



Cultural Year Report 2022



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Contents

Preface	3
Overview	4
Infographics.....	5
Interviews.....	8
Royal Decoration ceremony	20
Theatre	21
Music	25
Visual Arts	30
Multidisciplinary.....	33
Photography.....	37
Dance	39
Film	41
Cultural Heritage.....	44
Other	46
Information of the Cultural Policy 2021-2024	48

Preface

Dear reader,

Before you lies the new edition of the annual report on the cultural activities of the Embassy and Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The publication of our annual report is a good moment to reflect on all the amazing efforts of the team and look back on so many beautiful and inspiring cultural events in Türkiye. There were many moments, throughout the year, where Dutch artists were able to present themselves as well as the Dutch art and cultural scene. Our initiatives successfully reached a diverse audience, from young theatre enthusiasts to cultural professionals.

During this year we were able to financially support new applicants and even some projects that were postponed due to Covid-19 were realised. We also made it financially possible for Dutch cultural experts to visit Türkiye and boost the bilateral cooperation. As a team, we are very proud that besides all the individual cultural projects, we established a stronger cooperation with different festivals and venues in Türkiye.

In 2022, there were quite some changes within the team. Ipek and Digna left, and we welcomed Talitha to replace Digna. Despite the changes, we were able to develop new initiatives and picked up new responsibilities. The Dutch Consulate General chaired the EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) Istanbul cluster meetings throughout the year. With our partners we initiated Sound of Europe, the EUNIC music festival.

2022 is also the year where ArtsMap, the online platform initiative, further expanded and grew in connecting, empowering, and building the capacity of artists. The visibility of the cultural eco-system also grew because of the Sustainable Development Goals micro support open calls under the ArtsMap initiative. We could not be happier that at the end of 2022 ArtsMap was self-supporting and continued to grow internationally by connecting other countries to this international network.

We are proud that this annual report shows our efforts to continuously reach out to cultural centres outside the main cities with both inclusive and diverse activities. We increased our cultural network by reaching out to smaller municipalities all over Türkiye, visiting more unknown festivals and cultural organisations. We could not have done this without the valuable contribution of the dedicated team of 'Spaces of Culture'. Together we can contribute to a wide and diverse programme of arts-based community exchange in the regions it covers.

As a result of our focus on becoming more sustainable, we broke with the tradition of printed booklets and limited ourselves to a digital annual report. We all wish you a happy digital reading and hope you enjoy the interviews and overview of cultural projects. We again want to thank all our applicants and partners for their cooperation, trust and support and the interviewees in this report for their time to give the readers more insight on the results of the cultural department.

The cultural department of the Embassy and Consulate of the Netherlands in Türkiye.

Overview

A wide range of cultural events unfolded in 2022, from captivating theatre performances to enchanting concerts, thought-provoking exhibitions, and engaging workshops, among others. We proudly supported over 40 projects, reaching a live audience of 167,000 people. These projects also had a substantial online presence, with an estimated online reach of over 7,000,000 people and extensive media coverage.

From 2021 to 2024, Türkiye was made a priority country for our Dutch cultural involvement. Our main aim is to make Dutch culture better known around the world by increasing its visibility, promoting more cultural exchanges, and building strong partnerships. We, the Dutch Embassy in Ankara and the Consulate General in Istanbul, are working enthusiastically to support Dutch arts and culture in Türkiye. We are actively fostering collaborations between Dutch and Turkish artists in various areas such as theatre, movies, art, and design. Our ultimate goal is to enhance mutual understanding and trust between the Netherlands and Türkiye through the shared experience of culture.

We continued working with existing partners and welcomed new ones, supporting fresh projects to expand our cultural network in Türkiye. For comprehensive details on the individual projects we supported and a spotlight on some of our esteemed partners, please refer to this report. Gain a deeper understanding by visualizing the significant impact through our infographics. Additionally, you can find detailed information on our cultural policy and guidance on submitting applications [here](#).

Infographics

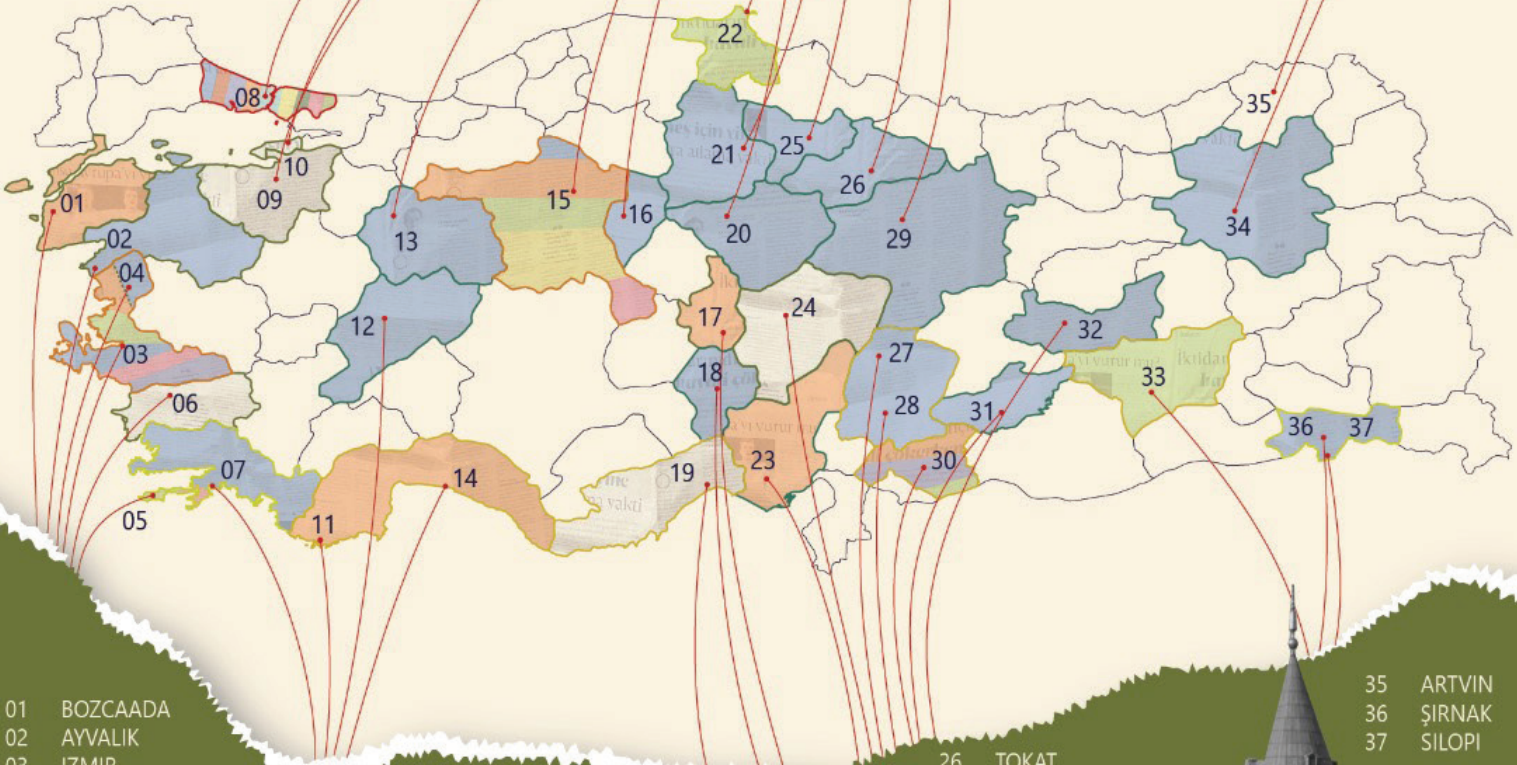
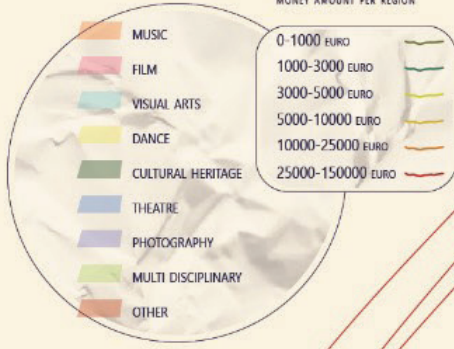
In our mission to actively support cultural initiatives in Türkiye, the Dutch government is dedicated to elevating the global presence of Dutch culture through visibility, exchanges, and enduring partnerships, as outlined in our Policy Framework for 2021-2024. This commitment is demonstrated by the focus of the Dutch Embassy in Ankara and the Consulate General in Istanbul on prioritizing support for Dutch arts and culture in Türkiye. The emphasis lies in fostering collaborations between Dutch and Turkish artists, particularly in performing arts, film, visual arts, and design, with the goal of encouraging international cultural exchange, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting cultural access. By recognizing the power of culture to connect people, we aim to enhance mutual understanding and trust between the Netherlands and Türkiye. Collaborating with various Dutch cultural organisations, we provide opportunities for cooperation and actively inform both Dutch and Turkish cultural sectors about these possibilities. For more details and contact with the Cultural Department, you can visit the [website](#).

In this report, we proudly showcase infographics offering a comprehensive overview of our impact in 2022. These visuals summarize our achievements, reflecting a total online reach of 7,280,000 people and direct engagement with 167,000 individuals.

The infographics provide valuable insights into our financial allocations across diverse categories, illustrating how resources were distributed and depicting the reach achieved in each category. Furthermore, a geographical map of Türkiye showcases the regions where our funding was directed, alongside respective project categories spanning music, film, visual arts, dance, cultural heritage, theatre, photography, multi-disciplinary endeavors, and more.

2022

CATEGORIES



- 01 BOZCAADA
- 02 AYVALIK
- 03 IZMIR
- 04 BERGAMA
- 05 BODRUM
- 06 AYDIN
- 07 MARMARIS
- 08 ISTANBUL
- 09 BURSA
- 10 ÇANAQQALE
- 11 KAŞ

- 12 AFYONKARAHISAR
- 13 ESKIŞEHİR
- 14 ALANYA
- 15 ANKARA
- 16 KIRIKKALE
- 17 MERSİN
- 18 NİĞDE

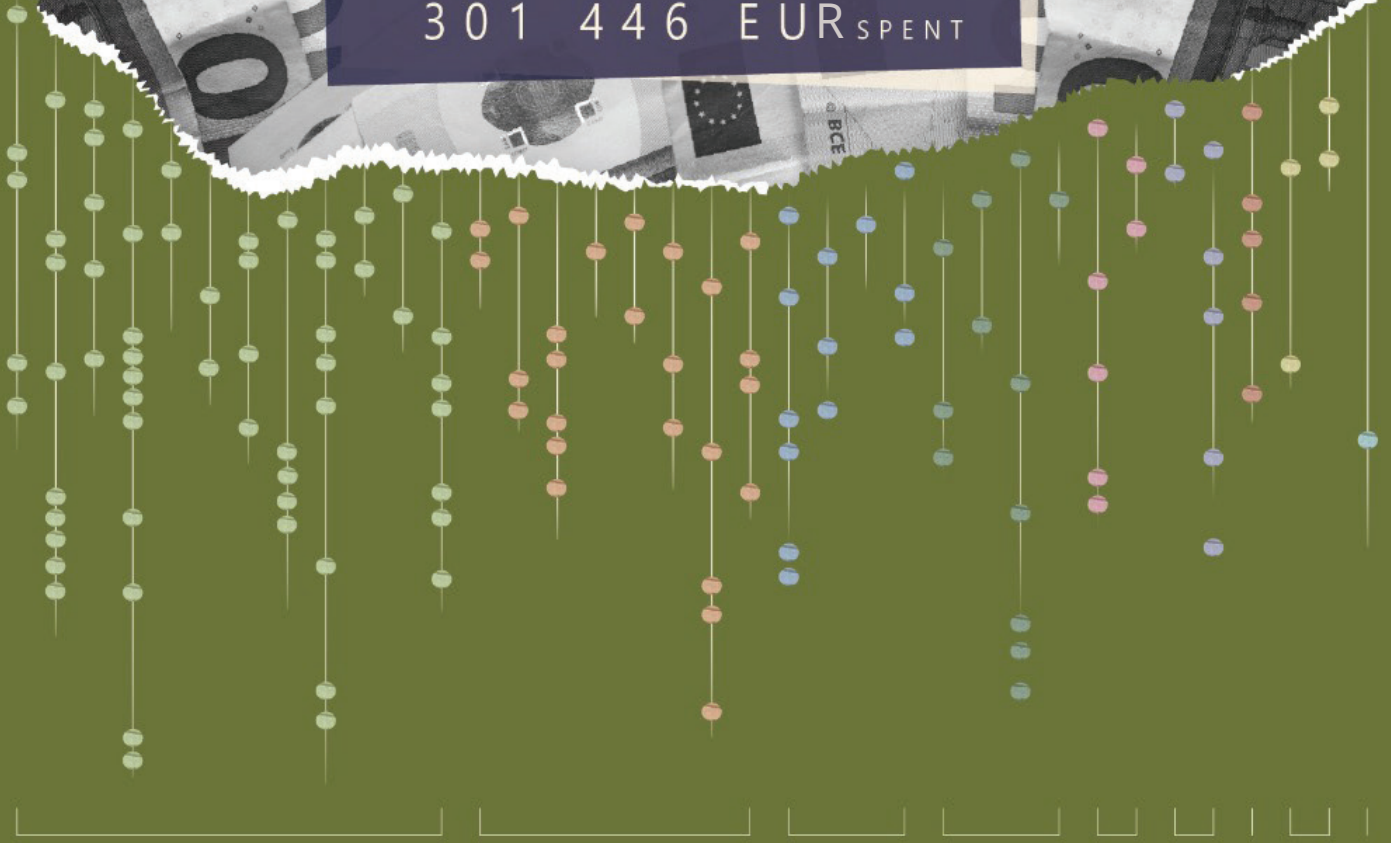
- 19 NEVŞEHİR
- 20 YOZGAT
- 21 ÇORUM
- 22 SINOP
- 23 ADANA
- 24 KAYSERİ
- 25 AMASYA

- 26 TOKAT
- 27 AFSIN
- 28 KAHRAMANMARAŞ
- 29 SIVAS
- 30 GAZİANTEP
- 31 ADIYAMAN
- 32 ELAZİĞ
- 33 DİYARBAKIR
- 34 ERZURUM

- 35 ARTVIN
- 36 ŞIRNAK
- 37 SILOPI



301 446 EUR_{SPENT}



92 790	76 690	53 216	24 357	16 478	14 530	9 000	8 800	5 585
MULTI DISCIPLINARY	MUSIC	THEATRE	CULTURAL HERITAGE	FILM	PHOTOGRAPHY	OTHER	DANCE	VISUAL ARTS

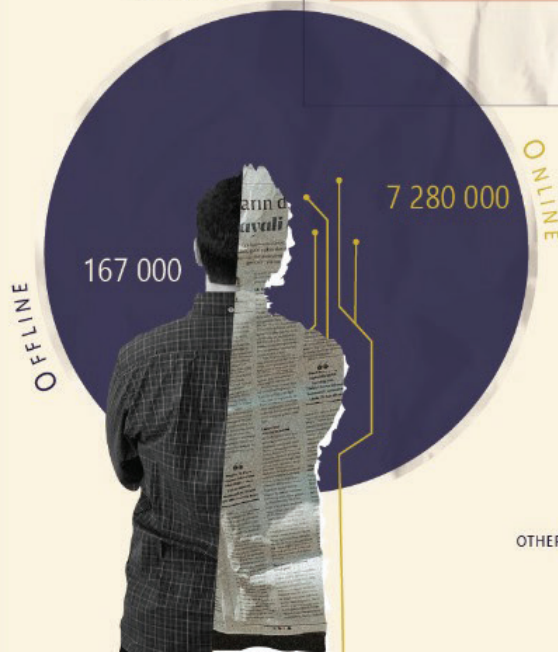
REACH GENERAL

PER CATEGORY

MUSIC	ONLINE 3 300 000	OFFLINE 7 000
FILM	ONLINE 120 000	OFFLINE 6 000
VISUAL ARTS	ONLINE 200 000	OFFLINE 16 000
DANCE	ONLINE 110 000	OFFLINE 3 000
CULTURAL HERITAGE	ONLINE 200 000	OFFLINE 2 000
THEATRE	ONLINE 2 400 000	OFFLINE 60 000
PHOTOGRAPHY	ONLINE 150 000	OFFLINE 70 000
MULTI DISCIPLINARY	ONLINE 700 000	OFFLINE 3 000
OTHER	ONLINE 0	OFFLINE 100 000

18 NEW PARTNERS

23 OLD



Interviews

Welcome to a series of interviews where we delve into the diverse cultural collaborations and initiatives between the Netherlands and Türkiye. In these conversations, we aim to explore not only the professional aspects but also add a personal touch to the narratives.

Our first interview features Hakan Silahsızoğlu, a valued partner in the impactful “Bully Bully” theatre play. Following that, we’ll engage in a conversation with our colleague Eray Ergeç, gaining insights into the broader cultural context and collaborative efforts.

The other two interviews shed light on the initiatives “Sound of Europe” with Ada Burçak Döner and “Spaces of Culture” with Övgü Gökçe. These discussions promise to expand our understanding of cultural exchange, touching upon experiences, challenges, and the stories that make these collaborations unique.



Hakan Silahsızoğlu

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your background in the world of theatre?

I underwent training as an actor at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in England. Subsequently, I worked at the Talimhane Theatre, where I fulfilled roles as an actor, producer, and coordinator in national and international projects, including those funded by the EU. For the theatre seasons spanning from 2012 to 2018, I served as a member of the Yapi Kredi Afife Jale Theatre Awards Jury in Istanbul. Additionally, I held the esteemed position of a global fellow at the International Society of Performing Arts (ISPA) from 2016 to 2018. I played a crucial role in both the selection committee and board of the International Performing Arts for Youth (IPAY). Currently, I sit on the boards of the Theatre Cooperative and the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People (Assitej) Türkiye. I take pride in being the founder and director of the Atta Festival, Türkiye's exclusive international arts festival for babies and children. Furthermore, I hold the position of the head of the children's theatre department at Watermans Arts Centre, considered London's leading cultural center.

What inspired you to create Atta Festival, and what is the primary mission or vision behind it?

I initially worked in theatre for adult audiences but began exploring children's theatre in 2010 when the Dutch Consulate in Istanbul invited me to the Tweetakt Festival in Utrecht. Visiting Tweetakt proved to be an eye-opening experience, exposing me to exceptional children's theatre characterized by high quality and a genuine commitment to taking children seriously. Following visits to the Netherlands in 2010 and 2011, I programmed three shows from the Tweetakt Festival in Türkiye and toured them to Istanbul, Eskisehir, Bursa, and Mardin. This initiative served as an early trial for what would later become the Atta Festival in Türkiye.

Atta is a social initiative rooted in children's rights to arts and culture. As Türkiye's leading children's festival, it showcases diverse art forms and interactive content, held annually in Istanbul around 20 November, World Children's Rights Day. In addition to the festival, Atta produces performances for children through international collaborations and tours them throughout the year in Türkiye and internationally, including performances tailored for children with complex needs. Before the creation of Atta, there was no international arts festival in Türkiye addressing children's performances from a broad perspective. While there were theatre or puppet festivals, they fell short of presenting various art forms and were not keeping pace with global standards, showcasing the best work available. I was determined not to let children in Türkiye lag behind their counterparts in countries like the Netherlands, the UK, the USA, etc. My goal was to offer something unique, enabling them to embrace the world before them through arts and culture.

Atta Festival is known for its focus on children's theatre. Could you share your reasons for concentrating on this particular audience?

Children are our future! This is a cliché, but it's absolutely true and valid at all times. If we'd like to change the world for a better place where everyone is equal and respected, it has to start with children so they can challenge future generations and bring their societies to a better place. Children are also the best audience, sincere and honest. If they don't like something, they will express their feelings and respond.

How do you believe theatre can impact the lives of children and contribute to their development?

There are many studies showing that arts and culture play a huge part in children's development. This is not only for their well-being and socialization but arts can make a huge impact on children's educational success. Theatre shares a world with children where they can see that there can be different lives, different situations in life, just as theirs, but it's okay, and life continues.

Can you tell us about some of the most memorable or impactful productions or projects that Atta Festival has been involved in?

The first one is our collaboration with Maas Theatre and Dance on *Wanted Rabbit!* I saw the show in 2012 during a visit to Tweekakt and it stayed in my mind. When we invited Rene Geerling's *iPet* in 2017 we had a great time with the company and wanted to work together. Then I remembered Rene's *Wanted Rabbit* performance and we agreed to co-produce it in Turkish. That was our first ever co-production where we had Rene and Saskia coming over to Türkiye for auditions and rehearsals. The play had a huge success and it's still touring in Türkiye with over 130

performances.

The second one is our collaboration with Ceren Oran & Moving Borders on *Elephant from an Egg*. This was our second co-production which happened during the pandemic and together with Safe Place, Tel Aviv based festival for children with complex needs, we were able to produce a version for children with autism. This play is still in our repertoire and we still perform this adaptation for children with complex needs.

The Dutch Maas theatre is a renowned name in the world of performing arts. Could you discuss your experiences and thoughts on collaborating with them?

Working together with Rene Geerlings is a blast. He is such a visionary director who is very creative and can make highly artistic performances. Since Rene has become the artistic director of Maas Theatre and Dance our collaboration went deeper. Maas is a very experienced company who tours all around the world. While working on our recent co-production *Bully Bully* we learnt a lot from each other. Our cultures are different but our artistic vision and eagerness to create a high quality performance for children the same. We had such a great time working together with Maas and it's director Rene and everyone at Maas during 3 weeks of rehearsals with Turkish performers in the Netherlands and 3 weeks rehearsals in Türkiye with Dutch creative team in Istanbul. This was a unique experience where we got to know each other's cultures more and learnt from each other.

What are some of the challenges and rewards of international collaborations in the theatre world?

When working on a collaboration with an international partner, one needs to understand there are many differences. First of all the culture is completely different. So everyone needs to understand each other

and accept one another as they are. The challenge is we are not on the same level of financial support from the government in Türkiye. What is more the workforce is very limited and we work in smaller teams in Türkiye. Our international partners have regular support from their respective countries and have a permanent staff etc who can run things in different departments. The beauty of working on an international collaboration, you really can learn from each other and present an idea, a performance in a completely different way when two minds come together. For performers the reward is working with international creatives where they can develop their practice and learn something new and challenge themselves artistically. For Atta the reward is presenting high quality international performances for children in Türkiye and raising the bar in children's theatre.

Can you tell us about Bully Bully, starting performances in 2022?

Bully Bully gives the audience Duplo-level insight into the collision of two world-powers that, eventually, learn to meet in the middle: politics at the kindergarten and childishness amongst serious and powerful grown-ups. This is a toddler's musical the likes of West Side Story that presents us with two performers, many songs, funny quarrels, a bit of bickering and, eventually, a happy ending. Bully Bully was a continuation of our relations with Rene Geerlings and Maas Theatre and Dance after a successful coproduction of Wanted Rabbit. We wanted to build on our existing relations and went further by creating a performance together. Bully Bully is a unique collaboration for us because we started to work on this performance from scratch as opposed to Wanted Rabbit where we produced an existing work. Performers from Türkiye worked with their peers for 3 weeks at Maas Theatre and Dance in Rotterdam and have seen many performances in the

Netherlands while rehearsing there. Then Dutch creative team came to Istanbul for 3 weeks and work together with Turkish performers and creative team. The play had a unique approach; having a Turkish cast who performs in Türkiye and having a Dutch cast who performs it in the NL as well as internationally. Bully Bully was a huge success as a collaboration. It has an award in the Netherlands and it already toured many children's festivals in different cities around the world. Atta was able to produce the work in Türkiye thanks to the Dutch Consulate and the Embassy in Türkiye as well as Maas Theatre and Dance where they contributed also.

Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives that you're particularly excited about or would like to share?

We have been working on performances for children with complex needs and would like to share our knowledge with subsidized and private theatres in Türkiye. We are equally excited to continue working with Maas Theatre and Dance and coproduce one of Rene Geerlings existing work PAK'M (Get Them) and build our relations further. We also like to introduce opera to children through Ton Meijer's work in the Netherlands and create a Turkish version so it can be sustainable and has an after life in Türkiye after it's creation. Last but not the least, we'd like to develop our capacity and exchange with partners from the Netherlands who work in different genres for children's performances.

How has children's theatre, particularly in the context of the 2023 earthquake made a lasting impact on young audiences in times of crisis? What future initiatives or approaches do you envision for using theatre as a means of support and healing for children in similar circumstances?

Theatre can always touch people's lives and healing trauma through theatre is one of the best cures for people to get better and return to their life. After the earthquake in February 2023, children and their families got health and social support to a certain extent immediately. It took some time for arts and culture to play its part after this devastating event. Theatre or performances in general made a huge contribution to their well being and getting through these difficult times. Many artists and theatre makers visited the region and met children as well as their families. We know that children and their families need a long term engagement and not only visited once in a commemoration of this earthquake. We have performed Wanted Rabbit in Kahramanmaras and run some creative workshops for children. We have produced Kabuk, a children's theatre for 5+ especially for cities affected from the earthquake in February 2023. The play is produced with the support of IKSV's Gulriz Sururi - Engin Cezzar Theatre Encouragement Award and will be touring in those cities with the support of the Dutch Consulate and Embassy in Türkiye.



Eray Ergeç

Can you tell us about your background and what led you to become a cultural policy advisor in Türkiye?

I have lived in the Netherlands since my early childhood but moved to Türkiye about 20 years ago. Before I started working for the Dutch Consulate and Embassy in Türkiye, I used to work in the cultural field in both countries, I used to organize exhibitions in Türkiye and the Netherlands. In this field I used to work with the consulate and embassy before I started working there as an employee. Other than that I also wrote for travel books and a magazine.

How has your collaboration with the Dutch embassy and consulate evolved over the years, especially expanding to multiple cities in Türkiye?

The projects that were supported used to be mainly in Istanbul and Ankara. Türkiye is a very big country with a lot of provinces. For the last 5 to 6 years we have been visiting a lot of different cities, in order to make more connections in areas other than those two cities. We've expanded our reach to

more provinces and numerous cities like Edirne, Kütahya, Sivas, Malatya, Diyarbakır, and more. In 2022, we had projects in 37 different cities and villages. As we are expanding, coverage in media also increased significantly. Getting more attention to our projects has had a very positive impact on the people involved and the public opinion.

Could you share a notable project you've been involved in, especially those geared towards children?

We have undertaken numerous projects for children since 2018, including engaging theatre plays based on Dutch children's literature. These initiatives, especially in disadvantaged areas, have brought theatre experiences to children who had never seen one before. One of my favorites was the play based on the Dutch writer Annie M.G. Schmidt: "Pluk ve Kırmızı Çekici". We have supported a number of children's plays based on Dutch literature. Many times after the performances the translated children's books were given to the children. The municipalities and the Turkish government have always helped with making contact with schools and getting children transported to the theatre with busses. In this way children who would never been able to attend a children's play were able to see a live performance for the first times in their lives.

Can you share some insights into the outcomes and reception of the cultural activities and collaborations between Dutch and Turkish artists or organisations?

We get a lot of positive feedback after artists and groups visit Türkiye. As the Dutch artists have had very positive experiences, they share these experiences with other artists contributing in the Netherlands. This results in more interest in going to Türkiye for projects and cultural events.

In addition to concerts, we also support masterclasses to share experiences. We highly value this, and it is well-received by both parties, the ones conducting these masterclasses and the students or professionals participating. It is a great way to have deep meaningful exchanges between the Dutch and Turkish participants. Through these activities, we've gained significant recognition. I hear from our Turkish partners that we are on top of the list for the most and enjoyable activities among other diplomatic posts in Türkiye from different countries.

How do you see the role of cultural diplomacy in strengthening ties between the Netherlands and Türkiye?

Culture is an excellent bridge to find common ground. We always like to include cultural events such as concerts or theatre for example to official diplomatic visits. Having cultural activities during visits adds color and helps in creating a relaxed atmosphere during official visits.

In your opinion, what tips can you offer for those looking to engage in cultural projects in Türkiye, considering its diverse cultural landscape?

Türkiye has a vast cultural landscape, from dance to concerts, theatre, and more as you can also read in this cultural year report. There are many different festivals and activities throughout the year, and organizers in general appreciate international contributions. So based on the field of expertise you would like to receive support, I would advise interested individuals to first contact festivals or other organisations and propose their ideas to them.



Ada Döner

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and about your background in event organisation and your past experiences working with the Dutch consulate?

Of course, with pleasure. I am a culture and arts professional who has worked in different positions in festivals and live events for about 18 years. For the last 5 years, I worked in the festival team of Istanbul Jazz Festival. For the last two years, I have my own production company. From capacity building to the festival, I produce, programme or provide consultancy for various culture and arts organisations. One of the tasks of my position at Istanbul Jazz Festival was to manage local and international public partnerships and fundraising. The Dutch Consulate and the Jazz Festival have a long history of cooperation, and this is how I got to know the Palais de Hollande. Afterwards, I produced some of the events organized at the Palace and many different

culture and arts projects supported by the Dutch Consulate.

What is EUNIC, and how did it play a role in cultural exchanges and collaborations?

EUNIC is a European network of national cultural institutes and organisations with 39 members from EU Member States and partner countries, supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. As an umbrella organisation, it provides fertile ground for intercultural dialogue. In fact, this is exactly what we experience during the Sound of Europe Festival. A real and organic sharing and dialogue emerges not only between European and Turkish musicians and music lovers, but also between European countries themselves, from the organisation to the stage.

The first EUNIC music festival was an exciting venture. Could you provide some insights into the vision and goals behind this event?

EUNIC has two clusters in Türkiye, in Ankara and Istanbul. These clusters come together regularly to talk about their respective culture and arts environments and activities. In 2022, the chairs of these clusters were İpek van Dijk, Senior Policy Officer of the Consulate General of the Netherlands, and Sophie Gauthier, Director of Institut Français Ankara. They thought it would be very exciting and enjoyable to create a festival together, in addition to the events organized by the cultural offices individually, and that it would also make a great contribution to the cultural and artistic life of Türkiye. And they were right, as we organized the second edition of the festival in 2023, we felt again how appropriate their decision was.

What made the EUNIC music festival unique compared to other cultural events, and what did attendees experience?

I think the most unique feature of the festival is that it opens its stage to new, young talents.

Brand new talents from different countries of Europe at the beginning of their careers meet with the audience in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. At the same time, they share the same stage with musicians and bands from Türkiye and intercultural dialogue starts from the stage and spreads. With the featuring artists we added this year, this communication has actually moved to another point in terms of production. Musicians from different countries who were guests on each other's stage created a different fusion.

How did your past experience in organizing events for the Dutch consulate influence your approach to curating the EUNIC music festival?

The festival brings together around 25 partners including consulates, embassies, cultural offices and municipalities. My previous experience with the Dutch consulate has greatly improved my perspective on intercultural dialogue, sustainability and working inclusively on a common ground. I always use this understanding and communication style while organizing the festival.

Could you share some of the highlights and key performances or artists that attendees enjoyed at the festival?

I think the performances where musicians from Türkiye were guests of European bands were the most uplifting and entertaining for everyone.

Normally we are used to seeing and listening to hanging drums in Türkiye, but seeing it in a different form of music actually makes us internalize, understand and feel close to the form we think we are different from. This is not only the case on stage and in music, mixing with each other is always one of the best ways to understand each other. Some of our European artists have a three-day tour of Türkiye, performing in every city. For these musicians, the tour experience itself is quite enjoyable. They meet an audience with a different character in each city and venue. They have the opportunity to compare and evaluate them. If they go to Ankara after performing in Izmir, the audience follows them on their social media posts, gets excited and waits for them to come to their city.

EUNIC often involves collaborations between different European cultural institutions. How did these partnerships contribute to the festival's success?

One of the most important goals of this festival is to act together and establish intercultural dialogue. With Sound of Europe, this concept was spontaneously created and organically adopted a very open communication.



Övgü Gökçe Yaşa

Working with “Spaces of Culture” requires a passion for cultural exchange and community engagement. What personally motivates you to dedicate your time and expertise to this project, and are there specific moments or experiences that reinforced your belief in its mission?

Having worked as Spaces of Culture’s Diyarbakır coordinator between 2018-2021 at Diyarbakır Arts Center (DSM), and serving as a steering committee member since 2021, I have witnessed and contributed to different aspects of the project in the past 5 years. I believe Spaces of Culture’s success resides in the accessibility, openness, and flexibility as a support programme, which enabled it to respond to the needs and demands of organisations and artists coming from different backgrounds. It could create grounds for direct communication and feedback through the city coordination mechanism and build solid trust in its first year. It has been rewarding to witness how the process of being a Spaces of Culture partner for many initiatives greatly contributed to their capacity in project design and implementation when facilitated with

close guidance. Particularly at events where partners from different cities come together and listen to each other, forming a common language and new collaborations have been very valuable.

“Spaces of Culture” focuses on fostering diversity, inclusivity, and cultural exchange. Could you provide examples of how these values are integrated into the projects and programmes it supports?

The diversity of cities in the programme directly reflects the diverse nature of the project as it spreads to different regions of Türkiye with different populations that include disadvantaged target groups, multiple ethnicities, and languages. Spaces of Culture facilitates the projects by different groups in a variety of settings and with diverse target groups in İzmir, accommodates productions of Syrian artists in Gaziantep, and supports projects by Kurdish organisations in Diyarbakır, who have limited opportunities for free expression due to the changing political climate in the past several years. The project’s inclusive, diverse approach shows itself in the multiplicity of languages, themes, and fields that cover a wide range including ecology, migration, children and women studies, music, theatre, literature, contemporary art, and film.

Collaboration with local artists and community actors seems to be a key aspect of the project. How do these collaborations contribute to the unique character of the cultural activities in these regions?

Collaborations between different organisations within the same city and in different cities contribute greatly to the cultural climate by multiplying the number of projects and issues that are taken at hand and developing new audiences. As Spaces of Culture increased the number of opportunities that enabled initiatives and

artists to get together in common meetings, capacity trainings, mobility programmes, and final conferences that embodied discussion of common topics as well as performances or exhibitions from cities, a strong network came to life. This also has a positive effect on the visibility of cultural and artistic activities in cities and contributes to creating networks of solidarity by bringing together relevant parties under difficult circumstances as in the case of earthquakes that took place in the southeast region in February 2023.

In times of social tension, the role of culture and art in bringing people together is crucial.

Could you share instances where cultural activities supported by “Spaces of Culture” have played a role in bridging communities or fostering understanding?

I believe specific and focused exhibitions or performances are significant, and they draw as many audiences as larger events such as theatre, film, or literature festivals. I can share my first-hand experience on the fourth edition of Diyarbakır Literature Days organized by Lîs Publishing House, Wêjegeh Amed (Diyarbakır Literature House) and DSM in 2022. In a cultural climate where Kurdish publishers and authors can hardly have the space and opportunity to present their works and where Turkish authors have limited circumstances to meet their colleagues writing in Kurdish, this bilingual event has created an amazing space for literary exchange. It was exciting to see how the different languages of Türkiye were represented in this event, how the audience was enthusiastic about the bilingual poetry nights, and how an open space for literary dialogue created an atmosphere that goes beyond the existing borders. Kurdish and Turkish writers signed their books for each other, shared their common problems as well as listened to diverging issues,

and cherished being together in an equal setting where the pressure of unresolved political issues has been overcome by a common language for dialogue.

In your opinion, what is the most significant impact or change that “Spaces of Culture” has had on the cultural landscape in the regions it covers?

There are many examples to illustrate the impact of Spaces of Culture in terms of quantity and quality of arts projects that have been produced as well as on issues that relate to increased communication with the public and visibility. I believe the most significant impact has been the self-trust Spaces of Culture built in organisations and individual artists during the project process. The self-trust in expressing oneself, executing a project, and the ability to carry out and realise a conception they have with all the necessary steps that they develop from project application to reporting has increased greatly through positive experiences. The flexible and guided processes of project development and implementation have given the courage to many partners in the cities that sustainability is not a ‘requirement’ but something that can be developed, thought over, and realised with further steps, reaching out to more partners, communicating more funders and finding ways to reach out to larger audiences. I am sure this self-trust paid back greatly under the increasing difficulty of cultural and economic circumstances in contemporary Türkiye with a series of crises ranging from the pandemic to economic downfall and lately earthquake by strengthening them and showing that sustainability is not only a financial issue but also something that concerns integrity and creativity for generating new circles of solidarity.

Royal Decoration ceremony



Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts General Director Görgün Taner was awarded the Knight of the Order of Orange-Nassau by H.M. King Willem-Alexander in recognition of his contributions to İKSV, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022, and his role in ensuring the continuity of cultural cooperation between Türkiye and the Netherlands. The decoration was presented to Görgün Taner during a surprise ceremony held at the Consulate General of the Netherlands on the evening of September 21st. It was presented by the newly appointed Ambassador of the Netherlands in Türkiye, Joep Wijnands.

"I firmly believe that the most significant moments occur when people come together, engage in meaningful conversations, and prioritize culture above all else. Talk, create, and collaborate – for the future is built on arts, culture, and the promise of hope." – Görgün Taner



Theatre

In the year 2022, our collaborative projects brought the magic of theatre to a staggering audience of 60,000 spectators. These performances, orchestrated by seven of our project partners, extended their reach far beyond the physical venues. An estimated 2.4 million people were captivated by the online reach, and their impact was further amplified by extensive media coverage.

It was truly heartwarming to witness the enthusiasm of our younger audience members as they immersed themselves in the world of theatre. Notably, five of these projects were tailored specifically for children, and their success continues into 2023. Let's have a look at those performances.



Cole Man

In the cities of Ankara, Çorum, Amasya, Tokat, Sivas, Yozgat, Kırıkkale, and Niğde, the enchanting play “Cole Man” was brought to life by the talented Ankara-based group known as Tiyatro Tempo. This performance delves into a Dutch folk tale, exploring the intricate bond between a father and son, navigating adversity, and the consequences of disobedience. At its core, it conveys a timeless message – that kindness always finds its reward. Over the years, the projects by Tiyatro Tempo have received steadfast support. This play was tailored for an audience aged 8 and up.



Breathless

In a novel initiative, the municipality of Kahramanmaraş received support for the staging of “Ademloos” or “Breathless,” a captivating Dutch play by Gerard van Gemert. This theatrical adaptation, tailored for both Turkish and Syrian refugee children, tells a powerful tale of dismantling prejudice, overcoming racism, and embracing the unifying force of sports. “Breathless” made a lasting impact in the cities of Elbistan, Türkoğlu, Kahramanmaraş, and Şanlıurfa, captivating over 2000 children with its compelling narrative. The project attracted significant media attention, marking a

successful collaboration that transcended cultural boundaries.



Bully Bully

The Atta Festival has received consistent support for a variety of plays, and “Bully Bully” stands as an exceptional testament to cooperation between the Turkish Atta Festival and the award-winning Dutch Maas Theatre. This collaboration saw the play’s development through the collective creativity of both theatre groups. “Bully Bully” made its world premiere in Türkiye, captivating audiences as young as 3 years old. In this uproarious production filled with music, dance, and comical skirmishes, two world leaders engage in a relentless battle before discovering the value of cooperation. The play was performed in Istanbul, Izmir, Muğla, Ankara, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Tunceli, Mersin, Hatay, and Adana, and its success continues in various cities in 2023.



I Want a Lion

The 'Sivas Görsel Sanatlar ve Kültür Derneği' received support once again. This time for the play "I Want a Lion." Adapted from the Dutch children's book "Ik wil een leeuw" by Annemarie van der Eem, this play was tailored for children aged 6 to 11. Especially children who reside in rural areas and may not be familiar with theatre or foreign literature due to their socio-economic backgrounds. Witnessing these young minds discover the world of theatre has been profoundly rewarding. Translated versions of the storybook were distributed after the play. "I Want a Lion" graced the stages of 17 locations across Türkiye, including Gazıemir, Karaburun, Urla, Afyonkarahisar, Şırnak, Silopi, Kahramanmaraş, Afşin, Adıyaman, Erzurum, Elazığ, Sivas, Yozgat, Marmaris, Ankara, Istanbul and Ayvalık.



1st Int. Puppet Festival

For the first time, the Municipality of Eskişehir received support for the inaugural 1st International Puppet Festival in Eskişehir. During this captivating event, the renowned Dutch Puppet theatre, 'T Magisch Theatretje,' graced the stage with two remarkable puppet plays.

A poignant and evocative play, 'Transit,' presented by Ananda Puijk, explored the theme of losing control over one's body as

they age. This deeply touching performance resonated with adult audiences, offering a deep reflection on life's journey.

For children aged 4 and older, Charlotte Puijk delighted the young hearts with 'NYX.' This play artfully tackled the common reluctance of children to go to bed in a dark room.

'NYX' was a play of action, a wordless yet expressive masterpiece that captivated young audiences.



Bergama Theatre Festival

The Bergama Theatre Festival, a celebration of culture, history, and urban life on the ancient grounds of Pergamon, received support in 2022. The festival welcomed the group Club Guy and Roni, whose performance and workshop left a lasting impact. Young professionals had the privilege to engage in a workshop on modern dance during this festival, enriching their artistic journey.



Zwermers

Organized by the Fringe Festival, the performance of 'Zwermers' received financial support. 'Zwermers' was a collaborative effort between a Dutch theatre group and Turkish drama students in Türkiye. The performance delved into the human tendency to categorize and label others, challenging visitors to confront their own inclination to judge and categorize. This collaboration between the Dutch group and drama students exemplified the beauty of partnership and creativity. The play captivated audiences when performed in public spaces in Istanbul and Izmir, sparking thought-provoking conversations about human perceptions and biases.



Music

A significant portion of our funding was allocated to support various musical initiatives throughout the year.

Our support extended to a wide range of musical endeavors. This included backing Dutch artists in their performances and offering workshops tailored to professionals. Our musical spectrum encompassed classical, jazz, and rock genres, supporting both emerging talents and established stars.

Concerts and workshops held under our sponsorship drew over 8000 attendees, while our online presence reached an impressive audience of over 3.3 million. Beyond maintaining our existing partnerships, our commitment to fostering innovation and cultivating new connections led to the emergence of fresh projects.

As we reflect on the past year's musical achievements, we invite you to explore the diverse and transformative world of music.



Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra

The renowned Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra from the Netherlands collaborated with the celebrated Turkish pianist Gökhan Aybuluş, delivering remarkable performances in both Ankara and Izmir. The concerts received resounding applause and appreciation from the audiences in both cities. In addition to their concerts, the orchestra members generously shared their expertise through masterclasses, benefiting a group of 50 enthusiastic students. An additional 500 students had the privilege of observing these masterclasses and all students were invited to join the orchestra's rehearsals, an opportunity that was eagerly embraced. Notably, students from various conservatories came together to form a student orchestra, where they delved into three distinct works by Mozart. This exchange of knowledge and experiences proved to be a valuable and enriching experience for all involved.



Opus Amadeus Festival

The Opus Amadeus Chamber Music Festival, a cherished celebration of baroque and classical music, continued receiving support in 2022. The Dutch ensemble 'New Collegium' brought their melodious performance to Istanbul, sharing their expertise through masterclasses at the prestigious Turkish conservatory Mimar Sinan. This rare

opportunity provided young music students with invaluable insights and learning experiences. Opus Amadeus remains committed to nurturing musical talent through these workshops, contributing to the growth of young musicians.



Istanbul Music Festival

IKSV has been a cherished partner in our journey, and our collaborative efforts have spanned numerous projects over the years. In 2022, we had the privilege of supporting Amsterdam Sinfonietta, a chamber orchestra that has been known for its innovative programmes, blending well-known classics with new commissions, fresh arrangements

and rarely performed works. This year was particularly special for the music festival as it marked its 50th anniversary.



Sound of Europe

The Sound of Europe festival came to life through the joint efforts of Istanbul and Ankara clusters of EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture), backed by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme. Each participating country contributed a music group to the festival, which took place in public spaces in Istanbul and Ankara. 2022 marked the inaugural year of this festival, and its resounding success led to its continuation in 2023. The Dutch contribution featured the band Crudo.

Mersin International Music Festival

The 20th Mersin Music Festival received our support, featuring the 'Utrecht String Quartet.' Known for its diverse musical styles, the festival offered a rich programme that appealed to a broad audience from Mersin and its surrounding areas. The Utrecht String Quartet took the stage with compositions by Beethoven and Piazzolla, delivering a captivating performance. This festival has received our support in the past, reflecting our commitment to its musical diversity.



Istanbul Jazz Festival

Another collaboration with IKSU involved supporting the concert of YinYin during the 29th Istanbul Jazz Festival. YinYin's unique ability to bridge East and West through music made their performance a highlight of the festival. They shared the stage with Velican Sagun in a remarkable collaboration that left a lasting impression on the audience.



Kaş Jazz Festival

For the first time, the Kaş Jazz Festival received our support, featuring a captivating performance by the Dutch Rembrandt Trio. The concert drew jazz and soul music enthusiasts from far and wide, marking a memorable debut for this festival.



Bozcaada Jazz Festival

In another first-time collaboration, we supported the Bozcaada Jazz Festival with a performance by the Dutch-based group Shishani & Miss Catharsis. The music of this talented ensemble is characterized by its melodic Indiesoul style, adding a unique flavor to the festival.



Alanya Jazz Days

The Alanya Jazz Days, a regular event since 2002, received our support for the first time, featuring the soulful sounds of Amsterdam-based artist Steffen Morrison. His music, a fusion of classic soul and rock & roll influences, resonated deeply with the festival's audience, leaving a lasting impression.



Ankara Jazz Festival

The Ankara Jazz Festival, a familiar recipient of our support, welcomed the group RUKEN this year. RUKEN's music represents a harmonious blend of influences from five different ethnic musicians, each contributing their unique essence to the mix. Their music serves as a bridge between Anatolian culture and modern jazz, enriching the festival's diverse musical offerings.



Meral Polat Trio

In 2022, as part of our cultural initiatives, we hosted the Meral Polat Trio, a musical ensemble that blends the traditional folk songs of Anatolian people and Kurdish Mountain melodies with an authentic blues spirit. Led by Dutch actress, singer-songwriter, and theatre producer Meral Polat, alongside the talented pianist and composer Chris Doyle and the versatile drummer and composer Frank Rosaly, their music embodies a heartfelt, melancholic, yet surprisingly hopeful journey. In 2022, the trio performed in Istanbul and Tunceli, offering audiences a fusion of cultural influences and musical genres that transcended boundaries, demonstrating the unifying power of music.



Influenced by legendary artists like Barış Manço, Cem Karaca, Erkin Koray, and more, Makas creates Progressive/Anatolian rock music that resonates with both heart and soul, making their live shows a must-see experience.



Makas

Rock band Makas, founded in 2012, has left an indelible mark on audiences with captivating performances in Adana and Gaziantep. Their music is a unique blend of Anatolian melodies and original compositions, delivered with an energetic sound that also carries a touch of melancholy.

Visual Arts

In the field of Visual Arts, our support has helped bring to life innovative projects that explore different aspects of contemporary art. These projects, spanning from Ankara to Istanbul and beyond, have made a lasting impact on the art scene.



Başkent Kültür Yolu

Our first-time support brought the project “Başkent Kültür Yolu” to life, an international initiative by Muse Contemporary in Ankara. The exhibition, titled “Geleneği/Geleceği Dokumak” (Weaving Tradition, Weaving the Future), united female artists from eight countries, including the Netherlands. Curated by Ayşe Pınar Akalın, this showcase of contemporary textile art expressed impactful statements about womanhood, tradition, and the bridge between past practices and future innovations. The artists explored themes such as sustainability, recycling, and the preservation of lost values, ultimately empowering women in the world of textile arts.



All waters fall into language

Exploring new territories, we supported a unique exhibition project guided by Naz Kocadere. Inspired by language and socio-ecological sustainability, this project created a space for discussions about the connection between language, sound, memory, and water. The exhibition featured works by artists from the Netherlands and Türkiye, blending different cultural perspectives. The project included an exhibition, public events, and a small publication. Naz Kocadere, the curator and art manager, led this initiative with her exhibition titled ‘All waters fall

into language,’ held at Kiraathane Istanbul Literature House.



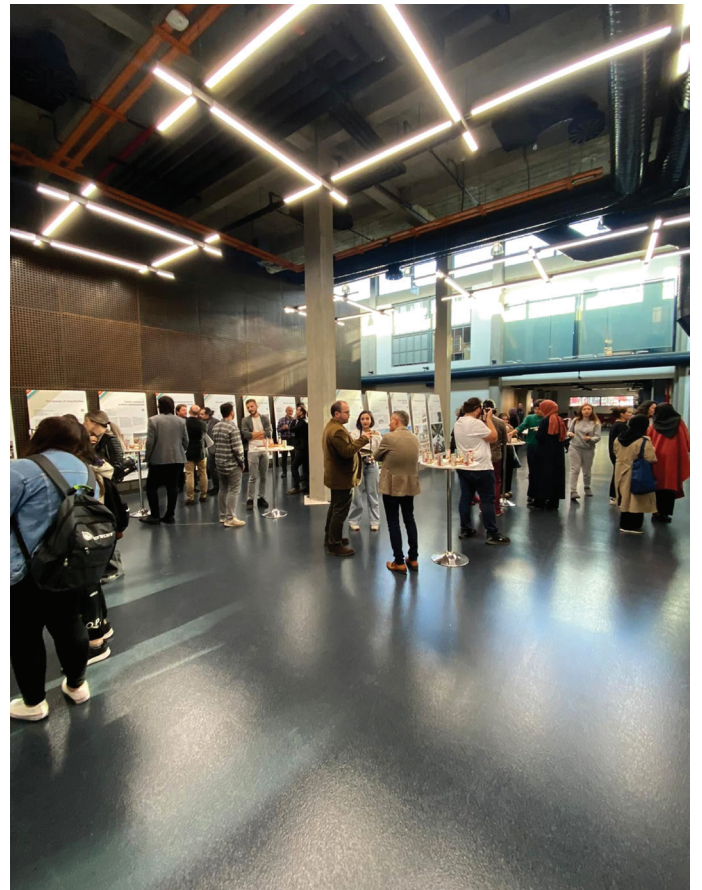
Dutch Chronicles in Türkiye

The ‘Dutch Chronicles in Türkiye’ exhibition showcased modern Dutch artists Arjen Zwart, Jeroen Paalvast, and Koenraad Marinus van Lier. Curated by Kemal Orta, it explored themes like time, identity, and distance in contemporary art. The exhibition shed light on Dutch culture, challenged ideas about distance and societal dynamics, and delved into the philosophy of time. It featured a wide range of art forms, from videos to sculptures, and included artist discussions and seminars. The exhibition’s success led to it being shown in multiple Turkish cities, engaging with universities, art institutions, and enthusiasts, promoting intellectual growth and artistic appreciation in the region.



Reuse Redevelop and Design

The “Old Buildings, New Uses” exhibition, a joint effort with the Netherlands Institute in Türkiye, featured 30 exemplary adaptive reuse projects, with 20 from the Netherlands and 10 from Türkiye. Focused on celebrating the transformation of historic buildings into vibrant, sustainable spaces while preserving their heritage, these projects showcased the timeless beauty and significance of repurposed structures. By bridging the past and present, the exhibition encouraged an appreciation for heritage preservation and sustainable design. Each project demonstrated creative repurposing, contributing to the vitality of communities as cultural centers, educational institutions, or innovative offices. Originally developed by the National Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, the exhibition highlighted the importance of sustainable architecture and adaptive reuse in preserving our cultural legacy.



Multidisciplinary

Over the years, we have supported a diverse range of projects that defy easy categorization. These initiatives span various fields, including biennials, design projects, and festivals featuring multidisciplinary performances and exhibitions. This chapter offers insights into some of these noteworthy projects.



International Sinop Biennial

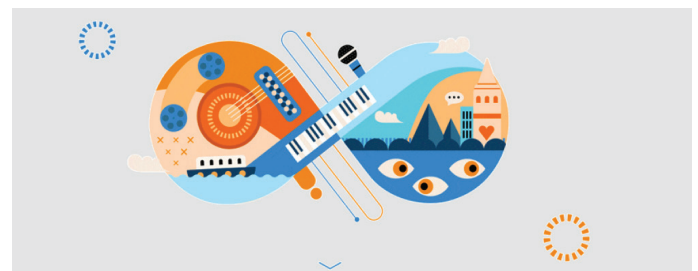
“Sinopale 8 has etched its place in memory as the world’s first online biennial, lasting for 6 months in 2021-2022. Following the pandemic, it was crucial for us that the invited artists reevaluate the works they produced in past years and share their artistic insights in light of today’s conditions.”
- T. Melih Görgün

The International Sinop Biennial, held online from 2021 to 2022, made history as the world’s first digital biennial. This groundbreaking initiative encouraged discussions and prompted artists to rethink their work considering today’s challenges. Sinop 8, a significant milestone in the biennial’s history, centered around the theme of “Upcycling” in response to Covid-19 and environmental concerns. The event, hosted on www.sinopale8.org, presented carefully curated projects that reimaged past artworks within today’s context, fostering connections between local and international art communities. Notably, Dutch contributions included the digitization of Dutch artists’ previous works for the online archive and the “A Cup of Tea as an Archive” project. This project, curated by Dutch experts, breathed new life into past participatory artworks to make them relevant in a contemporary context.



Artsmap

Artsmap, the digital platform, has consistently received support from its inception, spanning conceptualization to project execution. Furthermore, we provided micro support funding to empower emerging artists and organisations, culminating in the backing of 17 projects across various Turkish cities. Artsmap, dedicated to fostering cultural connections between Türkiye and the Netherlands, strives to establish a sustainable cultural and artistic ecosystem. It acts as a comprehensive map, encompassing all cultural entities, universities, and theatres, with valuable data contributed by DutchCulture regarding Dutch-Turkish cultural collaborations. Artsmap serves as a central hub where cultural stakeholders collaborate and engage in co-production. Remarkably, Artsmap continues to expand its horizons, venturing into different countries to further its mission. For additional information, please visit their [website](#).



Spaces of Culture

Spaces of Culture serves as a dynamic platform that not only provides physical space but also invaluable resources for cultural projects. Beyond this, it facilitates discussions and offers training and development opportunities, catering to the needs of local institutions, cultural professionals, and community members within these domains.

As steadfast partners of 'Spaces of Culture,' we collaborated with other cultural entities to support projects in Izmir, Diyarbakır, and Gaziantep throughout 2022. These collective efforts have significantly enriched the cultural landscape of these regions. For more details about these specific projects, please visit the [website](#).

Spaces of Culture

Who is buzzing in your garden?

The "Who's Buzzing in Your Garden?" project initiated by Nil İlkbaşaran has set off a public awareness programme that we usually hardly find time for next to the responsibilities of academic life. But we look forward to the continuation of the project with diverse activities in 2024.

In 2022, our continued support for the 'For the Love of Bee' project led by Nil İlkbaşaran, initiated in 2016 persisted with contributions from Dutch institutions. The project focused on activities such as wild bee observations, workshops with Robert College students, creating DIY bee hotel kits, and collaborating with artists. The efforts extended to introducing DIY bee hotel kits to institutions linked to biodiversity, celebrating World Bee Day, conducting bee counting, and installing "bee hotels" in city gardens or campuses. Collaborations with artists and engagement through social media remained integral. The project also connected with the Re-Nature Festival for knowledge exchange with Dutch partners, Natuur & Milieu, and Naturalis. Training materials were developed, and the final stage saw the successful launch of the project's website, laying the foundation for long-term sustainability.



Gümüşlük International Music Festival

Gümüşlük International Music Festival is an event we first partnered with in 2020 when we provided green electricity, marking it Türkiye's inaugural green festival. The festival broadened its scope beyond music, incorporating sustainable living workshops and a diverse range of activities. In 2022, the festival welcomed the acclaimed Dutch music ensemble, Rembrandt Trio, and hosted a 10-day residency for the Dutch group, Stam, featuring three musicians and seven circus artists. This residency allowed them to refine their live performance, culminating in a captivating show attended by primary school children. The Gümüşlük International Music Festival enjoys widespread recognition and consistently boasts impressive attendance rates, both in-person and online.



Photography

Our lens shifted to the captivating world of photography as we embarked on two enriching collaborations with longstanding partners, "212 Photography Istanbul" and Ahmet Polat.



212 Photography

212 Photography Istanbul, an annual global event that unites photographers, artists, and enthusiasts in a celebration of visual culture, has been a recipient of our support for many years. The festival extends beyond traditional photography to include performance art, new media, literature, and music. Our Dutch collaboration, featuring Erik Kessels, enhances the project with insightful artist talks and valuable portfolio reviews. The festival strives to create a lasting international platform, nurturing photography culture, fostering global connections, supporting emerging talents, and expanding the influence of photography. This collaboration reinforces our commitment to broadening the horizons of photography, anticipating continued growth in the partnership.



Roots

Hasan Kalyoncu University (HKU) showcased its commitment to cultural and artistic pursuits by hosting Ahmet Polat's photography exhibition, "Kökler" (Roots). Through this exhibition, the Turkish-Dutch photographer delved into the ancestral origins of his Gaziantep-based family. Ahmet Polat is a recipient of the International Center of Photography's young photographer award. "Kökler" serves as a catalyst for reflections on intergenerational relationships and the profound impact of revisiting the past through photography. This exhibition not only sparks contemplation but also fosters meaningful discussions on the evolution of identity.



Dance

We supported two incredible dance projects that showcased the power of dance as an art form. These projects, each with its own special story, brought people together, conveyed deep emotions, and crossed cultural boundaries.



When the Children Cry

When the Children Cry was a contemporary dance project that offered a heartfelt perspective on the world through the eyes of children. It unfolded in a playground, where the audience was exposed to a striking portrayal of the concept of war, masterfully brought to life by expert artists. This performance, in collaboration with the Ankara State Ballet Modern Dance Company, received our support for the first time. The project was enriched by the musical composition of the talented Dutch composer, Selma Mutal. Through the universal language of dance, When the Children Cried served as a mirror reflecting the vibrancy and hopefulness of children's worlds against the stark backdrop of adult conflicts, including wars, migrations, exiles, disappearances, and violence.



The Hip Hop Ladies project broke the traditional norms associated with the genre and contributed to freedom of expression through movement and the universal language of dance.



Hip Hop Ladies

In our ongoing commitment to empower women and foster inclusivity, we proudly continued our support for the Hip Hop Ladies dance group. This project supported the cause of girls and young women from diverse backgrounds, providing them with opportunities to shine in society. The Urban Spirit Dance Festival was their platform to engage with these individuals, especially those often overlooked by society. This festival not only facilitated cultural exchange but also offered valuable workshops by professional dancers that promoted personal growth and empowerment.

Film

In the world of film, 2022 was a year of exciting collaborations and fresh beginnings. Three of these projects were newcomers, while one was a long-standing partner. Let's delve into the cinematic journeys.



Bus from Adana

Our journey began with “BUS FROM ADANA,” a short film directed by Jochem de Vries and produced by Stichting Ulexiet. This marked our first collaboration with this creative endeavor, brought to life with contributions from Stichting Argan, Cultuurfonds, Amsterdam Fonds voor de Kunsten, and others. Stichting ULEXIET, led by filmmaker Jochem de Vries, specializes in crafting projects that seamlessly blend narrative and artistic excellence, often rooted in socially relevant tales within our diverse society. Jochem de Vries, passionately shared his expertise not only through filmmaking but also by conducting workshops and masterclasses. Our first-time support for “BUS FROM ADANA” underlined our commitment to cultivating the arts, fostering creative expression, and endorsing stories that evoke empathy and shared understanding.



Palimpsest of Memory

In 2022, we partnered with the Dyalog Association’s Mahalla Festival, a cultural initiative founded in 2006 in Istanbul to promote dialogue between Europe and Türkiye. The festival, initiated in 2017 to address the Syrian migration crisis, has expanded its focus to include artists from conflict zones. It serves as a platform for exploring forced migration and solidarity

structures, bringing together artists to address global conflicts. Despite its physical presence, the festival maintains a strong online presence, conducting workshops on platforms like Zoom for transcultural exchange. One notable outcome is the art piece “Palimpsest of Memory” by Syrian Dutch artist Roua Jaffar, exhibited during the Mahalla Festival in Istanbul. This collaboration underscores our commitment to supporting cultural exchange and artistic dialogue.



Documentarist

In 2022, we celebrated the 15th edition of Documentarist, Istanbul Documentary Days, demonstrating our enduring commitment to this impactful festival. Founded in 2008, Documentarist, led by passionate young filmmakers, has consistently showcased creative documentary filmmaking to Istanbul’s audience. Known for its diverse selection of international documentaries, the festival goes beyond screenings, offering masterclasses and workshops.

A highlight of the festival is the Johan van der Keuken New Talent Award, recognizing emerging Turkish directors and honoring the legacy of Dutch filmmaker Johan van der Keuken. In 2022, Dutch participation added excitement with seven Dutch documentary films and the presence of filmmaker

Aliona van der Horst, presenting a trilogy and contributing to discussions on the use of “found footage” in documentaries. These films explored personal stories amid historical challenges. Other Dutch documentaries covered diverse themes, from life in the 1960s Bahamas to the world of oology during World War II.



Sustainable Living Film Festival

Our journey into the world of film in 2022 also marked the first time we proudly supported the Sustainable Living Film Festival in Istanbul, Türkiye. This festival serves as a platform for promoting sustainability and environmental awareness through the medium of film. It brings attention to global issues while celebrating innovative solutions. As part of our collaboration, the festival featured the documentary “A World to Shape” by director Ton van Zantvoort. The film showcases two contemporary Dutch Designers, Nienke Hoogvliet and Dave Hakkens, who represent a new generation deeply concerned about resource depletion, energy scarcity, and the impact of globalization.

Cultural Heritage

The enduring connection between the Netherlands and Türkiye, rooted in centuries-old interactions, is showcased through shared heritage. This rich tapestry of historical ties, artistic influences, and mutual knowledge has mutually enriched both nations. The visible manifestations of this shared heritage can be found in architectural elements, trade routes, culinary traditions, and artistic inspirations. Two notable projects embodying this commitment are the Netherlands Institute in Türkiye, organizing activities and lectures on heritage, and the “Once Upon a Time” project centered on Hasankeyf. These initiatives not only pay homage to the past but also strengthen the bonds of friendship and collaboration, fostering a deeper understanding of the intertwined histories and cultural legacies of the Netherlands and Türkiye.



Netherlands Institute in Türkiye

The Netherlands Institute in Türkiye (NIT) is a valued, long-term partner located in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district, dating back to its establishment in 1958 as a subsidiary of the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO). NIT has played a crucial role in nurturing cultural and academic ties between the Netherlands and Türkiye, thanks to steadfast support from the Dutch Consulate. Their mission encompasses promoting academic research, cultural exchange, and bridging various disciplines. NIT actively engages in archaeological projects, emphasizing heritage studies and participating in research, conferences, lectures, workshops, and courses for students. Recent collaborations focus on sustainability and urban heritage, aligning with global concerns for inclusive, circular, and sustainable cities. As a hub of cultural exchange and academic excellence, NIT continues to strengthen the Netherlands-Türkiye bonds. To learn more about their projects, please visit their [website](#).

sparking global concern for cultural heritage. Suat Ögüt's work focused on Hasankeyf's caves, symbols of resistance and homes for the local community, shedding light on the political forces shaping the city's future. The project bridged the past, present, and future, addressing contemporary issues. Suat Ögüt's interdisciplinary approach and collaborations fostered discussions across personal and collective histories. The project made a profound impact on exhibition visitors and students, emphasizing the power of cultural heritage to inspire dialogue.



Once Upon a Time

In 2022, our collaboration with Suat Ögüt on the "Once Upon a Time" project explored the history and transformation of Hasankeyf, influenced by the Ilisu Dam project. The project highlighted the city's rich history and its struggle for survival as the dam submerged significant archaeological sites,

Other

Through the Window

TTW, in collaboration with Koli Art Space, Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları, and Şahika, launched the ÇARK project, marking a shift from its previous digital phases to a more physical presence. TTW, a cultural network uniting queer artists, thinkers, and nightlife professionals in Türkiye and the Netherlands, expanded its horizons through this project. The programme featured exhibitions, workshops, conversations, and a final party at Koli Art Space and Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları, extending beyond the digital realm to engage with the wider community. It emphasized the connection between the body and activism, sought to strengthen local bonds while maintaining a transnational community through online discussions, and adopted a hybrid approach to cater to diverse audiences. ÇARK was a significant step in embracing the diversity of queer culture in Türkiye and the Netherlands.



Our Team

Meet the team of 2023:

David Naves - Cultural Attaché in Istanbul.
David worked as the head of the Economic Cluster at the Embassy in Ankara between 2010 until 2014, and he returned to Istanbul in 2021 as Cultural Attaché.



Eray Ergeç - Senior Policy Advisor in Ankara
Eray has been working at the embassy in Ankara since 2017.



Cheyen Bannenberg - Second Secretary Press Political and Cultural Affairs in Ankara
Cheyenne became a part of the team in September 2023.



Talitha Smit - Senior Administrative Officer in Istanbul
Talitha has been the senior administrative officer since November 2022.



Recep Tuna- Senior Policy Advisor in Istanbul
Recep worked as Senior Policy Advisor between 2005 and 2017. He resumed his position in April 2023.



Thanks to:

Maria Jordan - Dutch based VFX artist - infographics

Digna van Houte - Senior Administrative Officer in Istanbul until 2022 - Cultural Report 2022

Ipek van Dijk - Senior Policy Advisor in Istanbul until 2022

Soleiman Ghafouri - Second Secretary Press Political and Cultural Affairs in Ankara until 2023

Information of the Cultural Policy 2021-2024

The Dutch government actively supports and facilitates cultural projects, offering guidance to organisations, artists, and designers, as well as organizing visitor programmes in cooperation with Dutch partners. They maintain a presence across Türkiye, with offices in both Istanbul and Ankara.

Policy Framework 2021-2024:

Türkiye is a priority country for Dutch cultural engagement from 2021 to 2024. The Dutch international cultural policy for this period focuses on strengthening the global position of Dutch culture through visibility, exchanges, and long-term partnerships. It highlights the role of culture in promoting bilateral relationships, achieving Sustainable Development Goals, defending cultural expression as a fundamental right, and contributing to solutions for societal issues through international cooperation on cultural heritage.

Priorities in Türkiye (2021-2024):

The priorities of the Dutch Embassy in Ankara and the Consulate General in Istanbul revolve around supporting Dutch arts and culture in Türkiye. This includes fostering collaboration between Dutch and Turkish artists, designers, experts, and cultural organisations, particularly in the fields of performing arts, film, visual arts, and design. The goal is to encourage international cultural exchange, preserve cultural heritage, and promote cultural access. Additionally, there's an emphasis on using culture to connect people, organisations, and communities, both within and between the Netherlands and Türkiye, to enhance mutual understanding and trust through shared cultural experiences. This approach involves collaboration with various Dutch cultural organisations and informs both Dutch and Turkish cultural sectors about cooperation opportunities.

For detailed information and contact with the Cultural Department please click [here](#).

