audience and income issues, however they were supported financially by the State, the Organisation, the Employees, and the Suppliers. In that sense, they survived when reopening was decided, despite losses in turnover, audience and regarding maintenance, excavation and other cultural heritage activities, delays and cancellations.

Private Organisations received some subsidies<sup>10</sup> for the lockdown and their employees part of their salaries as subsidy, by the Government and the Region<sup>11</sup>. However, that wouldn't cover the losses in long term, considering the re-engagement of the customers; stock in warehouses; changes in the markets (suppliers and buyers), etc.

While tangible heritage was not open during lockdown measures, intangible heritage was not deployed, other than the digital presence (where the case).

The tourism turnover<sup>12</sup> in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, according to Vouloutidou *et al* (2021), fell in 2020 in the Regional Unit of Drama by -47,82%; the Regional Unit of Evros by -64,59%; the Regional Unit of Thassos by -71,34%; the Regional Unit of Kavala by -57,39%; the Regional Unit of Xanthi -49,66%; and the Regional Unit of Rodopi by -55,99%.

### [Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employability](#)

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus, has had a significant impact on employability, with many individuals facing job losses, reduced work hours, and increased competition for available jobs. Indicatively:

- **Job losses**: The pandemic has led to job losses in many sectors, particularly those that rely on face-to-face interactions or are heavily impacted by travel restrictions and social distancing measures. For example, the hospitality, tourism, and retail sectors have been hit hard by the pandemic, leading to significant job losses in these industries.
- **Reduced work hours**: Many employers have reduced work hours for their employees in response to reduced demand or revenue, leading to reduced income and job insecurity for workers.

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<sup>10</sup> The majority, however under terms and conditions.

<sup>11</sup> Through reallocation of structural funds mainly, the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace prepared a major support programme.

<sup>12</sup> Travel and Accommodation; food; tickets; etc.

- Remote work: The pandemic has led to an increase in remote work, with many employers adopting work-from-home policies to comply with public health guidelines. This has created new opportunities for some workers, particularly those in the technology and creative industries, but has also posed challenges for those who are not able to work remotely.
- Increased competition for jobs: The pandemic has led to increased competition for available jobs, as many individuals who have lost their jobs or had their hours reduced are seeking new employment opportunities. This has made it more difficult for some individuals to find work, particularly those with limited education or experience.
- Changes in job requirements and skills: The pandemic has also led to changes in job requirements and skills, as employers adapt to new business models and customer needs. For example, many employers are seeking workers with digital skills and experience in e-commerce, online marketing, and remote collaboration.

According to Eurostat, Cultural Statistics – Cultural Employment<sup>13</sup>, as cited in Travkina and Sacco (2020), For a variety of reasons, cultural employment is frequently undercounted in official statistics. It might be challenging to gauge how much of particular economic activities and occupations are actually cultural when evaluating cultural employment. Because of this, some culturally based activities and jobs are frequently left out of official data on cultural employment. Furthermore, unlike CCS<sup>14</sup>, which also includes secondary employment and volunteer work, labor force surveys only cover a respondent's primary paid job.

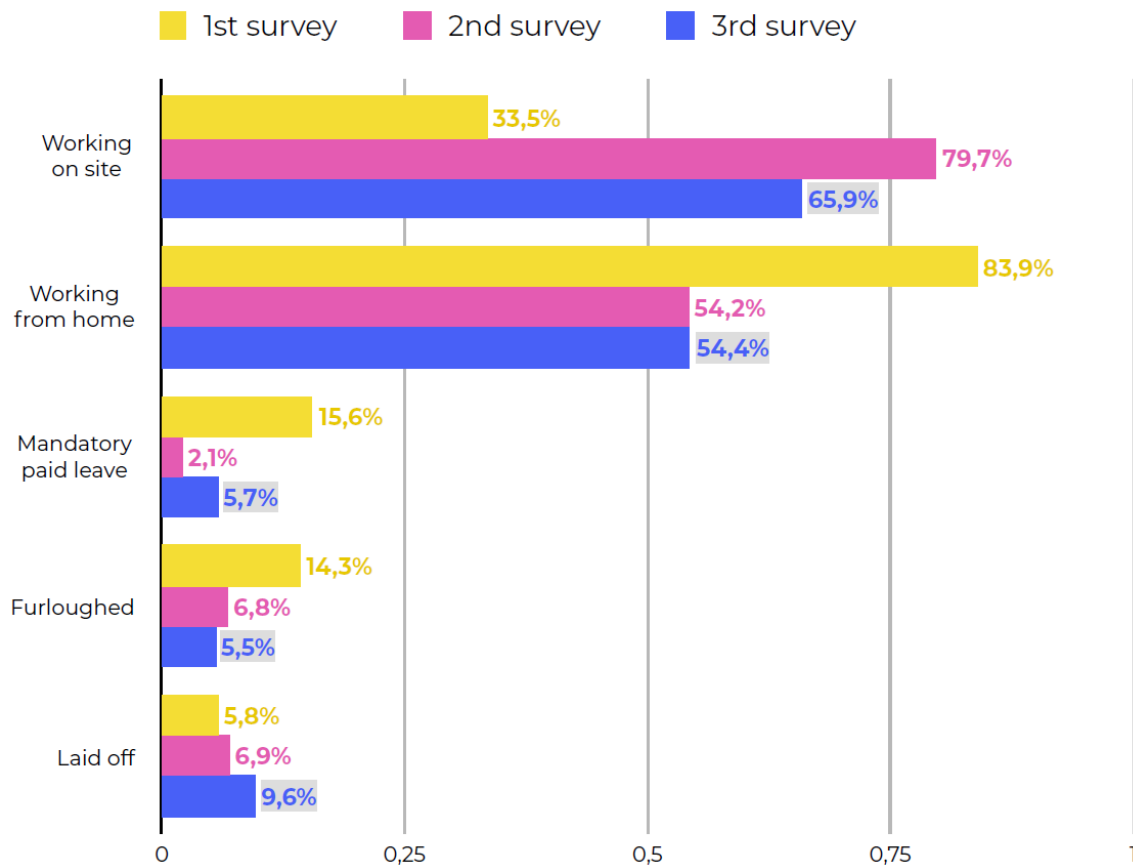
According to three (3) surveys of ICOM and Gaballo (2021), in Spring 2020, Autumn 2020, and Spring 2021, the situation with staff and their work is presented in the following histogramme:

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<sup>13</sup> [Online]. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Culture\\_statistics\\_-\\_cultural\\_employment](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment). Accessed on 15 June 2020.

<sup>14</sup> CCS: Cultural and Creative Sectors.

NB. this was a multiple answer question, percentages are higher than 100% and illustrate how many of the total number of respondents selected at least that answer



In the private sector, other job positions were cut<sup>15</sup>, other employees after the lockdown found job positions in other companies, which in some cases that the staff was specialized, caused damage to the first businesses. The seasonal employability in Tourism (Hotels, Food) faced serious challenges and finally the related labour force was not enough and adequate (in general) to cover the needs (after Winter 2021-2022), a problem that remains until today, 3 years after the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic. That had consequences also in the cultural sector.

Another critical aspect related to seasonal employability in the fields was the fact that workers from Bulgaria and Albania, who were coming for seasonal work, were forbidden the entrance in the country, and many farmers and processing companies faced significant losses.

<sup>15</sup> Despite the part-subsidy during the lockdown, and the teleworking.



Overall, the pandemic has had a significant impact on employability, creating new challenges and opportunities for individuals seeking employment. The extent and duration of these effects will depend on the course of the pandemic and the success of public health measures and economic recovery efforts.

### [Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the income of the cultural heritage labour](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the income of cultural heritage labour, particularly those who work in arts and creative industries.

- Job losses and reduced hours: Many cultural heritage workers have experienced job losses or reduced work hours due to the closure or reduced operations of cultural heritage institutions, such as museums, libraries, archives, and historic sites. This has led to reduced income and financial insecurity for workers.
- Cancelled contracts and projects: Many cultural heritage workers, particularly those who are self-employed or work as freelancers, have experienced cancelled contracts and projects due to the pandemic. This has led to lost income and reduced opportunities for professional development and advancement.
- Reduced funding and revenue: The pandemic has led to reduced funding and revenue for cultural heritage institutions, which has impacted their ability to pay salaries and wages to their employees. This has resulted in pay cuts, furloughs, and reduced benefits for workers in these institutions.
- Increased competition for jobs: The pandemic has led to increased competition for available jobs in the cultural heritage sector, as many workers who have lost their jobs or had their hours reduced are seeking new employment opportunities. This has made it more difficult for some cultural heritage workers to find work and negotiate fair wages.
- Shifts in job requirements and skills: The pandemic has also led to shifts in job requirements and skills in the cultural heritage sector, as institutions adapt to new business models and customer needs. This has created new opportunities for some workers, but has also required others to acquire new skills and competencies to remain competitive in the job market.

In the area of intervention, the COVID-19 outbreak caused also several losses in the cultural sector with the most severely hit being the sector of artists (musicians; actors, writers; directors; support staff in theatres and stages; etc.). In the area of the Municipality of Paggai, that was reflected to the local professionals and those working part-time.

Part time labour for research in the cultural sector, was also reduced, while educational excursions by Universities (History; Archaeology, Theology, Geology; etc.) were not performed in general.

### [Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on spending on the conservation and maintenance of cultural heritage monuments and the support on intangible cultural heritage](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the spending on the conservation and maintenance of cultural heritage monuments.

- **Reduced budgets:** Many governments and private organizations have faced reduced budgets due to the economic impact of the pandemic, leading to reduced spending on cultural heritage conservation and maintenance.
- **Delayed projects:** The pandemic has forced many cultural heritage organizations to delay planned conservation and maintenance projects, due to reduced staffing, disrupted supply chains, and safety concerns.
- **Shifts in priorities:** The pandemic has also led to shifts in priorities for cultural heritage organizations, with a greater emphasis on emergency response and public safety measures, such as ensuring adequate ventilation and implementing social distancing protocols. This has impacted the allocation of resources for conservation and maintenance projects.
- **Increased digital engagement:** In response to the closure or reduced operations of cultural heritage institutions, many organizations have increased their digital engagement with the public, creating virtual tours and online resources to showcase their collections and monuments. This has required investments in new digital technologies and resources, which may impact the available budget for conservation and maintenance projects.

- Public-private partnerships: The pandemic has also led to an increased emphasis on public-private partnerships for cultural heritage conservation and maintenance, as public institutions seek to leverage private funding and expertise to support their activities.

Furthermore, regarding intangible cultural heritage, the COVID-19 pandemic had also significant impact. Some indicative effects are:

- Cancellation of events and festivals: Many cultural events and festivals, which serve as important platforms for showcasing and promoting intangible cultural heritage, have been cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic. This has led to lost opportunities for practitioners to earn income, share their skills and knowledge, and connect with new audiences.
- Reduced funding: The pandemic has led to reduced funding for intangible cultural heritage projects, as many governments and private organizations have shifted their priorities and resources to emergency response measures. This has impacted the ability of practitioners and organizations to invest in research, documentation, and preservation activities.
- Disrupted transmission of knowledge: The pandemic has disrupted the transmission of knowledge and skills related to intangible cultural heritage, as many practitioners have been unable to gather in person to teach and learn from each other. This has also impacted the ability of cultural institutions and researchers to conduct fieldwork and documentation activities.
- Increased digital engagement: In response to the pandemic, many practitioners and organizations have increased their use of digital technologies to share and promote intangible cultural heritage. This has created new opportunities for virtual learning and engagement, but has also required investments in new technologies and resources.
- Emphasis on local and community-based support: The pandemic has also led to an increased emphasis on local and community-based support for intangible cultural heritage, as practitioners and organizations seek to adapt to the changing landscape and create new opportunities for engagement and support.

Overall, as intangible cultural heritage was not promoted due to lockdown and/or other restriction measures, the related income was reduced significantly, while ordinary

maintenance and excavation works where seasonal workers were providing their services (supporting labour for the scientists in the field) were receiving less attention, with several side effects.

However, it has to be stated that new opportunities for innovation and collaboration, were raised.

### [Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the addressed Policy Instrument \(the Strategic Planning of the Operational Programme of the Municipality of Paggajo\)](#)

The addressed policy instrument of the Municipality of Paggajo, was also affected as reallocation of funds was a necessity, in order to cover new needs (e.g. self-protection measures for staff; update of the teleconference and teleworking with additional safety measures; thousands of working hours lost; cancellation of events and other activities; closure of schools; measures for all buildings and schools; etc.).

At the same time, it should focus on how to manage the tourism season (after the end of each lockdown and during complicated public hygiene protocols and restriction measures).

It was decided to save budget for events and either use it later or reallocate for other activities, related to health.

It further supported the health services in the Municipality, although under the coordination of the Ministry of Health.

In general, the funds allocated and used for culture, were reduced during the years 2020 and 2021.

### [Brief description of Case Studies of confrontation challenges such as COVID-19 pandemic](#)

There have been several case studies in culture, confronting the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some indicative examples in the World:

- The performing arts industry: The pandemic has had a significant impact on the performing arts industry, with many theaters and other venues closing their doors.

In response, many artists have turned to online performances and virtual events to keep their audiences engaged. For example, the Metropolitan Opera in New York City began streaming free performances on their website, while the Berlin Philharmonic offered free access to their Digital Concert Hall.

- The fashion industry: The pandemic has disrupted the fashion industry, with many designers having to cancel or postpone fashion shows and events. Some designers, however, have found creative ways to showcase their collections virtually. For example, Gucci created a virtual fashion show that featured models walking down a digital runway, while Dior launched a virtual reality experience that allowed viewers to explore their latest collection in 3D.
- Museums and art galleries: With many museums and art galleries closed to the public, many institutions have turned to virtual exhibitions and tours to continue engaging with their audiences. For example, the Louvre Museum in Paris launched a virtual tour of its galleries, while the Getty Museum in Los Angeles created a social media challenge called #GettyMuseumChallenge, encouraging people to recreate famous works of art using household items.
- Sports: The pandemic has had a significant impact on the world of sports, with many events and competitions either postponed or cancelled altogether. Some sports organizations, however, have found ways to adapt to the new normal. For example, the National Basketball Association (NBA) created a "bubble" in Orlando, Florida, where players and staff were isolated from the outside world to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while still being able to play games.

Regarding the Municipality of Paggaio, among others, it revised significantly parts of the MED4ALL project<sup>16</sup>, to contribute to the confrontation of the COVID-19 pandemic and set procedures, supportive for the tourism season, in cooperation with the Health Centre of Eleftheroupolis<sup>17</sup>, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Health Region of Greece (4<sup>th</sup> YPE)<sup>18</sup>;

Cultural and sports events were cancelled. The labour force of the rganisation was supported with protection measures, telework, leave, etc.

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<sup>16</sup> MED4ALL project was funded by INTERREG V-A "Greece - Bulgaria 2014 – 2020" programme, implemented in the area of Paggaio with Municipality of Paggaio as Beneficiary

<sup>17</sup> Eleftheroupolis: the seat of the Municipality of Paggaio.

<sup>18</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> YPE: Branch of the Ministry of Health, in charge of the Regions of Central Macedonia, and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

## Response of the Municipality of Paggaios, in the COVID-19 pandemic challenge

The Municipality took action for several aspects, including tourism and cultural heritage. Indicatively,

- (i) within the framework of the project CUSTAGE, funded by INTERREG V-A “Greece - Bulgaria 2014 – 2020” programme, implemented in the area of Paggaios, with Municipality of Paggaios as Lead Beneficiary, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, beneficiary of the project, proceeded in a survey among tourists from Bulgaria<sup>19</sup>, in summer 2020. According to Karasmanaki, *et al* (2021), more than 2/3 of the summer (sea and sun) visitors from Bulgaria, would wish to visit modern cultural assets (e.g. Wineries) or have the option for other alternative forms, during their vacations. Such information is precious for the tourism professionals as they realise options to expand their seasonal product in time<sup>20</sup>;
- (ii) It saved budget from regular promotion activities, and used it for the preparation of a package to promote wisely and with modern tools the attractiveness cultural and natural assets of area;
- (iii) It postponed its Conference on the Local History of Paggaios, but saved the budget for use in the cultural heritage sector;
- (iv) It revised significantly parts of the MED4ALL project, funded by INTERREG V-A “Greece - Bulgaria 2014 – 2020” programme, implemented in the area of Paggaios with Municipality of Paggaios as Beneficiary, to contribute to the confrontation of the COVID-19 pandemic and set procedures, supportive for the tourism season, in cooperation with the Health Centre of Eleftheroupolis<sup>21</sup>, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Health Region of Greece (4<sup>th</sup> YPE)<sup>22</sup>;
- (v) It arranged events with tourism professionals, the Deputy Regional Governor in charge for tourism and culture, and the Director of the Health Directorate of the Regional Unit of Kavala, regarding the appropriate use of the protocols for opening of the tourism season;
- (vi) It procured a vehicle for its social services and used it in cooperation with the Health Centre of Eleftheroupolis to enhance the “Vaccination at home” programme, to prevent the spread of the Novel Coronavirus;

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<sup>19</sup> Tourists from Bulgaria constitute a very large percentage of the tourism flows in the area of interest, in general.

<sup>20</sup> Until then, all thought that the summer tourists were visiting the area only for the *sun and sea*.

<sup>21</sup> Eleftheroupolis: the seat of the Municipality of Paggaios.

<sup>22</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> YPE: Branch of the Ministry of Health Branch of the Ministry of Health, in charge of the Regions of Central Macedonia, and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

- (vii) It took measures for the personal protection of its employees, in order to continue the optimal providing of services to citizens and visitors.

The Municipality of Paggaio, responded to the COVID-19 crisis with initiatives and actions to confront the severe situation, mitigate the consequences for the Organisation and the Local Economy, and set the grounds for revival.

### Opinion of Staff and members of the Town Council of Municipality of Paggaio

A survey was conducted with closed questions, to randomly<sup>23</sup> selected staff and directors of the Municipality of Paggaio, as well as members of the town council.

The questions (presented in Annex III in this document) were in Likert scale (1 “very little” to 5 “very much”) as follows:

- Q1: Do you think that the correspondence of the Municipality of Paggaio to the COVID-19 outbreak, was sufficient?
- Q2: Did Municipality of Paggaio take more initiatives in relation to the obligations imposed by the central administration?
- Q3: Has COVID-19 negatively affected the cultural heritage sector in the Municipality of Paggaio?
- Q4: How negatively has the local economy been affected by COVID-19?
- Q5: After COVID-19, is the Municipality of Paggaio better prepared for a possible future major crisis?
- Q6: Do you think the cooperation of the Municipality of Paggaio with the professionals of the area for the implementation of health protocols was satisfactory?

In total, 23 questionnaires (12 white collar employees; 4 directors; and 7 members of the town council/local town councils) were filled in.

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<sup>23</sup> Staff: white collar workers were randomly selected between 09.30 and 11.30 for 2 random mornings, entering the office; directors were selected by draw; Town council members and local town council members: selected randomly between 11.30 and 12.30 for 2 different mornings, entering the office.

The results were as follows:

Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Average (white collar employees)	3,75	4,08	4,33	4,08	3,42	3,42
Average (directors)	3,75	4,50	3,25	3,75	3,25	2,75
Average (members of the town council)	4,29	4,14	4,14	4,14	3,29	3,43
Average (overall)	3,91	4,17	4,09	4,04	3,35	3,30

Justifying the satisfaction for the Reaction of the Administration of the Municipality of Paggajo (Q1; Q2), the negative effects on the cultural heritage and the local economy (Q3; Q4); the better preparedness of for potential future major crisis (Q5) and the cooperation with the local professionals (Q6).

## Lessons Learned

It is important to become wiser through the COVID-19 pandemic and consequences. Summarised the following may be proposed for the culture related business and activities:

- General and local general risk management plans for severe emergency situations with long-lasting effects:
  - Transparency and equal access to information about funding and financing<sup>24</sup>;
  - Support frameworks reflecting the specific needs of freelancers<sup>24</sup>;
  - Fair payment schemes to be applied and debate on alternative income forms launched<sup>24</sup>;

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<sup>24</sup> IDEA Consult *et al* (2021).



- Challenging frameworks to persist related to new income sources for the CCS and the readiness of non-public investors to (re-)engage<sup>24</sup>;
  - The potential usefulness of generic support programmes for the (more commercial) CCS needs in-depth analysis<sup>24</sup>;
  - Copyright to remain a central pre-condition to ensure income of creators and to negotiate an equal and level playing field with digital distribution platforms<sup>24</sup>;
  - Financial literacy needs further strengthening to ensure good access to finance<sup>24</sup>;
  - The public value of arts and culture should remain reflected in public budgets for arts and culture<sup>24</sup>;
  - Access to (new) CCS earning opportunities has become essential during the crisis, including the full use of the Single European Market<sup>24</sup>;
  - Building on the social and economic innovation potential of the CCS for the EU relaunch is essential<sup>24</sup>.
- Specific, per sector, risk management plan for severe emergency situations with long-lasting effects;
  - Specific risk management plans for each cultural institution or enterprise for severe emergency situations with long-lasting effects;
  - Public support to the cultural sector is crucial in general, including the tangible and intangible heritage, the professionals of culture, the amateurs and art-lovers, the related business professionals and other stakeholders;
  - Local Authorities can and should contribute through a balanced set of measures, including also provisions for the sector of culture.

## Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on individuals, communities, and societies around the world, and its long-term effects are still unfolding. Below are some conclusions that can be drawn from the crisis:

- The importance of public health: The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of public health infrastructure, preparedness, and response, as well as the need for collaboration and coordination across sectors and countries to address global health challenges;

- The fragility of economic and social systems: The pandemic has exposed the fragility of economic and social systems, as well as the inequities and vulnerabilities that exist within them. This has created new opportunities and imperatives for building more resilient and inclusive systems, as well as for addressing longstanding structural issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation.
- The power of collective action: The pandemic has demonstrated the power of collective action, as individuals, communities, and organizations have come together to support each other and respond to the crisis. This has created new opportunities for collaboration and innovation, as well as for building trust, solidarity, and resilience.
- The role of technology: The pandemic has accelerated the adoption and development of digital technologies, as individuals and organizations have sought to adapt to new ways of working, learning, and engaging with each other. This has created new opportunities for virtual collaboration and innovation, as well as new challenges around issues such as privacy, security, and access.
- The need for global cooperation: The pandemic has underscored the need for global cooperation and solidarity, as countries and communities have faced similar challenges and shared risks. This has created new imperatives for addressing global issues such as climate change, inequality, and migration, as well as for building stronger and more effective international institutions and partnerships.
- Resilience plans of Local Communities: Local communities should be prepared for highly effective crisis and solidarity, while the local authorities should be ready with plans and trained through drills.
- Preparedness of families and individuals: Individuals and families should always be prepared for severe conditions (it could be a pandemic and lockdown, a technological disaster or an act of God, etc.), including the children, for which a different approach would be needed.

Overall, the COVID-19 crisis has created both challenges and opportunities for individuals, communities, and societies around the world, and its long-term impact will depend on the actions and choices we make in response.

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## Annex I – Indicative significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on cultural heritage around the world.

Some of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on cultural heritage around the World, are as follows:

- Closure of museums, galleries, and cultural sites: Many museums, galleries, and cultural sites have been closed or had limited access to visitors due to lockdowns and social distancing measures. That did lead to a decline in revenue and visitor numbers.
- Reduced funding: The COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic downturns in many countries, leading to reduced funding for cultural heritage projects, maintenance, and preservation.
- Interruption of Archaeological Excavations: Many archaeological excavations have been suspended due to the COVID-19 crisis, leading to a delay in important discoveries and research.
- Cancellation of events: Many cultural events, festivals, and performances have been canceled or postponed, leading to a loss of income for artists and cultural institutions.
- Increased risk of looting and theft: The closure of cultural sites and museums has led to an increased risk of looting and theft of cultural artifacts.

- Delayed preservation and maintenance: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, preservation and maintenance activities have been delayed, which could lead to the deterioration of cultural heritage sites and artifacts.
- Reduced tourism: Tourism is a significant source of revenue for many cultural heritage sites and institutions. The pandemic has caused a reduction in tourism, leading to a decrease in revenue.
- Impact on intangible cultural heritage: The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected intangible cultural heritage, such as traditional festivals and cultural practices, which have been disrupted due to social distancing measures.
- Loss of job positions: Many job positions were lost, mainly in the private sector. Jobs linked to culture (science jobs, arts, etc.)<sup>25</sup>.

Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of protecting and preserving cultural heritage for future generations. It has also demonstrated the need for more resilient and sustainable approaches to managing cultural heritage in times of crisis.

## Annex II – Policy recommendations for cultural and creative sectors in light of COVID-19 and its consequences

(This Annex is extracted from OECD / Travkina and Sacco (2020). *Culture Shock: COVID-19 and the Cultural and Creative Sectors*)<sup>26</sup>

### In the short term:

- Ensure that public support for COVID-19 relief does not exclude CCS firms and workers due to their non-traditional business models and employment contracts
  - Consult with CCS network organisations, representatives of self-employed professionals, small cultural and creative businesses, and sectoral employer organisations to raise the efficacy of policy measures

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<sup>25</sup> According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021), the pandemic caused an estimated loss of 225 million full-time equivalent jobs in 2020. It is important to note that the impact of the pandemic on employment varies widely across countries and sectors, with some industries being hit harder than others.

<sup>26</sup> Published on 7 September 2020. [Online] Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/culture-shock-covid-19-and-the-cultural-and-creative-sectors-08da9e0e/>

- Address gaps in self-employment support schemes by simplifying eligibility criteria and making them accessible to hybrid forms of employment (e.g. those that combine salaried, part-time work and run their own business as a self-employed person as well). See note below.
- Include non-profit institutions (e.g. museums) in support programmes designed to help small businesses retain employees
- Ensure that the support to cultural organisations reaches artists and other creative professionals
- In parallel with income and business support measures, invest in cultural production to help the sector rebound after the crisis
- Consider tax incentives for corporate and individual donations to promote investments in the sector
- Encourage private and non-profit sector mobilisation in support of CCS firms and workers

**In the medium and long term:**

- Introduce measures for the recovery to help the self-employed and other small firms adapt to structural changes (e.g. shifts in consumer habits) and seize new opportunities, including digital tools
- Widen innovation strategies and policies to better account for the role of cultural and creative sectors
- Invest in digital infrastructure that can amplify advances in cultural and creative sectors
- Promote greater complementarities between culture and other policy sectors
  - Education can benefit from advances in cultural and creative sectors, particularly in the use of new digital tools that build on gaming technologies and new forms of cultural content
  - Health care and social services can benefit from greater linkages with cultural and creative sectors to improve well-being, prevent illness or delay its onset, favour the adoption of healthy habits, and prevent social isolation, among others

- Develop new local strategies for cultural tourism that address the socially and environmentally unsustainable practices of many large-scale or intensive tourism centres
- Use targeted cultural policies to address social issues such as intercultural dialogue or the integration and valorisation of minorities and migrants
- Support cultural and creative entrepreneurship as catalysts of new models of economic and social value creation





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