

# KEY CHALLENGES TO BE SOLVED BY CULTURE AND ARTS POLICY

Baseline report

2024

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## About the RES-POL Project

This baseline report was developed within the framework of the [RES-POL project](#) (Rapid Expert Support for Culture and Media Policies in Ukraine), implemented by the Public Union **‘Centre for Regional Development’** of the [PPV Economic Development Agency](#) with the financial support of the **European Union**. The responsible partner for policies and strategies in the Culture and Arts sector is **‘Insha Osvita,’** with key experts Alona Karavai, Iryna Chuzhynova, and Olha Diatel.

The RES-POL project aims to strengthen the functional capacity of the [Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications](#) and its departments (the Ukrainian Book Institute, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education, and the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance).

The RES-POL project duration is from January 2024 to June 2025.

The RES-POL project focuses on four sectors (**Arts and Culture, Cultural Heritage, Creative Industries, and Media**) and over 20 sub-sectors (industries and artistic activities). RES-POL separately addresses **10 key issues** and challenges of cultural sector (competitive wages, efficiency of state-funded institutions in the field of culture, financing of creative industries, financing models of cultural services, communities and cultural heritage, EU integration and cultural policy, etc.).

The project **methodology** includes the following actions:

- To identify key policy issues and challenges in sectors and sub-sectors and describe them in policy briefs and baseline reports;
- To analyse 10 key issues and challenges of cultural development in the project focus and describe them in baseline reports;
- To develop and describe policy proposals for key issues and challenges in sectors and 10 key issues and challenges of cultural development in strategic briefs;
- To develop sectoral strategies and operational programmes for the sectors in the project focus and roadmaps for their implementation;

- To develop amendments to several legal acts and / or pilot project concepts to implement the policies created in the project;
- To analyse European experience in policy planning and implementation, evaluate some cultural policies in Ukraine, and assess the institutional capacity of the agencies under the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy.

The RES-POL project actively engages stakeholders at all stages of policy development. Information about the project's achievements is available on the [RES-POL Facebook](#) page.

This baseline report was prepared by the **'proto produkciia'** agency at the request of the **'Tsentr "Rehionalnyi Rozvytok"'** public association in cooperation with the **'Insha Osvita'** public organization.

## On the Baseline Report Methodology

**The purpose of this baseline report** is to outline the key policy issues and challenges within the Arts sector.

**Key policy issues and challenges** are the challenges and obstacles faced by stakeholders that hinder the sector's development. Addressing these challenges may require government intervention.

The **methodology** for preparing the baseline report includes:

- Developing key policy issues and challenges in the sub-sectors based on the analytical notes (available on the RES-POL materials page);
- Conducting a desk study of analytical materials on the state and dynamics of the sector;
- Conducting in-depth interviews with stakeholders (market participants, ecosystem and environmental representatives, relevant government agencies and organisations);
- Developing lists of key policy issues and challenges for the sector, in collaboration with the RES-POL expert team;
- Verifying with stakeholders and describing the key policy issues and challenges;
- Preparing recommendations for further policy development to address the identified key issues and challenges.

Work on this baseline report lasted from July to December 2024.

As part of the study, **five analytical notes** were created, which explore the available information on the Culture and Arts sector and existing policies, as well as a review of regulatory documents affecting the formation, development, and activities of the artistic community and cultural actors. The preparation of each analytical note included at least **10 in-depth interviews**. List of analytical notes:

1. Key Policy issues and challenges: Performing Arts. Written by: Olena Apchel and Iryna Chuzhynova.

2. Ukrainian Literary Sector: Key Problems and Challenges. Written by: Polina Horodyska and Alona Karavai.
3. Key Policy issues and challenges: Audio Arts. Written by: Kateryna Alymova and Olha Diatel.
4. Key Policy issues and challenges: Visual Arts. Written by: Oleksandra Kushchenko, edited by Alona Karavai.
5. State and Main Problems of the Library System of Ukraine Written by: Oksana Brui.

Additionally, in the spring of 2024, the Vox Populi Agency conducted a study of the needs, challenges, and key issues within the Culture and Arts sector through focus group discussions. The goal of the study was to identify a list of existing problems from the perspective of representatives of various fields of art. A total of 10 focus group discussions were held, during which 67 professionals in the field of art were interviewed. Particular attention was paid to regional balance, the balance between representatives of the public and independent sectors, and the inclusion of Ukrainian professionals in the arts who are currently living abroad.

During the spring and summer of 2024, key experts from the Culture and Arts sector worked with a database of previous analytical reports, studies, strategy proposals, and regulatory documents related to Ukraine's cultural policy, which were provided by various stakeholders in the RES-POL project and identified experts within their independent search.

In the next stage, during the summer of 2024, the list of existing problems and key policy issues and challenges identified in these five studies was converged, consolidated, and analysed for their cross-cutting or specific nature. These issues and challenges were also classified as cross-cutting (common to the entire sector) or specific (pertaining to individual sub-sectors).

Subsequently, the key issues and challenges were submitted to an online priority ranking, where professionals from the arts sector indicated how urgent and fundamental each issue was to be addressed based on their work context and experience. The ranking was conducted in September 2024, with 167 respondents participating.

Based on the collected data, a list of key issues and challenges that need to be addressed as a priority within the arts sector was identified, which formed the basis of this base-

line report. However, one of the blocks of key issues and challenges, which received a relatively low priority ranking, was moved to the top of the priority list by the authors of this baseline report. This concerns the key issues and challenges in the Security block, which are described in more detail in the relevant section.

In addition to this baseline report, key experts from the Culture and Arts sector prepared a baseline report 'The Role of Art in the Post-War Recovery of Ukraine,' which discusses in more detail the following areas of functioning of art institutions, products, and actors:

- Fixation. Commemoration. Memorialisation.
- Art Therapy. Trauma-Informed Art.
- Cultural Diplomacy.
- Cancelling Policies.

During the development of this baseline report, key experts held regular consultations with the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, as well as synchronised with the process of creating the Ministry's Strategy for 2025–2030. This allowed both parties to stay informed of developments, but also to maintain the autonomy of the methodological structure and analytical conclusions, impartially and independently determining the appropriateness of their inclusion in further policy proposals. The experts indicated how urgent and fundamental each of the issues and challenges is to be resolved from the perspective of their working context and experience.

The authors of this baseline report are grateful to everyone who participated in in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, online surveys and (online and offline) consultations – we are talking about at least **289** representatives of the Culture and Arts sector, and we are grateful to each and everyone for their time and willingness to share their cases, experience, and vision.

## Summary

Art is often an inconvenient and incomprehensible element that is difficult to integrate into state cultural policies – this occurs both in times of peace and prosperity and, even more so, in times of crisis and war. At the same time, the role of art and artists during the war becomes even more complex, as the “peaceful” functions of preserving spaces for both freedom and criticism, as well as consolidation and empathy, become even more critical. In addition to these, other roles emerge that are characteristic of challenging historical moments. Here, we find ourselves at a crossroads between two scenarios. In the first, **art, as a certain excessive and decorative privilege, is instrumentalised** to evoke patriotic sentiment, glorify heroes, and support a form of cultural diplomacy that borders on propaganda. This scenario signals a social order approaching totalitarianism. In the second scenario, **art retains its role as an autonomous sphere within society**, engaging in participatory practices that help process collective trauma and facilitate thoughtful commemoration of the deceased. This may include trauma-informed approaches and practices at the intersection of art and art therapy, as well as voluntary political expression in an international context. This scenario reflects the preservation of a democratic society, but it is significantly more difficult to implement—both in peacetime and, even more so, during war. In an international context that leans towards right-wing radical and fascist ideologies, Ukraine has the potential to emerge as one of the centres of the free world. However, **we can only preserve societal freedom by also safeguarding the freedom of art.**

The authors of this baseline report operate on the assumption that Russian (including military) aggression against Ukraine will persist into 2027. Therefore, this report examines how art can function during wartime – not in a residual capacity, but fully. On the one hand, this necessitates moving away from linearity and adopting adaptive, non-linear approaches (in particular, through the concept of tactical commemoration). On the other hand, **security considerations require heightened attention and vigilance**, which must be embedded across all management decisions. At the same time, in the online ranking of key issues and challenges, security concerns unexpectedly ranked low on the list of priorities. This may be due to both the normalisation of higher-risk daily actions and the fundamentally different security conditions in various regions of Ukraine. The authors of this report propose a classification of Ukrainian regions into three categories, based on the premise that **multiple strategic approaches and flexible cultural policy frameworks** are needed to ensure optimal conditions for cultural develop-



ment in each specific security context. In the near future, these regional differences will only deepen. Nevertheless, the authors of this analytical report consider it crucial to avoid dividing regions into those that produce cultural works and those that merely receive them on tour. Instead, we need **adaptive forms of non-linear recovery** that allow for protection, evacuation, and emergency assistance, while simultaneously facilitating research into gaps in historical and cultural narratives and the creation of new, high-quality artistic works. This must be achieved with both excellence and an awareness of the corridor of opportunities available.

In general, key issues and challenges within the Culture and Arts sector – both quantitatively and qualitatively – centre **around people and human capital**. The issue of education (the formation of human capital) was by far the most frequently mentioned, taking absolute precedence. The vast majority of in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted within the RES-POL project both began and ended with this topic. At the same time, it is important to note that most respondents were not referring to a narrow understanding of art education, in the sense of formal educational institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, which primarily focus on the **technical (“craft-based”) training** of future art practitioners. Instead, they spoke of a broader framework of (formal and informal) educational practices in the field of culture and art. This includes, in particular, **meaningful (“conceptual”) education** for specialists who can navigate the contemporary global art landscape and contribute work that, if not entirely new, is at least relevant to its time. The key concern was that **Ukrainian contemporary art remains disconnected from the modern European and global context, as Ukrainian art education continues to bear a strong post-Soviet imprint and remains isolated from European artistic education**. Moreover, contemporary art occupies a marginal position within formal art education – it is barely taught at all. Other concerns raised included the need for modern education for curators, sound and lighting directors, the lack of foreign educators, and the extreme shortage of relevant educational literature – both original and translated. Human capital challenges are also reflected in broader concerns about **managerial capacity**, which hampers much-needed institutional reform, as well as in the **crisis within the cultural and arts labour market and the sector’s overall precariousness**. In times when there are fewer of us, it becomes even more vital to maintain the people-centred nature of the sector and to create comprehensive **conditions for return and reintegration** – particularly for the reintegration of veterans and their return to artistic practice and for preserving both professional and personal ties between members of the Ukrainian cultural community, whether in Ukraine or abroad. Respondents frequently expressed concerns about growing

conflict, insularity, and artificial divisions within the professional community. Specialists in cross-cultural interaction often interpret these tensions as echoes of collective trauma. Ukrainian cultural policy must acknowledge these sensitivities while remaining open, inclusive, and accessible to all compatriots who wish to participate in Ukraine's cultural and artistic landscape, upholding the principle of "open doors."

**Without the development of human capital, institutional reform is impossible.** In particular, this refers to the reform of the cultural network, which consists of three organisational and legal forms – institutions, organisations, and enterprises (the largest segment comprises rural, district, city, and regional cultural centres, followed by libraries in second place and museums in third). The network of cultural institutions inherited from the Soviet era has seen little renewal since Ukraine's independence. However, as of 2024, this reform has become urgent – both due to the growing budget deficit and the increasing demand from the artistic community to finance not stagnant institutions, but those that act as agents of change, capable of generating meaning and innovation. Proposals for reform already exist, including a revised funding formula, a new organisational and legal model for cultural institutions, and amendments to Ukraine's legislation on patronage activities.

It is important to note that discussions about reforming cultural institutions focus solely on state and municipal institutions, with **very little analytical material or knowledge available regarding the independent sector**. Yet, for example, almost the entire field of contemporary visual art and contemporary music is driven by the independent sector. Similarly, when discussing the reform of art education, attention is given only to formal education, while informal education remains largely unexamined. Any decisions made without accounting for data on the independent sector will be ineffective, as they fail to recognise a significant part of the cultural ecosystem and its impact on the creative industries. This is akin to attempting to assess a panoramic landscape with a severely restricted field of vision. **These gaps – both in knowledge and communication – must be addressed**; otherwise, Ukraine's cultural policy risks being formulated with one eye closed. A particularly pressing issue highlighted in this report is the lack of a sustainable culture of dialogue and cooperation, the sector's low capacity for forming coalitions, and the urgent need for more "communication windows" and platforms for discussion. There are also proposals for possible **models of competitive access to cultural infrastructure**, which should be made available not only to state institutions but also to independent players. At a time when the construction of new cultural infrastructure is indefinitely postponed, it is essential to explore opportunities for the optimal and shared use of existing resources.

One consequence of the (artificial) separation between the state and independent sectors is the current situation with contemporary art. Since contemporary art has historically been the domain of the independent sector, it often remains invisible and unrecognised by the state sector and, as a result, has received little institutional support or museum representation. The role of preservation – both in public perception and within the professional community – is largely associated with cultural heritage, which is commonly equated with works created 50 or more years ago. This perception is not only mistaken but also harmful and potentially dangerous for the comprehensive and representative preservation and enrichment of Ukrainian cultural heritage. As things stand, Ukrainian contemporary art produced since independence is mostly found in private collections, both in Ukraine and abroad, or in foreign museums. **Ukraine does not have a representative state collection of contemporary art, nor does it have a state or municipal Museum of Contemporary Art.** It is crucial to explore strategies for better research and museum representation of contemporary art in Ukraine, preparing for the establishment of a Museum of Contemporary Art as a stable and high-quality institution before even discussing the construction of a dedicated building. Among other possibilities, such a museum could serve as a platform for long-term cooperation and a “shared project” between the public and independent sectors. At the same time, while public-private partnerships for the musealisation of contemporary art are feasible, they require careful regulation and a well-calibrated balance of power to prevent the misuse of economic or political influence by private actors. In Western European countries, patronage in the field of contemporary art is a well-established practice with a centuries-old history and a defined ethical framework. In contrast, in Eastern Europe of the post-Soviet bloc, this sphere is still largely dominated by (peri)oligarchic structures that treat contemporary art as a status symbol – one that can be instrumentalised, often at relatively low cost, for reputation laundering and the promotion of private interests.

Respondents emphasise the importance of **maintaining cultural life, supporting the continuation of artistic practice, and fostering the creation of new cultural products.** The need for programmes that support individual artistic activity is particularly highlighted. If conditions for cultural production are not ensured, this could result not only in a shortage of high-quality cultural works “for export” but also in an increased tendency for key artists, unable to realise their potential in Ukraine, to leave the country. Additionally, it could lead to a dominance of oversimplified and monotonous artistic expressions. It is therefore recommended to prioritise support for the development of **local cultural products**, as well as works that critically engage with the war and other complex historical events. In this context, it is crucial to seize the current “window of opportunity” to **move away from the post-Soviet culture of glorification and pathos in**

**commemorating the victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war.** Instead, Ukraine should follow the European model of an inclusive culture of remembrance, participatory commemorative practices, and a quieter yet more human-centred and sincere approach to memorialisation. Commemorative practices also serve as an important tool for work in de-occupied territories and in cases of reunification of communities that were (artificially) divided for a period of time.

Regardless of the specific challenges discussed in the Culture and Arts sector, one phrase is frequently repeated: ‘We don’t know (for sure).’ Meaningful decisions about the future must be informed by an analysis of both the present and the past. However, **data on the cultural sector is not collected systematically**, and decisions are often made based on fragmented and incomplete information. In particular, there is no established mechanism for gathering indicators on the independent sector, meaning there is no data to justify or inform the implementation of certain policies. Among other critical issues and challenges, **the lack of digital archives, the lack of mechanisms to support research and analysis in the arts** (such as the Culture Analytics grant programme, which was implemented by the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation in 2020–2021), and the inadequate support for Ukrainian arts media are all significant concerns. A further challenge in working with archives is **the shortage of specialists** trained in archival practices. Greater intersectoral collaboration is also needed – where culture and art intersect with fields such as medicine or ecology, there is significant potential for synergy.

A major part of the group discussions and in-depth interviews conducted within the RES-POL project focused on issues and challenges of international cooperation and cultural diplomacy. A key concern is the **insufficient quality of cultural products developed “for export”** and the imbalance in representation, where traditional art is prioritised over contemporary art. A separate and pressing issue is the **mechanism for appointing the Commissioner of the Ukrainian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale**. It has been proposed that Ukraine should examine the experience of other countries that have transferred this function to a specialised state institution dedicated to visual art and experienced in organising international exhibitions. There is also considerable tension surrounding **the restricted access of male artists to international cultural diplomacy venues**. The procedure for granting travel permission to artists who are active military personnel requires refinement, and no mechanism currently exists for the temporary exemption of artists engaged in key cultural diplomacy projects (for example, curating the Ukrainian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale). The primary proposal in this section is the establishment of a permanent platform to synchronise efforts between state and independent cultural actors – particularly in addressing the challenges and priorities of cultural diplomacy.

War is a paradoxical state where mutually exclusive things can happen at the same time. This complexity, coupled with the rapid pace of change and the lack of resources to address increasing exhaustion, can lead to a desire – or rather a compulsion – to simplify. **It is important to counteract this inertia in order to preserve art as a field capable of withstanding paradoxes, rather than rolling back from democratic values and civilised progress in general. At the same time, the fuel for resistance and the further development of art in Ukraine can be not only – and not exclusively – the availability of resources, but primarily and as a priority, the preservation of the space for freedom, self-expression, and artistic autonomy.**

At the same time, we as a society should realize, reflect on, and analyse our collective trauma to better understand patterns of social interaction and transform them into ones that would be (more) productive and ecological.

## 1. Key issues and challenges Overview

At the beginning of this section, a final list of key issues and challenges identified in the Culture and Arts sector is provided. These key issues and challenges are divided into cross-cutting (i.e. common to the entire sector and recurring in focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and analytical documents from three or more sub-sectors) and those specific to one of the five sub-sectors (literature, visual arts, audio arts, performing arts, and libraries). A separate section is dedicated to issues and challenges related to post-war recovery and the military situation – specifically, the role of artists and art during these crisis stages of the country's development. In this part of the section, key issues and challenges are presented as a ranked list based on stakeholder prioritisation.

In the second part of the section, these key issues and challenges are structured into eight categories, displayed in a table. Sections 5 to 13 of this report are organised according to these categories to ensure a comprehensive discussion of all issues and challenges within a single document. Security-related issues and challenges form a separate tenth category – by decision of the authors, these have been placed at the beginning of this baseline report.



## **1.1 List of Key issues and challenges**

### **Arts: Cross-cutting Key issues and challenges**

- **ІПП-М-Б-01.** Lack of policies and tools for evacuating institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones. Absence of mechanisms for ensuring long-term storage of evacuated collections and archives.
- **ІПП-М-Б-01.** Lack of policies and tools for enabling institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones to continue their work. Shortage of cultural infrastructure such as underground theatres.
- **ІПП-М-01.** Outdated and irrelevant professional art education. A narrow understanding of art and cultural education. Lack of qualified academic and teaching personnel with relevant expertise and practical experience.
- **ІПП-М-02.** Absence of competitive funding for state institutions based on artistic quality and institutional effectiveness. Overdue need for cultural institution reform.
- **ІПП-М-03.** Lack of systematic investment in the creation of relevant cultural products, both in Ukraine and internationally. Absence of programmes and mechanisms to support individual artistic activity.
- **ІПП-М-04.** Insufficient managerial competencies. Shortage of professionals capable of managing institutions in uncertain conditions and/or establishing stable international partnerships.
- **ІПП-М-05.** Lack of modern educational literature for art education. Absence of translations of key texts and textbooks into Ukrainian.
- **ІПП-М-06.** Human capital outflow, particularly in de-occupied territories and areas near active hostilities. Lack of programmes to support returns – both within Ukraine and from abroad. Absence of unifying initiatives for the Ukrainian art community in Ukraine and the diaspora.
- **ІПП-М-07.** Lack of a sustainable culture of dialogue and cooperation between the state and independent sectors. Low capacity for forming effective unions and coalitions to advocate for sectoral interests. Fragmentation within the sector and a toxic culture of internal conflict.
- **ІПП-М-08.** Lack of support for cultural journalism, professional media, and art criticism. Absence of (support for) research and analysis on art and the arts sector in Ukraine.

- **ИПП-М-09.** Lack of a human-centred approach and absence of tools to support mental health. A narrow understanding of inclusivity, focusing only on infra-structural adaptation. Lack of awareness of psychological and psychic inclusivity, as well as knowledge gaps in art therapy, trauma-informed art, and the prevention of re-traumatisation.
- **ИПП-М-10.** Wages in the sector remain lower than the national average. Precarious working conditions. Staffing structures and pay scales in state institutions are outdated and prevent sectoral development.
- **ИПП: Subsector-Specific Key issues and challenges**
- **ИПП: Literature**
- **ИПП-М-Л-01.** Lack of support for literary translations. Insufficient development of the translation ecosystem.
- **ИПП-М-Л-02.** Presence of pirate libraries. No legal action is taken against them.
- **ИПП-М-Л-03.** Absence of programmes and mechanisms to support the Crimean Tatar language and literature.
- **ИПП: Audio Arts**
- **ИПП-М-А-01.** Lack of modern concert halls.
- **ИПП-М-А-02.** Lack of music publishers and a shortage of published sheet music.
- **ИПП-М-А-03.** Need to reduce the tax burden on the creation of independent cultural products (including enabling touring activities for self-employed artists under the third category of individual entrepreneurs).
- **ИПП: Visual Arts**
- **ИПП-М-В-01.** No simplified taxation mechanism for the sale of personal artworks by self-employed artists.
- **ИПП-М-В-02.** Lack of a national Museum of Contemporary Art, or a collaborative model between the public and private sectors to establish one.
- **ИПП-М-В-03.** Need for reform of the National Union of Artists and regional artists' unions.
- **ИПП: Performing Arts**



- **ІПП-М-С-01.** Shortage of production and technical specialists (e.g., sound engineers, lighting technicians). These roles are underrepresented in the education sector and the labour market.
- **ІПП-М-С-02.** No economic incentives for those in active conflict zones, such as tax exemptions.
- **ІПП-М-С-03.** Limited experience and tools for reaching international audiences through digital platforms and television (e.g., high-quality video productions).
- **ІПП: Libraries**
- **ІПП-М-Б-02.** Slow renewal of public library collections.
- **ІПП-М-Б-03.** Lack of legal entity status for libraries, which could optimise costs and allow for monetisation of library spaces.
- **ІПП: Key issues and challenges on the Role of Artists in Post-War Recovery**

## Commemoration and Memorialisation

- **ПП-М-ПВ-01.** Transition from a vertical to a horizontal model of memorialisation. Inclusive memory policy. The lack of memorialisation models that establish rules agreed upon by different stakeholder groups and allow for the involvement of civil society.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-02.** The need for tactical commemoration.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-03.** Underutilisation of commemorative practices as a tool for work in de-occupied territories and in cases of reunification of communities that were (artificially) divided for a period of time.

## Art Therapy and Trauma-Informed Art

- **ПП-М-ПВ-04.** Shortage of (additional) qualifications in trauma-informed art and art therapy practices, Lack of professional higher education to obtain an art therapist diploma.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-05.** Lack of research and institutions at the intersection of art and mental health. There is a need to strengthen intersectoral and interdisciplinary professional exchange between artists and therapists.

- **ПП-М-ПВ-06.** Need to strengthen interagency and intersectoral cooperation in the field of mobile art groups and other cultural and artistic events and programs for the military.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-07.** Need to strengthen interagency and intersectoral cooperation for the reintegration of veteran artists.

### Cultural Diplomacy

- **ПП-М-ПВ-08.** Deficit of high-quality cultural and artistic products “for export”, stemming from insufficient investment in the domestic cultural product.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-09.** Imbalance between the representation of traditional and modern Ukrainian culture with a disproportionate emphasis on traditional culture.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-10.** Lack of systematic cultural exchange and insufficient involvement of foreign artists in creating artistic products about Ukraine.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-11.** International cooperation projects often proceed without adequate financial contributions from Ukraine. Lack of parity.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-12.** Insufficient institutional interaction and inadequate involvement of the “global Ukrainians” – artists and professionals in the art field living abroad.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-13.** Limited access to international venues for Ukrainian male artists. The absence of a mechanism for allowing active military personnel to temporarily travel abroad for artistic and cultural diplomacy purposes.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-14.** Limited geography of cultural diplomacy.
- **ПП-М-ПВ-15.** Lack of a platform for regular synchronization of the Ukrainian cultural and artistic communities on issues and challenges of international cultural and artistic work, including issues and challenges of the cancellation of Russian cultural actors. Lack of a shared vocabulary with the world to define the policy of the Russian Empire towards Ukraine.

## 1.2 Key issues and challenges Categories

The above-mentioned key issues and challenges have been grouped into categories (see Table 1). It is around these categories that the narrative of this baseline report is structured.

<b>Security</b>	Lack of policies and tools for evacuating institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones. Absence of mechanisms for ensuring long-term storage of evacuated collections and archives.
	Lack of policies and tools for enabling institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones to continue their work.
<b>Art Education</b>	Outdated and irrelevant professional art education. A narrow understanding of art education. Lack of qualified academic and teaching personnel with relevant expertise and practical experience in the art education system.
	Lack of modern educational literature for art education. Lack of Ukrainian translations of textbooks. Insufficient development of the translation ecosystem.
	Slow renewal of public library collections.
<b>Institutional Reform and Management Capacity</b>	Absence of competitive funding for state institutions based on artistic quality and institutional effectiveness. Overdue need for cultural institution reform. Lack of legal entity status for libraries, which could optimise costs and allow for monetisation of library spaces.
	Insufficient managerial competencies. Shortage of professionals capable of managing institutions in uncertain conditions and / or establishing stable international partnerships.
	Lack of a national Museum of Contemporary Art, or a collaborative model between the public and private sectors to establish one.
	Need for reform of the National Union of Artists and regional artists' unions.
<b>Arts Product and Infrastructure</b>	Lack of systematic investment in the creation of relevant cultural products, both in Ukraine and internationally. Absence of programmes and mechanisms to support individual artistic activity.
	Deficit of high-quality cultural and artistic products “for export”, stemming from insufficient investment in the domestic cultural product.
	Transition from a vertical to a horizontal model of memorialisation. Inclusive memory policy. The lack of memorialisation models that establish rules agreed upon by different stakeholder

	groups and allow for the involvement of civil society. Need to support tactical commemoration initiatives. Underutilisation of commemorative practices as a tool for work in de-occupied territories and in cases of reunification of communities that were (artificially) divided for a period of time.
	Lack of modern concert and exhibition halls. Shortage of cultural infrastructure such as underground theatres.
	Lack of support for literary translations. Insufficient development of the translation ecosystem. Absence of programmes and mechanisms to support the Crimean Tatar language and literature.
	Insufficient use of the potential of cultural products to reach international audiences through digital platforms and TV channels. Insufficient investment in quality video products.
<b>Human Capital Crisis and Inclusiveness</b>	Human capital outflow, particularly in de-occupied territories and areas near active hostilities. Lack of programmes to support returns—both within Ukraine and from abroad. Absence of unifying initiatives for the Ukrainian art community in Ukraine and the diaspora.
	Lack of a state policy on time-limited reservation of independent sector professionals. Lack of a social contract on mobilization and reservation system.
	Shortage of production and technical specialists (e.g., sound engineers, lighting technicians). These roles are underrepresented in the education sector and the labour market.
	Lack of a human-centred approach and absence of tools to support mental health. A narrow understanding of inclusivity, focusing only on infrastructural adaptation. Lack of awareness of psychological and psychic inclusivity, as well as knowledge gaps in art therapy, trauma-informed art, and the prevention of re-traumatisation.
	Shortage of (additional) qualifications in trauma-informed art and art therapy practices, Lack of professional higher education to obtain an art therapist diploma.
	Need to strengthen interagency and intersectoral cooperation for the reintegration of veteran artists. Need to strengthen interagency and intersectoral cooperation in the field of mobile art groups and other cultural and artistic events and programs for the military.
<b>Tension Lines and Parallel Worlds</b>	Lack of a sustainable culture of dialogue and cooperation between the state and independent sectors. Low capacity for forming effective unions and coalitions to advocate for sectoral interests. Fragmentation within the sector and a toxic culture of internal conflict.
<b>Research and Analytics</b>	Lack of support for cultural journalism, professional media, and art criticism. Absence of (support for) research and analysis on art and the arts sector in Ukraine.
	Absence of translations of key texts into Ukrainian.

	Lack of research and institutions at the intersection of art and mental health. There is a need to strengthen intersectoral and interdisciplinary professional exchange between artists and therapists.
	Lack of systematic research on local culture. Lack of archives of local cultural and artistic processes and local cultural heritage.
<b>Precariousness and imperfection of financial models</b>	Wages in the sector remain lower than the national average. Precarious working conditions. Staffing structures and pay scales in state institutions are outdated and prevent sectoral development.
	Need to reduce the tax burden on the creation of independent cultural products (including enabling touring activities for self-employed artists under the third category of individual entrepreneurs).
	No simplified taxation mechanism for the sale of personal artworks by self-employed artists.
	"Tax holidays" for the non-state sector and those in active combat zones.
<b>Integration into the International Context</b>	International cooperation projects often proceed without adequate financial contributions from Ukraine. Lack of parity.
	Imbalance between the representation of traditional and modern Ukrainian culture with a disproportionate emphasis on traditional culture.
	Lack of systematic cultural exchange. Weak involvement in international networks and insufficient representation at key world events. Insufficient involvement of foreign artists in creating artistic products about Ukraine.
	Insufficient institutional interaction and inadequate involvement of the "global Ukrainians"—artists and professionals in the art field living abroad.
	Limited access to international venues for Ukrainian male artists. The absence of a mechanism for allowing active military personnel to temporarily travel abroad for artistic and cultural diplomacy purposes.
	Limited geography of cultural diplomacy.
	Lack of a platform for regular synchronization of the Ukrainian cultural and artistic communities on issues and challenges of international cultural and artistic work, including issues and challenges of the cancellation of Russian cultural actors. Lack of a shared vocabulary with the world to define the policy of the Russian Empire towards Ukraine.

## 2. Security

Security issues and challenges were unexpectedly ranked low among the key issues and challenges. Notably, the key issue of the ***‘lack of a network of contemporary storage facilities for collections, archives, and funds accessible to both state institutions and the independent sector’*** was in the third dozen, with 14.6% of respondents marking it as the second priority for resolution. However, the authors of this baseline report elevated this issue higher on the list of priorities, based on their assessments and conclusions from various other analysts (including military experts) and scenario planning. This decision will be explained in further detail below.

### 5.1 Significance and Context of the Key Issue

The authors of this baseline report make several assumptions regarding the medium (or low) prioritisation of security issues and challenges in the online ranking.

Firstly, the **role of preservation – both in public perception and within the professional community – is largely associated with cultural heritage**, which is commonly equated with works created 50 or more years ago. While the authors of this report consider **such an understanding not only flawed but also harmful and potentially dangerous for the comprehensive and representative safeguarding of Ukrainian cultural heritage**, this perception may influence how the importance of preserving contemporary art and art created during Ukraine’s independence is assessed. This concern is explored in more depth in the section on Institutional Reform and Management Capacity and in the part on the absence of a Museum of Contemporary Art.

Secondly, the authors suggest that Ukrainian society as a whole tends to [avoid considering negative scenarios, even when they are quite probable](#). By the second year of a full-scale invasion, security concerns may have faded into the background for some parts of the community – not necessarily due to an actual improvement in the security situation, but rather due to habituation and the implementation of certain pre-existing security measures. It is plausible that if this ranking of key issues and challenges had taken place in 2023 rather than 2024, the results might have been different.

Thirdly, the **security situation across different regions and cities of Ukraine is highly variable, which suggests the need for multiple cultural strategies and policies tailored**

**to the specific security context.** For example, in the baseline report [‘The Role of Artists in Post-War Recovery,’](#) the authors propose a classification of Ukraine’s regions into three groups, namely:

- **Rear regions:** Lviv, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne, Chernivtsi, Khmelnytskyi, Ternopil, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, and Volyn regions.
- **War zones:** Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Odesa regions.
- **Areas at high risk of hostilities:** Chernihiv region, Kyiv region and the city of Kyiv, and Poltava region.

This classification is not the only correct one, but it mostly aligns with other assessments. In particular, according to the sociological survey ‘Cultural Practices and Needs for Population Recovery in De-Occupied and Frontline Communities,’ conducted in the fall of 2023 across Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson regions, security is the primary factor influencing life in these communities. In 7 out of 8 surveyed regions, respondents do not feel secure on a systematic basis and organize their lives around the constant and unpredictable threat of shelling. [The most critical security situations are observed in the Kherson and Mykolaiv regions.](#)

Although the RES-POL project’s analytical focus placed special emphasis on the regional representativeness of respondents, it can be assumed that cultural actors from especially dangerous areas often lack the time and mental resources to fully participate in such studies. It is also important to consider **survivorship bias – the logical fallacy of drawing conclusions based only on data from those who survived.** In places where one would expect results from the analysis of “unsuccessful cases,” we often find gaps and blanks.

Taking all of the above into account, the authors of this baseline report moved security issues and challenges to the top of the priority list and, consequently, included them in this report. Based on the baseline report [‘The Role of Artists in Post-War Recovery,’](#) we assume a scenario in which sustainable peace will not be reached by 2027 and hostilities will continue. Therefore, security issues and challenges should remain a central focus – for both the independent sector and state cultural institutions, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, as well as the relevant strategic frameworks and policies.



## 2.2 Key issues and challenges

In separate analytical reports and surveys within the RES-POL project, the following key policy issues and challenges that need to be addressed were identified:

- 1. Lack of policies and tools for evacuating institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones, in particular absence of mechanisms for ensuring long-term storage of evacuated collections and archives.**

The analytical note on visual arts highlights the lack of security protocols for working in threatened regions and cultural institutions, in particular, security protocols for municipal galleries, municipal centres of contemporary art, and art schools are absent. There is also a lack of policies and tools for evacuating institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones. [This concerns the need to develop a more extensive network of modern storage facilities](#) for (public and private) collections, as well as the need for professional storage services for private art collections, which could be provided by public museums and storage facilities. This issue is not limited to visual arts – for example, the [analytical note on libraries](#) refers to the absence of specially equipped storage facilities with appropriate temperature and humidity conditions for preserving documentary heritage objects.

*As a solution, it is proposed to analyse mechanisms for transferring private collections to state storage facilities for preservation, as well as the potential (including commercial) of such storage facilities in terms of self-sufficiency through public-private partnerships. This issue will be analysed in the next stage of the RES-POL project.*

- 2. Lack of policies and tools for enabling institutions and cultural actors from (new) risk zones to continue their work, in particular, the lack of cultural infrastructure for artistic events.**

This issue primarily concerns institutions and initiatives in the performing and audio arts that prefer to continue operating in regions of increased risk and require new or updated solutions for equipping venues for such artistic events. Specifically, this involves the near-impossibility of stage work in Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, and Sumy. Performing arts are inherently associated with gatherings of people, and require solutions such as the creation of permanent underground venues, which after the war could be re-purposed as additional stages, catering spaces, or rooms that can be rented out for various types of events. The analytical note on audio arts discusses the lack of equipped and adapted shelters to support educational processes and concert activities.



Additionally, the analytical note 'State and Main Problems of the Library System of Ukraine' addresses the challenges of restoring the work of libraries in de-occupied territories. [As of the end of 2023, 131 library buildings or premises that housed them were completely destroyed due to the war.](#)

### **3. The need for better protection of documentary heritage**

[The analytical note on libraries](#) refers to the destruction of documentary heritage objects on analogue media, often caused by the lack of systematic measures for the conservation, stabilisation, and restoration of documents. State programmes for the creation of backup copies of especially valuable and rare documents and collections are also lacking.

### 3. Art Education

The issue of art education, as framed in the following way, secured a strong first place in the ranking of key issues and challenges: *'Outdated and irrelevant professional art education.'* A third of respondents (specifically, 30.5%) identified this issue in the online ranking format as the most pressing for resolution. Due to the material importance and significance of this issue, the most detailed and comprehensive section of this baseline report is devoted to its analysis.

#### 3.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue

Among other points, this key issue, in the above-mentioned formulation, was confirmed within the framework of a study using the focus group method, conducted by Vox Agency on behalf of the RES-POL project in the spring of 2024 (the documentation of the study and its conclusions were published as part of the project). The participants in this study highlighted the educational reform process, particularly its impact on **art education reform**. According to the respondents, the reorganisation of the educational process, updating of educational standards to align with the European context, and the creation of mechanisms and programmes to support informal education in the arts and other fields were urgent matters, as informal education is more flexible and responsive in addressing the gaps in formal education.

It is also worth noting that the **issue of deficits in both formal and informal art education was ranked among the top three priorities in both the Cultural Heritage and Creative Industries sectors** within the RES-POL project. Since separate groups of (key) experts worked on the analysis of these sectors, using different research methods, this can be seen as further confirmation of both the urgency of this issue and its cross-cutting nature. In the context of demographic shock and the loss or outflow of human capital, tools for developing potential through education and further training may be at the forefront of priorities across all sectors of the economy. This underlines the need for interdepartmental cooperation between several ministries to bring about meaningful change in this area.

The importance of this issue is also corroborated by the analytical note 'Reforms of Higher Art Education in Ukraine: Risks and Challenges' by Anna Yefimova, published in 2024 by the Centre for Social Innovations NGO within the framework of the Cultprpavo-

form project, with support from the British Council. Partners in this project and research include the Lviv National Academy of Arts and the Institute for Cultural Strategy. According to this note, despite some positive developments, **higher art education faces numerous challenges, primarily stemming from the absence of high-quality and effective reforms specifically targeted at this sector**, while broader reforms in higher education in Ukraine are progressing relatively dynamically.

In art schools, lyceums, and professional art colleges, the traditions of Soviet art education persist, focusing on training performers and prioritising technical skills over the development of creativity and imaginative thinking. Colleges (offering professional pre-higher art education) continue to position themselves as institutions that funnel applicants into higher education institutions rather than addressing the personnel needs of regional cultural sectors. A significant number of their graduates go on to pursue higher education in non-artistic disciplines (such as pedagogy or classical universities). However, after completing non-specialised higher education, these individuals often seek roles in professional teaching at art schools, which raises concerns about the quality of primary art education. Vocational colleges and higher art schools are poorly equipped to respond to the cultural sector's demand for specialists, particularly for those working with community cultural spaces. Moreover, there is no collaboration between art schools and higher education institutions or the professional sphere in the creation and implementation of educational programmes.

The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Culture and Education for 2027, entitled [‘Education of Winners,’](#) also highlights the issue of the “outdated content of education.” *‘Education should prepare a person for tomorrow, not even for today. That is why it is not enough for us to make a cosmetic repair of the education and science system. We need to transform it,’* says Oksen Lisovyi, the Minister of Education.

It is important to note that the issue of modernising art education is not new. The need to reform the educational process, transitioning from post-Soviet systems to one aligned with European standards and current global artistic trends, was also addressed in earlier strategic cultural policy documents. Specifically, the long-term strategy for the development of Ukrainian culture, [‘Strategy of Reforms,’ approved by the Cabinet of Ministers](#) on 1 February 2016, states: *‘Art education requires radical modernisation in various cultural sectors and in the general education system, considering the profound changes in society, technology, and the arts. Education is what forms the creators and producers of cultural products and active recipients or consumers.’* In other words, **the obsolescence of the arts education system and the need for reform have been recog-**

nised at the state level for the past decade. The full-scale invasion has only highlighted these systemic issues and challenges and emphasised the urgency of addressing the needs that existed before. The unaddressed challenges are particularly glaring during times of crisis.

In particular, the long-term development of Ukrainian culture, as outlined from 2016, included the following operational goals related to art education:

- Modernisation of the content of cultural and artistic education;
- Creation of a system for monitoring the quality of primary art education;
- Creation of a system for grant and other financial support for pupils/students of specialised art educational institutions at all levels;
- Stimulation of the development of inclusive art education programmes at the primary level;
- Promotion of domestic and international academic exchanges between cultural and artistic education institutions;
- Popularisation and enhancement of the prestige, support, and development of industry science, including through the financing of applied [scientific research and development](#).

### 3.2 Context

**Formal art education** is divided into extracurricular education (art schools), complete general secondary education (art lyceums), professional pre-higher education (professional art colleges), and higher education (universities, academies, institutes):

- 1,259 art schools (art, music, and theatre). In 2021, there were 2,021, and as of autumn 2024, there are 1,259. The reduction of nearly 38% is primarily due to the closure of art schools in frontline and temporarily occupied territories. Art schools are managed by local authorities.
- 3 state art lyceums within the framework of general secondary education ([Kharkiv](#), [Lviv](#), [Kyiv](#), and [Opyshnia](#)). As of the time of writing this report, the Kharkiv State Art Lyceum operates online, as do all educational institutions in the city.
- 4 state music lyceums within the framework of general secondary education ([Kyiv](#), [Odesa](#), [Lviv](#), and [Kharkiv](#)). As of the time of writing this report, the Kharkiv State Music Lyceum operates online, as do all educational institutions in the city.
- 4 professional colleges ([Kyiv](#), [Kosiv](#), [Uzhhorod](#), [Kaniv](#)) under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications (MCSC), and 49 professional art colleges under the management of local authorities (data up to 2022).
- 14 state-owned higher art education institutions (under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications). These include five art academies (M. Boichuk Kyiv State Academy of Decorative and Applied Arts and Design, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Transcarpathian Academy of Arts, Lviv National Academy of Arts, Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts); three music academies (P. I. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, M. V. Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy, A. V. Nezhdanova Odesa National Music Academy); three culture academies (Luhansk State Academy of Culture and Arts, National Academy of Managers of Culture and Arts, Kharkiv State Academy of Culture); two universities (I. K. Karpenko-Kary Kyiv National University of Theatre, Cinema and Television, I. P. Kotliarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts); two additional territorial structural units art academies (Kosiv Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts of the Lviv National Academy of Arts and the Mariupol branch of National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, which is not fully functioning but still appears in the database).

- There are also 4 higher education institutions in municipal ownership of communities and their associations (Kyiv Municipal Academy of Variety and Circus Arts, Kyiv Academy of Arts, P. Chubynskyi Academy of Arts, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music).

According to the [annual report of the State Agency of Ukraine](#) for Arts 2023, almost 20% of out-of-school art education institutions operated in a distance learning format. As of 20 November, 2023, the most affected institutions of extracurricular art education in the occupied territories and in regions close to the front line were in:

- **Donetsk region:** Before the full-scale invasion, 49 art schools operated; after, 37 operate remotely.
- **Luhansk region:** Out of 32, only 5 schools are operational (remotely).
- **Zaporizhzhia region:** After the full-scale invasion, the number of art schools has more than halved (all operate remotely).
- **Kyiv:** 56 art schools out of 57 have switched to distance learning.
- **Kharkiv region:** The number of schools has decreased from 80 to 71, all of which operate remotely.
- **Kherson region:** The number of schools has decreased from 36 to 9, all of which operate remotely.

The statistics on the activities of out-of-school art education institutions highlight the vulnerability of art education, especially at the primary level, particularly in regions close to the conflict zone. This indicates the risk of (partial) loss of the current generation of students and teaching staff in art schools.

In addition to the formal art education described above, there is a layer of **non-formal art education** that falls outside the remit of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications and the Ministry of Education and Science and is difficult to quantify within the framework of statistical data. Under the Law of Ukraine [‘On Education,’](#) in 2017, definitions of non-formal and informal education were developed, harmonised and synchronised with the relevant definitions of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. In February 2022, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine approved the Procedure for the Recognition of Learning Outcomes in Higher and Professional Pre-Higher Education, Acquired through Non-Formal and / or Informal [Education](#).

Examples of non-formal art education include the following projects that are operational at the time of writing this analytical report:

- [Kyiv Academy of Media Arts \(KAMA\)](#) – an independent alternative educational institution that operates on a commercial basis, offering, in particular, courses in contemporary art. It has recently launched a grant programme for training veterans and combatants.
- [Frankivsk School of Contemporary Art fra fra fra](#) – implemented by the NGO ‘Asortymentna Kimnata’ on a non-profit basis with support from donations and international grants. This educational programme has existed since September 2023 and trains interdisciplinary artists in the field of contemporary art. A distinctive feature of the school is that it offers dedicated groups for teenagers and works with an audience aged 12 and older.
- **Vedel School of Contemporary Music** – operating in both offline and online formats from Lviv since 2019, this school offers courses in music theory and composition, with a focus on digital instruments and electronic music. It operates primarily on a commercial basis but has also secured external grant funding to expand access to education for children and adolescents, regardless of their parents’ financial circumstances.
- [The Antonin Artaud Fellowship](#) – established in 2023, this initiative provides training opportunities for performing and theatre artists who are in the process of professional development and working in Ukraine. The programme, offered in the form of a scholarship, functions as a long-term educational initiative for interdisciplinary artists at the start of their careers. Through the creation of their work-in-progress projects, participants acquire practical skills essential for developing their own work, while also gaining access to mentoring support, a series of lectures and workshops, and peer-to-peer exchange with colleagues. The vast majority of these opportunities are provided on a non-profit basis (through international grant funding) and awarded competitively.



### **3.3 Consultations with the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education**

As part of the analysis of this key issue, a group of leading experts from the RES-POL project held consultations with representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, including the Acting Head of the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education, Olha Rossoshanska. During these consultations, the following points were discussed:

- The need to continue implementing the [Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine for 2022–2023](#), which was approved on 23 February 2024. Its main goals and principles remain relevant even after the full-scale invasion. Thanks to the updated strategic plan for 2025–2028, which addresses the challenges of the ongoing war, this document continues to serve as a vital framework.
- The importance of supporting [Draft Law No.10339](#) on Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Financing Higher Education and Providing State Targeted Support to Applicants. This law includes provisions for a “money follows the graduate” mechanism, as well as a system for awarding state grants for higher education.
- **The need to enhance cooperation between the culture and arts sector (employers) and formal art education in shaping and adapting art education. Specifically, there is a pressing need to involve practitioners from the culture and arts sector in initiating and developing professional standards, as well as in defining the demand for specialisations that align with market needs.** At present, educational institutions themselves largely determine the forecasted volume of state-funded training based on their capacities, with only formal approval from local employment centres and cultural departments. As a result, **rather than being driven by market demand, the education system (re)produces demand within itself.**

Additionally, the Head of the Art Education Department at the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, Tetiana Kolos, highlights that, *‘In art schools, lyceums, and professional art colleges, the traditions of Soviet art education persist, focusing on training performers and prioritising technical skills over the development of creativity and imaginative thinking. [...] Vocational colleges and higher art schools are poorly equipped to respond to the cultural sector’s demand for specialists, particularly for those*



*working with community cultural spaces. Moreover, there is no collaboration between art schools and higher education institutions or the professional sphere in the creation and implementation of educational programmes.'* To address this challenge, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications has already planned and initiated the following steps:

- Updating the standards for higher and professional [pre-university education](#) in the relevant specialities within the field of Culture, Art and Humanities.
- Revising the content of [primary](#) and [specialised musical](#), [artistic](#), and choreographic education, which is obtained alongside general secondary education.
- Updating the procedure for obtaining the educational and creative degree of Doctor of Arts.
- Developing an electronic repository of educational and methodological literature for cultural and artistic education, with open access for contributions following plagiarism checks.
- Introducing certification for teachers in specialised [artistic educational institutions](#).
- Developing and approving the concept of professional art colleges as key centres for staffing the cultural sector at the local level.

### 3.4 Key issues and challenges

**‘Outdated and irrelevant professional art education’** – This is how the key issue is framed in various analytical surveys and focus groups conducted within the RES-POL project. The issue is further explored through the following sub-questions. These are presented in a logical sequence for clarity but are not ranked in terms of priority.

- 1. Ukrainian contemporary art remains disconnected from the modern European and global context Ukrainian art education continues to bear a strong post-Soviet imprint and remains isolated from European artistic education.**

The network of educational institutions in the field of art in Ukraine is largely a legacy of the (post-)Soviet system: *‘... before the pandemic, 300,000 children studied in art schools, yet only 3% of graduates went on to conservatories. The system of art education occasionally unearths diamonds, but this happens by chance rather than by design.’* At the same time, art and music schools fail to fulfil their educational and cultural role. Many graduates *‘... do not become engaged audiences for philharmonic concerts, and instead, their interest in academic and classical music diminishes after completing music school.’*

Art education also reveals **significant gaps in the history and theory of contemporary European art and the principles of international collaboration**. These shortcomings stem from several factors, including due to insufficient proficiency in English, which limits access to the international academic community; a lack of translated key European texts and textbooks into Ukrainian; limited integration of Ukrainian art education institutions into global academic libraries networks due to a lack of institutional subscriptions. According to a focus group study conducted by Vox Agency on behalf of the RES-POL project in spring 2024, these deficiencies contribute to the weak representation of Ukrainian art in the international market, particularly in fields such as theatre and contemporary dance. Analytical documents within the Culture and Arts sector of the RES-POL project indicate that urgent measures are needed to **develop both formal and informal educational formats (training sessions, online courses, and educational materials) based on principles of international cooperation**; enhance the quality of English language education to **ensure that artists and cultural professionals attain a high level of proficiency**.

The harmonisation of Ukrainian art education with European standards – particularly in terms of curriculum content and teaching methods – remains a pressing issue. Aligning Ukrainian educational and professional programmes with European ones would in-

crease mobility and enable credit transfer for core professional disciplines. Raising the overall quality of education to match the standards of European art academies is a priority in the context of Ukraine's European integration.

## **2. Art Education is Divided and Fragmented, While Its Scope Remains Too Narrow to Meet Contemporary Global Requirements**

In the modern world, art education should provide not only applied and technical skills in at least one art form but also a deep understanding of disciplines such as art history, anthropology, cultural studies, and political science. The division into different educational institutions, as well as the division of interdepartmental subordination, does not make sense. Formal education institutions under the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications primarily focus on developing the practical skills of artists, while those under the Ministry of Education and Science provide qualifications in humanities-based disciplines such as cultural studies and cultural management. This division isolates artists – who acquire only technical skills – from the academic and intellectual environment that fosters critical discourse, while cultural managers and theorists, in turn, remain disconnected from the realities of artistic practice. A more effective approach would be to strengthen interdepartmental cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications and the Ministry of Education and Science. This would enable greater alignment between related disciplines and create opportunities for synergy between students from different universities and faculties.

**Another significant divide exists between formal and non-formal art education.** This study found almost no examples of long-term, successful collaboration between providers of formal and non-formal education. Despite the proven value of non-formal education in shaping a new generation of artists and cultural managers, it remains largely invisible to the public sector. Providers of informal art education are neither systematically mapped nor analysed in quantitative and qualitative terms. Moreover, they are not invited to participate in public forums on art education, further limiting their impact.

## **3. Contemporary art occupies a marginal position within formal art education – it is barely taught at all.**

This issue is closely linked to the previous two sub-questions. Due to outdated curricula in many art education institutions and the artificial separation between practical training and humanities-based theoretical disciplines, students in formal art education pro-

grammes do not engage with contemporary art – whether European, global, or Ukrainian. While some informal education initiatives (in particular, those listed as examples above) attempt to address this gap, their efforts remain insufficient.

Field studies conducted by key experts and analysts within the RES-POL project identified several critical shortcomings:

- Lack of qualifications in the history and theory of contemporary world, European, and Ukrainian art.
- Insufficient expertise among staff in state museums regarding contemporary art, independent curation, and modern exhibition practices – these skills differ significantly from conservation and cultural heritage management. Limited knowledge and training in digital archiving and collection digitisation in state museums.
- Absence of an educational programme in ‘Curating in Visual Arts’ within state higher education institutions.

**The role of the curator is a defining element of contemporary art.** A greater number of trained curators would not only improve the quality and understanding of contemporary artistic practices but also enhance cultural diplomacy by making Ukrainian contemporary art more accessible to European and global audiences. Despite this, state educational institutions lack sufficient programmes for training art curators. At present, undergraduate degrees in visual arts are offered under two key specialities: 023 ‘Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Restoration,’ and 034 ‘Cultural Studies.’ However, higher education institutions design their own curricula within these categories. For example, the Lviv National Academy of Arts offers educational programmes in ‘History and Theory of Art’ and ‘Cultural Studies and Art Expertise’ within the 023 ‘Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Restoration’ speciality. The National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture provides educational programmes such as ‘Art History. Theory and History of Art’ and ‘Art History. Organisation and Management of Artistic Culture’ under the same speciality. However, these curricula do not align with European or American programmes in curatorial studies. As a result, graduates of these programmes do not acquire the necessary knowledge and skills expected in contemporary art curation or culture studies. The core weakness of all higher art education programmes lies in their outdated theoretical foundations, which place excessive emphasis on art history rather than contemporary art theory.

#### **4. Lack of Textbooks, Teaching Materials / Notebooks, and Sheet Music both original and translated, which would integrate Ukrainian art education into the European and world context and foreign key textbooks and texts on art history**

One key issue identified in the focus group study conducted by Vox Agency on behalf of the RES-POL project in the spring of 2024 is the reliance on Soviet and/or Russian textbooks, as well as sources and literature translated into Russian, due to the lack of translations of European and global primary sources into Ukrainian. In particular, field studies conducted by key experts and analysts within the RES-POL project identified several critical shortcomings:

- Insufficient educational literature written or translated into Ukrainian, which calls for the creation of new textbooks.
- Limited access to international sources, including electronic resources, to widen access to global knowledge and research.
- Absence of key translations of texts on the history and theory of art into Ukrainian,. General lack of modern professional literature for art education in the visual arts sector.

The analytical note on performing art, created within the framework of the RES-POL project, highlights the issue of an outdated material and technical base, as well as a shortage of both scientific and methodological publications in Ukrainian, including the translations of essential fundamental and applied materials. Higher education institutions lack publishing departments, which prevents them from addressing these issues and challenges independently. There are currently no specific state programmes aimed at supporting the creation and adaptation of scientific, methodological, and educational materials for art education.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications is working on the creation of an electronic repository of educational and methodological literature for cultural and [artistic education](#).

The critical issue of the lack of modern textbooks – both original works by Ukrainian authors and translations of key international texts – will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

## **5. Lack of Teachers with Relevant Scientific/Practical Experience. Lack of teachers from abroad**

A key issue for the art sector in general is the challenge of supporting young personnel and performers. Even before the full-scale invasion, the country faced problems with the quality of education, including difficulties in involving practising artists and cultural managers in teaching. As one respondent noted: *‘When, for example, you are appointed a department assistant, and you have 7 teaching hours a week, and you are busy filling out papers 24/7 instead of teaching. Students are wonderful, but working with them in conditions of such limited resources from the teacher-practitioner is very difficult. After these experiments and after the decline of the implementation of the Law on Dual Education, students’ classes with practitioners on a permanent basis stopped. Those single lectures or meetings with “stars” or managers are not taken into account, which [meetings] do not really have a long-term impact.’*

The RES-POL project’s analytical note on visual arts, prepared by Oleksandra Kushchenko in the summer of 2024, also speaks to the insufficient number of younger teachers and the obstacles to their involvement.

A specific challenge that emerged from the analytical field surveys within the RES-POL project concerns the **involvement of teachers from abroad**. This includes specialists from Ukraine who have left as refugees during the full-scale invasion or as labour migrants earlier and are willing to remain in the cultural and educational sector of Ukraine and cooperate with art education institutions as teachers. In particular, field studies conducted by key experts and analysts within the RES-POL project identified several critical shortcomings:

- The need for special procedures and tax regimes for “nomadic specialists” who are abroad but work in or for Ukrainian cultural institutions.
- Lack of support for the return of specialists from abroad and mechanisms for maintaining contact with them.
- Reluctance within the sector to accept and integrate foreign specialists (whether they hold citizenship of other countries or lack knowledge of the Ukrainian language).

The critical issue of models and solutions for attracting teachers from abroad will be addressed by the RES-POL project’s key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.



## **6. Lack of Educational Programs for Sound and Light Directors**

Iryna Chuzhynova and Olena Apchel, as authors of the analytical survey on performing arts conducted within the framework of the RES-POL project in 2023, indicate a lack of educational programmes for the so-called technical professions to meet the needs of the performing sector – in particular, sound directors and lighting operators. Sound directors and lighting operators are trained by the only institution of professional pre-higher education in the country – the [Odesa Theatre and Art Professional College](#), which leads to an acute shortage of workers in the labour market and a forced situation of attracting workers with low qualifications, requiring cultural institutions to independently qualify these specialists in the process of their work. Obviously, this negatively affects the quality of the cultural product.

The lack of educational programmes for related specialities (sound engineers, lighting engineers, curators, critics, etc.) is also mentioned in the analytical note on the audio art sector by Kateryna Alymova.

The critical issue of the lack of educational programmes for sound and lighting directors will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

## **7. The Challenge of Involving the Professional Community in the Formation and Adaptation of Educational Requests**

Educational materials and programmes need to be rethought, and this rethinking requires the involvement of all stakeholders, including representatives of the market and the professional community. The consultations with the team of the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education, mentioned above, indicate the need to enhance cooperation between the culture and arts sector (employers) and formal art education in shaping and adapting art education. Specifically, there is a pressing need to involve practitioners from the culture and arts sector in initiating and developing professional standards, as well as in defining the demand for specialisations that align with market needs. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Culture and Education until 2027, entitled '[Education of Winners](#),' sets one of its goals as achieving 70% satisfaction of employers with the training of specialists in institutions of professional and specialised pre-higher and higher education. The authors of this analytical report consider this indicator unrealistic; however, for positive changes and for moving closer to this target, a neces-

sary prerequisite is inter-sectoral cooperation and a holistic view of the market (training) of personnel in the field of culture and art, which is possible only with the involvement of all players in this market.

The critical issue of forms and models of synergistic cooperation in the field of art and culture, and art education for more effective formation of educational requests will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

#### **8. Educational Losses due to the Fact that an Entire Generation does not have Access to Offline Education**

It is urgent to catch up on the curriculum and overcome the gaps or “grey areas” in education that were caused by prolonged online learning. Cultural actors and teachers in the field of performing arts, who participated in focus groups organised by Vox Agency on behalf of the RES-POL project in the spring of 2024, have particularly emphasised this. Additionally, an analytical note on visual arts by Oleksandra Kushchenko, created in the summer of 2024, highlights the inadequacy of art school programmes due to the predominance of online learning under unstable internet conditions. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Culture and Education until 2027, entitled [‘Education of Winners,’](#) also references the *‘educational losses caused by long-term education of students during the pandemic and war.’*

In 2024, the State Education Quality Service issued [recommendations](#) on compensating for the so-called “educational losses” – losses in the educational process (for example, the transition of institutions from full-time to distance and mixed learning, or the unstable conditions for organising the educational process due to air raids and power outages), which affected the learning outcomes of students. These recommendations concern losses in learning time and learning outcomes for secondary school students, though they may also be (partially) applicable to out-of-school, school, and higher art education. However, the authors of this analytical report believe that the current status quo, with losses in learning time and outcomes, cannot be fully addressed by any policies or decisions. We must **acknowledge what has been lost and take this into account throughout, while creating any educational solutions for applicants who began or continued their studies after 2020.**



## 4. Institutional Reform and Management Capacity

This section integrates two key issues and challenges that, according to the ranking of stakeholders in the art community, are the most urgent. These are the issues and challenges of **'the need to optimise the network of state-funded cultural institutions in terms of product quality and institutional effectiveness'** (20.1% of respondents identified this as the highest priority, with another 20.1% placing it in second place) and the issue of **'lack of management competencies at different levels of institutional management'** (20.1% of respondents ranked this as the highest priority).

During consultations and focus group discussions, representatives of the art sector repeatedly emphasised the direct cause-and-effect relationship between these issues and challenges. On the one hand, the lack of competition in cultural production stifles managerial competition, which would otherwise drive the continuous development of managers – not only in operational matters but, crucially, in strategic thinking. This includes integrating contemporary knowledge in cultural management and developing a deep understanding of the cultural context, particularly through expertise in art history, contemporary art theory, cultural studies, and cultural anthropology. On the other hand, reforming the network of cultural institutions is impossible without first enhancing managerial capacity. The reform process necessitates greater decision-making autonomy – and, consequently, increased responsibility for risks – which is unattainable without strong governance and quality leadership.

## **4.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue**

The issue of reforming the network of cultural institutions is included in the draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#), which is being developed by the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications at the time of writing this baseline report. The document states, in particular, that *‘the inefficient network of cultural institutions and uneven access to cultural services is one of the main problems that limits opportunities for different groups of the population to fully engage in cultural life and benefit from it’* and that **‘the network of cultural institutions inherited from Soviet times has not undergone any significant renewal during the years of independence.’** Among the tasks outlined within the relevant operational objective are the *‘review and optimisation of the network of cultural institutions’* and *‘support for the creation of modern multifunctional cultural institutions as spaces for community cohesion.’*

The issue of modernising cultural management and the cultural network was also addressed in the long-term strategy for the development of Ukrainian culture, [‘Strategy of Reforms,’](#) approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 1 February 2016. The tasks within this operational objective included, among others, the *‘development of a system of indicators to measure the impact of culture on socio-economic development,’* the *‘establishment of effective forms of public oversight through supervisory, public, and expert councils,’* and the *‘transition to a grant-based system of financing culture through the development of public-private partnerships and the expansion of the powers of cultural institutions.’*

## 4.2 Context of Institutional Reform

The network of state and municipal cultural institutions includes libraries, cultural centres, art schools, museums, theatres, philharmonics, and other enterprises, organisations, and institutions. According to statistical data provided by the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications in the draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#), as of early 2024, Ukraine's basic network of cultural institutions comprised 32,969 institutions. **The largest segment consists of rural, district, city, and regional cultural centres** – 14,791 as of early 2024, with the majority (over 70%) located in rural areas. **Libraries are the second-largest category**, with 12,908 public libraries and 9,930 specialised ones. The network of cultural institutions also includes over 900 museums, 110 theatres, 25 philharmonics, and 9 state circus enterprises.

We cannot provide such detailed statistics regarding the network of independent cultural and art institutions in Ukraine, nor any data robust enough to serve as a basis for formulating assumptions and verifying them. Independent art institutions operate under different legal forms – primarily as either public organisations or individual entrepreneurs. The former mainly use the CEA classification of 94.99 – Activities of public organisations. According to [YouControl](#), as of early 2025, there were 117,281 active organisations under this classification, but this figure likely represents the total number of all relevant public associations in Ukraine, spanning various fields – from volunteer work and youth associations to think tanks and organisations implementing technical assistance projects. As for registration under the category of individual entrepreneur, the available CEA classifications (e.g., 93.29 – Organisation of other types of recreation and entertainment') provide little insight. According to [YouControl](#), as of early 2025, there were 5,693 legal entities that could be classified as “art institutions” based on CEA data. However, even a cursory review of the list suggests that these are primarily state and municipal cultural institutions. Thus, while this key issue primarily concerns reforming the network of institutions that receive funding from state or local budgets – as well as strengthening the managerial competencies of cultural managers across all organisations, regardless of ownership structure – **there is almost no data on the quantitative composition or qualitative indicators of effectiveness among independent art institutions**. Despite the widespread perception that independent art institutions operate more effectively, this remains an unverified assumption. **We lack data on what percentage of such institutions are truly effective within the overall landscape, and we have not established criteria to measure this effectiveness**. Consequently, there is a risk of “survivor bias” – a logical fallacy arising from conclusions based only on visible and successful cases, without accounting for those institutions that failed, closed, or proved less effective.

Among other considerations, and within this framework, the authors of this baseline report propose to examine and analyse the changes that have occurred in the network of cultural institutions – both state-funded and independent – since the full-scale invasion. According to the draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#), as of the end of October 2024, 2,093 cultural institutions had suffered damage due to military actions, 361 of which were destroyed. Between 2022 and the end of 2024, 197 cultural and educational institutions in the cultural sector were relocated to safer regions – 83 of them have continued their activities, while 114 relocated but did not resume their primary functions. There are no available statistics on the relocation or closure of non-state cultural and artistic institutions.

As noted earlier, the issues and challenges of modernising and reforming the network of cultural institutions gained relevance at the state level following the onset of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014. The growing budget deficit and population decline after the full-scale invasion in 2022 **transformed the modernisation agenda into an urgent need to optimise the network of cultural institutions**. Since at least early summer 2024, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications has publicly advocated for optimisation – [primarily in the sense of reducing the number of institutions](#).

The study [‘Organisational and Legal Forms of Cultural Institutions: Current Status and Necessary Changes,’](#) conducted by the Museum of Contemporary Art NGO with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and prepared for the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications as the main beneficiary, highlights *‘a certain legal chaos in the regulation of organisational and legal forms.’* The study attributes this to inconsistencies, gaps, and contradictions in various regulations: *‘In Ukraine, public cultural institutions are established under the organisational and legal forms of “organisation” (“institution”) and “enterprise.” Each of these models has flaws that hinder the independence and autonomy of the public cultural sector – from the entrepreneurial nature of operations to the inability to independently approve organisational structures, staffing levels, and employee numbers. The management of cultural institutions lacks the necessary powers to respond effectively and promptly to today’s challenges.’*

Taking these findings into account, alongside qualitative analytical surveys within the RES-POL project – particularly in-depth interviews and focus group discussions – we can assert that **a number of art organisations, including state, municipal, and independent institutions, have demonstrated adaptability in response to new challenges. Many have successfully developed flexible strategies to sustain their activities** following the full-

scale invasion. For instance, after the evacuation of the Odesa National Art Museum's collections to a safer location, large exhibition spaces became available, leading to a significant increase in exhibition activity: while the museum hosted 5–6 exhibitions annually before the full-scale war, by the end of 2023, it had presented 25 projects. Similarly, the Yermilov Centre for Contemporary Art in Kharkiv served as a bomb shelter for artists, their families, and art centre employees at the start of the full-scale invasion. By spring 2022, exhibition activities had resumed, and according to its director, [Natalia Ivanova, the centre has not cancelled a single event or exhibition since then](#). Notably, the Yermilov Centre exemplifies an effective public-private partnership model – initiated and founded by the Association of Alumni of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, it operates as an independent public organisation while receiving ongoing infrastructural support from the university, all while maintaining conceptual and artistic independence. This model, along with the management capacity of its team, has enabled the Yermilov Centre to establish itself as a prominent hub for the artistic process both in Ukraine and internationally over the past 10 years.

These examples of effectiveness, adaptability, and self-sufficiency among state, municipal, and independent art institutions are not isolated (*At the same time, we do not know the percentage of these examples compared to other examples with lower efficiency. There is a lack of data to calculate this ratio*). Certain parallels can be drawn between their operational models. For example, in Lviv, RadioGarage – an exhibition and multifunctional space owned by the Lviv Radio Public Enterprise – hosted a Centre for the Support of Forcibly Displaced Ukrainians in 2022, while fully resuming its programme activities in 2023. Similar socio-cultural initiatives aimed at establishing temporary hubs for displaced individuals and volunteers within art institutions have also been observed elsewhere. In Dnipro, the [Centre for Contemporary Culture](#), managed by several public organisations under the leadership of Andrii Palash, has played a comparable role. Likewise, [the Frankivsk Drama Theatre, even before the full-scale invasion, announced a long-term strategy to develop a multicultural and interdisciplinary hub](#). All of these examples serve as a basis for assuming that there are a certain number of efficient and effective (or even super-effective) institutions and that **good governance and visionary leadership are an important component of this effectiveness**.

According to participants in the focus group discussions held in spring 2024 as part of the RES-POL project, most spheres of art and culture experienced a noticeable revival after 2014, driven by an influx of young, proactive professionals. However, for many of these talented cultural managers, the art sector has never become a fully professional

field. Ukraine still has a relatively **small cohort of specialists** who can be regarded as cultural managers or administrators in the cultural sector, possessing competencies aligned with contemporary realities and comparable to the qualifications of their European counterparts. In each sphere – music, fine arts, visual arts, and performing arts – the number of such managers remains limited. Although the period after 2014 saw the emergence of a certain level of institutional human resource capacity, respondents currently assess this capacity as clearly insufficient. The situation has been further exacerbated by the outflow of cultural professionals abroad following the start of the full-scale invasion, increasing the pressure and workload on the already limited number of individuals with the necessary skill



### 4.3 Key issues and challenges

‘The need to optimise the network of state-funded cultural institutions in terms of product quality and institutional effectiveness,’ alongside ‘insufficient managerial competencies at different levels of institutional management,’ are significant key issues and challenges. These issues and challenges are elaborated further through a set of sub-questions formulated within the framework of analytical investigations within the RES-POL project.

1. **Lack of a competitive principle for financing state and municipal institutions, based on an extensive system of quality criteria and key performance indicators.**

This issue is cross-cutting and is addressed in several analytical reports within the RES-POL project, which were worked on by experts from various sectors. Specifically, the analytical note on performing arts highlights that **‘it is not stagnant institutions that need financing, but providers of change – that is, those who are able to develop new meanings.’** The [analytical note on visual arts](#) stresses the need to preserve and prioritise support for those institutions that have demonstrated particular effectiveness and sustainability after the full-scale invasion. Meanwhile, the analytical note on audio arts draws attention to the lack of transparent mechanisms for distributing and utilising funds from state and local budgets between institutions of varying forms of ownership. In general, it can be inferred that there is a **growing demand for fairness within the arts sector – particularly for more transparent and equitable funding rules, which should be based not on inertia from the past, but on supporting institutions and teams capable of looking towards the future and realising that vision in cultural products and services.**

The call for reforming the principles of financing state institutions had existed previously within the cultural and artistic community, but it gained significant momentum after the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, as the main investor in the cultural ecosystem and the only state provider of project (rather than institutional) support under unified rules for both the public and independent sectors, de facto ceased to fulfil this role. This shift began in the spring of 2021 due to questionable decisions by the [Supervisory Board](#), leading to a loss of trust in the institution. This issue reached its peak with the onset of the full-scale invasion, while there is a clear correlation between the dynamics of institutional flourishing or decline and the terms of the Supervisory Board. Under the board’s [2021–2024 term](#) (first chaired by Mykhailo Zakharevych and later by Larysa Mud-

rak), the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation largely moved away from its role as an ecosystem player. However, with the new [2024–2027 term](#) (chaired by Natalia Kryvda), there has been a notable effort to restore this position.

Nonetheless, it would be mistaken to assume that the demand for optimisation of the cultural institutions network stems solely from the dynamics of conflict over limited resources in the artistic field. As of the end of 2024, this call is also grounded in significant demographic and financial factors that cannot be overlooked. Moreover, amidst a general shortage of analytical data and considerable gaps in sectoral research, it can be assumed that little is known about the real and current cultural needs of communities that an effective network of cultural institutions should address. The existing structure is often more an inertial echo of the Soviet system of ideological education through cultural practices than a response to these evolving needs. At the same time, the issue of optimisation and modernisation is frequently associated by employees of local cultural institutions with closure due to budget cuts (*This was shared during the discussion of the draft MCSC Culture Strategy in various thematic groups*). This highlights the need to develop criteria and performance indicators that are both reasonable and comprehensible for the sector. After all, participants in discussions on the Culture Strategy project have provided examples where the forced closure of institutions occurred as a cost-saving measure, despite the effectiveness of these cultural institutions.

In 2020, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications conducted a [review of budget expenditures related to the financial support of national theatres for the period of 2017–2019](#). Among its conclusions was a proposal to implement a **“formula” for funding, where part of the allocation would be a fixed amount, with the remainder distributed based on performance indicators**, using a flexible approach. At the same time, employee salaries would be capped at no more than 80% of the allocated amount for operational expenses, with provisions for development and capital expenditures. This proposal has not yet been agreed upon or piloted in an experimental format. The authors of this report believe it is essential to organise an independent evaluation of this formula by a group of independent experts, as well as pilot it in a limited format to assess its impact.



## 2. Changes in the legal forms of state and municipal cultural institutions are necessary.

The draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#) includes the liberalisation of the working conditions of state and municipal cultural institutions at the operational objective level. In particular, it recommends implementing experimental projects on potential changes to the organisational and legal forms of cultural institutions and, based on the results, updating the relevant regulatory framework.

The analytical note on libraries within the RES-POL project highlights the issue of the absence of legal entity status for the vast majority of libraries. Such a status would, first and foremost, enable these institutions to operate as business entities and conduct activities independently, including financial operations. This would facilitate the development and transformation of the library network, contingent upon appropriate management capacity.

The analytical note on visual arts within the RES-POL project outlines that the current organisational and legal forms of state and municipal institutions hinder their ability to quickly adapt, make prompt decisions, and attract additional funding.

The [‘Study of the Ecosystem of the Circulation of Works of Art in Ukraine’ \(2023\)](#) proposes introducing **a new organisational and legal form** at the legislative level with the following features:

- Non-profit nature of activities, where profits are not redirected to the state (or local) budget, but reinvested into the development of the institution.
- An expanded list of powers for management bodies, including the ability to approve the organisational structure, staffing, and employee numbers within the budget, without requiring approval from the founder.
- Diverse funding sources: funding from state, regional, and local budgets, as well as participation in national and international grant programmes.
- The ability to carry out entrepreneurial activities that align with the cultural institution’s objectives, including renting space for restaurants or cafés, or selling souvenirs, without resorting to grey market practices.

- Independent auditing of the institution's financial activities, enabling the assessment of income and expenditure efficiency and the identification of any misuse or violations.
- The introduction of an extensive system of management bodies.

The authors of this report believe it is necessary to incorporate these recommendations into the ongoing reform process, as well as to involve the expert team from the aforementioned report in the relevant working groups.

### **3. The Need for Greater Financial Autonomy of State and Municipal Cultural Institutions – Including for Working with Grant Funds and Donations. State and municipal cultural institutions should benefit from attracting and earning additional funds**

Due to the bureaucratic nature of the procedures associated with the operation of funds attracted from grants and donations, state and municipal cultural institutions are often forced to create “satellites” (or parallel structures) in the form of public organizations or charitable foundations. This workaround is necessary because the funds from a cultural institution's special fund – financed through non-budgetary sources not prohibited by law – are still subject to the same restrictions as the main state-funded budget. Essentially, regardless of whether the funds come from public budgets or external grants, the funds are considered public and fall under stringent state control. This makes the efficient handling of grant funds from external donors not only almost impossible, but also legally meaningless – after all, grant funds from private and international donors should be handled differently than government purchases using taxpayers' money. Furthermore, with grant tranches often closing just before the fiscal year ends, institutions without commercial bank accounts (aside from the state treasury) risk not registering payments in time, which can result in the forfeiture of funds.

By creating these satellite organizations, cultural institutions can more effectively use grants and donations in alignment with Ukrainian legislation, accounting rules, and grant agreement. These satellite organizations are typically led by employees of the respective cultural institutions, allowing, for example, state museums or theatres to relatively quickly attract grant funding for the creation of (main or additional) cultural products and services. In other words, operating with grant funds (even state grants) is more accessible through an organization outside the budget sphere. This also means that **at least some of the teams of state and municipal cultural institutions have the**

relevant competencies, organisational and visionary capacities to attract and use grant funds, but the legal and financial framework does not allow them to realise this potential within the institutions themselves. This practice should become a thing of the past, as it creates the effect of non-transparent processes and alternative structures.

The issue of attracting funds outside of grants also presents an ironic challenge. For state and municipal cultural institutions, it is often not profitable to generate income and invest it in infrastructure such as machinery, transport, or equipment. The reason is that any additional income must be put on the balance sheet and declared, and consequently, the institution's financial support from the state or local budgets will be reduced by the amount of that income. **This mechanism, designed to encourage the development of cultural institutions and save the budget, has the opposite effect in practice.** To avoid income that could lead to profit for the institution, cultural institutions initiate bonus payments or routine repairs at the end of the year (as a rule, these funds are not enough for capital expenditures, and even if they are, it is not realistic to implement a capital repair project due to the procedure).

A similar issue arises with the rental of space by state-funded cultural institutions. Rent from state-owned property is subject to a 50% deduction to the State Property Fund (the deduction rate for municipal institutions is set by the governing bodies at the community level). As a result, renting space is not financially viable for these institutions, as they cannot accumulate sufficient funds for capital repairs or other necessary improvements. Local governing bodies are reluctant to allocate additional funds for such purposes, and since 2022, they have stopped providing these funds altogether.

Another pressing issue is the **lack of transparent financial management in cultural institutions**. Most institutions do not publish detailed annual financial reports, and budget documents only provide summary information. Income-related data is typically accessible only to management bodies. Increasing transparency in financial reporting can be achieved by allowing for public oversight and establishing clear mechanisms of accountability in the management of public funds.

In 2020, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications conducted a review of budget expenditures related to the financial support of national theatres for the period of 2017–2019, concluding that 'the amount of charitable support – such as sponsorship and patronage – received by these institutions accounted for no more than 1–2% of their total income. [...] In particular, **for the successful development of philanthropic activities, it is essential to establish a favourable legal framework**, including an effective

fiscal mechanism, and to remove obstacles that hinder the development of philanthropic initiatives. In other words, institutional continuity, political will, and advocacy are necessary to submit for consideration and voting the already prepared draft law [‘On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding Philanthropic Activities in the Sphere of Culture.’](#)

This issue also emphasises that it should be profitable for state and municipal cultural institutions to generate additional funds – for example, by renting out specific spaces. This is not a new issue, and work on it has been ongoing for several years. Notably, in 2023, the PPV agency published [recommendations on simplifying the procedure for leasing municipal property of cultural institutions](#).

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#) identifies *‘simplification of the economic activities of cultural institutions’* and *‘creation of a system of economic incentives for attracting extra-budgetary, patronage, and charitable funds to support the cultural sector’* as one of the priorities of Ukraine’s cultural policy for the next five years. Measures to liberalise the economic activities of cultural institutions and create motivational tools for attracting and generating additional funds require support both at the level of consistent and sustainable political decisions and through targeted support from the artistic community and international partners.

#### **4. Reform of the network of cultural institutions is unachievable without reforming the cultural departments**

Furthermore, analytical research within the framework of the RES-POL project suggests that the reform, optimization, and modernization of the network of cultural institutions must occur in tandem with similar processes for the cultural departments, particularly at the territorial community level. In line with this, the draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#) identifies *‘updating legal principles and changing approaches to managing the cultural sector at the regional level in the post-war period’* as one of the priorities of Ukraine’s cultural policy for the next five years.

## **5. Lack of a national Museum of Contemporary Art (or such a museum in a public-private partnership)**

In Ukrainian society and even within the art community, there remains a prevalent perception that cultural heritage consists only of ancient art objects and cultural values created over 50 years ago. However, cultural heritage extends beyond the past – it encompasses the present, as well as cultural products that were created in our time and which serve as significant evidence of historical events and the evolution of society and the state in recent decades, particularly during Ukraine's independence. This understanding aligns with UNESCO's [definition of cultural heritage](#), which includes both tangible and intangible heritage possessing confirmed value – be it symbolic, historical, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological, scientific, or social.

The legacy of Soviet-era museum governance, which focused on propaganda functions and systematically excluded contemporary and critical art from collections, has led not only to the near absence of other trends – except modernism and Soviet socialism—in our Soviet-era museum collections, but also to a **failure in developing a culture of independent curation, including that of contemporary art**. Ukrainian contemporary art produced since independence is mostly found in private collections, both in Ukraine and abroad, or in foreign museums. **To this day, Ukraine does not have a single representative state collection of contemporary art nor a state or municipal Museum of Contemporary Art.** While the presence of a certain segment of the private sector, which has taken responsibility for contemporary art, is valuable, it should not lead the state to withdraw from preserving this aspect of cultural heritage or from building its own contemporary art collection. Private museums and contemporary art centres may have limited commercial interests in developing collections, and they could potentially cease operations in Ukraine, relocate their collections abroad, or even sell them (including to individuals and entities with ties to Russia). They may also decline to lend important works from their collections to significant global exhibitions of Ukrainian art. These decisions are often based on the goodwill of the owners, and similar cases have already occurred throughout Ukraine's post-independence history. Thus, while public-private partnerships for creating a Museum of Contemporary Art are feasible, they should be approached with caution to prevent potential abuse tied to economic or political influence by private actors. **In Western European countries, patronage in the field of contemporary art is a well-established practice with a centuries-old history and a defined ethical framework. In contrast, in Eastern Europe of the post-Soviet bloc, this sphere is still largely dominated by (peri)oligarchic structures that treat contemporary art as a status symbol – one that can be instrumentalised, often at relatively low cost, for**



**reputation laundering and the promotion of private interests** (this can be seen in actors like Viktor Pinchuk, who uses the PinchukArtCentre and the YES conference as platforms for such interests.). Therefore, in Ukraine, there is a need for both the development of an ethical framework surrounding patronage – one that excludes commercial and political exploitation – and for enhancing the autonomy of the public sector in the field of contemporary art, which is currently overshadowed by oligarchic players, with only a few independent voices holding disproportionately smaller resources.

A relevant and instructive example in this regard is the history of the [Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art](#), which officially opened in 2024. This museum was initially founded as a nomadic institution in 2005 and has since accumulated a collection of over 1,000 works. In 2016, the museum temporarily relocated to the Pavilion on the Vistula, a building originally constructed in Berlin as a temporary space for the Kunsthalle Berlin (2008–2010). Following this, the building was taken over by the [Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary \(TBA-21\) Foundation](#), which is owned by [Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza](#) (formerly of the House of Habsburg). By Francesca's decision, this pavilion was moved to Warsaw and given to the Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art for free use. In October 2024, the Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art opened its main location opposite the Palace of Culture and Science (*At the opening in October 2024, only 9 artworks were exhibited, including 2 works by Ukrainian artists Zhanna Kadyrova and Kateryna Lisovenko. The Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art opened without an exhibition in order to first introduce visitors to the museum building, which is a work of art in itself. The permanent exhibition with the collection will open in February 2025*), vacating the pavilion near the Vistula (*It is noteworthy that the last exhibition of the Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art in this pavilion was an exhibition of works by Maria Prymachenko entitled 'A Tiger Came to Garden'*). For some time, the possibility of transferring the pavilion to Kyiv was discussed, to continue the Berlin-Warsaw-Kyiv chain (Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza visited art institutions and artists in Ukraine after the full-scale invasion and was one of the co-founders of the Museums for [Ukraine initiative](#), which provided financial support for initiatives aimed at preserving cultural heritage). The implementation of this scenario would have meant that Ukraine could receive a pavilion for its future Museum of Contemporary Art, without the need to build one or search for an existing building. This did not happen (the unofficial reason being the Ukrainian side's unpreparedness), and for now, the premises will be temporarily transformed into the [Pavilion of Dance and Other Performing Arts](#).

The draft [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#) also mentions the need to create a Museum of Contemporary Art as one of its operational goals. Within the framework of the RES-POL project, together with the Museum of Contempo-

rary [Art NGO](#), which has been working on this topic since 2020, proposals for models of such a museum, including financial models, will be developed. Proposals from other actors in the sector will also be taken into account.

## **6. Need for reform of the National Union of Artists and regional artists' unions.**

Professional unions play a crucial role in the ecosystem of the sector – when they are numerous and effective, the need for dialogue and coordination within the sector is met at this level, reducing the necessity for separate solutions. Furthermore, effective unions with a representative membership of artists can address gaps in both quantitative and qualitative data, which have been repeatedly highlighted in the analytical documents of the RES-POL project. This would provide a clearer picture of the actual number of independent artists, the average frequency of their exhibitions, the volume of their sales, etc. Access to such data would enable more precise analytics and better-informed recommendations, while the availability of mailing and contact lists of such unions would facilitate communication with the artistic community – from both state institutions and independent organisations.

The analytical note on visual arts examines the institutional shortcomings of the National Union of Artists of Ukraine, which has remained largely unchanged since the Soviet era, with no significant attempts to rethink or reform its management culture and interaction practices – despite its importance to the ecosystem. We assume that similar characteristics may be found in the National Union of Writers and the National Union of Composers, but the relevant analytical notes do not contain this data.

The structure of the [National Union of Artists of Ukraine](#) comprises 33 regional and territorial organisations (including Crimea). The union's resources are limited, and its assets outdated. However, this infrastructure is funded by the state budget and exceeds the resources available to other independent institutions. For instance, respondents in both this visual arts note and the RES-POL focus group discussions have repeatedly emphasised the lack of exhibition spaces – yet membership in the union grants access to permanently operating exhibition spaces in city centres. Despite this, many artists, particularly those who studied and began their careers after Ukraine gained independence, choose not to join the union due to its bureaucratic and outdated approach to management and communication. In contrast, there are successful examples of professional unions in European countries, such as Macedonia and [Croatia](#), which function differently – serving as dynamic, progressive centres that not only support artists in developing their careers but also transparently manage shared infrastructure, including exhibition spaces and workshops.

Regrettably, the difficulty of Ukrainian civil society in self-organising into dynamic and effective networks or unions is a lingering post-Soviet challenge. The National Union of

Artists is one manifestation of this issue, but there are more successful examples, such as the [‘Coalition for Culture’ NGO](#) established in 2021. However, this association does not receive state funding or have access to cultural infrastructure that it could distribute among its members and affiliates. In fact, the **lack of competitive access to cultural infrastructure – an issue that affects both state and independent players** – is a fundamental challenge in this area. Within the RES-POL project, policy proposals will be developed to address this issue and ensure fair and competitive access to cultural infrastructure for all stakeholders.

## **7. Shortage of professionals capable of managing institutions in uncertain conditions and / or establishing stable international partnerships.**

Managerial capacity issues and challenges in the arts sector – affecting state, municipal, and independent actors – can be categorised into the following groups:

### **7.1. Insufficient managerial competencies:**

- Insufficient expertise in ethical management, strategic planning, financial management, marketing, and fundraising;
- Limited experience in establishing and implementing long-term international partnerships and projects;
- Inadequate proficiency in English (and other foreign languages);
- Insufficient knowledge of agile organisational models;
- Lack of experience in multi-scenario financial planning and the creation of reserve funds (financial “safety nets”);
- Lack of skills in developing management models that ensure leadership continuity and the sustained operation of institutions.

Participants in [focus groups conducted in spring 2024 as part of the RES-POL project](#) highlighted leadership challenges in **addressing ethical and value-based issues and challenges**. For instance, respondents pointed to the reluctance of the administration of the [National Academy of Music of Ukraine to remove the name of P.I. Tchaikovsky, despite ongoing protests by students and faculty](#).



To enhance the competitiveness of state and municipal cultural institutions, it is essential to provide high-quality training for their managers. However, respondents noted that the [National Academy of Managers of Culture and the Arts](#) fails to deliver this due to outdated and irrelevant curricula and faculty. According to focus group participants, state institutions frequently employ specialists with a “post-Soviet” mindset, resulting in a lack of genuine competition and the continued support of inefficient institutions. This hinders the sector’s development and its ability to meet contemporary standards and align with the European artistic context.

### 7.2. Gender Inequality:

- The persistence of gender inequality in leadership roles and the underrepresentation of women in top management positions, even during a full-scale war. This issue has been documented in analytical notes on the performing and audio arts, allowing us to infer broader structural barriers to women’s access to leadership in art forms linked to stage performances, audio production, and video recordings.

### 7.3. Lack of Continuity (in Leadership) within Art Institutions:

- Insufficient or absent support for leadership continuity in curatorship and cultural management;
- Low efficiency of the current system for appointing heads of institutions, its impact on the quality of events and programmes, and the lack of transparency and objectivity in selection processes;
- The need for periodic renewal of management teams in state and municipal institutions;
- Insufficient transparency and objectivity in competitions.

Participants in [focus group discussions held in spring 2024 as part of the RES-POL project](#) highlighted flaws in the competitive procedure for electing heads of cultural institutions, as outlined in the Law on Culture. Furthermore, during the full-scale war, appointments of cultural institution leaders have been made non-transparently, solely at the discretion of the head of the governing body, rather than through open competition: *‘The system is structured in such a way that a director seeking re-election has all the necessary tools to ensure that, while the procedures appear legally sound, the actual*

*voting process unfolds according to their preferences. I am not saying that everyone takes advantage of this, but these tools exist – and they should not.'*

In the independent sector, leadership continuity is further undermined by unstable and **precarious** working conditions, which leave institutions vulnerable to financial instability, underpricing, and exploitation. The sector often relies on project-based work and lacks stable financial models. In this context, focus group participants also pointed to the **absence of medium- and long-term institutional support programmes for independent institutions**. Such programmes would enable the most effective actors in the sector to dedicate more time and resources to ensuring team sustainability, institutional memory, and continuity. The RES-POL project will develop policy proposals and models for medium- and long-term institutional support for independent actors that demonstrate effectiveness.

The authors of this report have chosen to focus specifically on opportunities for financial and institutional sustainability, as these are the primary concerns of institutional leaders. Addressing these issues and challenges leaves them with limited resources and opportunities for capacity-building and skills development. At the same time, discussions with sector representatives frequently highlight staff development as a potential solution. This would require improving existing training mechanisms, expanding the number and diversity of institutions that offer professional development, and establishing a clear link between advanced training and wage progression.

## 5. Cultural Product

According to the ranking of key policy issues and challenges in the sector, **‘the lack of systematic investment in the creation of a relevant cultural product’** was identified as one of **the top five priority issues and challenges** in a survey of the artistic community. A total of 22.6% of respondents in the online ranking of key policy issues and challenges highlighted this as the most urgent matter requiring immediate resolution.

### 5.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue

The long-term strategy for the development of Ukrainian culture, ‘Strategy of Reforms,’ adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 1 February 2016, identified ‘ensuring state support for the national cultural product and the leading role of artists and culture managers in its creation, dissemination, and preservation’ as one of the five strategic directions of reform. At the operational level, the strategy outlined objectives such as ‘supporting individual artists and groups through the implementation of special grant programmes,’ ‘creating a flexible system of support for musical arts through grant provision,’ and [‘promoting the development of creative residency programmes.’](#)

Similarly, the draft of the latest [Strategy for the Development of Ukrainian Culture for 2025–2030](#) includes ‘stimulating the creation of a high-quality cultural and artistic product and fostering demand for it’ as one of its operational goals. The first tasks associated with this goal are ‘supporting local and national cultural initiatives through financing, grants, and partnerships.’

## 5.2 Context

According to UNESCO, a cultural product is a consumer product that conveys ideas, symbols, and ways of life. This includes [books, magazines, multimedia products, software, recordings, films, videos, audiovisual programmes, crafts, and fashion](#). Meanwhile, the [Law of Ukraine on National Cultural Product](#) defines a cultural product (or cultural production) as goods and services produced (or replicated) through cultural activity based on creative works, serving to meet citizens' creative, spiritual, and leisure needs (such as publications, films and their screenings, audio products like phonograms and albums, applied art, theatrical and circus performances, concerts, etc.).

For the purposes of this report, the term cultural product is understood as the outcome of cultural institutional and artistic activities, forming part of cultural identity and heritage. A cultural product may take various forms, including painting, sculpture, text, music, literature, theatre, dance, photography, and interdisciplinary expressions.

The creation of new cultural and artistic products is vital for supporting artists and the creative economy, reflecting identity, strengthening communities and society, shaping Ukraine's international image, and preserving and revitalising cultural heritage.

**The lack of systematic investment in the creation of a relevant cultural product** has led to stagnation in these processes. The Ukrainian Cultural Foundation (UCF) is the primary state investor in culture and the creative industries, yet following the full-scale invasion – and at the time of writing this baseline report – this key institution for Ukraine's cultural ecosystem has effectively lost its role. 'State support for the cultural sector through the UCF in 2022 was reduced to almost zero. In 2023–2024, the budget of the UCF is four times smaller than it was before the full-scale invasion. This means that the entire sector has been deprived of investment for creating new cultural products, and the independent sector is on the verge of survival,' Halyna Hryhorenko said in an in-depth interview conducted as part of an analytical note on audio arts. For the Ukrainian cultural and artistic landscape to function effectively, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation must consistently fulfil its strategic investment role through various forms of support. Additionally, it must facilitate synchronisation and collaboration between state and independent sectors by ensuring transparent, standardised rules of the game (in project financing), as this is a prerequisite for the sector to work. **When this institution fails to perform its function, or does so incompletely or ineffectively, deficits emerge throughout the cultural ecosystem, triggering secondary issues and challenges.** It is important to note that the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation does not necessarily have to rely solely on

state budget funding. Instead, it can attract financial resources from various sources, such as joint programmes with European donors. However, achieving this requires strong management capacity.

From 2022 to 2023, this deficit was partially compensated by international institutions. According to the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation's report, [‘Strategy for Adapting Culture and Creative Industries to War Conditions,’](#) their support has been the most significant for the Ukrainian cultural and artistic environment. However, this assistance has been largely reactive and lacks a systemic approach. As a result, the call to support the creation of a relevant Ukrainian cultural product is a recurring theme across multiple analytical notes within the RES-POL project.

At the same time, analytical notes from the audio and visual sectors highlight an **increasing demand for cultural products**. The repertoire policies of many institutions have shifted, with a growing proportion of Ukrainian music from various historical periods featured in concert programmes. This development stems both from archival research and the (re)discovery of previously overlooked artists, as well as from the composition of new works. However, the rising demand for Ukrainian audio products often exceeds the capacity of archives or the availability of digitised scores. There is also a notable increase in commissions for the composition and performance of contemporary Ukrainian academic music. Meanwhile, exhibitions are attracting record [numbers of visitors](#), new [auction records](#) are being set, and theatres are experiencing strong demand, particularly for productions featuring Ukrainian repertoire. Due to restrictions on men's travel abroad during martial law, contemporary Ukrainian art on the international stage is currently represented predominantly by women. This trend is reflected in the [Artfacts Heat Index report](#): among the 25 most successful artists in the category of works valued up to \$10,000, Kateryna Lisovenko ranks sixth, Lesia Khomenko fourteenth, and Nikolay Karabinovich twenty-second. In the \$10,000 to \$50,000 price category, Zhanna Kadyrova holds fourth place.

However, at the Cultural Diplomacy Forum held in October 2024, Olena Zelenska noted that [‘interest in Ukraine \[abroad\] is entering a process of stagnation.’](#) This suggests that sustained global attention to Ukrainian art can only be ensured through the consistent quality of its cultural products. If conditions for cultural production are not ensured, this could result not only in a **shortage of high-quality cultural works “for export”** but also in an increased tendency for key artists, unable to realise their potential in Ukraine, to leave the country. Additionally, it could lead to a dominance of oversimplified and monotonous artistic expressions.

### 5.3 Key issues and challenges

Below is an analysis of the key issue of the **‘lack of systematic investment in the creation of a relevant cultural product,’** broken down into narrower needs identified within the analytical framework of the RES-POL project.

1. **The lack of adequate support for individual artistic activity** is recognised by stakeholders as one of the key factors currently hindering the creation of a new cultural product. In other words, this point concerns the mechanisms of support for individual artists (for example, through residencies or scholarships) and individual works of art (for example, through production grants or the commissioning tool), in contrast to institutional support, which is provided through grant-based project support mechanisms.

**The commissioning** of works of art refers to the creation by an artist of a specific work or event at the request of an art institution. In this case, the institution acts as the “commissioner” (as with the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications in organising the Ukrainian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale), outlining certain parameters for the work (for example, the theme or technical specifications), but the artist retains the artistic freedom to interpret the project. The details of the commissioning (or ordering) of the artwork – specifically the ownership rights to the created work – should be outlined in the contract.

This challenge is multifaceted and manifests itself at various levels. Specifically, based on five analytical notes in the Culture and Arts sector (covering literature, libraries, visual, audio, and performing arts), as well as focus group discussions conducted by the Vox Populi Agency within the RES-POL project, the following areas of work have been identified as requiring priority support:

- Programmes to support individual artistic activity (individual scholarships and grants for artistic work, as opposed to project-based support).
- Intra-Ukrainian artistic (literary, visual, and performing) residencies (in particular, for male artists), which have proven to be effective platforms for not only creating new works of art but also for launching new art schools and movements.
- Programmes to support contemporary composers and playwrights.



- Support programmes for the translation of modern Ukrainian literature into other languages, and programmes for the professional development and recognition of literary translators working from Ukrainian into foreign languages.
- Support programmes for writers and translators working with the Crimean Tatar language.
- Support mechanisms for cultural journalists, as well as art critics and researchers of Ukrainian art (in particular, research scholarships for working with archives and searching for scores).
- Support programmes for Ukrainian book scouts abroad.

The key issue of the lack of adequate support for individual artistic activity will be addressed by the RES-POL project team of key experts in order to develop policy proposals for the next phase of the project.

2. The necessary foundation for the creation, development, and distribution of a cultural product is **cultural infrastructure**.

Without it, the full functioning of the cultural sector, the attraction of investments, and the creation of a competitive cultural product are impossible. In this context, there is currently an issue with the lack of modern premises for cultural needs, as well as the need to update outdated infrastructure and equipment. Participants in [focus group discussions conducted by the Vox Populi Agency within the RES-POL project](#) in the spring of 2024 also highlighted the lack of cultural infrastructure for the implementation of independent projects.

For example, there is a **shortage of modern exhibition spaces and concert halls**. This issue has several dimensions – on the one hand, there is a lack of music halls, while on the other, existing venues are often not suitable for productions of a certain level due to their acoustic, technical, or safety limitations. For example, in Kharkiv, by order of the Defence Council, shelters must be specially [designed protective structures](#) – such as bomb-shelters or anti-radiation shelters. It is often not feasible to build such structures in existing cultural institutions due to technical or financial constraints. There is also a lack of venues that meet the growing demands for inclusiveness. As for exhibition halls, their scarcity has been repeatedly highlighted by respondents in in-depth interviews conducted as part of the analytical note on visual arts and in focus group discussions in spring 2024 within the RES-POL project. However, in each regional centre, there are

exhibition spaces belonging to the regional union of artists, where landmark exhibitions that attract the attention of art critics or cultural journalists are extremely rare. This suggests that the exhibition infrastructure, funded by the state through the [National Union of Artists](#) and its units, could be made more accessible to a broader – including younger – community of artists. This would help address one of the needs of the artistic environment using already available resources and possibly revive the artistic process and increase the visibility of diverse artistic practices.

The lack of modern infrastructure, coupled with **the limited competitive access to existing state infrastructure for representatives of the independent sector** to create a new cultural product, are issues and challenges that, according to the ranking of priorities, ranked lower, and were placed in the bottom twenty.

Investing in the creation of new infrastructure in Ukraine, in the context of active hostilities and the high likelihood of destruction, requires careful analysis and well-considered decisions. Public opinion in frontline and occupied territories suggests that the **recovery of cultural institutions should begin after the end of the war** ([this view is held by 73–90% of respondents, depending on the region](#)). We recommend that international partners and investors take this direction into account, as it would allow us to lay the groundwork for future recovery now, creating essential prerequisites for long-term development.

The RES-POL project will develop policies that would enable the independent sector to have access to existing state infrastructure on a competitive basis for the creation of a new cultural product.

3. Representatives of the artistic community also highlight the **impossibility of meeting the existing demand for cultural products from the audience in the de-occupied territories and areas close to the contact line.**

For instance, in Kharkiv, the opportunity to hold cultural events is extremely limited, and in the de-occupied communities, the issue of updating the book collection is particularly pressing. [The residents of these communities have shown an increased interest in reading – especially regarding books on the history of Ukraine and children's literature.](#)

In the study '[Cultural practices and needs for population recovery in de-occupied and frontline communities](#),' at least 50% of respondents answered “Definitely yes” or “Rather yes” to the question of whether it is necessary to allocate funds for cultural events during



the war, while only 22% answered “Definitely no.” This demonstrates public support for funding cultural events even in the face of limited wartime resources.

**Frontline regions are forced to rely on cultural products imported from central and western areas.** [However, less attention is given to the local artistic environment, its analysis, and the export of local cultural products outside the region.](#) It is recommended to focus on supporting the creation of local cultural products. This process involves addressing gaps in our knowledge of local cultures, which is discussed in more detail in the Research and Analytics section.

The RES-POL project team of experts will work on strategies to increase the supply of cultural products in the de-occupied and contact-line territories, including promoting the creation of local cultural products and addressing investment-related issues and challenges in cultural production.

4. Investments in current artistic activity are also crucial in the context of **specific artistic projects focused on commemoration** (more details can be found in the report [‘The Role of Art in Post-War Recovery’](#)).

It is crucial for Ukraine to seize the current “window of opportunity” to **move away from the post-Soviet culture of glorification and pathos in commemorating the victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war** (such as [‘The Politics of Heroes’](#)). **Instead, Ukraine should follow the European model of an inclusive culture of remembrance, participatory commemorative practices, and a quieter yet more human-centred and sincere approach to memorialisation** (as seen in [‘Laboratory of Memorialisation Practices’](#)). In 2024, one of the largest organisations in informal cultural education, [Cultural Project](#), created and launched an open course [‘Memorial Projects about Social Losses,’](#) where contemporary trends in memorialisation (including in military memorial language) can be explored.

Supporting artistic initiatives focused on **tactical commemoration** is equally important. Tactical commemoration refers to rapid and adaptive memorialisation in wartime, characterised by timeliness, flexibility, and a focus on the needs of the community. The main challenge in working with commemoration and memorialisation in Ukraine is that the war is still ongoing, while most methods were developed for peacetime – when the war has already ended, allowing for meaningful memorialisation based on the finale and cessation of violence and destruction. Ukrainian society is in a unique position, where multiple processes must be handled simultaneously, processes that are typically linear. Therefore, tactical commemoration becomes crucial, involving short-term actions to

commemorate amid uncertainty, but with the involvement of local communities and stakeholders.

Commemorative practices also serve as an important tool [for work in de-occupied territories and in cases of reunification of communities that were \(artificially\) divided for a period of time](#). These practices not only help voice individual traumatic experiences but also create a platform for forming a new cultural landscape based on dialogue and understanding. Supporting artistic activities that include participatory and commemorative practices allows for the revealing – if not the avoidance – of the existing hierarchy of traumas and experiences in society, creating a space for the consolidation of these differences.

To prevent chaotic memorialisation and conflicts – such as disputes over temporary bans on new murals in urban spaces – it is crucial to transition from a “vertical model,” where decisions are made solely by authorities, to a “horizontal model” that actively engages stakeholders. These stakeholders should collaborate within a framework of socially agreed norms and rules. In particular, the RES-POL project will analyse potential changes to the Procedure for Conducting Architectural and Urban Planning Competitions – including the possibility of involving the public and expert community in the jury.

5. The analytical note on the performing sector addresses the key issue of **investing in quality video productions to attract international TV audiences** for distribution through platforms like [ARTE](#), which broadcasts European cultural and artistic products to a wide audience.

Investing in a high-quality video product can be very effective in terms of investment and audience reach. Given this, it is advisable to include the creation of video content in the plans of cultural diplomacy activities.

## 6. Human Capital Crisis

According to the ranking of key issues and challenges in the sector, the key issue of **‘human capital outflow, particularly in de-occupied territories and areas near active hostilities’** entered the second top five priority issues and challenges, according to a survey of the artistic community. Over 18% of respondents in the online ranking of key policy issues and challenges highlighted this as the most urgent matter requiring resolution.

### 6.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue

According to the government assessment prepared for the [Ukraine Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RNDA3\) report](#), by the end of 2022, approximately 37% of workers employed in culture and cultural and creative industries had lost their jobs, and over 20% of professionals in the sector had left the country. In most sub-sectors of culture and creative industries, the number of employees decreased by an average of 20%. In the summer of 2024, the acting Minister of Culture and Information Policy Rostyslav Karandziej reported that, [during the full-scale war, the cultural sector lost 18% of its employees, and 13% of cultural institutions in Ukraine ceased their activities](#). This discrepancy in the figures may stem from the partial return of professionals to Ukraine in the second half of 2022 and the first half of 2023.

According to the analytical note [‘Strategies for Adapting Culture and Creative Industries to War Conditions,’](#) published by the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation in 2023, the shortage of qualified personnel continues to rise. Over the first six months of 2023, the shortage indicator increased by more than 9%. The outflow of qualified and motivated specialists in the field is a noticeable, though not unique, issue for the cultural sector. Currently, a shortage of personnel is observed across the entire [labour market](#), and this trend will likely intensify in the future.

The situation is compounded by the fact that **artistic training in areas such as dance, music, or visual arts requires a significant amount of time and cannot be replaced by short-term retraining programmes**. For example, a musician’s educational journey begins at the age of 5 or 6 and typically ends at 21 or 22, including master’s studies. This results in a significant number of unfilled positions. For instance, as of the summer of 2024, the Lviv National Philharmonic had 13 open vacancies for orchestra positions.

The mobilisation of artists from theatres, circuses, and art groups, where the group's repertoire is built around artists with no replacements, remains a difficult issue. Also, in the summer of 2024, acting Minister of Culture and Information Policy Rostyslav Karandiev stated that [‘the percentage of mobilised does not exceed 10%.’](#) However, no consolidated data or estimates are available on the number of mobilised artists, curators, and cultural managers. The National Union of Theatre Workers of Ukraine attempted to create a register of workers mobilised to the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, but this effort was unsuccessful due to several factors: institutions and the mobilised themselves did not consider it necessary to submit data, citing potential problems related to its disclosure. There are also no statistics or lists of those in the sector who died during the full-scale invasion – whether as soldiers or civilians. PEN Ukraine launched a grassroots initiative to collect the names and brief stories of artists (musicians, writers, painters) who died at the front. The lists for [2022](#) and [2023](#) are publicly available.

## 6.2 Key issues and challenges

The key issue of ‘human capital outflow, particularly in de-occupied territories and areas near active hostilities’ encompasses several aspects and sub-questions, which are analysed below.

- 1. Human capital outflow, particularly in de-occupied territories and areas near active hostilities. The need for special procedures and mechanisms to support institutions and cultural actors working in frontline regions.**

In this context, special attention should be given to identifying levers and tools that will contribute to the preservation, strengthening, and development of workers across various art sectors who have remained and are successfully working in high-threat areas (for example, the Yermilov Centre in Kharkiv or the Odesa National Art Museum). The next stage of the RES-POL project will focus on developing such policies.

- 2. Lack of initiatives, projects, and mechanisms to maintain professional and personal ties between the Ukrainian professional community in Ukraine and abroad.**

The list of cross-cutting issues and challenges for the Culture and Arts sector also includes the issue of *‘strengthening the lines of tension between the professional community within Ukraine and that part of the community that has left (has been forced to leave) abroad’* – over 15% of respondents marked it as having the third priority for resolution.

As noted in the Ukrainian Institute’s and the analytical organisation [Cedos](#) study [‘Beyond Greener Grass: Strategies for Reviving the Ukrainian Cultural Field Across Borders,’](#) conducted in 2022–2023, there are several advantages to the fact that a significant number of Ukrainian actors in the visual arts sector are abroad. These include:

- Cooperation between Ukrainian institutions and cultural activists from Ukraine working in foreign cultural institutions, which can act as a catalyst for inter-institutional partnerships.
- Gaining valuable experience: among the examples of expertise gained by curators abroad, feminist perspectives, inclusive curatorial practices, and tools for expanding the audience of artistic events were mentioned, including attracting viewers of different ages and with varied experiences of attending events.

Despite these positive effects of migration, there are tendencies within the community

toward **partial rejection of Ukrainian artists and cultural actors who have been forced to stay in the EU as refugees**. These tensions are understandable, as the life and professional realities faced by cultural actors in Ukraine and abroad are very different, and over time, this difference in experience is likely to deepen. It is also clear that the greatest wariness and conflict arise in relation to men from the artistic community who left abroad after or shortly before the full-scale invasion. This boiling point is often expressed in new everyday “folklore about evaders” or in narratives close to harassment – for example, in one of the controversial programmes of [‘Toronto Television.’](#) The authors of this report interpret these practices as symbolic reproductions of social conditions, but not as models that should shape real policies. This is because, in such a version, the latter would be more reactionary and focused on the present, rather than being practical or forward-looking.

To support and strengthen ties with specialists in the sector who are outside Ukraine and wish to maintain this connection, it seems important to involve them both in foreign cultural diplomacy events and in speeches, lectures, discussions, expert councils, etc., within Ukraine, while considering remote cooperation. This can help **keep artists important to Ukrainian (contemporary) art within the Ukrainian orbit**, though, obviously, it is not a panacea. It is reasonable to expect that a certain number of artists will, by their own decision, move away from this orbit and begin to identify themselves as “Berlin-based artists”, “Canadian artists”, “cosmopolitan artists”, etc. – this is a natural process that falls within the field of artistic autonomy and self-identification. **Ukrainian cultural policy must be open, inclusive, and accessible to all compatriots who wish to participate in Ukraine’s cultural and artistic landscape, upholding the principle of “open doors.”**

As of the writing of this report, this principle is being implemented at the state policy level by the newly created [Ministry of National Unity of Ukraine](#), established in the autumn of 2024 by renaming the Ministry for the Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, within the framework of the internal Resilience Plan of Ukraine. In particular, Minister Oleksii Chernyshov has already announced an initiative to invite men currently living abroad to work in defence enterprises with a reservation from [mobilisation](#). In the field of independent artistic initiatives, one can mention the ‘Scattered Sown’ programme, launched in the autumn of 2024 by the Insha Osvita public organization and the Asortymentna Kimnata public organization for [artistic dialogue](#) and the consolidation of the community of artists who have left abroad and those who have remained in Ukraine.

The existence of initiatives to preserve professional and personal ties between the



Ukrainian professional community in Ukraine and abroad can serve as a solid foundation for more fundamental return programmes in the future, after the end of martial law, as they already convey the key message: **'You are needed here.'** Competitive salaries cannot motivate all specialists to return from abroad in the near future, as they do not guarantee safety during wartime. At the same time, according to some respondents within the RES-POL project, **the opportunity for professional growth or the chance to be involved in landmark processes significant to the history of art could increase the motivation to return.**

However, given the ongoing military operations, it seems productive to focus on **supportive solutions for the professional group of "nomadic professionals" who live in two countries (or, less often, in two cities within Ukraine, one of which is in a high-risk zone).** Due to the legislation on mobilisation, these "professional nomads" are most often women, who currently act as mediators, ambassadors, and synchronisers between different (professional) communities and various pools of opportunities. It is important to analyse this professional group, its needs, and challenges in more depth in order to formulate optimal policies to support them and more effectively engage them in the development of the cultural and artistic sector.

The RES-POL project will develop policies and proposals both to stimulate return and to support hybrid formats of professional cooperation with the so-called "professional nomads."

### **3. A narrow understanding of inclusivity, focusing only on infrastructural adaptation. Lack of tools and pilot programmes necessary for the reintegration of veterans from the sector, as well as for their return to artistic activity and / or other cultural and artistic work.**

Veterans from the artistic environment, who are already returning to civilian life (mainly due to injury, family reasons, or after captivity), are attempting to adapt either at their previous place of work or in new projects and institutions. Currently, there are no established stable mechanisms for return, and the **direction of veterans' reintegration does not yet have a state strategy.** The previously developed draft [strategy](#) is at the stage of public hearings at the time of writing this report, but at the same time, we have information about the preparation of a new [project](#). More systematic solutions and recommendations regarding return and adaptation are very much needed and requested, including in the arts sector – this is evidenced by analytical notes on visual, audio, and performing arts, created within the framework of the RES-POL project.



Despite the lack of state policy, new projects for restoring the psycho-emotional health of civilians and military personnel through artistic practices are emerging in the public sector. For example, the Lviv National Academy of Arts launched the [Academy for Veterans](#) – a project aimed at the rehabilitation and reintegration (re-socialisation) of persons affected by the Russian-Ukrainian war. In August 2024, the Insha Osvita public organization launched VILNO – a pilot scholarship programme for the professional reintegration of veterans from the artistic and educational spheres, which is conceived as a model of work with veterans from the same professional group or from related professional groups, based on the assumption that adaptation to civilian life can be easier and more productive in narrower professional groups and “one’s own” [communities](#). *(Insha Osvita public organization implemented the [Vidnova Fellowship Ukraine](#) programme, which provides scholarship support to people who were forced to go abroad after the Russian full-scale invasion but returned to Ukraine to continue their cultural, media, environmental, educational or human rights activities (in 2022, 23 out of 3602 applications were supported, in 2023—50 out of 750 applications)).* The analytical note on audio arts also speaks about the need for such a specialised approach: the lack of rehearsals and the inability to maintain musical form during military service leads to a very practical problem, in which a person cannot (immediately) return to their previous place of work and needs special programmes to restore form.

Important issues and challenges include **the standardisation and implementation in various sectors of the arts of advanced training in tactical medicine, trauma-oriented communication, and initial psychological training** to care for both the audience of artistic events and colleagues with experience of military and violent actions, injuries, captivity, etc. We must take care of our visitors and colleagues who took care of us by their involvement in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The issue of **monetisation of benefits for socially vulnerable groups of the population and veterans** requires special attention and regulation at the legislative level because state and municipal cultural institutions are deprived of a legal mechanism for the implementation of a preferential ticket. Today, the issue of preferential visitation is regulated through the recommendation of establishing a regime of free admission on the last Thursday of the month for all cultural institutions; however, for performing and musical art institutions, this is an insufficient tool due to the note “subject to availability of free seats.” The solution would be to introduce mechanisms for a preferential ticket, including through technical support for such an operation.

It is recommended to pay attention to the potential of interagency cooperation between the Ministry of Veterans and the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications on the issue of professional reintegration of veteran artists.

#### **4. Lack of a state policy on time-limited reservation of professionals (in particular, from the independent sector).**

As early as the first half of 2023, there was a lack of a social contract regarding mobilisation and the reservation system. This has since shifted to a compromise on this social contract, which is widely unpopular and highly conditional: *'There will be no demobilisation until the end of martial law for anyone, and reservations are available only for a small group within the state art sector.'* Such a status quo automatically increases pressure on the mobilisation process, making it more aggressive, with cases of forced mobilisation, and also heightens suspicion towards all mechanisms for deferring mobilisation – whether through reservations or temporary travel abroad. When pressure builds in one part of the ecosystem, it inevitably spreads to other areas, much like interconnected vessels.

The issue of reserving artists (particularly circus artists) has encountered public resistance. This is not only a matter of social justice but also of recognising the social value of these specialists in the labour market. The structure of certain cultural productions is such that if several key artists are mobilised, the entire production – whether a theatre performance, a tour, or an exhibition – collapses and ceases to exist. For instance, following May 2024, the number of mobilised workers in state cultural institutions increased, forcing some to suspend operations. The Taras Shevchenko Chernihiv Regional Academic Music and Drama Theatre, for example, was compelled to close its season early due to [the mobilisation of 14 employees](#). This is not about seeking complete exemption from mobilisation but, as the acting Minister of Culture and Information Policy, Rostyslav Karandziej, noted at the 'Culture During War: Human Capital' forum in June 2024, ['uneven and unfair attention in specific cases results in individual cultural institutions being forced to cease their activities.'](#)

This issue is particularly critical for key contemporary art projects, including those related to cultural diplomacy. For example, artists commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications to create work for the Ukrainian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale face significant challenges. In the non-state sector, independent artists have virtually no opportunities for reservation, leaving even key male artists in major Ukrainian contemporary art projects in a precarious position, where planning and executing exhibitions or performances involving them becomes nearly impossible.

There is an urgent need to develop solutions allowing for the temporary reservation of artists engaged in key contemporary art projects, particularly in the field of cultural diplo-

macy. As part of the RES-POL project, an analysis of such a mechanism will be initiated, drawing on the expertise of the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications.

**5. Lack of a human-centred approach and absence of tools to support mental health. Lack of awareness of psychological and psychic inclusivity, as well as knowledge gaps in art therapy, trauma-informed art, and the prevention of re-traumatisation.**

Due to the war, missile attacks, shelling, and constant stress, representatives of the contemporary art sector, like workers in other fields, are experiencing severe psychological strain. This leads to burnout, depression, nervous disorders, as well as feelings of instability, anxiety, and hopelessness. Respondents to analytical surveys within the RES-POL project have mentioned initiatives by the Ministry of Social Policy aimed at psychological support, such as the [‘Forming Resilience’](#) programme and the nationwide mental health initiative launched by Olena Zelenska, [‘How Are You?’](#) – indicating the visibility of these efforts. At the same time, representatives of the contemporary art community emphasise the need for practical, both short-term and systemic, solutions for mental health support within their workplaces. Such measures could include:

- Policies allowing remote work on days of intense shelling and paid leave when close relatives serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine go on leave.
- Training in the basics of psychological first aid and facilitation of psychological self-help groups.
- Regular self-assessment tools for monitoring stress and depressive states, based on test forms approved by specialists, enabling early diagnosis of mental health disorders.

It is also worth noting that despite the significant demand for and potential of art in mental health, particularly in collaboration with the therapeutic functions of specialised institutions and systemic programmes, there is a noticeable lack of comprehensive research in this area. This key issue is explored in greater detail in the RES-POL project’s foundational report, ‘The Role of Art in Post-War Recovery.’

As part of the RES-POL project, policies on standardisation and advanced training in tactical medicine, trauma-oriented communication, trauma-informed art, and psychological (self-)care will be separately developed.

## **6. Intergenerational Challenges – Mentoring for Young People and Career Trajectories for Older Professionals**

Almost all analytical reports produced within the RES-POL project highlight challenges related to the professional integration of two “extreme” age groups – young specialists entering the field and experienced professionals approaching the end of their careers. In particular, the former face **a lack of structured formats and programmes to facilitate a high-quality entry into the profession, particularly in the form of mentoring schemes**. Meanwhile, the latter struggle with the absence of career or professional transition pathways, leaving them with few opportunities for either vertical or horizontal mobility within the job market.

The issue of retirement within the profession also remains unresolved. On the one hand, individuals continue working due to [low pension payments](#); on the other, they fear becoming sidelined and struggle to envision themselves outside their profession. The absence of structured support for a gradual transition into retirement creates additional challenges for both older professionals and young specialists, who, lacking opportunities to join established teams, are forced to seek alternative career paths. A successful example of best practice can be found in the analytical report on audio arts, which highlights the “Club of Honourable Philharmonia Actors” initiative launched by the National Philharmonic of Ukraine. This programme organises meetings, concerts, and consultations, fostering a sense of continued engagement and belonging among retired professionals while maintaining their connection to their former workplace.

## **7. Unpreparedness of the Sector to Accommodate Foreign Specialists**

On the periphery of some analysts’ discussions – particularly in an analytical note on literature – the issue of the Ukrainian labour market’s unpreparedness to accommodate a larger number of professionals in the cultural and artistic sector who do not hold Ukrainian citizenship has been highlighted. Specifically, challenges arise from both legal and financial perspectives. Given the growing demographic crisis, which is already affecting the labour market, and forecasts of a demographic shock that will hinder a swift recovery after the war, it is crucial to develop strategies for attracting and integrating labour migrants into the cultural and creative industries.

## 7. Tension Lines and Parallel Worlds

According to the ranking of key policy issues and challenges in the sector, the key issue of the **'lack of a sustainable culture of dialogue and cooperation between the state and independent sectors'** was among the second top five most pressing problems, as identified in a survey of the artistic community. Over 18% of respondents in the online ranking of key policy issues and challenges highlighted this as the most urgent matter requiring resolution, while another 18% identified it as the second-highest priority.

Additionally, the key issue of **'low capacity to unite into effective sector-wide unions and coalitions to synchronise and defend one's interests'** ranked among the top twenty concerns, with 19.5% of respondents identifying it as the second-highest priority for resolution. The list of cross-cutting issues and challenges for the Culture and Arts sector also includes the issue of **'increased conflict and insufficient consolidation within the professional community, hermeticisation of professional art communities'** – more than 13% of respondents ranked this issue in third place, with another 13% placing it fourth. This concern was particularly highlighted in analytical notes on visual art and literature.

## 7.1 Significance and Context of the Key Issue

In general, this set of issues and challenges is difficult to quantify – just as openness to (trans-sector) dialogue or the level of toxicity within the professional community is difficult to measure. One can only rely on individual cases (and their recurrence) and on the verbalised experiences of community members (and their repetition), while also considering the possibility that certain aspects may be silenced when it comes to conflicts – potentially creating a “blind spot” in addressing these issues and challenges.

The notion that Ukraine is [‘a country with a weak state and a strong civil society,’](#) where civil society often (by necessity) takes on state functions by creating strong alternative structures, is not new. From this, it logically follows that there is a need for greater synchronisation and more comprehensive dialogue between the state and independent sectors – so that their efforts do not overlap but instead complement one another. This is especially important given the current constraints on material, human, and time resources. However, this interaction is often sporadic and unsystematic, or it leads to tensions and conflicts exacerbated by mutual distrust between the state and independent sectors. These tensions in communication, along with the heightened emotional intensity of public dialogue (commonly referred to as “shitting around”), are not limited to state-public discourse but are also characteristic of discussions and relationships within smaller professional communities in the cultural and artistic fields. This suggests that the issue is part of a broader challenge related to the culture of dialogue in general.

Maryna Starodubska, a lecturer at the Kyiv-Mohyla Business School and a researcher of cross-cultural interaction, highlights that “shitting around” serves as indicators of public trust levels and social polarisation, as well as a symptom of low trust in formal (state) institutions. The roots of this issue can be traced to historical contexts that have conditioned Ukrainian society to nepotism or “familism”, fostering a reliance on personal networks rather than institutions. [Similar patterns are observed in societies such as Poland, Bulgaria, and Argentina.](#) In general, the inability to engage in constructive dialogue and the tendency towards highly emotional discussions – bordering on harassment on social media – became particularly relevant after 2022 and have been [the focus of several popular science publications in Ukraine’s largest media outlets.](#)



## 7.2 Key issues and challenges

Against the background of the above remarks, the key issue of ‘the lack of a sustainable culture of dialogue and cooperation’ (between the state and independent sectors, but also partly within the independent sector), as well as ‘the insufficient capacity of the art sector to unite into effective sector-wide unions and coalitions to synchronise and defend its interests,’ becomes more comprehensible.

The analytical note on literature highlights *‘increased conflict and artificial dividing lines within the professional community,’* while the analytical note on audio arts points to *‘the hermeticisation of the sector and the limited involvement of new participants.’* The analytical note on visual arts lists among the key issues and challenges *‘fragmentation and division within the artistic community into “independent” and “nomenclature”,’* which create artificial barriers to cooperation and *“[shitting around](#)”.* Meanwhile, the analytical note on performing arts speaks of *‘different conditions for development associated with the division of theatres into national, regional, municipal, and independent.’* Notable and sensitive challenges for the entire sector include othering and discriminatory practices within communities. In particular, forced self-censorship, silencing, and the so-called “infrastructure of compromise” are of concern.

**The insufficiency and ineffectiveness of professional associations** contribute to the lack of internal sector dialogue. Specifically, this relates to:

- the absence of effective institutions that represent and protect the interests of artists,
- the low effectiveness of existing unions and associations,
- the limited capacity of sector players to advocate for their interests,
- the need for effective professional associations of a new kind.

Regrettably, the difficulty of Ukrainian civil society in self-organising into dynamic and effective networks or unions is a lingering post-Soviet challenge. The National Union of Artists exemplifies this issue: as a result, access to resources is concentrated within unions, but they are used inefficiently due to restricted access.

Beyond the post-Soviet legacy, more recent collective traumas have also played a role. The full-scale invasion has significantly intensified public discourse. The loss of key cultural hubs – centred around physical spaces such as art schools or grassroots associations of art workshops like the Odesa SRZ-2 – has led to the (partial) fragmentation of



local contemporary art communities. There is currently a risk of losing at least one generation of art school graduates who may be unable to access an educational service of a minimally sufficient standard.

Proposed solutions include establishing more platforms for systemic and sustainable dialogue within the sector and enhancing communication from the public sector – particularly in relation to the allocation of public funds and the involvement of civil society in strategic policy decisions. Some in-depth interviews and focus groups suggest the need for a permanent “communication window” between the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications and sector players.

According to the authors of this analytical report, efforts to develop programmes and mechanisms that promote mutual exchange and synergies through public-private partnerships should be prioritised in strategy and policy formation (including within the RES-POL project framework). At the same time, we as a society should realize, reflect on, and analyse our collective trauma to better understand patterns of social interaction and transform them into ones that would be (more) productive and ecological.

Despite its concise treatment in this analytical report, this block of key issues and challenges is fundamental and cross-cutting, as it recurs across multiple challenges and frequently underpins specific problems. Notably, the need to reform the National Union of Artists is explored in the section ‘Institutional Reform and Management Capacity,’ while tensions between the professional community within Ukraine and those who have been (forcibly) displaced abroad are addressed in the section ‘Human Capital Crisis and Inclusivity.’

## 8. Lack of Analytics and Research

Qualitative decisions about the future should be grounded in an analysis of both the present and the past. However, there is a significant lack of data in the field of culture and art. Many grey areas remain in our understanding of artistic processes, and substantial gaps persist in our narrative of art history. In recent years, research in the field has been expanding, yet the deficit of open and verified data on the sector is still acutely felt. The key issue of the **'absence of (support for) research and analysis on art and the arts sector in Ukraine'** was ranked towards the lower end of the top ten priorities. However, the authors of this baseline report view this as a relatively high priority and a positive signal from the sector regarding the need for an in-depth exploration of cause-and-effect relationships.

### 8.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue

At present, **data on the cultural sector is not collected comprehensively**, and decisions are often based on fragmented datasets that only partially represent the sector. The State Statistics Service of Ukraine traditionally provides data in an aggregated form, combining art, sports, entertainment, and recreation into a single general indicator. This approach complicates the analysis of culture and the creative industries as distinct sectors of the economy. Moreover, until 2022, the State Statistics Service transferred the collection and processing of state statistical observations for theatres, museums, and concert organisations to government bodies. The Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications updated these forms and initiated data collection only in 2024. However, this does not resolve the problem, which remains urgent and cross-cutting: **there is no established mechanism for gathering indicators on the independent sector, meaning there is no data to justify or inform the implementation of certain policies.**

The independent cultural sector is diverse in its organisational forms and **lacks a single register or database**, making it difficult to gain a representative overview and conduct a thorough analysis of its key players. In the absence of such a register, statistical data is often derived from CEA classifications. Cultural sector professionals registered as individual entrepreneurs frequently use broad CEA categories such as 'Individual Artistic Activity' or 'Organisation of Congresses and Exhibitions.' However, there are no specialised CEA classifications that accurately capture the specifics of their work – such as curator-

ship or art writing – nor do they allow these professionals to be recognised as a distinct professional group. This absence of precise categorisation makes it impossible to conduct a detailed analysis of individual branches of the contemporary art sector and creates challenges in designing effective state support policies. **Any decisions made without accounting for data on the independent sector will be ineffective, as they fail to recognise a significant part of the cultural ecosystem and its impact on the creative industries. This is akin to attempting to assess a panoramic landscape with a severely restricted field of vision.**

The absence of comprehensive data on participants, assets, and resources within the cultural sector prevents optimal planning and development. Furthermore, the lack of information about the needs, potential, and challenges of different cultural fields complicates the evaluation of cultural projects' societal and economic impact. This, in turn, hampers efforts to attract investment and justify the necessity of funding.

## 8.2 Context

Respondents and experts in the sectoral analytical notes highlight the issue of insufficient analytics and research on art and the broader cultural sector in various contexts. In the literary sector, there is a general lack of research, analysis, and open data on how the sector functions. The same issue applies to the performing arts sector.

The report on the challenges within the audio sector places significant emphasis on **structuring and archiving**. The catalyst for this concern was the heightened international interest in Ukraine following the full-scale invasion, which led to numerous requests for sheet music of composers' works suitable for performance. However, the level of interest often does not align with the sector's readiness to open archives, provide sheet music, or share structured information. Additionally, the extent of cultural appropriation and the tangible consequences of Russian cultural imperialism remain largely unexamined and unanalysed across the multiple dimensions necessary for forming fundamental insights. For instance, if an analysis were required of works composed in the past three years, gathering this information would demand extraordinary effort and time.

Furthermore, there appears to be a connection between the lack of data and analytics in the sector and various aspects of the human resource crisis. Respondents contributing to the analytical note on contemporary visual art stress the need to examine the motivations of professionals returning to Ukraine from abroad – particularly those whose migration was forced and unplanned. Potential factors influencing their return include participation in the country's recovery, demand for expertise, and opportunities for professional development. [These aspects require thorough research.](#)

In the analytical note on literature, respondents highlight the **absence of data on the (relatively) new group of so-called “nomadic professionals” – those who live between two countries or two cities within Ukraine**. Currently, this professional group remains a “blind spot” in cultural policy. As a result, there is no clear understanding of how (or whether) they should be supported to better integrate into the evolving cultural and artistic landscape.

Since its establishment in 2017, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation has prioritised the promotion of analytical and research work in the field of culture and the creative industries. Notably, the Foundation provided grant funding for research through the dedicated ‘Cultural Analytics’ programme (2020–2021), commissioned studies, and sup-

plied data for external projects. Previously, the Foundation collected and analysed its own data, publishing reports via the specialised platform [uaculture](#). However, this platform is no longer operational, and its [domain](#) is now under different ownership. As of the writing of this baseline report, there is no dedicated grant programme supporting cultural analytics. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation's analytical sector consists of only [three people](#).

It is important to recognise that **the lack of data is not only an obstacle to developing cultural policies and strengthening individual sectors of art and culture but also a critical area requiring attention within the framework of European integration**. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), as a leading organisation in this field, has established the 'Framework for Cultural Statistics' (FCS), a global standard for collecting statistical data on culture. This programme enables countries to measure culture's contribution to development using indicators such as employment in the cultural sector, economic impact, and access to cultural infrastructure. The UIS has also developed online platforms that visualise cultural data through interactive graphs, maps, and diagrams, making statistical insights more accessible to policymakers, researchers, and the public.

At present, the Ukrainian cultural industry lacks the necessary indicators and data collection frameworks to assess the contribution of cultural and creative industries to the national economy. As a result, it remains difficult to justify capital investments in this area.

### 8.3 Key issues and challenges

As a result of the analysis, we have identified the following components of the problem of the **'absence of (support for) research and analysis on art and the arts sector in Ukraine, as well as the lack of support for cultural journalism, professional media, and art criticism:'**

1. **Information on works of contemporary art is collected and systematised in insufficient quantities, making their analysis and research impossible.**

The issue of preserving cultural heritage is being studied within the RES-POL project by a separate group of experts. However, the issue of preserving contemporary art – often on the periphery of expert discussions on cultural heritage – frequently falls into a blind spot. For example, the analysis and research of Ukrainian art from the 1990s is complicated by the limited amount and fragmentation of available data. While before independence, this situation could be attributed to the colonial policies of the metropolis, after 1991, the loss of potentially significant materials for future research has been an exclusively Ukrainian societal decision – whether conscious or not. This threatens the preservation of an important part of our cultural heritage and creates a long-term problem.

The 'Institutional Reform' section of this report provides a more detailed discussion on the necessity of establishing a (networked) Museum of Contemporary Art – whether state-run, municipal, or through a public-private partnership. Due to the lack of a curatorial approach to collections, as well as the absence of funds for expanding museum collections, contemporary art holdings in state and municipal museums are either entirely lacking or unsystematic, comprising an arbitrary assortment of donated works of varying quality. **The erosion of contemporary visual art heritage in private collections and abroad** is already a reality. Establishing a Museum of Contemporary Art could be a crucial step in collecting and systematising key works of contemporary Ukrainian art that are still accessible.

In the field of academic music, growing international interest has increased the presence of Ukrainian compositions from various eras in concert programmes. This has led to the discovery of new composers, the exploration of archives, and the creation of new works. As a next step, respondents from the sector highlight the need for **systematic work with manuscripts and archives**. This requires comprehensive programmes that will ensure funding, the use of modern technologies, and the ability to engage relevant specialists. In particular, this would enable **integration into the international archival system**.

A further challenge in working with archives is **the shortage of specialists** trained in archival practices. In most cases, responsibility for preserving, systematising, and digitising archival materials falls to employees for whom archival work is not a primary responsibility.

## **2. Digital archives: lack of digital tools or their insufficient use in archive preservation.**

Among the key issues and challenges identified is the urgent need to digitise collections of visual art, which would enhance the academic rigour of research in this field. The digitisation of Ukrainian musical scores has also been highlighted as a critical issue – currently, the substantial demand from the international community for Ukrainian musical works does not always align with the available supply. This has, in part, led to the creation of the [Ukrainian Scores project](#), which is developing a digital archive for distributing Ukrainian music scores. Thus, in a crisis mode, digitization of works is taking place. However, this process remains fragmented and reactive – primarily aimed at ensuring access to works for foreign partners rather than forming a comprehensive research base.

In the context of Russian military aggression against Ukraine, digitisation is also a means of safeguarding works that are at risk of destruction. At present, the level of digitisation in Ukraine remains extremely low: less than 1% of museum collections and less than 10% of archives have been digitised. The best-digitised sector is archival collections ([particularly national archives](#)), where digitisation is progressing dynamically.

The key issue of the lack of digital tools or their insufficient use in archive preservation will be examined by the RES-POL project's core team of experts in consultation with specialists from the Cultural Heritage sector, ensuring alignment with proposed solutions and policies.

## **3. Lack of Support for Ukrainian Media about Art**

Media about culture and art play an essential role in documenting the artistic process, recording individual stages, geographies, and actors for both contemporaries and future researchers. They perform the functions of criticism and analysis, helping the audience to deepen their understanding and appreciation of individual artistic works and events, as well as navigate contemporary trends. Through cultural media, the memory of outstanding artists, works, and events is preserved, making them a key component of the information infrastructure for the preservation of cultural heritage.



Among the examples of cultural media operating at the time of writing this baseline report, we can highlight those that work with local environments and contexts (e.g. [Lyuk in Kharkiv](#), [post impreza in Ivano-Frankivsk](#), [POMIZH in Dnipro](#)), or those that focus on a specific sector or theme (e.g. [Ukrainian Theatre magazine](#), online publication on classical music [The Claquers](#), [Chytomo](#) about book publishing and literature, [ArtsLooker](#) about contemporary visual art). Additionally, recently, media with a broad scope for artistic sectors (e.g. [Sensor](#)), separate cultural editorial teams (in particular, [Suspilne Kultura](#) and [Livyi Bereh Kultura](#)), as well as experimental publishing formats such as [bytext](#), have been gaining visibility. The latter is positioned as a platform for independent art criticism, where texts are selected monthly by a different editorial team. This project is supported by a private foundation of a Ukrainian entrepreneur.

In an interview with Detector Media, Anastasiia Yevdokimova, the editor-in-chief of the media outlet [Sensor](#), noted that *'There are many difficulties. First of all, it is funding. Money is something that has always been lacking in cultural journalism, in criticism. Can we call it a difficulty that students come to practice who have never studied offline, have not gone live for classes, have not worked in groups, and do not have many communication skills that are crucial for journalists and editors? [This is a problem, because it concerns the development of the field.](#)'*

According to respondents in the focus groups conducted within the framework of the RES-POL project, a significant challenge for the sector is **the closure of specialised media outlets dedicated to theatrical life**. This applies to both publications aimed at a broad audience of cultural consumers and expert publications. Platforms that promote performing arts, as well as those that provide an opportunity for theatre critics to write reviews and consider foreign trends, require long-term financial support. There is also a need for support for both cultural media and Culture sections in mainstream media outlets that cover broader social topics. Experts in the audio arts sector discuss the necessity of supporting media that promote classical arts. The issue of **translating materials into English and other languages to expand the audience is also highlighted as important**.

The critical issue of the lack of support for Ukrainian media about art will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

#### **4. Absence of translations of key texts into Ukrainian.**

This key issue ranks within the top five priorities according to online ranking. The lack of translations hinders access for Ukrainian researchers, students, and artists to fundamental works on the theory and history of art. This, in turn, results in insufficient knowledge of the history of contemporary European art and the principles of international cooperation, which complicates the representation of Ukrainian art on the global stage.

This issue also correlates with the challenge of limited proficiency in English (and other foreign languages) within the sector. Potentially, as the proficiency in English among artists and cultural managers grows, the need for translations will become less pressing, though not entirely eliminated – since the integration of key ideas and trends from global art into Ukraine's cultural space requires the inclusion of quality Ukrainian translations of relevant texts in educational standards.

The key issue of the lack of support for the translation of key texts into Ukrainian will be addressed by the team of key experts from the RES-POL project in conjunction with broader discussions surrounding issues and challenges in art education.

#### **5. Lack of research and institutions at the intersection of art and mental health. There is a need to strengthen intersectoral and interdisciplinary professional exchange between artists and therapists.**

Art therapy represents one of the approaches in psychotherapy and psychological support. It is based on art and creativity as methods and is practised by psychologists and psychotherapists (or less commonly, artists) with appropriate qualifications. Artists cannot undertake art therapeutic activities without the necessary qualifications. Otherwise, there is a risk of, at best, trivialising the process and failing to achieve its intended goals, and at worst, causing re-traumatisation and worsening the psychological condition of participants. If a cultural or artistic event is conducted without the involvement of a professional, certified art therapist, [it cannot be considered art therapy or referred to as art therapeutic.](#)

Despite the significant potential of art within the field of mental health, there is a lack of specialised institutions, systematic programmes, and research in this area in Ukraine. Existing initiatives often encounter the challenge of insufficient qualification among specialists, which may lead to re-traumatisation. To address this issue, it is necessary to: strengthen the intersectoral exchange between artists and therapists, create conditions for their collaboration, support information resources and research centres on art therapy,

establish a speciality for art therapist in higher education institutions, and systematically evaluate art-therapeutic practices.

**6. Lack of systematic research on local culture. Lack of archives of local cultural and artistic processes and local cultural heritage.**

This results in an insufficient representation of unique contexts, histories, and narratives in created cultural products, thus threatening the preservation of a crucial part of Ukrainian culture that shapes the identity of local communities. The situation is further complicated by the targeted destruction of cultural infrastructure by the enemy, particularly in eastern Ukraine, which makes academic research and the archiving of artistic heritage virtually impossible.

The analytical note on performing arts mentions the development and implementation of a plan for the relocation of cultural institution staff, as well as the relocation of assets and theatre museums / archives. It is already known that, due to the absence of such measures, the archives of the theatres in Luhansk, Sievierodonetsk, Donetsk, and subsequently Mariupol, have been destroyed, along with those of many smaller artistic collectives.

In these circumstances, it is important to focus on and support private and local initiatives for the research and archiving of cultural heritage.

## 9. Precariousness and Imperfection of Financial Models

Lack of financial resources, economic instability, **low wages, and unattractive working conditions** are among the most frequently mentioned problems in the sector by respondents. According to the ranking results, the issue of remuneration levels and problems with tariff scales were placed in the second ten of the priority list. Additionally, within the framework of the RES-POL project, a separate study on “Competitive Remuneration in Culture, Art, and Cultural Heritage” will be conducted, featuring a cross-sectoral analysis.

### 9.1 Justification for the Urgency of the Issue

In the study [‘Strategies for Adapting Culture and Creative Industries in War Conditions,’](#) conducted by the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation in 2023, almost half of respondents assessed the state of Ukraine’s culture and creative industries as poor. Aside from the war, the main obstacles to the development of culture were identified as the lack of stable state financial support (75.4%) and low wages coupled with demotivation among personnel in the cultural sector (60.9%).

Underestimating the importance of these issues and challenges is common among representatives of the cultural and artistic community. The sector’s difficult state, combined with a chronic lack of funding, has fostered a tolerance for unsatisfactory working conditions, including unpaid or volunteer work. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced during crises when the need for collective action encourages a willingness to work for minimal remuneration or even for free. For example, a sociological report on wage levels noted that workers perceive their salaries as decent or minimally decent. Regarding motivation, the study states: *‘Experts believe that working solely for financial gain in this sector would not be productive; those who seek to develop within it will do so regardless of salary levels.’*

However, even in relatively stable periods, this trend has resulted in the limited sustainability of both independent initiatives and established organisations. In public institutions, it has contributed to decreased efficiency and declining job attractiveness. [The lack of resources to ensure decent working conditions makes high-quality, long-term development impossible and, in turn, limits the sector’s potential impact on the cultural landscape.](#)

## 9.2 Context

Low salaries and a lack of career growth prospects hinder the attraction and retention of talented professionals, negatively impacting the quality and diversity of the cultural product. The situation is further complicated by outdated approaches to staffing structures and the remuneration system, which is based on a single tariff grid in state institutions and does not align with modern requirements or market conditions. Additionally, limited opportunities for monetising activities and difficulties in securing additional funding, including international sources, exacerbate the problem. As a result, there is a continued outflow of personnel from the cultural sector.

## 12.3 Key issues and challenges

### 1. Wages in the sector remain lower than the national average.

This makes it impossible to attract and retain qualified personnel, particularly university graduates, and negatively impacts the development of the cultural sphere. This is especially true for professions outside the artistic personnel market, such as accountants, legal consultants, public procurement specialists, project managers, and grant managers. These professionals are in demand across various fields, making competition for their services increasingly fierce and insurmountable for the culture and arts sector. The absence of such specialists significantly undermines the institutional capacity of both state / municipal and independent sectors. In general, the culture and arts sector (as well as the creative industries) is not traditionally regarded in Ukraine as a sufficiently extensive labour market for specialists in non-creative professions. This mistaken view results in a failure to acknowledge the intense competition in the labour market and, consequently, leads to a decline in the quality of cultural institution management.

According to Work.ua, the average salary in January 2025, based on 178,000 vacancies, was UAH 22,500 per month – matching the average salary in the ‘Culture, Music, Show Business’ category. In 15 out of 28 categories, [the average salary was higher](#). The Ministry of Finance reported that [the average monthly salary](#) across all sectors in the third quarter of 2024 was UAH 21,946. By sector, employees in the creative, arts, and entertainment industries earned the least, with an average monthly salary of UAH 13,148, while employees of museums, archives, libraries, and other cultural institutions received UAH 13,653.

## **2. Low salaries in the cultural and artistic sector make it uncompetitive in the labour market, leading to an outflow of talent to other industries.**

['The salary of a state-employed artist in a museum is lower than that of a cashier. They arrive – young and creative \(museums are struggling for staff\) – but when they see the salary, they say: "Sorry, no".'](#) In 2021, the Cedos think tank conducted a study, ['Working Conditions in the Cultural and Creative Industries.'](#) According to the study, one of the survival strategies for cultural workers facing low wages is to seek additional employment. Some 38% of respondents reported having other paid work, with almost half of them working in sectors unrelated to culture. As a result, for many professionals, employment in the cultural and artistic sector is only viable alongside additional part-time work, leading to overwork, low efficiency, and stress. Similar roles in other fields tend to offer better pay, making it difficult to attract competent employees – an issue exacerbated by the general shortage of personnel.

Low pay and inadequate working conditions are cited as the primary reasons why young people are reluctant to pursue professional education and careers in libraries. Salary indexation is based on outdated statistical indicators. In the Literature sector, extremely low wages for translators and interpreters, a lack of social protections, and an absence of a clear and transparent remuneration system have been highlighted. This creates instability, devalues the professions of authors, translators, and editors, and enables exploitative practices by publishers. The absence of standardised salary scales and a clear tariff policy allows publishers to dictate terms and offer minimal fees. The situation is further exacerbated by the lack of effective trade unions.

There is also a significant gap in the tariff grid between categories for creative workers and those in technical professions, who enable the functioning of production cycles. For unclear reasons, the latter are classified as so-called “low-skilled specialists,” resulting in lower remuneration. This not only creates tensions within institutions – since performances, exhibitions, concerts, and other productions rely equally on various specialists who collectively shape the final outcome – but also contributes to a growing shortage of technical specialists in cultural institutions.

The critical issue of low wages in the sector, which renders it uncompetitive, will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.



### **3. Competition with International Organisations**

Due to a lack of funding and low salaries, specialists (curators, managers, communicators) from the public sector are moving to the private sector or engaging in cooperation with international organisations. There has been a growing demand from foreign partners for experienced local managers who are context-aware, have expertise in working with specific institutions, and possess a network of contacts with curators, artists, and private collectors.

Competition in salaries and project scale (including career growth potential) incentivises Ukrainian specialists to prioritise collaboration with foreign colleagues. Often, such opportunities require physical presence in an office abroad or in major Ukrainian cities, thereby severing specialists from their previous professional environment and creative networks. This affects the overall ecosystem of the visual arts sector. The organic career growth of experienced professionals ultimately results in a declining number of qualified personnel within the local labour market.

This challenge is likely to intensify and evolve into a major threat to the culture and art sector following Ukraine's accession to the EU. The experience of other countries (notably Lithuania) demonstrates that integration with the European labour market has led to a substantial outflow of specialists seeking better remuneration and more reliable social protections. For Ukraine, which has already suffered and continues to suffer significant losses in human capital across all sectors – including culture, art, and the creative industries – this growing competition could have profound consequences, exacerbating stagnation in the creative sector.

### **4. Representatives of public institutions highlight the issue of outdated staffing structures (“cadre grid”) that fail to reflect modern realities and the needs of team structures. Furthermore, opportunities for monetisation remain limited.**

Staffing lists, tariff scales, and qualification categories within public institutions are often rigid and outdated, posing several challenges to institutional development. Strictly defined staffing lists with fixed positions and qualification requirements make it difficult to recruit highly specialised experts or professionals with unconventional skills. The inflexibility of these lists also complicates the formation of interdisciplinary teams, as they do not account for the temporary engagement of professionals from other departments or institutions. In a rapidly changing environment, institutions must be able to adapt quickly to new challenges. However, outdated staffing structures severely restrict



this flexibility, as making amendments is a lengthy and bureaucratic process. Tariff scales frequently dictate low salaries that fail to align with labour market conditions. Furthermore, rigid qualification categories can limit employees' professional development and career advancement opportunities. Additionally, fixed staffing lists may result in institutions maintaining redundant positions or duplicating functions unnecessarily.

Potential solutions to these issues and challenges include: granting cultural institutions the status of legal entities, establishing transparency in pricing and fee policies, developing a minimum threshold for tariffs, strengthening community collaboration and joint efforts against unfairly low fees (dumping), encouraging open public discussion on wages in the sector.

The level of wages and working conditions is directly linked to the capacity to build financial models that ensure not only sufficient revenue streams but also their long-term sustainability. Insufficient and unstable funding, dependence on limited state budgets, difficulties in attracting alternative sources of financing, and various fiscal and regulatory constraints create a vicious cycle that reinforces existing problems.

#### **5. State institutions often lack the ability to commercialise their activities.**

Participants in the focus groups shared that state institutions are often unable to widely attract international assistance or develop international partnerships. The reason for this is the complex procedures involved in fund development, which are not synchronised with the requirements and mechanisms for receiving (and reporting) donations, donor funds, or technical assistance, both from within Ukraine and abroad. For these reasons, many state institutions are forced to establish parallel structures in the form of public organisations and unions.

Institutional support and sustainable funding, which are provided to state institutions on a regular basis, are crucial for enabling planning, development, and the creation of new products.

The key issue of the ability for state institutions to commercialise their activities will be addressed by the RES-POL project's team of key experts in the future through consultations with experts from other sectors to synchronise decisions and policies.

## **6. Lack of medium- and long-term funding programmes for non-state sector players**

This affects private initiatives and public organisations, as they predominantly rely on project grant assistance. The further development of products created within the framework of a grant project requires continuous work on promotion, communication with partners, and team updates, which change due to irregular involvement. Developing future opportunities, which may include foreign presentations, regular performances for a local audience, etc., requires 100% involvement from at least a few people. In most cases, sources of funding for such activities are absent.

The critical issue of the lack of long-term funding programmes for non-state sector players will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

## **7. Lack of Official Status of “Cultural Actor / Artist”**

For self-employed individuals, this means that the state only recognises those who are registered as individual entrepreneurs. This, combined with the low level of legal and financial literacy among artists, creates a situation where only a small proportion of them officially register their activities and pay taxes. As a result, a significant portion of the primary market for the sale of objects of contemporary art (direct sales of works of art) operates in a “grey” zone, outside the legal framework.

The following regulatory, legal, and fiscal key issues and challenges are a priority:

- There are no classifiers of types of economic activity (CEA) other than ‘individual artistic activity,’ which makes it impossible to collect data on sectors (e.g., how many composers, visual artists, or dancers are registered as individual entrepreneurs).
- The need to reduce the tax burden on the creation of an independent cultural product: In particular, it is noted that the third group of individual entrepreneurs cannot engage in touring activities and, accordingly, pay a single tax (CEAs 90.01 and 92.32), as well as that the reduced VAT rate of 7% is unavailable for independent cultural institutions.
- No simplified taxation mechanism for the sale of personal artworks – an individual entrepreneur of the third group can only sell works of art under the general taxation system.

- The need for “tax holidays” for the non-state sector and those in active combat zones.
- There are also a number of issues and challenges regarding the practical implementation of legislation in the field of copyright and royalties.

For example, in the “Literature” sector, the issue of pirated electronic libraries is significant. ‘If they were regulated, publishing houses would receive more profit from the sale of books, including e-books, and could therefore better compensate their staff,’ experts from the literature sector’s analytical note say.

The team of key experts from the RES-POL project will develop proposals for resolving regulatory and fiscal issues and challenges related to the activities of self-employed individuals and independent associations through consultations with lawyers.

## 10. International Context and Cultural Diplomacy

A more detailed analysis of the problematic issues and challenges of cultural diplomacy is provided in the report 'The Role of Art in Post-War Recovery' (Section 3.3.), which focuses on cultural diplomacy as a specific role of art in post-war recovery.

### Context

The issues and challenges outlined in this section of the document, according to the ranking results, fall within the second ten in terms of priority. In particular, this may indicate their dependence on the resolution of top-level issues and challenges:

- Investments in the creation of a cultural product in Ukraine, which will contribute to the emergence of a greater number of competitive products in the international context.
- Development of managerial competencies that could ensure the sector's ability to engage effectively and equitably in international cooperation.

Cultural diplomacy plays a critically important role, especially against the backdrop of growing global fatigue from the Russian-Ukrainian war. Cultural diplomacy not only helps maintain international interest in Ukraine, but also provides a space for interaction between different experiences and perspectives.

Despite numerous internal limitations, the formation of tools and mechanisms for the development of cultural diplomacy in Ukraine is taking place under conditions of limited funding for culture in many countries. We are entering a realm of equal competition for available opportunities, but under very different starting conditions.

Following Ukraine's independence and even prior to the full-scale Russian invasion, cultural ties with Russia were maintained intensively. Exchange of ideas, cooperation, tours – all of this often took place within the post-Soviet space. Work on integration into the European space had fewer historical precedents and was also not prioritised at the cultural policy or resource level. From the analytical note of the Literature sector: *'... and before the war, we went on tours of Europe talking about Ukraine through literature and introducing Europeans to our culture, but if until 2022 we went on one tour per year, then after the invasion it's five to seven tours per year.'*

As a result, we have had low integration into the European cultural process, along with an unsynchronised understanding of what cultural products might be the most effective for promoting Ukraine. The situation is even more challenging when it comes to presenting the country on other continents.

## Key issues and challenges

### **1. International cooperation projects often proceed without adequate financial contributions from Ukraine. Lack of parity.**

In the previous section, it was mentioned that the representation and parity of cooperation depends on resources. International cooperation projects often proceed without adequate financial contributions from Ukraine, leaving international institutions to set the terms of engagement. This often results in demands for collaboration with Russian artists under the guise of fostering reconciliation between the two nations. Ukrainian artists abroad are often stripped of their agency in selecting their repertoire and are compelled to compromise with institutions that dictate the direction of these collaborations. This occurs because international organisations act as the primary implementers of projects, relegating [Ukrainian artists to the status of hired contributors rather than equal partners](#).

Co-financing for the presentation of Ukrainian cultural products at international venues can also play a significant role. For example, [according to a study by Perform Europe](#), lack of funding is the primary reason for not including foreign works in the programmes of 87% of venues and festivals, as well as theatre groups and companies; lack of resources remains the main obstacle to international presentations.

This means that even if international colleagues would like to include our product in the programme of their events, they may not have the funds to do so. For example, it was observed that in December 2024, the [German government announced significant planned cuts in cultural spending for 2025](#), which is already causing protests from artists and calling into question the existence of certain institutions.

### **2. Imbalance between the representation of traditional and modern Ukrainian culture with a disproportionate emphasis on traditional culture.**

Weak involvement in international networks, lack of sustainable partnerships, limited resources to attend key international events in the sector, the tradition of presenting

Ukrainian culture, and the level of art education, among other factors, influence the formation of a hermetic view of what cultural product may be effective for communication with the world.

There is an imbalance in Ukrainian cultural diplomacy: the emphasis is often placed on traditional culture. This creates a stereotypical image of Ukraine in the world and limits its potential as a modern European country.

According to respondents in the focus groups, there is almost complete utilisation of folklore and folk motifs at the level of international events, which negatively affects the image of both the Ukrainian cultural sector and the state in general. Diaspora organisations support or popularise mostly folklore, traditional culture, and folk art. This approach is also actively supported by representatives of many Ukrainian embassies abroad (under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). An alternative approach, with a focus on presenting modern cultural products and contemporary art, is demonstrated by the Ukrainian Institute and the Ukrainian Institute in Germany. Another positive example is the Kyiv Biennale, which, as an independent initiative, has been implementing large-scale exhibitions of contemporary art abroad since 2023, accompanying them with a discussion programme. In particular, the criticality and independence of this initiative are the reason for its popularity among foreign (professional) audiences, and in early 2025, the [Ministries of Culture of Ukraine and Austria included the Kyiv Biennale in the list of international cultural events they are ready to jointly support from 2025 to 2030](#).

Contemporary art is a language understandable to Europeans and an important tool of cultural diplomacy that allows integration into the European cultural space. It is necessary to raise the awareness of specialists in state institutions about contemporary art and create mechanisms for its promotion on the international stage.

The critical issue of the imbalance between the representation of traditional and contemporary culture will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

### **3. The Need to Reform the Mechanism of the Commissariat of Ukrainian Pavilions at the Venice National Biennale**

Currently, there is a procedure involving a Commissioner from the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications and an annual open competition for the curator of the pavilion. This process is public and transparent, but almost always occurs too late for thorough preparation. Respondents of analytical intelligence within the framework of the RES-POL project have drawn attention to the experience of the closest Western neighbours, who have transferred the function of the Commissioner to a specialised state institution, which specialises in visual arts and has experience in foreign exhibitions and presentations.

In general, a transparent and understandable mechanism for commissioning works of art – such as murals, urban sculptures, and other artistic projects – by state or municipal institutions (or with state or municipal authorities) would help structure quality criteria and ensure better quality solutions in these areas.

### **4. Lack of Systematic Cultural Exchange**

Ukrainian artists have limited opportunities for international cooperation due to the insufficient number of exchange programmes with foreign colleagues. This limits the establishment of international ties and the presentation of cultural products abroad. At the same time, the limited participation of foreign artists in creating works about Ukraine hinders the formation of a multifaceted and objective image of the country on the global stage.

Polina Horodyska, author of an analytical note on the problems of the Literature sector, notes that after the start of the full-scale invasion, the number of international projects has increased significantly. This is the second most common change in the literary sector caused by the war, according to the analytical note. Respondents emphasise that the existing international integration through the borrowing of best practices has had a positive impact on the development of the Ukrainian literary sector and its personnel. 'On the other hand, the war has given us more visibility abroad, and we have seen the development of English-language media. Also, since several of my colleagues and I have been abroad, this has allowed us to step outside the bubble and see how the world perceives Ukraine. This exposure has enabled us to borrow best practices, improve our own, highlight our achievements, and demonstrate the quality of our work, which is on par with, and in some cases surpasses, the work of colleagues from other countries,' noted Iryna Baturevych in an in-depth interview conducted as part of the analytical note on literature.



Regarding the lack of cultural exchange, we can highlight the following sub-questions:

### **Insufficient Representation of Ukraine at Key International Events and in International Networks**

The authors of the analytical report on performing arts speak of the low representation of Ukraine at key international festivals and networks within the performing sub-sector. There is a need for better networking and integration into European networks. Obstacles include the lack of institutional capacity to organise large-scale international tours, the requirement to pay membership fees (their size, as well as the need for additional regulation of the financial and economic activities of cultural institutions), insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, and the inability to participate fully due to the short planning horizon of activities in Ukraine.

Considering that the sector also has a low capacity to unite within the country, it is clear that this has a significant impact on the readiness and understanding of the need to join international networks.

For example, IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts) is one of the oldest and largest international cultural networks, representing the voice of member organisations and individual professionals working in the field of contemporary performing arts around the world, uniting over 530 members from 60 countries. On the [network's website](#), there is one institutional member from Ukraine (the educational and cultural events agency proto produkciia) and one individual member (choreographer, producer, and performer Anton Ovchinnikov). Meanwhile, [Opera Europe](#), a network of opera organisations, has 11 institutional members from Ukraine – quite a significant number in comparison to other countries.

A more detailed analysis can be found in the analytical survey '[Participation of Ukrainian Institutions and Cultural Organisations in European Networks](#),' published by PVV Knowledge in early 2025. This document speaks of a relatively low engagement from Ukrainian players compared to other countries (primarily due to insufficient English language proficiency), though better engagement is noted among audio and performing arts institutions.

The critical issue of the lack of systematic international exchange will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

**Lack of programmes and mechanisms to support educational and professional mobility programmes to include Ukrainian specialists in the global context.**

There is a constant need for capacity building, advanced training, and establishing international ties – through residencies, training programmes, and the opportunity to jointly apply for European grants. The opportunity to study, undertake internships, and collaborate with foreign colleagues is crucial for the development of the Ukrainian cultural sector, as it influences skill development (which is especially important in the context of the challenges in art education and the human capital crisis). For instance, to successfully present Ukrainian visual art on the world stage, curators must continuously develop and learn from experience. Attending key international art events, such as the Venice Biennale, Documenta, and Manifesta, enables curators to familiarise themselves with works and trends, and to gain a better understanding of the requirements for presentation at such events. Similarly, for instance, it is difficult to imagine the extensive system of official and unofficial programmes at the Avignon Theatre Festival, which hosts around 1,000 performances daily, without first attending the festival in person. These experiences provide invaluable knowledge that helps to develop more effective strategies for foreign presentations, making them more comprehensible to international partners.

The lack of grant opportunities for educational and professional mobilities (particularly abroad) is acknowledged by experts in various fields. There is a need to create mechanisms to support mobility programmes. The key obstacle to the implementation of these initiatives remains securing adequate funding.

**Lack of mechanisms and projects to encourage the movement of international specialists, artists, and cultural actors to Ukraine.**

This is an effective tool for initiating future joint projects, where foreign partners will already have a better understanding of the context in which the work will take place. Additionally, such visits can function as showcases, allowing the introduction of a cultural product that, for various reasons, cannot be presented outside Ukraine.

It is important to involve foreign representatives of the sector in the creation of cultural products about Ukraine. Their works can reach a wider audience and communicate in a language that will be more accessible to different countries (both literally and metaphorically). Examples include the Polish pavilion at the Venice Biennale and the performance 'Mothers. Songs of Wartime' at the Avignon Festival. Involving foreign artists in

cultural diplomacy will help address limitations in resources and experience within the Ukrainian cultural sector.

Ukrainian state theatres have experience in involving foreign professionals (most often directors) in long-term cooperation. According to the analytical note on the performing arts, the following issues and challenges are barriers to such collaboration: the matter of remuneration (fees are often not commensurate with the capabilities of theatres); and the lack of legislation regulating co-productions (it is problematic for a state theatre to host a performance on its balance sheet that belongs to another entity).

#### **5. Insufficient institutional interaction and inadequate involvement of the “global Ukrainians” – artists and professionals in the art field living abroad**

In 2020, the Ukrainian Institute conducted [a series of studies on the perception of Ukraine and Ukrainian culture abroad](#). In the study, representatives from various countries outlined the following difficulties in institutional interaction with Ukrainian counterparts: lack of funding, bureaucracy, and a formal approach to collaboration. Other issues and challenges included a lack of strategic planning, inadequate feedback from Ukrainian partners, and the absence of institutions that would facilitate the search for necessary contacts.

The institutional capacity for effective international cooperation, as well as the ability of [Ukrainian players to interact and synchronise, needs to be strengthened](#).

In particular, focus groups identified the **limited involvement of “global Ukrainians”** – artists and professionals in the field of art living abroad – in cultural diplomacy.

These specialists consider involvement in cultural diplomacy and the representation of Ukraine’s interests abroad to be a strategic priority. These individuals promote Ukrainian contemporary art and cultural heritage through their projects and artistic practice, establishing collaborations with European institutions and organising support projects for Ukrainian artists.

However, there are currently no effective mechanisms or policies to systematically engage these professionals in state-led cultural diplomacy efforts. Ukrainian artists abroad have expressed a desire for professional contact with state institutions and for the standardisation of cultural diplomacy practices. Despite their willingness, the diplomatic sector has been slow to involve them in this process. [The potential of Ukrainians abroad and displaced actors could be used for cultural diplomacy if there is coordination](#).

## **6. Limited access to international venues for Ukrainian male artists. The absence of a mechanism for allowing active military personnel to temporarily travel abroad for artistic and cultural diplomacy purposes**

The procedure for obtaining permission to travel abroad to present their work is complicated and not always successful, even with permits from the Ministry of Culture.

This issue is particularly pressing for artists who are active military personnel. The lack of a clear mechanism for obtaining leave to participate in international cultural events effectively prevents their travel abroad. This limits their participation in cultural diplomacy, which holds significant potential. While there have been initiatives involving military artists in cultural diplomacy – such as international tours and documentary filmmaking – these do not address the core issue of limited access to international venues for most military artists.

Additionally, within the Human Capital section, a proposal has already been raised to create a mechanism for temporarily “booking” male artists from the independent sector who are working on key projects. This issue is particularly critical for key contemporary art projects, including those related to cultural diplomacy. For example, artists commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications to create work for the Ukrainian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale face significant challenges. In the non-state sector, independent artists have virtually no opportunities for reservation, leaving even key male artists in major Ukrainian contemporary art projects in a precarious position, where planning and executing exhibitions or performances involving them becomes nearly impossible.

The critical issue of limited access to international venues for male artists will be addressed by the RES-POL project’s key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.

## **7. Limited geography of cultural diplomacy**

Until recently, the geography of Ukrainian cultural diplomacy was significantly limited, focusing primarily on the countries of North America and Europe, as defined by the Public Diplomacy Strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 2021. This created substantial gaps in the perception of Ukraine in other regions of the world, where the idea of our country is either absent or based on outdated stereotypes. Only at the end of 2023 did

the [Ukrainian Institute begin to expand its activities to countries in Latin America, Africa, and South-east Asia](#), where it is essential to actively work on forming an objective image of Ukraine and counteracting disinformation. This step is critical for strengthening international support for Ukraine and attracting new partners in different parts of the world.

We are only just beginning to engage with a large portion of the world where the perception of Ukraine is either absent or shaped by narratives formed during the Soviet era.

**8. Lack of a platform for regular synchronization of the Ukrainian cultural and artistic communities on issues and challenges of international cultural and artistic work, including issues and challenges of the cancellation of Russian cultural actors. Lack of a shared vocabulary with the world to define the policy of the Russian Empire towards Ukraine.**

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the issue of cancelling Russian culture and its actors has become a topical issue for the Ukrainian cultural community.

Cancelling mechanism currently operates as an unspoken agreement within the cultural community. While there is broad adherence to this consensus, debates frequently arise over specific decisions. There is a request for an exchange of experience, as both participation in cultural diplomacy and the mechanics of cancellation are relatively new and [unfamiliar to many cultural actors](#).

The issue of the synchronization of the community within the country regarding the cancellation of Russian culture is acutely highlighted in the analytical note on audio arts. The performance of works by Russian composers, participation in international venues, and the critical understanding of the heritage of the Soviet era – these topics, which often become the subject of scandals and extensive discussions – include issues and challenges such as: renaming the Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, conducting works by Russian composers by Oksana Lyniv, and adapting productions of The Nutcracker to the music of Ukrainian composers in Kyiv theatres, etc. Focus group respondents also mentioned that *'It is difficult to explain and highlight some of the dissonances of Ukrainian realities. We insist on the cancellation of everything Russian, while many Ukrainian migrants speak exclusively Russian. Then we explain the historical roots of these processes...'* Synchronization and agreements on the principles of interaction are necessary, which could be formulated in a certain memorandum or principles of decision-making. This could increase the effectiveness of communication on this issue with the world.

Although the culture of cancellation is an understandable phenomenon for many countries as a boycott of a person or organisation whose actions or statements are considered discriminatory or unacceptable, the call for the cancellation of (Russian) culture as a whole causes misunderstanding among many partners. Equally important is the problem of the lack of a common vocabulary with the world that would allow for mutual understanding of each other's narratives. In particular, [Ukrainians describe Russia's policy towards Ukraine as colonial, and Russian culture is considered part of this policy, but this thesis is still debatable in many European circles](#).

The critical issue of the lack of a platform for the regular synchronization of Ukrainian cultural and artistic communities on matters of international cultural and artistic work, including the cancellation of Russian cultural actors, will be addressed by the RES-POL project's key experts in the future, within the framework of policy labs and the development of policy proposals involving various stakeholders from both the public and independent sectors.



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