

8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

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Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

With a view to mitigate discrimination and poverty by means of cultural activities, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism formulates policies for enhancing everyone's access to and involvement in culture with an integrated and inclusive approach. In formulating such policies, projects are developed and implemented to ensure that particularly disabled and elderly citizens, women, children and young people are to the full extent included in such services. Based on this understanding, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism carries out the following efforts to ensure that cultural access is provided to people of any age and from any segment:

1. Museum card, libraries serving disabled people as well, making of cultural centers widespread, mobile libraries and applications such as e-book, free art events are the products of new cultural policies for enhancing cultural access and inclusion under the GENÇDES Project.
2. Children below 18 years of age and elderly citizens above 65 years of age can visit the museums and archaeological sites of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism free of charge.
3. Android Mobile Guide Application, which has been developed to give information on the Historical Area of Gallipoli and is accessible to everyone, has many language options and contains various visual and audio materials.
4. The buildings that provide library services are rearranged with the understanding "non-disabled library" to ensure easier access of disabled and disadvantaged citizens.
5. The "Speaking Library Center for the Visually Impaired", established to overcome physical barriers and facilitate access to information, is available in the National Library. The books selected based on the priorities

and requests of visually impaired users are dubbed by volunteer readers and then are made accessible to citizens over the web system “speaking library”.

6. 20 electronic databases in different areas including art, economics, medicine, history, etc. have been available in the National Library since 2006 in order to facilitate academic studies and enable access to sources of information. Using these databases, researchers can freely access 13 million electronic materials consisting of 10 million articles and 3 million e-books, e-newspapers, e-journals, academic theses, artistic visuals and documents.

7. In an effort to enhance access to and participation in opera and ballet, free shows are organized in domestic tours and festivals, disabled citizens are provided with free tickets upon request, educational activities are carried out at schools, talented children in children’s homes are provided with the opportunity to receive music education in children choir and ballet courses and watch shows free of charge.

8. In the East and Southeast Anatolia Regions that have limited access to cultural activities particularly due to geographical conditions, 115 opera and ballet events have been organized in 21 provinces for the last 15 years.

9. In order to enable disabled citizens to watch theater plays, all stages have been made disabled-friendly with all necessary arrangements, and approximately 16,000 disabled citizens could watch plays free of charge in a season. Furthermore, war veterans and relatives of martyrs can go to plays free of charge.

10. 623,451 people who had limited access to theater due to financial distress could have discounted tickets in 2016-2017.

11. The access of disabled citizens to cinema is provided by voiced description of supported feature-length movies.

12. Yunus Emre Institute carries out culture and art activities aimed at all young people without discrimination of language, religion and race, and ensures that they get involved in such activities.

Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

In the Youth Centres within the body of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, projects aim at binding young people from any section through various cultural activities and education. With the artistic and cultural activities organised, it is aimed to turn the youth that faces the risk of social exclusion into an equal part of the social body. Language teaching and cultural integration activities are carried out for the Syrians that are under temporary protection in the youth centers in Turkey.

Within the framework of the “Social Cohesion and Youth Participation Project” signed between Turkey Office of the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, social cohesion project is carried out in 19 provinces where a considerable population of Syrians live. Within the scope of the said project, focus group discussions and interviews were conducted with 600 young people to identify their needs and develop a road map. This project is carried out with social and cultural activities. In 2016, 12,000 young people were reached by means of this project.