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STRATEGY ON PRESERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND POPULARISATION OF CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The RA Strategy on Preservation, Development and Popularisation of Culture (hereinafter referred to as "the Strategy") outlines the developmental priorities within the domain and the methodologies for their attainment in response to prevailing challenges, emanating from the priorities of the RA government and relevant international obligations.
2. The imperative for the Strategy arises from the need to furnish comprehensive remedies to the challenges confronting the domain, while concurrently coordinating the initiated reforms.
3. The values that are foundational to the Strategy are preservation of cultural heritage, societal well-being, and individual engagement in cultural endeavours, along with upholding creative liberties as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, wherein they are legally stipulated guarantees.
4. The Strategy is grounded in the preservation, development, dissemination, and popularisation of culture rooted in national identity and values, while at the same time establishing connections and communication with both national and global values, ensuring holistic inclusiveness, accessibility of culture and arts, promoting experimentation and innovative forms, economisation of culture, and implementation of modern management systems and capacity building. The strategy introduces the institution of cultural donors and encourages public-private partnerships to promote mutually beneficial cooperation. The strategy aims to fortify democratic values and elevate the prominence of Armenian culture on the global cultural map.
5. The key messages of the Strategy are as follows:
 - a. **Culture is fundamental to the formation of national identity and serves as a cornerstone for international coexistence based on universal values.**
 - b. **Culture is a vital component of national security.**
 - c. **Culture ensures the preservation of Armenian identity within the Diaspora.**
 - d. **Culture is an essential component of citizen education and upbringing, and is key to the development of human capital.**
 - e. **Culture is fundamental to the formation of free and happy citizens.**
 - f. **Culture is a medium for expressing and fostering creative freedom and spirituality, enabling personal self-expression.**

g. Culture is a guarantee for fostering public solidarity and building a prosperous society.

h. Culture is a vital factor in the expansion of international cooperation.

6. This strategy is grounded in tools aimed at comprehensive analyses of cultural heritage and contemporary arts, along with recommendations on actions necessary to consider and utilize culture as a resource for sustainable development.

7. The strategy establishes the vision and goals for sector development, outlining the anticipated outcomes of the reforms and their impact on individuals and society.

8. The strategy development process was highly participatory, incorporating proposals from the professional community and international organisations. The document establishes a flexible review system, enabling responsiveness to changing challenges and maintaining adaptability in crisis situations. Furthermore, extensive public communication is prioritised to uphold the principles of participation and accountability.

9. The strategy and action plan have been developed in pursuance of Annex 1 of N 1902-L decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia “On approving the 2021-2026 Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia”, dated November 18, 2021, specifically under Annex 1, sub-clause 1.2 of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports.

10. The Strategy will serve as a benchmark for the next five years, guiding the development of other strategic documents and related policies in the sector.

1. LINK OF THE STRATEGY WITH OTHER PERTINENT DOCUMENTS

11. The Strategy for the forthcoming five years delineates cultural reforms within the Republic of Armenia, thereby establishing a conceptual framework directly contingent upon the priorities of the RA Government and international obligations, collaborative agreements as well as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with local and international entities. Consideration is given to ongoing systemic reforms, along with contemporary local and international insights and expertise.

12. **In the Armenia Transformation Strategy 2050**, Armenian culture is identified as a pivotal national asset and instrumental in cultivating a resilient identity and fostering pan-Armenian potential for realisation. The achievement of the objectives delineated in this Strategy will advance the overarching aims 1 and 16 of the Transformation Strategy. *This will be accomplished by fostering the development of a civilised, creative, innovative and adept citizenry through the enhancement of knowledge, culture, awareness, and skills. Simultaneously, it will contribute to the establishment of a recognised, esteemed, and hospitable Armenia, and the propagation of Armenian cultural heritage.*

13. The Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (2021-2026) stipulates that cultural policy is geared towards **fostering the advancement and dissemination of Armenian culture and contemporary arts, meeting the spiritual needs of the people, creating a conducive environment for the nurturing of creative and talented artists, while also focusing on the preservation of the historical and cultural landscape and enhancing recognition thereof.**

14. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this Strategy underscores the commitment of the Republic of Armenia to achieve the UN's 2030 SDGs. To ensure measurable progress, the outcome chain of the Strategy's objectives, particularly the specified criteria, are inherently aligned with SDG principles and internationally endorsed targets. Notably, the effective execution of the Strategy will advance the realisation of ESGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 17, with emphasis placed on sub-points such as 11.4, which pertains to strengthening endeavours to safeguard the global cultural and natural heritage, and 4.7, which emphasizes the promotion of a culture of peace, non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity, recognizing the role of the culture in sustainable development.

15. The conceptual scope of the Strategy adheres to the foundational tenets delineated within international conventions ratified by the Republic of Armenia.

16. Additionally, the conceptual framework of the strategy is shaped by collaborative agreements signed with international development entities and organisations active within Armenia, including but not limited to the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Armenia 2021-2025, technical support from the World Bank, and agreements such as the USAID "Direct Assistance to Armenia."

17. **Inter-ministerial coordination:** in formulating this Strategy, a comprehensive mapping of ongoing and forthcoming reforms and strategic programs pertinent to the sphere of culture conducted by other ministries and ministerial bodies has been undertaken. Such assessments have been duly factored into the delineation of the Strategy's conceptual framework. Efforts have been made to harmonize the main reforms conceptually.

2. THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY

18. The Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan have been developed in accordance with the following principles:

1. **Human-centric and rights-based approach:** Founded upon the constitutional entitlement of each individual to engage in the cultural affairs of the Republic of Armenia and to conduct cultural activities, this principle underscores the accessibility of cultural assets for all.

2. **Transparency and accountability:** The process of formulating and executing the Strategy and Action Plan, as well as their outcomes, shall be made publicly available through avenues such as public discussions, meetings, and collaborative brainstorming sessions.

3. **Engagement and inclusivity:** Throughout all phases of the Strategy and Action Plan, the perspectives of all stakeholders, including representatives from civil society and international organisations, will be duly considered.

4. **Viability and measurability:** This principle pertains specifically to the Action Plan, targeting issues necessitating immediate resolution while accounting for time constraints, financial resource allocation, as well as obstacles and solutions identified in past strategies and their implementation. Actions and timelines are devised with measurability in mind, enabling outcome evaluation.

5. **Continuous enhancement:** Emphasizing ongoing refinement of the Strategy and its Action Plan, this principle acknowledges the need for adaptability in response to evolving

circumstances, urgent issues arising during action implementation, or alterations in legal dynamics.

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION AND THE FRAMEWORK OF ANTICIPATED REFORMS

1. OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CREATIVE SPHERES ¹

19. Amidst contemporary geopolitical shifts and rapid advancements in information technology, the role of culture and creative industries is also evolving. The new realities and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the war instigated by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh have underscored the importance of culture as a key factor in sustainable, healthy, and inclusive economic development. This period has highlighted culture's critical role in societal development, human capital growth, and the formation of national and spiritual values. Special emphasis has been placed on the therapeutic significance of cultural communication during crisis situations.

20. The Strategy delineates the priorities of the Republic of Armenia's cultural policy, aimed at preserving and disseminating culture, fostering the advancement of cultural and creative sectors, and augmenting their role in the nation's sustainable development endeavours. It prioritizes the accessibility of culture and contemporary arts, social inclusion, the reinforcement of democratic principles, the cultivation of a flourishing society, and the integration of Armenian culture into the global arena and the assurance of competitiveness in international markets.

21. The creative sphere serves as a catalyst for novel economic development, particularly in the realm of small and medium enterprises. This necessitates and anticipates network engagement, a profusion of ideas, the presence of visionary teams, and actors (artists) with forward-thinking perspectives, as well as dedicated financial allocations and active engagement and collaboration.

22. Presently, the term "Creative Industry" is synonymous with "Cultural Industry." As industrial societies gradually transition into intellectual ones, the adoption of a creative problem-solving approach becomes pivotal for maintaining competitiveness.

23. While the concept of cultural industry primarily encompasses cultural heritage and traditional forms of creativity, creative industries encompass applied arts, innovation, generation of revenue and employment opportunities through the utilisation of intellectual property.

24. Examination of international practices reveals that over the past decade, the turnover of creative production and services has doubled worldwide, reaching 624 billion. In EU countries, where

¹ "Creative spheres" - entrepreneurial activity in which economic value is inextricably linked to cultural content.

approximately 12 million individuals (7.5% of the population) are engaged in these fields, cultural and creative industries account for 5.3% of gross production.

25. As per UNESCO's Culture for Development Indicators, culture commands a significant portion of the national economy and Gross Domestic Product (approximately 3.33% of GDP). However, the comprehensive impact of culture transcends the confines of current statistical metrics.

26. According to the December 2021 Report on the Socio-Economic Status of the Republic of Armenia provided by the Statistical Committee, revenue generated from cultural, recreational, and leisure activities amounted to 22,005.5 million AMD in December 2021, in December 2020: 99.9%, in December 2021: 113.8%, in January-December 2021: 234,232.9 million AMD, overall 12.5, and a notable 68.5% increase specifically for the year 2021 (as compared to 2020). This includes revenue from creative, artistic, and ceremonial performances, libraries, archival activities, museums, and other cultural organisations, which amounted to 3,806.5 million AMD in 2021, marking a 165.9% increase compared to 2020.

27. As of March, data furnished by the RA Statistical Committee indicates that the amount generated from cultural, recreational, and leisure services totalled 23,487.5 million AMD (in percentage terms, this represents a 118.4% increase from the corresponding period in 2023). Particularly notable is the significant rise in revenue from the operations of creative, artistic, and ceremonial performances, libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural organisations, which amounted to 643.6 million AMD in 2023. This marks a 2.1-fold increase compared to the equivalent period in 2022.

28. Upon examination of employment figures within the cultural sector, a more thorough understanding emerges, highlighting the significant role of culture in the economy as a mechanism for poverty alleviation.

29. Based on the aforementioned research, while cultural management stands on firm footing, the existing state of cultural infrastructures in the Republic of Armenia not only restricts access to culture but also hampers opportunities for cultural production, distribution, and utilisation.

30. Though only 36% of the nation's population is concentrated in Yerevan, it is noteworthy that the city hosts 64% of museums and exhibition venues, showcasing an imbalance in cultural resources distribution.

31. The formulation and execution of cultural policy fall under the purview of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports. However, regulations pertaining to the sector also intersect with the responsibilities of other governmental entities.

32. The Republic of Armenia maintains membership and collaboration with numerous international organisations and associations in the cultural sphere, notably including UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the World Bank, the British Council, and various other international professional bodies. The implementation of sectoral policy by the Republic of Armenia adheres to its corresponding international obligations.

2. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF THE MACROENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IMPACTING THE SPHERE ACROSS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIO-CULTURAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

33. An overarching analysis of the macro-environment spanning political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological aspects has been conducted as part of the Strategy, with the findings detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Succinct List of Political, Economic, Social-Cultural and Technological Factors.

Political	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic state • Capital (Yerevan) and 10 regions (marzes) • Intricate political past • Unresolved conflicts • Impact of regional conflict • Limitations on regional border access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition from conventional industrial practices to a knowledge-driven economy • Reliance on external funding sources • International tourism as a cornerstone of developmental endeavours • Strategic significance of culture and cultural creative sectors • Centralised administration of cultural and creative sectors
Social-Cultural	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 million population • 98% ethnic Armenians • Ancient historical and cultural heritage within the Republic of Armenia and beyond its borders • Extensive use of Russian and English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive utilisation of the Internet • Government involvement in ICT policy formulation • Well-developed ICT sector • Implementation of digitisation strategies, with priority given to

languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralised cultural life • Armenian Diaspora (more than 7 million) • Impact of pandemics 	digitizing cultural heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition toward digital transformation
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3. AXES OF DEVELOPMENT

34. The strategy is founded upon exhaustive analyses of cultural heritage and creative industries.

35. Examination and identification of challenges were undertaken across four primary axes: **a) preservation and transmission of cultural heritage, b) modernisation of cultural and creative sectors, c) fostering innovation, enhancing cultural accessibility, and promoting inclusion, d) international collaboration** to complement sectoral advancements.

36. In the course of strategy formulation, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis was conducted for each of the aforementioned four axes (Tables 2-5).

1. PRESERVATION AND TRANSMISSION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

37. The cultural heritage of the Republic of Armenia encompasses the collective body of cultural assets fashioned in bygone eras, which hold significant import in the preservation and evolution of the cultural identity of both the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian nation. This heritage is regarded as an investment in the broader tapestry of international civilisation, examined through archaeological, architectural, historical, aesthetic, and socio-cultural lenses.

38. Both tangible and intangible cultural heritage are recognised as influential factors in fostering intercultural dialogue, nurturing tolerance toward diverse cultures and values, and shaping collective identities and value systems in practice.

39. The preservation and transmission of cultural heritage stand among the state's foremost priorities, gaining heightened urgency post-2020 and amidst the 2023 conflict initiated by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh. Azerbaijan's relentless pursuit of cultural genocide and the devastating consequences of its actions to obliterate Armenian cultural heritage, desecrate and distort Armenian identity highlight an urgent and compelling need to fiercely protect and preserve Armenian cultural heritage. This aggression has resulted in the control of approximately 5,000 significant stationary monuments of Armenian history and culture by Azerbaijan, including monastery complexes such as Aramas, Gandzasar, and Dadivank, as well as historical sites like Tigranakert, Azokh, and Nor Karmiravan. Additionally, numerous forts, fortresses, sanctuaries, and

other monuments have been affected. Furthermore, 19 state and private museums, including those of Shushi carpets and Armenian dram have fallen under Azerbaijan's control.

40. Simultaneously, the chain of cultural identity transmission among the indigenous Armenian population, who have inhabited these territories for millennia, has been severed, resulting in the loss of identity and values inherent in the intangible cultural heritage of communities, groups, and individuals carrying the said heritage. In this regard, safeguarding the cultural rights of forcibly displaced Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh, and ensuring the ongoing preservation and transmission of collective identity through the implementation of potential protection mechanisms for intangible cultural heritage and international normative legal frameworks, has become a paramount concern.

41. Cultural heritage plays a crucial role in upholding national security through the cultivation of a sense of accountability towards the cultural identity and statehood of both individuals and society as a whole.

42. Furthermore, cultural heritage holds significant sway over social and economic advancement, notably in education, job creation, and the promotion of tourism. In this vein, community engagement in heritage preservation, appreciation, transfer, and enhancement is particularly imperative.

43. Hence, the Strategy underscores the criticality of both community and governmental engagement in the preservation and administration of cultural heritage. To this end, it advocates for the development and execution of comprehensive measures geared towards fostering collective social responsibility and participatory policymaking.

Table 2: Summary of the SWOT Analysis of Cultural Heritage

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abundant cultural heritage assets (both tangible and intangible)• Over 24,250 monuments• More than 135 museums• Exceeding 2 million museum specimens/units• Bearer of Urartian civilisation legacy• Approximately 500 libraries• Established legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monuments susceptible to risk from natural phenomena, dense population, land utilisation, and other circumstances• Potential peril to Western Armenian• Informational and cognitive gaps concerning the values of cultural heritage• Accessibility to cultural heritage

<p>pertaining to cultural heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic significance of cultural heritage in stimulating tourism and investment • Membership in international organisations • Utilisation of digital technologies to advance heritage preservation and its transmission modalities, broadening the scope of advantages and stakeholders 	<p>content, information, and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of modern scientific and educational capabilities, connections, content, and resources • Inadequate financial resources • Threats to the preservation of Armenian cultural heritage abroad
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2. MODERNISATION, INNOVATION OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS

44. Armenia showcases its contemporary performing and visual arts on the global stage: theatre, music, fine arts, cinema, and dance. This fosters the creation of competitive artistic works, drives creative endeavours, encourages investment in new art projects, engages society in cultural activities, and activates the sector's creative potential.

45. Concurrently, the spheres of performing and visual arts (within the cultural and creative sectors) stand as pivotal elements in intercultural dialogue. This domain not only bolsters international cooperation but, more significantly, nurtures creativity, encourages continual advancement, and facilitates generational change.

46. In recent years, the cultural and creative industries sector has emerged as one of the swiftest-growing sectors with considerable potential to stimulate economic growth. Presently, creative industries encompass a confluence of individuals and enterprises offering cultural, innovative products and services, revitalizing production, services, commerce, and entertainment.

47. Present-day development within creative realms and creative industries seamlessly integrates with modern information technology and the utilisation of artificial intelligence capabilities. A notable instance occurred in Armenia in 2019 during the WCIT-2019 international conference in Yerevan, where the state symphony orchestra and 110 musicians from 15 countries showcased music composed by artificial intelligence, drawing inspiration from Armenian hymns.

48. Beyond its contribution to fostering sustainable economic development, the creative economy engenders intangible values and ensures sustainable growth centred on human welfare. It fosters exports, generates new employment opportunities.

49. In this regard, the significance of national and folk art is underscored, alongside the imperative to elevate public awareness and appreciation of folk and ethnographic culture through performing arts. Strengthening cultural vitality and culture-shaping endeavours in the regions will further facilitate broader community access to cultural offerings and enhance the engagement of the regional population in cultural life, including the integration of folk and patriotic music into everyday endeavours of the population.

50. Consequently, the cultural and creative sector assumes a significant role in the educational and socio-economic advancement of the nation. The establishment of creative and innovative hubs and laboratories within communities holds particular significance, as it not only enriches the cultural fabric of communities but also fosters the growth of creative thinking, cultural production, and the creation of new employment opportunities, thereby decentralizing cultural activities.

51. Consistent with the objectives of cultural and creative sector development policy, government funding is allocated towards the generation, acquisition, and effective presentation of cultural products, as well as the modernisation of cultural infrastructures. Additionally, efforts are directed towards cultivating a competitive environment, fostering interregional (between the marzes) collaboration, and positioning Armenian art on international platforms.

52. Through the endeavours of individual creators and organisations within the sector, including festivals, publishing houses, multimedia companies, and other entities engaged in creative pursuits, Armenia has established a robust institutional framework for contemporary visual and performing arts.

53. As per UNESCO's Culture for Development Indicators, culture commands a significant portion of the national economy and Gross Domestic Product (approximately 3.33% of GDP). This is primarily driven by the audio-visual and interactive media sector (78%), followed by books and press (7%), arts performances and celebrations (7%), design and creative businesses (5%), and cultural and natural heritage (3%). According to UNESCO data from 2014, the cultural and creative industries employ over 50,000 individuals, representing nearly 5% of the total population's employment (UNESCO, 2017). Projections suggest that the global CreaTech industry could experience an average annual growth rate of 5% from 2020 to 2025, with the market volume expected to reach \$2.6 trillion by 2025. Furthermore, according to several experts, the creative sector's contribution to GDP may rise to 10% by 2030².

² <https://unescofutures.hse.ru/news/824123788.html>

54. While the government acknowledges the strategic significance of the culture and creative sector in Armenia's economic and societal progress, studies indicate that some stakeholders in the field feel they are not adequately and comprehensively engaged in state policies and strategic initiatives.
55. Ensuring the participation of painters and artists with disabilities is designated as a particular priority by the Government, particularly given the aftermath of recent armed conflict.
56. Emphasis is placed on the establishment of a more conducive administrative and legal framework aimed at fostering philanthropy, market competition, international collaboration, flexible resource management, and revenue generation through commercial means.
57. Current regulations and legislative provisions constrain the potential for diversifying revenue streams and accumulating additional financial resources for cultural institutions (hereinafter referred to as "Institutions") operating with state and community funding. This perpetuates their reliance on public funding and hampers their ability to demonstrate the requisite initiative and self-reliance.
58. Consequently, Institutions exhibit minimal levels of strategic deliberation and planning, characterised by a deficiency in institutional vision, clearly articulated mission statements, or long-term development planning processes.
59. From a human resources standpoint, there exists a dearth of proficiency and expertise in marketing, financial management, and fundraising within the sector.
60. Recent research reveals that organisations within the cultural and creative sectors demonstrate limited effectiveness in marketing strategies, with a lack of differentiation between institutional and program marketing efforts³.
61. In state-funded cultural institutions, priority is given to the implementation of effective monitoring and evaluation systems. This initiative aims to enhance the efficient allocation and utilisation of capital and income, thereby improving the organisations' and staff's capacity to assess and manage activity and impact levels.

Table 3: SWOT Analysis of Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS)

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
CCS policies and platforms	CCS policies and platforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The significance of public-private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Armenia export-oriented

³ Muradyan, T. and Zeitounian, Z. (2020). Perspectives on contemporary art management in public sector. Final narrative report. Unpublished.

<p>partnerships and the market orientation of CCS products and institutions is increasingly emphasised within the cultural policy framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a notable focus on fostering CCS businesses related to tourism and cultural heritage, identified as a priority sector. • Enhancement of UNESCO's Culture for Development Indicators by addressing the monitoring requirements influenced by industry dynamics. • Open dialogue between the government and industry professionals. 	<p>industrial development strategy does not encompass CCS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an absence of a comprehensive development strategy for CCS. • Cultural policy and management are subject to centralised control. • There is limited interaction between the IT sector and creative communities. • Civil society is relatively underdeveloped, and coordinated cooperation among CCS entities is lacking. • Creative and professional unions are inadequately adapted to the new market dynamics and experiences.
<p>CCS structures and infrastructures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of entrepreneurial endeavours within the cultural domain in both Yerevan and the regions. • Restoration of libraries and equipping those as hubs for education and cultural pastime. • Establishment of new venues for creative pursuits, such as the "TUMO" Centre for Creative Technologies. 	<p>CCS structures and infrastructures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate assistance provided to CCSs regarding access to new facilities. • State and community management frameworks for cultural institutions require modernisation. • There is a necessity to enhance property and infrastructure standards.
<p>CCS financial allocation and assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing interest from international companies and organisations operating 	<p>CCS financial allocation and assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public funding lacks a competitive process for effectively targeting

<p>in Armenia in providing private financial support to CCS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government pays increased attention to allocating funds to literature and publishing. • Within the framework of the cultural decentralisation policy, priority is given to funding projects implemented in regions. • Inclusive arts programs receive funding priority. 	<p>diverse stakeholders in CCS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are deficiencies in legislative regulations aimed at promoting sponsorship. • There is a limited level of professional capacity and availability of alternative funding sources. • Intellectual property rights receive inadequate attention, and there is weak enforcement of legal regulations in this regard.
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3. CULTURAL ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

62. The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia affirms the entitlement of every individual to engage in societal cultural activities.

63. Furthermore, there exist various hurdles pertaining to accessibility, inclusion, and societal cohesion within the cultural production and consumption landscape.

In particular:

1. Despite the widespread availability of the Internet, challenges persist in accessing Internet services, particularly among socially disadvantaged and elderly individuals.

2. A disparity exists between cultural demand and the offerings provided by institutions, with the broader public showing a preference for entertaining content⁴.

3. An irregularity exists in the accessibility and dispersion of cultural infrastructure across different regions. Cinemas, theatres, museums, and other significant cultural establishments are unevenly distributed, with a higher concentration observed in major urban centres like Yerevan and Gyumri. Participation and employment prospects are more restricted in other areas, particularly within smaller communities. Prioritizing cultural decentralisation has been underscored as a priority, particularly amidst the escalating emigration from Armenia⁵.

⁴ Muradyan, T. and Zeitountsian, Z. (2020). Perspectives on contemporary art management in public sector. Final narrative report. Unpublished.

⁵ Grigoryan, A., Khalatyan, A., Mnatsakanyan, G., Ohanyan, M., Papoyan, S., Mlqe-Galstyan, S. (2017). A new cultural policy for Armenia's Regions: a policy brief for Culture & Creativity EU-Eastern Partnership Programme.

4. The mutual awareness level of cultural and educational institutions is deemed inadequate.

64. The factors outlined above involve digital, cultural, and ultimately socio-economic risks of division among the youth and the elderly residing in urban centres, and/or those living in smaller rural areas.

65. This poses a challenge within the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as the repercussions of military operations on civilians, including the adverse effects on the physical and/or mental well-being of artists, thereby impeding the progress of cultural development.

Table 4: Summary of SWOT Analysis of Cultural Accessibility and Inclusion

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
Cultural education and skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural educational programs hold prominence as a priority within the state's cultural agenda.• Private sector initiatives contribute to the development of the creative education system.• The decentralisation of creative education fosters the emergence of novel networks and facilities (such as the "Tumo" centre, Loft, National Centre for Aesthetics, Technopark, etc.).• There is notable enhancement in the quality of cultural education, paralleled by substantial quantitative expansion.• Numerous schools, including those in border areas, experience high student enrolment rates.• Expansion of branches by the	Cultural education and skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creativity and entrepreneurship are inadequately addressed in educational programs.• There is a deficiency in the professional capacity of arts management and an inadequacy in the educational system to address it.

<p>National Centre of Aesthetics is observed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of textbooks on art history is undertaken. 	
<p>Building markets and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous private initiatives establish connections between culture, the creative sphere, and the wider public. • Widespread utilisation of the Internet. 	<p>Building markets and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of strategies for expanding audience and enhancing consumer engagement • Uneven dispersion of creative education centres • Requirement for the consolidation of culture managers and consumers

4. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

66. Sustained advancement of mutually advantageous and equitable relations with all nations is crucial in foreign affairs, facilitated by cultural and creative sectors, amicable and partner nations and diaspora communities.

67. The Government remains dedicated to perpetuating international involvement, fostering cultural, social, and economic progress, achievable through cultural tourism, investment, and entrepreneurial endeavours.

68. The promotion and enlargement of international relations necessitate the implementation of comprehensive strategic initiatives concerning pertinent entities, extant international affiliations, and partnerships. This entails strengthening and fortifying existing connections while leveraging new prospects, all while considering prevailing challenges and risks.

69. The Republic of Armenia prioritizes the safeguarding of Armenians in the Diaspora. The active and well-coordinated involvement of the Diaspora in their respective countries of residence holds significance for enhancing Armenia's international engagement. The weakening of the Armenia-Diaspora bond or the absence of mutually enriching interactions can pose risks to the promotion of fundamental interests.

Table 5: Summary of SWOT Analysis of International Cooperation

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tightly interconnected international CCS community. • Decisive involvement of the diaspora within international creative communities. • Emphasizing culture as a determinant for the international positioning of the state. • Sustained participation on esteemed international platforms (such as Cannes, Berlin film festivals, Venice Biennale). • State policy in promoting gifted young individuals and facilitating their education and representation on the international stage. • Commitment to expanding opportunities for Armenian cinema in international relations. • Utilisation of festivals as crucial platforms for regional and international cooperation. • Participation in organisations such as "Creative Europe", the CIS Interstate Humanitarian Fund and EURIMAGES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the standpoint of cultural policy, there is a deficiency in inventory across priority international platforms and differentiation in state support participation. • Absence of NGO involvement in the policy framework for cultural diplomacy. • Language barriers. • Limitations due to displacement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. • Regional enclosure and border issues.
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4.VISION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

1. VISION AND PRIORITIES

70. The Strategy is grounded in the fundamental tenets delineated within the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, encompassing human rights, freedoms, and the objectives of state policy as articulated therein. The Constitution ensures that everyone shall have the freedom of literary, artistic, scientific and technical creation. Furthermore, it directs the state to

promote the progress of culture, education, and science, while underscoring the duty to protect and preserve the Armenian language and cultural heritage.

71. Considering the fundamental human rights outlined in the Constitution and the primary development directives, the Strategy delineates **culture development priorities and the envisaged vision** in line with which it ensures:

1. ***Preservation of cultural heritage and its unaltered transmission to future generations.*** Armenia's rich cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is conserved for posterity and made accessible through contemporary and captivating means.

2. ***Establishment of an institutional environment to foster the advancement of creative spheres and the expression of creators' abilities.*** Established to facilitate unfettered creative self-expression, conducive conditions ensure the full involvement of cultural institutions, creative enterprises, and practitioners, thereby integrating creativity, diversity, and artistic excellence into social and economic progress.

3. **Cultural Access and Inclusivity:** Every individual, irrespective of age, background, or religious affiliation, possesses the right to engage actively in cultural life. This includes access to high-quality cultural education and services, which significantly enhances their quality of life and well-being.

4. ***Positioning Armenia as a custodian and creator of global civilisational values.*** Armenia, recognised as a culture-oriented and civilised nation, actively participates in diverse international platforms encompassing political, economic, intellectual, creative, and cultural facets.

2. OBJECTIVES

72. The strategy delineates the subsequent principal strategic objectives:

1. PRESERVATION AND TRANSMISSION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ACROSS GENERATIONS

73. Principal Objective 1 delineates the preservation and transmission of Armenian cultural heritage through the modernisation and enhancement of access to information, content, skills, and knowledge.

1.1 Cultural Heritage Inventory and Institutionalisation

74. The exhaustive cultural heritage of the Armenian nation shall undergo continuous research and mapping, encompassing both the Armenian territory and worldwide, tracing their origins to the

present day. This process anticipates their identification and classification based on their locations and types.

75. By the year 2027, there is a planned initiative to inventory 60% of the Armenian historical and cultural heritage, including immovable, movable, and intangible cultural assets.

1.2 Digital Accessibility of Cultural Heritage

76. The information acquired from the aforementioned inventory and mapping, along with its associated values, will be incorporated into advanced digital repositories, including through comprehensive digital platforms. These resources will encompass new, expanded, and modernised repositories featuring museum collections, intangible cultural heritage, and information concerning monuments and written heritage. By 2027, there is a planned augmentation of museum object repositories by 40%, along with an 80% enhancement in the replenishment of intangible cultural heritage. Additionally, a digital database of monuments is slated for development, with a completion target of 60%.

1.3 Content Modernisation, Enhancement of Professional Skills, and Continuous Development in the Field of Cultural Heritage

77. Continuous professional development programs will be established to enhance the capabilities and performance of specialists in Armenia's cultural heritage sector.

78. Educational programs for cultural heritage will be updated with new educational materials. Additionally, steps will be taken to modernize professional literature in the field of cultural heritage.

2. MODERNISATION OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS, INNOVATION

79. Principal Objective 2 delineates the enhancement of the capacity and sustainability of cultural and creative institutions, freelance creators, and private organisations operating in Armenia.

2.1 Upgrading Management Models in Cultural and Creative Sectors

80. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia conducts ongoing research and analysis to identify and address issues within the cultural and creative sectors. This includes legislative reforms and the development of key performance indicators (both qualitative and quantitative) for state and community cultural institutions. Efforts also focus on promoting cultural self-financing, modernizing management systems, implementing a new model for unified automated ticketing services and new models of financing, and establishing awards and ceremonies to recognize achievements in cultural and creative sectors.

81. The purpose of these awards is to foster the development of the creative sector and support freelance artists and creators within the community. This initiative aims to encourage the creation of new, innovative, and competitive ideas and projects both within Armenia and internationally. The awards, tailored to sector-specific characteristics, will be granted to participants and winners of A-class music, theatre, and film festivals, as well as art biennials. Artists who receive international awards will be granted a nominal pension for one year.

82. The aim of the aforesaid measures is to enhance the efficiency of state allocations, foster cooperation between the private sector and the state, ensure the financial stability of the said institutions, and promote public engagement and sponsoring. The new funding model is scheduled to be implemented in all performing arts organisations operating under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia by 2027.

2.2 Promoting the Activities of Freelance Creators in Cultural and Creative Sectors

83. To foster a modern and sustainable creative economy, it is crucial to support and empower both state cultural institutions and the independent creative community and entrepreneurship. This support will enhance creative entrepreneurship, expand participation and inclusivity in cultural production, facilitate the creation and export of cultural products, diversify income sources, and promote the engagement and development of creative and entrepreneurial potential.

2.3 Promotion of Cultural Investment and Philanthropy, and Establishment of a Cultural Donation Rating

84. In addition to state funding and internal revenues, numerous cultural and creative organisations worldwide rely significantly on private donations, public contributions, grants, and funds as crucial sources of financial support.

85. The Armenian Diaspora presents significant opportunities for promoting Armenian culture abroad and for securing funds to support cultural development.

86. Actions aimed at fostering cultural philanthropy in Armenia will include the development of state-level incentive programs for sponsors, such as enhancing the public recognition for sponsors.

2.4 Modernisation and Enhancement of Material and Technical Base, Property, and Infrastructure

87. Acknowledging the dynamic evolution of technological advancements and the evolving societal and producer needs, it is imperative, especially to maintain competitiveness and goal-oriented progress, to strategically allocate investments towards the improvement and modernisation of

Armenia's cultural institutions and infrastructure in the forthcoming five-year timeframe. By the year 2027, it is anticipated that 70% of the infrastructure of cultural organisations, overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, shall undergo modernisation.

88. The modernisation encompasses the following:

1. Targeted financial allocations for the enhancement of museums, libraries, theatres, and concert halls, with a focus on improving technical and building conditions. This includes funding for stock and exhibition spaces, as well as upgrades to lighting, sound equipment, and security systems.

2. Acquisition of musical instruments and stage/concert costumes through targeted funding, facilitating the advancement of professional standards and expanding the scope of international cooperation, thereby fostering the appropriate representation of creative groups.

3. Investments will be directed towards the establishment and enhancement of cultural heritage research and rehabilitation laboratories, as well as the creation and modernisation of stock spaces.

3. FACILITATING THE CREATIVE INTEGRATION OF SOCIETY INTO CULTURAL LIFE AND EXPANDING THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND THE ARTS IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES OF THE NATION

89. The principal objective 3 focuses on ensuring broader public access to culture and expanding markets for various art forms, cultural products, and programs.

3.1. National Self-Reassessment and Self-Awareness

90. To foster growth in Armenia's cultural and creative sectors, it is imperative to elevate both the production of cultural and creative works and the levels of primary demand for associated services.

91. During the inaugural year of setting the foundational level of demand, research and endeavours will be undertaken with the aim of annually increasing the said demand until 2027. These activities will entail conducting behavioural research on cultural preferences among the public. Subsequent initiatives will include the development of centralised, regulated advertising platforms and the utilisation of contemporary social tools to disseminate cultural content through the said platforms, thereby fostering enhanced public comprehension of culture.

92. National and international festivals will be organised to advocate for folk culture and patriotic music integration into the lives of the people. It is projected to host six festivals annually.

3.2 Decentralisation of Culture

93. Decentralisation of cultural life has been identified as a priority due to the level of general development of community, moral and psychological conditions. Actions in this direction include:

1. Establishment of aesthetic education centres and involvement of communities in state grant programs allocated to cultural projects: 90% by the year 2027.

2. Enhancement of intercommunity collaboration through joint musical-theatrical projects and staff exchanges: 60% by the year 2025.

3. Establishment of a cohesive educational and cultural network among communities, aimed at fostering the implementation of new state-funded projects within communities, with the objective of doubling the 2023 figure by 2027, ensuring 80% community involvement.

4. Reassessment of the role of libraries within communities through the implementation of new services.

5. Enhancement of the effectiveness of specialists in the field through the development and implementation of a mentoring program.

6. Integration of community-based youth centres into programs supported by the state.

3.3 Harmonisation of Cultural and Educational Policies

94. The quality and demand of the cultural and creative sector are directly contingent upon the education level and the extent of knowledge within the receiving environment (audience, listeners).

95. In this context, the combination of education and culture is one of the priorities of state cultural policy.

96. The policy is primarily implemented through various educational-cultural projects, expanding the interaction between renowned artists and academic institutions, thereby fostering favourable conditions for professional orientation.

97. Targeted measures may include:

1. Development of intellectual, educational, cultural and recreational environments:

2. including by means of creating youth centres and art residences. The number of such centres will reach 10 in 2027.
3. Introduction of a new cultural policy for children and the youth including targeted grants and educational projects (the number will be doubled to 12 in 2027).
4. Expansion of educational programmes of museums and libraries, introduction of new qualitative and quantitative criteria: by 2027 the number of participants will reach 350,000 beneficiaries.
5. Execution of educational programs tailored for art and culture organisers, including curators, literary agents, and film industry managers.
6. Execution of novel programs designed to advocate for and propagate literature and reading.

4. *POSITIONING ARMENIA AS A CUSTODIAN AND CREATOR OF GLOBAL CIVILISATIONAL VALUES*

98. The focal point of the principle objective 4 includes endeavours aimed at integrating Armenian culture and creative industries into global markets and elevating the recognition of Armenia.

2.1 Coordination and Alignment of Cultural and Foreign Policies

99. In the internationalisation of Armenian culture, the amalgamation of external affairs and cultural policies is paramount.

100. Key activities comprise:

1. Enhancing collaboration with international organisations and other global partners such as the UN, UNESCO, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), EU, EURIMAGES, the British Council, the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO), etc.

2. Under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the development of joint action plan by the representatives of Armenian diplomacy operating in foreign countries or affiliated with international organisations, along with authorised bodies in the cultural sector, will be conducted. This process will be facilitated through the establishment of an intergovernmental working group and the formulation of an annual plan.

3. A comprehensive inventory of international prestigious cultural markets and media platforms will be conducted, with participation ensured in accordance with cultural policy priorities.

4.2 Enhancing Recognition of Armenia

101. With the objective of increasing awareness about Armenian culture, other initiatives may encompass:

1. Enhancing the representation of Armenian culture within international organisations by expanding engagement in networks and platforms.

2. Showcasing Armenian cinema at international film markets such as the Cannes Film Festival and Film Market, Venice Film Festival and Film Market, Berlin Film Festival, Annecy Festival, Busan Film Festival, Oscars, and Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

3. Promotion of the endeavours of prominent Armenian artists, creative groups, and organisations on the global stage through exhibitions, festivals, and art biennales (such as Venice Biennale, Malta Biennale, Prague Quadrennial).

4. Participation in international music festivals (such as Operalia, Europalia) and in competitions showcasing Armenian classical and contemporary music.

5. Distribution of publications concerning Armenian history, culture, and art in foreign languages to reputable libraries overseas, educational and cultural institutions, and among international peers. The objective involves publishing 35 titles by the year 2027.

6. Within the purview of the Ministry's jurisdiction, to engage in information platforms (such as YouTube, Wikipedia, Wikimedia, etc.) to foster a positive perception of Armenia.

5. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

102. The strategy delineates the vision for the development of culture and identifies priorities within two primary sectoral domains, constituting the principal program components of state policy.

103. These domains encompass the spheres of cultural heritage and contemporary arts, wherein specific challenges have been addressed, sectoral developmental priorities have been defined, and resultant objectives have been outlined.

1. CULTURAL HERITAGE

104. The strategy has defined the preservation and uninterrupted transmission of cultural heritage as a primary objective, which is executed through five principal domains, as detailed hereinbelow:

1. Historic and cultural immovable monuments

105. Ratified by the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the state lists of immovable monuments of historical and cultural significance comprise over 24,000 monuments, organised into approximately 7,300 territorial conservation units. Furthermore, over 700 historical and cultural objects have been designated the status of newly discovered monuments.

106. The initiatives conducted in the field aim to register, research, and maintain historical and cultural monuments, addressing issues related to preservation, restoration, and utilisation while ensuring undisturbed operations for detection and resolution of associated challenges.

107. The processes directed towards the preservation, utilisation, and popularisation of historical and cultural monuments, as outlined in the strategy and action plan, will facilitate the improvement of mechanisms for safeguarding such monuments. They will also extend the circle of stakeholders, augment societal responsibility, and engage international organisations, individual benefactors, and communities in these processes. This, in turn, will foster the development and execution of prospective programs aimed at advancing tourism, while concurrently enhancing expertise in the field to remain current with contemporary economic and other developments.

108. The strategy has identified archaeological heritage as a priority in the country's sustainable development processes, recognizing it as an economic resource. This includes the conservation of Armenia's archaeological heritage, infrastructure development, and its popularisation.

109. Another priority outlined in the strategy pertains to **history and culture, specifically focusing on augmenting the restoration efforts of immovable monuments**. This involves increasing allocations from the state budget and fostering public-private partnerships to secure additional funding. Moreover, within the framework of such partnerships, it is imperative to acknowledge and safeguard historical and architectural monuments belonging to other ethno-cultural groups, encompassing their beliefs, religion, and culture, and situated within the Republic of Armenia, as these monuments are regarded as integral constituents of Armenia's comprehensive historical and cultural heritage. This priority is also regarded as an economic asset for sustainable development, exerting a direct influence on the expansion of tourism and the resultant financial benefits within the context of Armenia.

110. The funds allocated from the state budget for monument restoration in 2022 have seen a notable increase of approximately 300% compared to the preceding two years, amounting to around 400 million AMD. A sum of 660 million AMD is earmarked for allocation in 2023, with plans to escalate this figure to 1 billion AMD through current redistributions. Additionally, allocations to the field from the state budget are projected to reach a minimum of 2 billion AMD by 2027.

111. Within the framework of public-private collaboration, the rehabilitation of over 10 predominantly religiously significant monuments is currently underway, with plans to increase this number by an additional 20 by 2027.

112. Prioritised in the lists for the restoration of immovable historical and cultural monuments, the restoration of castles and fortresses is emphasised, serving as symbols of statehood and contributing to the diversity of tourist routes.

113. A considerable portion of the Republic of Armenia's monuments face endangerment today due to the corrosive impact of natural elements, dense population in certain areas, economic activities, land use, and various other factors. The areas designated within the state lists of immovable historical and cultural monuments do not accurately represent the true quantity of these monuments. Given this context, a priority within the strategy is the delineation, as well as the development of tourism infrastructure, focusing on the inventory of monuments concealed within Armenia's forested regions and their subsequent promotion.

114. The aim of the Strategy and action plan is to enhance the regulatory framework governing the cultural sector, delineate the functions and jurisdiction of institutional structures engaged in management processes of the field, and enhance comprehensive oversight mechanisms concerning activities aimed at preserving immovable monuments of historical and cultural significance, as well as the historical environment. This includes efforts directed at the restoration of endangered and damaged monuments and their enhancement. Furthermore, it seeks to foster the development of cultural tourism by means of facilitating the utilisation of immovable monuments and historical environments, establish conducive settings for archaeological heritage research in line with contemporary standards, and foster future development initiatives. Additionally, it aims to foster the expansion of international scientific collaboration in the field.

115. The enhancement of the legal framework is scheduled to be executed progressively, focusing on bolstering measures for monument protection, strengthening the accountability of owners, and implementing efficient mechanisms to combat illicit excavation and theft of cultural heritage artefacts.

116. The implementation of measures delineated in the Strategy will facilitate the preservation, restoration, advancement, and popularisation of historical and cultural monuments, with a specific focus on archaeological sites. This involves the development of tourist routes that integrate archaeological monuments, extending the active tourist season in Armenia, fostering a dynamic increase in tourist arrivals, bolstering inbound tourism, and addressing socio-economic challenges

in several communities, thereby ensuring employment opportunities for a specific segment of the population.

Priority 1: Prioritizing the fortification, restoration, and establishment of infrastructure for historical and cultural monuments bearing civil significance, alongside architectural landmarks (such as castles and fortresses) that hold significance as state symbols.

117. There exist approximately 700 fortifications across the territory of the Republic of Armenia, comprising significant monuments such as castles, forts, towers, citadels, palace complexes, ancient settlements and else. In the ongoing endeavours of the year 2022, initiatives have entailed the restoration of a portion of one castle walls and the development of scientific project documents for the examination, documentation, repair, and restoration of six monuments of civil and state significance or their subsidiary monuments. Eleven monuments of civil and state significance have been designated as reserve-museums, with five of them operating under a ticket economy model. By the year 2027, the plan includes the restoration of 30 monuments, the development of 30 scientific project documents, the establishment of 4 new reserve-museums, and the implementation of ticketing in 5 reserves.

118. As per the strategy, the primary direction outlined involves the preservation and promotion of **civil architectural monuments with state significance**, specifically forts and fortresses. The aim is to broaden tourist pathways and extend the active tourism season, encouraging a dynamic rise in tourist visits and an increase in additional financial revenues.

Objectives include:

1. The uninterrupted conservation of historical and cultural monuments.
2. By implementing new infrastructures, transforming castles and fortresses into popular tourist spots, creating new reserves, implementing ticketing policies, and improving the quality of services.
3. Creating favourable conditions for research aligned with contemporary standards and prospective development, targeting the preservation and promotion of Armenian fortification construction as part of the national heritage.
4. Addressing socio-economic challenges, increasing community involvement, and generating employment opportunities.
5. Reviving historical crafts, some of which have been partially lost, such as the revival of martial arts traditions and their transmission to the younger generation.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Establishing and maintaining a dedicated database for castles and fortresses of historical and cultural significance.
2. Implementation of thorough measures and regulations for the research, preservation, fortification, restoration, museification, utilisation, and popularisation of castles and fortresses, encompassing the restoration and dissemination of the contents of historically significant monuments, museum visualisation of monuments, and infrastructure development.
3. Implementation of initiatives (programs) aimed at comprehensive restoration of the mentioned monuments, in partnership with different departments and stakeholders, especially in the framework of creating infrastructures (such as maintaining access routes, installing utility lines, lighting, etc.).
4. Periodic publication of scholarly research and articles concerning fortification construction in internationally esteemed journals, aimed at spreading awareness and promoting the field.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Establishment and enhancement of tourism infrastructure for the preservation and utilisation of castles, fortresses, and their historical environments.
2. Modernisation of preservation and administration of castles and fortresses by delineating economic development priorities and adopting a holistic approach that addresses the natural, historical, and cultural heritage aspects, as well as the challenges of tourism infrastructure development.
3. Strengthening Armenia's global presence, ensuring the availability of information regarding its historical and architectural legacy, including castles and fortresses, restoring archaeological discoveries from these locations, and mandating their exhibition in museums.
4. Facilitating access to information regarding castles and fortresses under state protection, enhancement of public awareness and legal consciousness.
5. Augmenting the quantity of restored and adequately maintained monuments.

2. Museums

119. The Republic of Armenia currently hosts over 133 museums (with a continually growing number), among which 65 are under state administration. Of these, 54, including reserve museums and branch museums, fall under the purview of the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, while 3 are managed by other ministries and 8 by regional governorates.

120. Twenty-five museums are under community jurisdiction, with four under Yerevan Municipality. Twenty-two museums are owned by public organisations and private individuals, while six are under the Armenian Apostolic Church. Additionally, fourteen museums operate under other state cultural and educational institutions.

121. The museum collection of the Republic of Armenia comprises over two million museum objects.

122. The state sector policy aims to preserve and continuously popularise museum collections. It also focuses on establishing museums as socio-educational institutions and providing non-formal education for all social layers and age groups of society, with a special emphasis on children and youth.

Priority 2: Enhancement of Museum Management Efficiency, Modernisation of Museum Premises, and Maximum Popularisation of National Fund.

Objectives include:

1. Enhancing the efficiency of museum administration.
2. Improving the structural integrity of museums, ensuring compliance with international standards, enlarging exhibition spaces, upgrading facilities for storing collections, implementing technical advancements and modernisation initiatives, and establishing new thematic museums.
3. Advancing the scientific and educational endeavours of museums.
4. Popularisation of Armenian cultural heritage.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Establishment of a legislative framework governing the museum sector, and enhancement through the introduction of legislative mechanisms and tools.
2. Adoption of a new model for museum management.
3. Upgrading exhibition and storage facilities, integrating modern information technologies, and renovating the material and technical infrastructure (logistic base).
4. Enhancing the scientific and educational component of museums, including:
 - Exhibitions dedicated to Armenian historical and cultural heritage.
 - Organizing educational programs and international conferences.
 - Implementing publications and media projects to promote and encourage intercultural exchanges and dialogue.

5. Formulation of novel museum concepts.
6. Deployment of a unified electronic ticketing system across museums.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Presence of pertinent legislation governing museum operations and the regulation of legal field, including the oversight of museum activities.
2. **Establishment of an institutional entity dedicated to museum development and management**, aimed primarily at enhancing the efficacy of museum administration. Under the proposed model, the creation of a Cultural Development Foundation is advocated, tasked with overseeing museum operations and promotion, especially in organisational, economic, personnel, financial, and promotional domains. Additionally, a significant portion of services is slated for outsourcing through competitive tendering to private enterprises.

The novel management framework will facilitate unified administrative and financial oversight of museums through a centralised entity, enabling the implementation of adaptable financial and personnel recruitment policies. Concurrently, it will enhance the effective execution of research initiatives by museum directors and professional staff, and foster the advancement of museums' scientific and educational endeavours. The gradual delegation of non-content-related responsibilities to the Foundation by museums is intended to elevate their prominence and attract supplementary funding, which will be allocated towards augmenting their resources, curating contemporary exhibitions, and fostering collaborations with prominent international museums and temporary exhibitions within Armenia.

Successful execution of the Foundation's agenda may prompt its application to performing arts organisations as well.

3. Enhanced infrastructure, updated permanent exhibitions, establishment of specialised laboratories and coordination centres to conduct thorough and high-quality research, examination, expertise, restoration, and maintenance of cultural heritage.
4. New thematic exhibitions featuring distinctive architectural designs. Over the past five years, 3 new museums have been inaugurated in the country: one operating as a branch (the branch of the National Gallery of Armenia Zakar Khachatryan and Artashes Hovsepyan House Museum), and two functioning as separate museums under municipal authority (the House-Museums of Hamo Sahyan and Sero Khanzadyan). It is anticipated that within the next five years, two additional museums will be established: one as a branch of the National Gallery of Armenia, and the other as an independent institution (Carpet Museum-Institute).

The creation of a Carpet Museum-Institute has surfaced as a vital strategic necessity subsequent to the war instigated by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh. Anchored in scholarly research and analysis, this institution will combat the appropriation of Armenian carpet culture while ensuring the rightful recognition of Armenian carpet weaving within the global carpet art landscape. Functioning as both a museum and an institute, it will facilitate the education of a new cadre of carpet specialists who will play a pivotal role in the international promotion of Armenian carpet culture.

5. The establishment of museums as non-formal educational venues. Over the years, museums have notably broadened their educational endeavours by providing diverse programs tailored to various age and social groups. In 2022 alone, museums accommodated over 245,000 pupils (approximately 60% of pupil population of public schools of the Republic of Armenia). Among them, 210,000 participated through the "Subscription System," while 33,000 engaged through other programs.
6. In the 2021-2026 Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia a distinct provision has been designated for the expansion of modern information technology applications, digitisation of heritage, establishment of information databases, and the ongoing development of integrated automation systems. Within this framework, particular emphasis is placed on the creation and implementation of a unified electronic ticketing system among the museums under the Ministry. This system is intended to streamline the organisation of museum visits to exhibitions, implement an updated ticketing management toolkit for financial transactions, ensure transparency, and modernize museum exhibits while encouraging the use of modern technologies.

3. Intangible cultural heritage

123. The state policy of the sector is aimed at the preservation, transmission and popularisation of intangible cultural heritage, public awareness, their involvement in heritage preservation processes, increasing recognition of heritage, valuation of its place and role in the context of achieving the country's sustainable development goals.

As a consequence of the war initiated by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh on September 19, 2023, the Republic of Armenia has witnessed the displacement of 106,625 individuals who have resettled across various regions and numerous settlements within the country. This displacement has disrupted the continuity of their cultural heritage, including its preservation, reproduction, and transmission in their native territories. Prioritizing the inventory of material cultural heritage values among the forcibly displaced persons is crucial. This organised effort will facilitate the mapping of

the "territories" and forms of their cultural endeavours, ensuring the essential principles of cultural continuity, such as participation, realisation, and transmission of heritage.

Priority 3: Preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage, enhancement of public awareness, valuation of its place and role in the context of realising the country's sustainable development goals, promotion of public engagement, awareness, and popularisation.

124. The strategy outlines the implementation of educational and cultural initiatives directed at preservation and transmission of local intangible cultural heritage in the RA communities, establishment of an "Intangible Cultural Heritage Repository," international networking, and institutional collaboration for the promotion of Armenian intangible cultural heritage.

Objectives include:

1. Preservation of intangible cultural heritage, raising awareness, fostering appreciation, and ensuring the involvement of communities, groups, and individuals.
2. Ensuring the applicability and popularisation of viable forms of intangible cultural heritage as contemporary, advanced, and relevant cultural phenomena.
3. Expanding the vitality, transmission, and utilisation of traditional crafts.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Establishment of an "Intangible Cultural Heritage Repository."
2. Implementation of inclusive educational and cultural programs aimed at preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage within the communities of the Republic of Armenia, utilisation of modern information technologies and diverse programs to raise public awareness.
3. International cooperation and global promotion of Armenian intangible cultural heritage.
4. Preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of forcibly displaced individuals from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Increased engagement of RA communities, groups, individuals, public, and cultural organisations, acting as custodians of heritage, in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, utilizing the potential of diverse social, ethnic, and age demographics.

Approximately 15 programs are annually directed towards the preservation, transmission, and popularisation of Armenia's national culture. These programs have a broad geographical reach, spanning over 40 communities across 10 regions of RA, with approximately 2000 beneficiaries. The programs exhibit inclusivity by catering to diverse demographics, such as

children and teenagers facing challenges, Artsakh Armenians, Syrian Armenians, individuals from different age groups including the elderly and youth, and the active participation of women in heritage preservation endeavours. There are plans to expand the reach to involve additional communities and beneficiaries.

2. Enhancing the efficiency of the inventory process for the intangible cultural heritage elements of the Republic of Armenia, fostering the sustainability of traditional crafts, revitalising engagement and creativity among communities, group and individuals. Currently, 72 Armenian intangible cultural heritage assets are registered across three state registries of the Republic of Armenia. The registration process remains ongoing, driven by the creative contributions of Armenian communities and the recommendations from various groups and individuals.
3. Enhancing the international recognition of Armenian intangible cultural heritage to bolster Armenia's visibility in support of sustainable development and economic advancement. The international popularisation of the field is executed through participation in diverse international events and the submission of applications to UNESCO. Presently, there are 7 applications and 1 financial support program registered. There are intentions to expand the number of registered applications to 9.

4. Libraries

125. The Republic of Armenia boasts 530 libraries, among which 12 are under the purview of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, while 510 are under municipal jurisdiction (Source: Latest data from the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia).

126. The sector's aim is to protect library collections, utilize modern information technologies to digitize cultural heritage, consistently improve information databases and integrated automated systems, ensure the ongoing replenishment and accessibility of library collections, compile and distribute bibliographies, bio-bibliographies, statistical data, and other informational resources, enhance service quality, promote fair distribution and development of libraries, and develop a concept for organizing community cultural activities centred around libraries.

Priority 4: Preservation of written heritage, continued digitisation efforts, improved accessibility and affordability of digital repositories, and equitable development of the library sector.

127. The strategy aims to preserve and promote written heritage, encourage reading, and ensure the population's constitutional right to access information. It encompasses the establishment of

community library units in the regions and the provision of library services throughout the entire territory of the Republic of Armenia, within the framework of equitable cultural development.

128. It is essential to improve the building conditions of community libraries or construct new facilities that meet specific requirements, whether they are small structures or part of larger buildings. These should be new, standardised, specialised library buildings equipped with the necessary material and technical resources to foster the cultural and economic development of communities. Over the next five years, the development of concepts for advancing community libraries is planned, acknowledging that libraries are crucial for societal development and self-education. Libraries must become essential platforms for ongoing education and dialogue within communities, providing access to information as knowledge. They will be considered vital for ensuring active societal participation in cultural life and as important venues for familiarizing the public with the main guidelines of Armenian and global cultural policies.

129. Ensuring the fulfilment of readers' library-bibliographic needs, supporting informational, cultural, educational, and scientific endeavours within the Republic, fostering the formation and enhancement of intellectual capabilities, enhancing service quality, and improving accessibility are critical factors that will guide the future advancement of library operations.

Objectives include:

1. Ensuring the enduring preservation of written heritage.
2. Encouraging reading habits.
3. Equitable distribution and advancement of libraries.
4. Development of a concept for organising community cultural activities centred around libraries.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Development and implementation of e-service programs and mechanisms in the libraries under the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports.
2. Improving the accessibility of manuscript, book, and archival collections by refining search systems with the help of artificial intelligence tools.
3. Conducting inventory of book collections within community libraries and ensuring record-keeping.

4. Provision of necessary material and technical (logistic) base in libraries, including the acquisition of digitisation equipment and technical upgrades.

5. Establishment of community library units in the regions with the aim of equitable cultural development.

6. Development of a new conceptual document outlining the principal prerequisites for contemporary public library structures.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Availability and accessibility of electronic library databases.

2. Enhancement of library infrastructure and service modalities through modernisation efforts, and implementation of e-services and unified reader's ticket systems throughout the Republic of Armenia.

3. Equitable advancement of community and state libraries.

4. Establishment of community library units with the aim of equitable cultural development.

5. Ensuring comprehensive library service coverage across the entire Republic of Armenia.

6. Completing the digitisation of the literature database, digitizing written heritage, and integrating these resources into comprehensive databases.

5. Publishing

130. Programs carried out within the publishing sector are designed to promote equitable development across various cycles of the literary landscape (writers, critics, literary agents, publishers, booksellers, readers). These programs seek to preserve, promote, disseminate, and popularize literary and cultural heritage through publishing. They also strive to nurture and expand creative potential within society, while facilitating international collaboration in the publishing field. Additionally, these programs contribute to enriching major libraries worldwide with literature that represents Armenian culture in foreign languages.

Priority 5: Popularisation of Armenian Literature and Enhancement of Reading

131. According to state policy, literature, literary projects, and enduring, socially impactful works, along with freelance cultural practitioners, should be integrated into the literary landscape, regardless of being overlooked by consumer and publishing preferences.

Objectives include:

1. Popularisation of classical and contemporary Armenian literature both domestically and internationally.
2. Encouraging reading habits.
3. Fostering creative skills.
4. Ensuring the population's constitutional right to access information.
5. Strengthening the chain involving writers, critics, the press, literary agents, publishers, booksellers, and readers.
6. Facilitating international collaboration in the publishing sector.
7. Enriching major libraries worldwide with Armenian cultural literature in foreign languages.
8. Providing education in the field of book publishing.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Training programs for fiction translators.
2. Executing educational programs focused on establishing the institute of literary agents.
3. Armenia's proactive involvement in international book exhibitions.
4. Supporting foreign publishers to publish Armenian literature through translations.
5. Granting honoraria to foster the development of critical thinking in literary and cultural press.
6. Supporting platforms for the publication aimed at nurturing creativity.
7. Implementing international seminars, master classes, lectures, and exchange programs.
8. Implementing governmental programs at the republic level to encourage reading.
9. Providing support in the translation of significant literary works predating the late 19th century, which have yet to be translated into Armenian from their original language.
10. Granting funds to support literature and literary studies.
11. Developing initiatives to promote the publication of books in Braille and other accessible formats, catering to the needs of individuals with limited vision.
12. Publishing foreign-language literature that represents Armenian culture to enrich the collections of the world's leading libraries.
13. Providing support for periodicals published in the languages of national minorities in Armenia.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Publication and popularisation of Armenian classical and contemporary literature in foreign languages worldwide (as of 2022, the "Armenian Literature in Translations"

initiative has facilitated the publication of 50 books abroad. By 2027, the target is to increase this number to 125 books.).

2. Establishment of the institute of literary agents in Armenia and the development of pluralistic chairs for writers (continuation and expansion of the 2023-2027 Yerevan Book Fest with the participation of 20,000 readers, 200 writers, 50 publishing houses, and 300 other specialists in 2027).
3. Expansion of book publication in Armenia, enhancement of reading in libraries, and book sales through bookstores (as of 2021, approximately 2,400 titles are published annually in Armenia, with an estimated rise to around 2,800 titles per year by 2027).
4. Advancement of international collaboration in publishing (Armenia's participation in 10 book exhibitions with a dedicated pavilion at international expos from 2022 to 2027).
5. Increase in media literacy.
6. Involvement of literature, literary projects, along with freelance cultural practitioners into the literary landscape, creation of significant, enduring, and public works (approximately 150 writers, cultural researchers, and translators will receive support during 2022-2027).
7. Ensuring access to written heritage for the visually impaired (2022-2027: publication of 461,640 books and magazines in Braille, recording of 900 hours of audiobooks).
8. Safeguarding minority languages, cultures, religions, and traditions, and creating conditions for their proliferation (2022-2027: support for 50 projects involving periodicals published in minority languages in Armenia)
9. Facilitating the interpenetration of cultural content and enhancing the quality of literary texts (100 projects in literary and cultural printed and electronic periodicals will received support between 2022-2027).
10. Ensuring the presence of foreign-language literature representing Armenian culture in the collections of the world's most significant libraries. From 2022 to 2027, this initiative aims to provide 500 university, public, and cultural institution libraries abroad with 35 books on Armenian history and cultural heritage, totalling 17,500 copies.

2. CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTOR

132. The cultural and creative sector, encompassing contemporary art forms such as music, dance, theatre, cinema, fine arts, and artistic education, is the focus of state policy aimed at promoting and developing these areas. Ongoing reforms (including the modernisation of material and technical resources (logistics) and the organisation of international festivals and other large-scale programs), have elevated Armenia's regional standing. Additionally, these changes have enhanced the

recognition of the place and role of the culture in the country's sustainable development, leading to greater integration.

133. In 2022, state budget allocations to the sector amounted to 16.5 billion drams, representing a 2.5-fold increase compared to 2019. Of these funds, 80% were capital expenditures. In 2023, the funding allocated under the "Arts" program also increased by **2.5** times, from 606,489.39 thousand AMD to **1.6** billion AMD. By 2025, state budget allocations for this program are projected to reach at least **2.5** billion AMD.

134. Particular emphasis was placed on the involvement of self-employed artists in state programs. To ensure their engagement, in 2022, the "Procedure for Allocating Subsidies from the RA Budget to Individual Performers, Creators, Art and Culture Figures for Participation in International Events and Projects" was validated by order of the RA Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports.

135. Transparency of state programs and funding is ensured through competitive grants, which amounted to **400** million drams in both 2021 and 2022. The number of beneficiaries from this grant program increased from **47** organisations in 2019 to **65** in 2022. Given the rising interest and activity of organisations, funding is planned to be **doubled** by 2025, with an expected **threefold** increase in program participants.

Music Field

136. In recent years, favourable conditions have been established for the development of all music genres (symphonic, chamber, folk, choral art) and for supporting the regular operations of artistic groups, leading to notable successes.

137. The development of music in Armenia has been significantly enhanced by over a dozen international music festivals and competitions. These events, along with joint concerts featuring renowned musicians from abroad and the participation of Armenian ensembles and independent artists in international competitions and festivals, have greatly contributed to the field.

Field of Theatre Arts

138. Productions of plays by Armenian and international classic and contemporary dramatists, as well as by young directors, have been supported through professional development and the implementation of new creative programs. The **15** state theatres operating in the Republic, including 2 under regional jurisdiction, present approximately **1,400** performances annually, with **40** of these being new productions. The Al. Spendiaryan National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre and the G. Sundukyan National Academic Theatre play pivotal roles in this field.

139. State support for theatre projects is provided with consideration for the balanced creative development of the sector and inclusivity (encompassing youth, jubilee, Armenian classic and modern drama, and regional theatres).

140. Priority is given to preserving both traditional and national values, as well as applying innovative and experimental formats. To achieve this, the creation of new platforms and the acquisition of new professional skills are essential⁶.

141. The development and internationalisation of the theatre arts are being advanced through international festivals, master classes, and collaborative theatre projects. In order to ensure international cooperation, performing arts organisations require modernisation of logistical infrastructure. Emphasis is placed on both traditional festivals and the implementation of new projects.

Field of Cinematography

142. The support for film production, the presentation of domestic film products both in Armenia and internationally, and the preservation, restoration, and promotion of Armenian film heritage are facilitated by a State Non-Commercial Organisation (SNCO) under the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports ("National Cinema Centre of Armenia"), as well as by non-governmental organisations providing cultural services.

143. The initiatives in the field of cinematography focus on supporting the production of feature, animation, and documentary films. They aim to preserve the film-photo-phono collection, popularize film art, ensure its dissemination and accessibility, maintain Armenian film traditions, and expand international cooperation. Effective implementation of these processes will enhance film production, increase the reach of Armenian films, and improve the level of film communication within society.

144. In 2021-2022, **22** feature films, **8** documentaries, and **10** animated movies were produced. 22 films and film projects of Armenian production participated in **63** international film festivals and film markets, with **12** films winning various awards. Notably, the film "Dawn of Aurora" was recognised as the Best Animated Film at the 2023 Asia Pacific Screen Awards. Additionally, support was provided for 7 film festivals organised in Armenia, including the "Golden Apricot" film festival. Over the past 19 years, the festival has expanded its geographical reach, increasing the

⁶ Creation of regional branches of "Tumo" creative technologies and "Loft" self-development and entertainment centres, Artbox incubator, Open Art Platform, Filforum and others.

number of participating countries, visitors, and films presented⁷. Maintaining a high reputation is a priority, aiming to develop the festival into one that promotes the regional film industry's growth and encourages joint film production.

145. Membership in two prestigious film production organisations, "EURIMAGES" and the "European Audiovisual Observatory," has significantly contributed to the production of joint and co-financed films and their presentation at numerous prestigious film markets.

146. However, the sector requires reforms, starting with the regulation of the legislative framework governing the film industry. Key measures include creating a favourable environment for film production, internationalising Armenian film products, expanding film sales, and training professional cadre. Additionally, the preservation of Armenian film heritage is urgent, necessitating the digitisation and popularisation of films.

Dance Field

147. State policy is focused on optimizing and ensuring the equitable/balanced development of organisations within the dance sector. This approach aims to concentrate financial and professional resources, enhance professional capabilities, and improve marketing and management skills within sector organisations.

148. The three state ensembles operating in this field (State Dance Ensemble of Armenia, "Berekamutyun" State Dance Ensemble of Armenia, and T. Altunyan State Song and Dance Ensemble) perform around 5 new dance performances annually. Strengthening professional capacities and presenting Armenian dance internationally through participation in international festivals is crucial.

149. Special emphasis is placed on the establishment of modern dance and ensuring the generational continuity of the Armenian ballet school.

150. However, there are issues that need to be addressed, such as the uncertainty of repertoires, development of folk costumes, elaboration of artistic standards, formation of artistic taste, improvement of the material and technical base (logistic base) of cultural institutions and provision of high-value artistic outcomes (audio equipment, musical instruments, stage costumes, furnishing halls and stages, heating, and security systems). Reforms are being implemented to concentrate personnel and financial resources.

⁷ At the 2022 festival, 100 films were presented, attracting 130 renowned international directors, screenwriters, critics, and actors. Participating countries included Egypt, Greece, Georgia, Russia, Iran, the USA, Italy, France, China, Belgium, Austria, and others.

151. The first step of the reforms was the RA government's Decision No. 1429-N on September 16, 2022, to merge the three state dance ensembles into a single organisation—the National Centre for Folk Music and Dance. The next step involves integrating the three collectives of the National Philharmonic of Armenia into a newly created structure.

Field of Fine Arts

152. The development of modern Armenian fine art and the popularisation of Armenian artists' works are key priorities. During the recent years this principle is applied not only in prestigious international expos and biennales (especially the Venice Biennale) but also through the presentation of Armenian contemporary art in plein airs, the creation of cultural products, and the establishment of a competitive service provision field. Additionally, the sector encourages experimental and innovative approaches, valuing individual creators.

153. One of the sector's priorities is to establish and manage policies on institutional relationships, particularly through coordinated efforts with the Union of Artists of Armenia.

Field of Art Education

154. The systematic enhancement of aesthetic and art education continues, involving the implementation of targeted cultural-educational programs, elevating the role of cultural education, and ensuring the comprehensive transfer of experience from older generations. Accordingly, the state has provided educational and practical support through budgetary funding to **10,250** students and **4,100** teachers in music, art, fine arts, and dance schools across the republic. This includes the publication of **22** educational-methodical manuals, the acquisition of **156** musical instruments across **24** categories, and the participation of **15** gifted young musicians in approximately **60** national and international projects.

155. ***Six main priorities*** have been established to achieve the strategic objective of *the cultural and creative sector*: **having innovative, presentable, and competitive modern art.**

Priority 1: Implementation of Modern Cultural Management Systems and a New Funding Model

156. This strategic priority focuses on introducing contemporary management systems in **21** public non-profit performing arts organisations. This involves optimizing state non-commercial organisations, concentrating financial and professional resources, elaborating programmes on enhancing professional competences and legal frameworks. Additionally, it includes establishing qualitative and quantitative efficiency criteria for organisational activities, creating and

implementing new funding mechanisms based on performance outcomes, and strengthening evidence-based management systems.

Objectives include:

1. Introduction of modern management system models and establishment of new qualitative and quantitative standards for organisational effectiveness, with annual revision of 20 SNCO's development programs.
2. Creation of new mechanisms for targeted management of state funds.
3. Implementation of a model for mutually beneficial private-public cooperation.
4. Development of a new funding model for performing arts organisations.
5. Establishment of the institute of cultural donations.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Marketing and segmentation of industry organisations, increasing efficiency of producers and directors⁸.
2. Ensuring the targeting and positioning process of performing arts organisations, organizing 4 courses for 20 SNCOs employees, and developing 12 SNCO strategy programs.
3. Implementation of "Management Capacity Development" courses for improving human resources and capacities of sector organisations, developing professional capacities of 30 SNCO employees annually⁹.
4. Implementation of "Cultural Fundraising" courses to develop fundraising capacities and mechanisms in cultural institutions, along with the development of a practical guide to fundraising.
5. Possibilities for gaining experience for students studying "Art Management" in state institutions: 8 courses each year for 51 beneficiaries, including 30-35 students.
6. Introduction of a new financing model for performing arts organisations by 2027, with the pilot version implemented in 2023 at the Al. Spendiaryan National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Targeted management of state funds.
2. Development of strategic thinking skills.
3. Enhancement of practical skills for producers and directors.

⁸ The training courses were conducted in the following areas: tactical management, institutional marketing, and program marketing.

⁹ The duration of the courses is 3 weeks and includes SWOT analysis, strategic planning, step by step development guide.

4. Establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation between private and public sectors.
5. Implementation of a new financing model.
6. Formation of public rating for cultural donations.

Priority 2: Modernisation of the Logistical Base in Performing Arts Organisations

157. Focus on enhancing theatre organisations by providing artistic furniture and stage costumes, improving the property and material-technical base (logistic base) of cultural institutions, and ensuring the delivery of high-quality artistic products. From 2019 to 2022, state budget allocations enabled extensive renovations of theatre and concert buildings¹⁰. Capital funds allocated in 2022 facilitated the thorough equipping of several theatre and concert organisations with lighting equipment, musical instruments, stage equipment, and more¹¹.

Objectives include:

1. Thoroughly renovated theatre and concert buildings: **50%** of organisations operating in the field.
2. Modernised cultural infrastructures: **80%** of cultural institutions re-equipped technically.
3. Provision of quality cultural services.
4. Full adaptation and accessibility of theatre and concert facilities for persons with disabilities.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Major repair and co-construction of theatre and concert organisation buildings, improvement of adjacent and surrounding areas, construction of ramps, targeting at least 2 theatre and concert organisations annually.
2. Acquisition of professional equipment for theatre and concert organisations (lighting equipment, musical instruments, stage costumes, etc.), targeting at least 3 institutions annually.
3. Installation of heating and cooling systems in cultural institutions.

Expected outcomes include:

¹⁰ As a result of these efforts, several cultural institutions have undergone significant improvements, including the roof and boiler house of the Al. Spendiaryan National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, partial renovation of the G. Sundukyan Theatre, Armenian State Song Theatre renovations and ongoing construction at the Sos Sargsyan National Theatre and the Yerevan State Pantomime Theatre, among others.

¹¹ Audio equipment, stage costumes, and musical instruments will be provided to the K. Stanislavski State Russian Theatre, the Sos Sargsyan National Theatre, the Pantomime Theatre, the Al. Spendiaryan National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, as well as the state theatres in Artashat, Gyumri, Vanadzor, and Goris. Additionally, the Paronyan Theatre of Musical Comedy, the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Armenia, the Armenian State Jazz Band, the State Philharmonic Orchestra of Armenia, the State Symphony Orchestra of Armenia, and the Hovhannes Tumanyan Yerevan State Puppet Theatre will also receive these upgrades.

1. Modernisation of **50%** of cultural infrastructures.
2. Improvement of cultural service quality: **80%**.
3. Ensuring **80%** accessibility of cultural institutions for persons with disabilities.

Priority 3: Promoting the Activities of Self-employed/Independent Creators

158. This priority focuses on creating a favourable environment for creative and talented individuals. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, Sports of the Republic of Armenia aims to achieve this priority by implementing various field-specific targeted programs (such as the **Arts Program, Cinematography Program**) and supporting the creative projects (music and dance concerts, theatre performances, touring activities, art biennials, exhibitions, and more) of independent artists and cultural organisations operating in the field¹².

The aim of this strategy is to institutionalize self-employed/independent artists.

Objectives include:

1. Developing cooperation mechanisms between the state structure and self-employed creators/artists.
2. Establishing a favourable creative environment for talented individuals and competitive artistic output.
3. Ensuring transparency in the distribution of state funds.
4. Improving the open-competitive system for the allocation of grants.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Implementing necessary legislative regulations in the field, including copyright protection (concepts, standards, etc.), by integrating international experience.
2. Executing targeted programs: **500** concerts per year, **15** jubilee events, **8** festivals, **30** new performances, **2** feature films, **2** animated films, **2** documentary films, and **4** jubilee events where freelance creators are involved.

¹² Freelance artists are actively engaged in educational and cultural projects of the State Philharmonic of Armenia and the Hovhannes Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre in Yerevan. Additionally, there has been a significant increase in the number of self-employed artists participating in creative projects abroad.

3. *Supporting creative projects in various cultural fields* through grants for culturally oriented organisations and self-employed/independent creators, benefiting up to **80** artists and **40** programs annually.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Establishing a favourable environment for creative self-expression and ensuring a competitive field.
2. Stimulating innovative ideas.
3. Expanding cooperation between creative unions and public organisations. Establishing conditions for the formation of professional umbrella associations that will unite Armenian artists and creative unions¹³.
4. Defining the legal and socio-economic status and relationships of self-employed/independent creators, enabling them to fully express their creative talents.
5. Identifying and promoting emerging talents in the cultural sector.
6. Integrating young creators into international cultural processes.
7. Ensuring the proportionality of cultural policy.

Priority 4: *Enhancement of Aesthetic Education and the Art Education System*

159. Integrating education and culture is a key priority within the state cultural policy. The quality and demand of the cultural and creative sector are directly contingent upon the education level and the extent of knowledge within the receiving environment (audience, listeners).

This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of art education and ensuring the accessibility of aesthetic education, training, and professional development in the cultural sector. It also aims to ensure the continuity of specialist education, initiate attestation processes, improve the quality of cultural-educational services, and implement targeted programs enshrined in values and culture to shape the future citizens of the Republic of Armenia. This involves implementing targeted cultural-educational programs, increasing the role of cultural education for all social strata and age groups, especially children and adolescents, facilitating the transfer of experience from the older generation by means of creating favourable conditions, and providing non-formal education.

Objectives include:

¹³ The recommendation is informed by the findings from the research on the needs of Armenia's creative sector, conducted by the AGBU "Catapult" creative acceleration program, which was funded by the EU. The establishment of the relevant union is planned to be implemented through the collaboration between the AGBU "Catapult" project and the Swedish "ArtNexus" project.

1. Expanding the system of art and aesthetic education.
2. Ensuring the continuity of professional education in the cultural sector by integrating it with general education programs and establishing a specialised school in each region.
3. Introducing new teaching methods.
4. Implementing an attestation model for pedagogical staff.
5. Increasing the quality of education by **40%** and accessibility by **70%**.
6. Promoting inclusiveness.
7. Creating a database of gifted children.
8. Completing the collection of musical instruments.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Implementing programs that promote the connection between education and culture.
2. Compiling and expanding the lists of gifted children.
3. Continuously identifying and developing the abilities of gifted children.
4. Preparing and training personnel in the cultural sector.
5. Implementing aesthetic education programs.
6. Reimbursing musical instrument training fees for national, brass, and string instruments in music and art schools.
7. Acquiring national, brass, and string instruments.
8. Implementing educational and cultural programs¹⁴.
9. Organizing inclusive festivals.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Identification and development of the spiritual and aesthetic abilities of children with developmental issues and disabilities.
2. Accessibility and continuity of high-quality artistic and aesthetic education.
3. Continuity of professional education in the cultural sector by integrating it with general education programs and establishing one specialised school in each region.

¹⁴ “Classics +Classroom”, “Film as a Teacher”, “Meknark”, “Zardagir”, “Your peer”, “DasArvest”, etc.

4. Improved living standards for pedagogical staff in the sector.

5. A 30% increase in the number of children receiving training in national, brass, and string instruments.

6. Provision of musical instruments to 50% of students in music and art schools.

7. Development of well-rounded and knowledgeable citizens.

160. In 2022, **26** targeted programs were implemented, including:

1. “Meknark” Targeted Talent Development Programme

This program includes 15 talented young musicians aged 11-20 who are given the opportunity to enhance their skills in the field of performing arts. Program participants received master classes from approximately 32 experts worldwide. In 2022, members of the program participated in 18 international music competitions, winning 1st and 2nd prizes.

2. “Classics +Classroom” Creative Educational Program

This program is designed for learners in high schools and VET institutions across the republic and aims to strengthen the school-theatre connections. In 2022, the number of program beneficiaries increased by 11% compared to 2021.

3. "Your Art at School" program

This program aims to guide children's professional orientation, foster their spiritual development, introduce them to various forms of art, and increase public recognition of Armenian artists. In 2022, the program facilitated 50 events: 21 in Yerevan and 29 in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia, engaging 50 artists, 4,887 learners, and 525 schools.

4. "My Symphony" Youth Educational and Cultural Program

Launched in 2022, this program aims to create cultural demand among the youth. The project involved 2,180 students from 8 universities across Armenia.

5. "Sister-Schools" Project

This cultural education project aims to foster continuous development through collaboration between music and art schools in Yerevan and the regions of Armenia. It focuses on joint creativity, the acquisition of practical skills, and the exchange of experiences by establishing platforms for collaborative activities, ensuring harmonious and proportional development across the sector. In 2022, the program facilitated 24 events: 12 in Yerevan and 12 in the marzes, involving 420 learners and 80 teachers from 60 schools.

6. "Talking Canvases" Project

As part of the inclusive project, tactile copies of five masterpieces from the collection of the National Gallery of Armenia were created. In 2023, the program was implemented in collaboration with the M. Saryan House-Museum. Within the framework of the project, six masterpieces by Saryan were reproduced as tangible copies: "Armenia" (1964), "Aragats" (1925), "Dogs of Constantinople" (1910), "The 7th Century Karmravor Church, Ashtarak" (1956), "To the Spring" (1928), and "Yerevan Yard in Spring" (1928).

7. "Film School Without Borders" Educational Program

This program, located in the "City of Rehabilitation for Heroes" named after RA National Hero Vahagn Asatryan, is Armenia's first free film school.

8. "Side by Side" Inclusive Music and Art International Festival

In 2022, this festival brought together around 200 participants, including teenagers, adolescents with disabilities, and renowned musicians.

Priority 5: Popularisation of Armenian Culture, Ensuring Broad Public Participation in Cultural Life

161. This priority involves the implementation of international and national festivals, competitions, creative projects, and exhibitions to develop and promote Armenian culture and contemporary arts. It aims to satisfy the spiritual needs of the population.

162. The programs will focus on development and popularisation of contemporary arts (theatre, music, visual arts, dance) based on national and international artistic transformations. They will strive to maintain high standards of creativity and artistry, ensuring that cultural products and services meet the demands of various segments of society.

163. Efforts will be directed towards organizing international festivals in the regions of Armenia aimed at popularising national holidays, traditions, folk music as well as musical instrument and dance included in UNESCO's lists of intangible heritage. These activities will engage the creative potential of communities, including national minorities and people with inclusion challenges, ensuring broad participation across different regions of Armenia.

Objectives include:

1. Establishment of Armenian culture as internationally recognizable and competitive.

2. Positioning Armenia as an active participant in contemporary artistic processes, preserving and disseminating universal civilisational values, thereby enhancing the country's global standing.
3. Embracing and integrating international artistic transformations.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Joint implementation of projects that promote intercultural relations.
2. Facilitation of the participation of Armenian ensembles, creative groups, and individual artists in international festivals abroad.
3. Support for the touring activities of performing arts organisations to popularize Armenian culture, aiming for **50** tours within Armenia and **30** tours internationally each year.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Popularisation of Armenian contemporary art at national and international levels.
2. Inclusion and recognition in the international art market.
3. Provision of cultural products and services that meet the diverse demands of various public segments.
4. Establishment of sector-specific awards.

Priority 6: Proportionate Development of Culture in Communities

164. The primary goal of this priority is the decentralisation of cultural life. This involves enhancing the capacity for cultural activities in the regions, invigorating cultural life and culture-creating activities, organizing community culture and cultural entertainment (including the renovation and modernisation of cultural institutions), developing interregional ties (between the marzes), improving the quality of cultural services, holding regional festivals such as the Songwriter's Song Festivals in Sevan and Jermuk, the Zark Fest in Dashtadem, and a film festival in Ujan.

Objectives include:

1. Decentralisation of cultural policy.
2. Revitalisation of cultural life in regions/marzes.
3. Strengthening interregional connections between marzes.
4. Enhancing the quality of cultural services provided in regions/marzes.

5. Renovation of community-run cultural institutions.

Steps to be undertaken:

1. Organisation and implementation of targeted programs in regions/marzes.
2. Support for programs proposed by regional social and cultural organisations.
3. Involvement of community population in the implementation of cultural projects.
4. Implementation of educational programs between educational and cultural institutions in Yerevan and the marzes.
5. Establishment of high-profile festivals aligned with community specificities.

Expected outcomes include:

1. Ensuring the continuity of the culture decentralisation policy, fostering cultural output, creating new jobs, and forming a unified cultural field.
2. Promoting cultural tourism in the regions through outbound performing arts tours, festivals, and the inauguration of theatre and concert seasons.
3. Developing interregional (between the marzes) creative connections and nurturing creative thought in the regions.
4. Enhancing professional capacities in communities, and establishing creative and innovation centres and laboratories.
5. Fostering a positive moral and psychological atmosphere in communities.

6. STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION STEPS, LIMITS OF EXECUTIVES' LIABILITY

1. Development and approval of legislative and other legal acts.
2. Coordination of actions carried out in accordance with strategic directions at the national level.
3. Organisation of the development process for guidelines and other educational materials.
4. Organisation of training courses for specialists in various fields.
5. Development and dissemination of informational materials.
6. Implementation of research aimed at studying sector-specific issues.

7. Management and monitoring of operations implemented within the framework of this strategy.
8. Engagement in the regional-level (referring to marzes) implementation of this strategy to facilitate the execution of measures.

7. IMPLEMENTATION RISKS OF THE STRATEGY AND THE RESULTING ACTION PLAN

1. The effective implementation of the strategy and action plan may encounter the following risks:
 - a) Insufficient financial resources or lack of adequate funding to support the implementation of operations.
 - b) Risks related to the emergence of the necessity for additional or unplanned tasks.
 - c) Potential extensions of action deadlines due to the requirement to undertake additional work during the implementation of the strategy.
 - d) During the implementation of the strategy, clarifications and adjustments to deadlines may be necessary due to the specific nature of the tasks being performed.
 - e) Organisational challenges.
 - f) Insufficient cooperation among involved structures and circles, and the lack of effective mechanisms for information exchange and control.
2. To mitigate these risks:
 - a) Capacity assessments and awareness activities will be undertaken.
 - b) The authority responsible for each operation shall ensure the financial forecasts in the budget application submitted to the authority, within the medium-term expenditure framework or from other sources, based on the assessment of financial resources required for the implementation of operations.
 - c) In the event of unplanned tasks arising during the implementation of actions, additional measures should be taken to evaluate the scope of work and the required funding, if any.
 - d) Measures should be taken to facilitate data exchange on the implementation of actions between the relevant bodies and their structural divisions.
 - e) Provide support to responsible bodies within the scope of their powers for the implementation of actions.

8. Evaluation Plan

1. Theory of Change

165. The Theory of Change (ToC) is a methodology used for planning and evaluating the success of interventions (policies, strategies, programs, or projects), particularly those aimed at fostering or carrying out societal change. This methodology focuses on identifying the targeted change(s) or benefit(s) that need to be ultimately realised. It then works backwards to map out a series of causally related preconditions necessary for achieving these outcomes. This process involves the following steps:

1. **Impacts:** These are the ultimate changes or benefits that the intervention aims to achieve for society as a whole. They can be articulated or strengthened through a "vision" of the future point in time where the intended changes have been implemented (or have begun to take effect) and the associated benefits are being realised.

2. **Outcomes:** Specific changes or benefits for individuals, organisations, or stakeholder groups that are necessary to realize the desired impacts.

3. **Immediate Results:** Clearly defined intermediate results that need to be achieved through project activities to ensure the intended outcomes.

4. **Actions:** The specific steps required to achieve the intended outcomes through the investments made.

5. **Investments:** The necessary resources required to carry out the planned activities.

The following factors should also be noted and considered in the theory of change:

Contributing Factors: External environmental conditions that can facilitate the achievement of the project's intended benefits.

Risks: External environmental conditions that can negatively impact the achievement of the project's intended benefits.

166. The main purpose of this methodology is to logically outline how the intended inputs and actions lead to the realisation of benefits (outcomes and impact) for stakeholders. This can be represented in a diagram to clearly illustrate cause-and-effect relationships and their chronology. This framework is sometimes referred to as the "Outcome Path" or "Logic Model."

167. The **logic model** for implementing an intervention will initially be based at least partly on theoretical concepts and assumptions. As the intervention is implemented, monitored, and evaluated, progressively available data on actual outcomes and impacts, along with evidence (both

positive and negative, intended and unintended), can help confirm, refute, or modify the theory. A high-level logic model of the strategy is illustrated in Figure 1.

2. Monitoring

168. Appropriate control and management mechanisms will be established to oversee the implementation of the strategic plan through to its completion. Customised frameworks may also be developed for specific interventions, such as project boards, plans, and assessments, particularly when dealing with large-scale and complex undertakings (e.g., major infrastructure projects). Monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy can generally be divided into two main components:

1. **Implementation:** This involves evaluating the extent to which the Strategy has successfully delivered the intended *actions* and *results* within the specified deadlines, using the allocated resources, and adhering to quality standards.

2. **Impact:** This focuses on assessing the degree to which the Strategy has achieved the intended benefits (*outcomes* and *impact*) for key stakeholders and the broader public.

3. Timeframe for Benefits Realisation

169. If the underlying theory of the Strategy is sound, the anticipated results (*outcomes* and *impact*) should logically result from its effective implementation. However, since the theory relies on numerous assumptions and variables, including the presence of enabling factors and the successful mitigation of risks, it is crucial to implement measures for monitoring and evaluating its impact.

170. It will be necessary to develop a framework for the implementation of benefits according to the theory and to identify:

1. The intended **benefits** and their primary **beneficiaries**;
2. The anticipated timeframe for realizing these benefits. This does not imply specific dates, but rather refers to the relative transformation of benefits into outcomes as outlined below:
 - a) **Immediate outcomes** occur in conjunction with activities and results that are closest to the time of implementation, either simultaneously or shortly thereafter (e.g., increasing knowledge and skills as a direct result of training, or improving the quality and accessibility of cultural spaces as a direct result of capital investment).
 - b) **Intermediate outcomes** are anticipated to follow immediate outcomes, typically within a few months to a few years (e.g., enhanced organisational performance due to the dissemination of knowledge and skills, or improved audience experience resulting from the enhancement or planning of cultural spaces).

171. **Long-term results** or **impacts** represent the positive changes the strategy aims to achieve and are therefore realised last. These may include increased economic activity or improved public health and welfare at the regional or state level.

172. Recommended **indicators** for measuring the receipt of benefits (including insights, data, and evidence) could include metrics such as audience size to gauge increased engagement. In some cases, additional calculation data may be required.

173. The proposed methodology for receiving and assessing benefit indicators involves starting with relatively simple exercises, such as polling audiences or staff evaluations, to measure direct individual outcomes. This can then extend to more complex evaluations that assess cumulative long-term effects at the state or sectoral level.

174. The extensive social and economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic presents a considerable challenge in establishing reliable baseline data and setting targets.

Key considerations include:

1. Growth trajectories within cultural and creative sectors when those encounter sudden disruptions, rendering the aspiration to improve previous metrics unrealistic, especially in the short term. This is exacerbated by the profound impact of the epidemic and the Nagorno-Karabakh war initiated by Azerbaijan, along with the subsequent measures taken in response. As a consequence, these trajectories lack merit as a foundation for comparing the future performance.

2. Predicting future trends poses challenges both in terms of economic activities and cultural behaviourism. As a result, while it is preferable, it becomes increasingly complex to find dependable alternative measures to gauge the impact of strategic interventions and to utilize them in various scenarios (predicting potential future outcomes in the absence of a strategy) and when comparing them to non-historical data (actual past events).

175. Therefore, in the absence of reliable baseline data or projections, and amidst continuous changes in the strategic environment and prevailing uncertainties, it is crucial to adopt a long-term perspective on addressing issues and refrain from hastily setting quantitative targets or measuring impact.

176. **In the short-term perspective** (1 to 2 years), evaluations should focus on the effective achievements and immediate outcomes from individuals and organisations, rather than on sector-wide or state-level results. This focus will likely be directed towards resilience and recovery efforts.

177. **In the medium term** (2 to 5 years), as the strategic environment becomes clearer and the long-term effects of COVID-19 are better understood, it may be essential to undertake further mapping

and analytical work. This includes capturing significant baseline data and elaborating divergent projections and development targets. Adjustments to the strategy may also be necessary to ensure it remains aligned with its overarching objectives.

178. **In the long-term perspective** (5-15 years), periodic evaluations can be conducted to assess the economic and broader social impacts of the strategy against baseline and alternative scenarios. The objective is to re-establish a cycle of sustainable growth.

1. ABBREVIATIONS

AGBU	Armenian General Benevolent Union
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CCS	Cultural and Creative Sectors
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EU	European union
ICT	Information and Communication technologies
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MoESCS	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports
MPI	Main Performance Indicator
UNO	United Nations Organisation
RA	Republic of Armenia
SNPO	State non-profit organisation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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