



CULTURE & COVID-19

Impact & Response Tracker

SPECIAL ISSUE



MESSAGE FROM ERNESTO OTTONE R.

ASSISTANT-DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR CULTURE OF UNESCO

The COVID-19 pandemic that continues to circulate around the globe is affecting almost every aspect of daily life, including the very human need to connect to culture. With many World Heritage sites closed, our connection to our heritage has been weakened. With concerts, theatre performances and community cultural practices interrupted or cancelled, our connection with each other has been weakened. The fundamental right to access to culture has been curtailed, due to the confinement measures imposed by Member States to tackle the health crisis. Within the cultural sector, the crisis has also starkly exposed the pre-existing vulnerabilities of the sector, including the precarious livelihoods of artists and cultural workers, as well as the tight budgets of many cultural institutions. It is clear that the full extent of the economic contribution of the cultural sector has hitherto been underestimated. This is the case for both the direct contribution to the economy through the cultural and creative industries, as well as indirectly through the tourism sector.

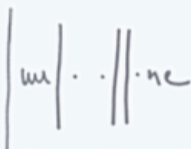
During the past three months of uncertainty about the scale of disruption to the cultural sector, UNESCO has been monitoring the situation and publishing this weekly Culture and COVID-19: Impact and Response Tracker. With the intention of sharing research and experiences around the world, it has reflected some of the most up-to date information about the social, economic and political impact of the crisis on the cultural sector, as well as responses of our Member States and civil society groups.

“ Culture has always saved us in the past and this time will not be any different.

Ms Alejandra Frausto Guerrero, Minister of Culture of Mexico

UNESCO has also mobilised to monitor the closures of World Heritage sites around the world, assess the impact on the cultural and creative sector, document the adaptations of communities to the suspension of intangible cultural heritage practices, understand the potential impact on museums, respond to incidents of looting of cultural sites and poaching at natural sites, consolidate experiences of underwater cultural heritage experts and advocate for arts education (particularly vital in times of crisis).

As the crisis develops around the world, we are pivoting our work from the immediate impact of the crisis towards examining the long-term structural changes that will - or should - be seen in the cultural sector. This special edition of “The Tracker” is a summary of both the key findings from the early onset of the COVID-19 crisis, as well as an overview of UNESCO’s actions from the past few months. It is a starting point to reflect on how to “build back better” over the coming months and years to ensure that culture has a central role in public policies for sustainable development.



Ernesto Ottone R.

“ In Chinese, the term crisis* refers to opportunity.

Ms N'Diaye Ramatoulaye Diallo, Minister of Culture of Mali

The term 危机, designating the concept of crisis in Chinese language, brings together two characters evoking danger and opportunity.

“ In culture we can find a safe harbour. Let us turn this crisis into a worldwide cultural renaissance.

Mr Dario Franceschini, Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities, and Tourism of Italy

“ Culture can - and should - bring us together, boost international commitment and restore hope and confidence.

Mr Zhang Xu, Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism of China



“ We are builders of the world tomorrow. This crisis is a reset button.

Ms Chiraz Laâtiri, Minister of Cultural Affairs of Tunisia



FACTS & FIGURES

The pandemic has revealed the true economic weight of the cultural and creative sector, in addition to culture's intrinsic value as an expression of humanity that can be key to advancing sustainable development.

13%
of museums
may never reopen
(ICOM, May 2020)



95% of the
estimated 95,000
museums worldwide
were closed in May
due to COVID-19



60-80%

reduction of international arrivals for 2020
(UNWTO Report, May 2020)

It is predicted that up to
75 MILLION JOBS
in the travel and tourism sector are under
immediate threat, equating to a loss
of **US\$2.1trillion GDP** in 2020
(The World Travel and Tourism Council, April 2020)



46%
of the global population
remains offline. The vast
majority of these
estimated 3.6 billion
people are in developed
countries
(Broadband Commission)

Cultural tourism makes
up nearly
40%
of world tourism
revenues
(UNWTO)



US\$10 BN
global film industry losses
by end of May
(Statista)

The cultural and
cultural industries
contribute

US\$2,250BN

to the global economy
(3% of GDP) and account for
29.5 million jobs worldwide



ASIA AND PACIFIC

The Asian region was the first to be affected by the pandemic and national authorities responded relatively quickly by closing cultural institutions. Some countries began to reopen museums and World Heritage sites, particularly in early May, often providing good examples of new safety measures in cultural institutions. Intangible cultural heritage is a strong priority for cultural policies in the region and a large number of traditions have been disrupted due to the crisis. However, many of these traditions have been adapted, including using digital technologies. The cultural and creative industries have been badly affected, whether it be the large creative industries of more economically developed nations or smaller-sized cultural activities that contribute to livelihoods, such as crafts. The islands of the Pacific region have been less impacted in terms of numbers of cases of COVID-19 but have been impacted greatly in terms of tourism, which makes up to 50% of GDP in some countries. These countries halted international travel rapidly as the disease would have had disastrous consequences. At the end of April, ASEAN Ministers of Tourism issued a joint statement to reaffirm their "commitment to take collective action and coordinate policies in mitigating the economic and social impact from the pandemic, safeguarding the people's well-being and maintaining socio-economic stability."

35%

FEWER INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS IN ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION IN Q1 COMPARED TO 2019, MAKING IT ONE OF THE HARDEST HIT REGIONS (UNWTO)

RESPONSES FROM THE REGION



In **China**, funds have been announced at a regional level, including US\$ 56m by the Government of Guangdong Province for cultural and tourism businesses, with a further US\$ 7m for the 1325 movie theatres impacted by the crisis, in the form of tax return from last year.

Indonesia's Directorate-General for Culture's has launched a YouTube channel "BudayaSaya" to share artistic performances and artisans' masterclasses on dancing, painting, music, storytelling, and producing films



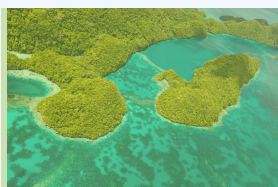
Malaysia has initiated income tax relief worth MYR 1,000, (US\$231) per person to reduce entrance fees and hotel rates at tourist attractions to stimulate domestic tourism



The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the **Republic of Korea** has launched a comprehensive guide to health and cultural life during confinement, which brings together resources related to the arts, education and sports, including links to virtual reality museum tours, and online access to old and rare books



The government of **Palau** is providing support for conservation work, planting trees in order to conserve natural sites



AFRICA

African countries imposed restrictions before registering large numbers of cases of COVID-19, impacting the cultural sector. Many artists, including graffiti artists and singers, have mobilised to raise awareness of the pandemic, often with the support of governments. With the closure of national borders, tourism revenues have plummeted, impacting not only World Heritage sites but also other creative and cultural workers, many of whom work in the informal sector. Furthermore, the lack of tourists in some natural World Heritage sites has removed a deterrent for poachers, which has seen a resurgence in some areas. The many budding creative and cultural enterprises across the continent have also taken a hit and highlighted the need to strengthen social protection for artists and construct new economic models. The crisis has also revealed the fragility of the museums and their lack of digital infrastructure for outreach. Meanwhile, civil society groups have mobilised en masse, with a third of ResiliArt debates taking place across the continent. Ministers of Culture came together on 27 May to discuss "the crucial and essential role that the arts, culture and heritage sector can play in assisting Member States in curbing the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the continent". An action plan was developed to support the sector in Africa; including social security schemes to curb the impact of COVID-19 for cultural workers.

\$38 BILLION

**INTERNATIONAL TOURISM REVENUES
GENERATED IN AFRICA IN 2018**
(UNWTO)

RESPONSES FROM THE REGION



In **Kenya**, the government created a fund of KES200 million (US\$1.9m) per month to give artists a minimum wage

In **South Africa**, the National Arts Festival, in partnership with Digital Lab Africa, has launched a call for creative professionals and digital experts to participate in the 2020 edition, which will take place online



The government of **Namibia** is developing a new tourism policy, with culture as an important element.



In **Burkina Faso**, the Ministry of Culture has allocated 10 million FCFA for cultural actors in awareness-raising initiatives through the production of songs and sketches



Nigeria has set up a Presidential Task Force that has a cultural arm contributing to raising awareness through cultural messaging and comedy performances.

EUROPE & NORTH AMERICA

Among the first regions to be affected by the pandemic, Europe closed its cultural institutions and heritage sites earlier this year. The creative industries represent a significant part of the economy in this region and many governments have announced emergency funding for artists and cultural organizations. The largest number of international tourists (745 million) visit Europe every year (2019 statistics, UNWTO). Many of these tourists come from within the region, and several cultural services that rely on tourism revenue have been affected, including museums in touristic areas. A UNESCO report on museums revealed that some 65% of museums are located in the Europe and North America region. Many countries in South-East Europe have initiated impact assessment processes, building on the existing work to build up strong cultural sectors within the sub-region. Many city-level authorities have also put in place measures to tackle the crisis, from funding for cultural institutions and measures for the appropriate use of the public space to encourage the resumption of the arts and the appreciation of historic city centres. At the regional level, the European Union has also launched two platforms to help share challenges and solutions at the EU level in relation to the COVID-19 impact on the cultural and creative sectors: one to allow culture ministries to exchange good practices and, the second one, Creatives Unite, to help people in the cultural and creative sectors share information and solutions more easily.

75-80%

REPORTED LOSSES IN INCOME FOR MUSEUMS IN TOURISTIC REGIONS DUE TO THE COMPLETE HALT OF TOURISM AND POTENTIAL CONTINUATION OF RESTRICTIONS INTO THE SUMMER PERIOD

(NETWORK OF EUROPEAN MUSEUM ORGANIZATIONS, MAY 2020)

RESPONSES FROM THE REGION



France has announced support funds by sub-sector: for music, books, visual arts and regional cultural bodies (US\$ 18.8m in total)

Italy started a system of vouchers for reimbursement or replacement of cinema, museum, theatre and concert tickets already sold



The Museum of the **Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**, is creating special sessions for elderly people to visit

In **Norway**, the Minister of Culture announced NOK 100 million (USD 10,6 million) to ensure that writers can continue their artistic work



In Vilnius (**Lithuania**), whose UNESCO-listed World Heritage city centre consists of narrow streets, the Mayor has ordered that eighteen of the city's public spaces - such as its central Cathedral Square - be opened up for outdoor cafes and restaurants.

ARAB STATES

The pandemic has caused disruption for the Arab States, resulting in the loss of tourism (including religious tourism) and the cancellation of book fairs and the World Expo in Dubai, which was due to be held in the region for the first time. The partial interruption of conservation activities has weakened the safeguarding of sites and raises the risk of looting of cultural or archaeological sites and illicit trafficking of cultural property, particularly in conflict or post conflict situation areas. In many countries of the Arab States region, the unequal access to technology has exacerbated the dynamics of exclusion of certain groups of the population, notably rural communities and women. Regional cooperation on culture has been reinforced. At the Extraordinary Virtual Conference of Culture Ministers of Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) on 17 June, Member States undertook "to promote the position of culture in tomorrow's societies to face future challenges, support and develop digital culture, raise awareness of the importance of cultural heritage, and encourage the culture of solidarity and cultural synergy." The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) meeting on 11 May "called on Arab countries to accelerate the completion of the digital transformation project, employ artificial intelligence and advanced technologies to produce cultural content, support cultural and creative industries, and expand the sharing of cultural resources online," as well as reinforce copyright law.

74% DROP IN BOOK SALES FOR Q1 AND Q2 OF 2020
ARAB BOOK PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

RESPONSES FROM THE REGION



In **Jordan**, the Royal Film Commission has launched a short film competition about the experience of confinement

In **Lebanon**, the Ministry of Culture has made virtual tours of its World Heritage sites and museums available



In the **United Arab Emirates**, the Dubai Culture & Arts Authority and the Art Dubai Group have launched an "Idea-thon" - an online hub calling for ideas on how to stimulate the creative industries. It identifies six specific challenges to be addressed by crowd-sourcing innovative ideas.

In **Algeria**, the National Office of Copyright and Related Rights has announced exceptional grants for artists



In **Egypt**, the Ministry of Culture received digital training to support online management of culture

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Parts of Latin America and the Caribbean are currently feeling the worst effects of the pandemic, with the cultural sector still closed down in many countries. Many countries in the region are also deeply concerned that the current crisis will exacerbate social inequalities and tackling this will be a priority in public policies. The crisis has accelerated recent shifts in the region to capitalise on the cultural and creatives industries, with increasing focus on the informal economy. Sub-regional organizations, particularly in South America and Central America are cooperating to reinforce their data systems. In the Caribbean, a large number of countries rely on international tourism, including for the major music festivals that are an important cultural expression of the sub-region. The South American sub-regional trading bloc, MERCOSUR, is cooperating to carry out this first ever joint statistical exercise on the cultural sector whilst the eight members of the Central American Integration System (SICA) have launched a digital platform in response to COVID-19 to promote regional integration. At the first CARICOM "Regional Dialogue on Culture in a COVID-19 Environment" on 21 May, Dr. Douglas Slater Assistant Secretary General in charge of Human and Social Development, said that "if there was ever a time that we need culture and creativity to address our challenges, it is now."

12% OF MUSEUMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN FEAR THEY WILL CLOSE PERMANENTLY (ICOM)

RESPONSES FROM THE REGION




In **Argentina**, the Ministry of Culture commissioned 500 artists to produce digital artworks

The **Jamaican** National Library is helping secondary-school students to prepare their School-Based Assessments via its online resource.



The Museum of Contemporary Art and Design of **Costa Rica** has created a directory of national design stores so that people can buy their cultural products even during the period of confinement.

In **Mexico**, the Ministry of Education launched a programme entitled "Aprender en casa" (Learn at Home) using UNESCO videos on World Heritage sites, living heritage and creativity, which were broadcast via television and the internet to teach history, natural science, ethics and civic studies



The Ministry of Culture in **Panama** is conducting a survey on the impact of COVID-19 on the country's creative and cultural industry to establish baseline data to inform post-pandemic strategies



UNESCO'S FOCUSED RESPONSE

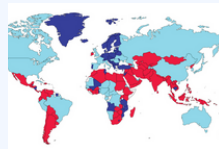
Key initiatives in response to the pandemic

April
#ShareOurHeritage
campaign launched to share
videos and virtual visits,



17 April
**IGOs &
Development
Banks Meeting**

22 April
**UNESCO tracking
map shows that
90% of countries
have closed World
Heritage sites**



May
**WH site manager
videos**



22 May
**Little Artists
exhibition**



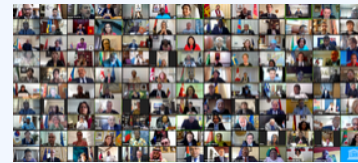
18 June
**First Ibermuseums
Panel**

Museums and the public in times of
crisis: dissemination, communication,
accessibility, inclusion and equity

26 June
**Expert Meeting on
Illegal Excavations
and Online Trade
during COVID-19**



15 April
**Tracker & ResiliArt
launched**



22 April
**Meeting of Ministers
of Culture**



7 May
**Intangible Cultural
Heritage platform
launched**



25-31 May
**International Arts
Education Week**



25 June
Urban Solutions:
Learning from Cities' Responses to
COVID-19 Meeting



Online Meeting of Ministers of Culture 22 April

Over 130 Ministers and Vice-Ministers of Culture joined the online meeting convened by UNESCO to discuss actions to bolster the cultural sector. The ministers spoke of the direct effects of the current crisis on tourism, museums, cultural production and artists, as well as the measures that they have taken to mitigate the impact of the crisis. They reaffirmed their commitment to intergovernmental dialogue and international solidarity in order to strengthen and unite their efforts.

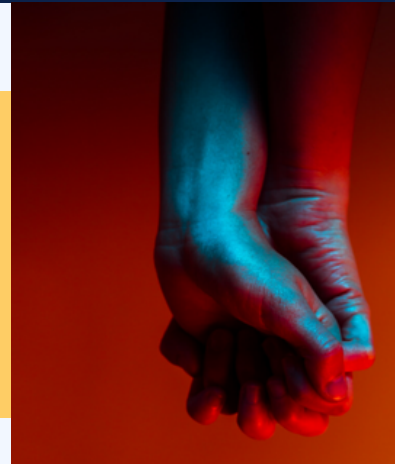


Museums Around The World in The Face Of Covid-19

This UNESCO report revealed that nearly 90% of the more than 95,000 institutions worldwide had closed their doors as of May 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also revealed great disparities between regions in terms of numbers of museums and use of digital technologies.

ResiliArt Movement

The ResiliArt movement is a series of online debates launched by UNESCO in mid-April to enhance dialogue on the far-reaching impact of COVID-19 on the cultural sector. To date over 93 debates have taken place in 53 countries, around a third in Africa. It aims to inform the development of policies and financial mechanisms that can help creative individuals and communities overcome the current crisis.



Online Meeting of regional intergovernmental organizations and development banks 17 April

The representatives from fourteen regional Intergovernmental Organizations and development banks agreed on the importance of providing data to measure the impact of COVID-19 on culture and culture-related activities, in order for culture to be included in post-COVID-19 recovery efforts. They proposed intensifying dialogue with Ministries and concerted action at the regional and international levels to support the cultural sector. Since then, several debates have taken place at the regional level since, inspired by this meeting.

Launch of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Platform

While physical distancing and confinement are affecting the way we live, some communities are finding creative ways to adapt to the circumstances and continue practicing their living heritage. UNESCO launched a survey to document experiences of living heritage during the COVID-19 pandemic, the results of which are presented on a dedicated web platform





◀ **CLICK ON ICONS
TO READ PAST
ISSUES**



- ◀ **ISSUE 1**
- Initial impact of pandemic on cultural sector
 - Immediate response: in countries and UN
 - Emergency support packages announced

ISSUE 2 ▶

- Impact on artists;
- Digital solutions



ISSUE 3 ▶

- Tourism statistics;
- UNESCO meeting with regional organizations;
- UNESCO Ministers of Culture meeting



◀ **ISSUE 4**

- Museums;
- Living Heritage in confinement



◀ **ISSUE 5**

- Looting and poaching;
- Adaptations in the cultural sector

ISSUE 6 ▶

- Vulnerabilities in cultural sector;
- Latest data (tourism and museums);
- Social inclusion



ISSUE 7 ▶

- Impact assessment for cultural sector;
- Arts and cultural education



◀ **ISSUE 8**

- Impact on natural heritage;
- Regional responses to the crisis



◀ **ISSUE 9**

- Consumer confidence;
- Strategies for re-opening,
- City-level responses

ISSUE 10 ▶

- Indigenous people;
- Culture 2030 Campaign;
- Books and publishing industry



ISSUE 11 ▶

- Tourism
- Civil society responses





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THE TRACKER



MONITORING CULTURE & PUBLIC POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!**

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