

Cour des comptes



REFOCUSING THE ROLES OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

STRUCTURAL ISSUES
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NOTICE

This policy paper is part of a body of work intended to present, on several major public policies, the main challenges that public decision-makers will face in the coming years and the levers that could make it possible to meet those challenges. This series of publications, which runs from October to December 2021, is a follow-up on the June 2021 report submitted to the President of the Republic, entitled, *Exiting from crisis: A public finance strategy*. That paper identifies structural issues, it offers a diagnostic resulting from previous works by the Court as well as guidelines for long-term growth, while strengthening the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of public policies.

The Court, in accordance with its constitutional mission of informing citizens, wished to develop a new approach, one that is different from its usual work, and thus contribute, through this series of deliberately concise and targeted documents, to the public debate, while taking care to leave open various possible avenues for reform.

This report was deliberated by the 3th chamber and approved by the Court of Accounts' Publication and Planning Committee.

Publications of the Court of Accounts are accessible online on the website of the Court and the regional and territorial chambers of accounts: www.ccomptes.fr.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

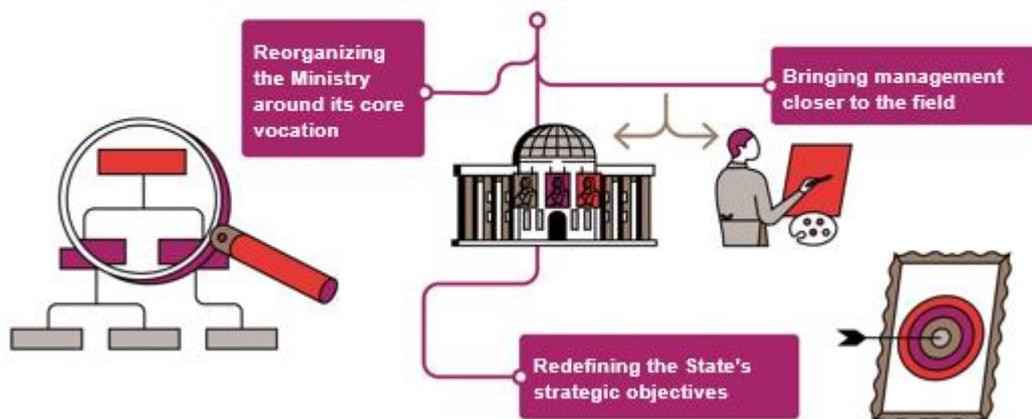
The policy pursued by the Ministry of Culture since its creation has resulted in a tremendous expansion of cultural activity in our country. This policy has also benefited from the growing intervention of local governments, who have relied on decentralization laws to invest in the field of culture and currently represent a source of funding threefold that of the ministry. It has also been marked by the multiplication of ministry operators which have advantage of their autonomy to develop in a remarkable way. As a consequence of this development, the central role of initiator, long played by the Ministry of Culture has lost its importance, especially as it seems to have adapted insufficiently in its organization and its modes of operation to the new order of which it was the instigator.

The contemporary situation of the cultural landscape, the changes in cultural practices, even in the relationship to culture, plead in favour of a global review of the roles for which it is the ministry's responsibility to assume. A re-examination of the objectives of the State's cultural policy and the renewal of its tools should be the starting point of a reform aimed at refocusing the Ministry of Culture on its roles of boosting and steering. In addition to the completion of the deconcentration and decentralization movement already well under way, an in-depth reorganization of its central administration, accompanied by an enhanced human resources policy, particularly for its supervisory staff, should enable it to concentrate its activity on the constitutive priorities of its core vocation and to be able to make even better use of its potential for expertise. By carrying out such a transformation, the ministry will be able to regain its momentum as a strategic administration.

Key figures:

- Executed budget for the *Culture* role: **€2.95 billion in 2019 and €3.16 billion in 2020** (including exceptional support measures linked to the pandemic)
- Cultural expenditures of local governments in 2019: roughly **€10 billion**
- Cultural facilities: nearly **45 000** listed monuments, nearly **1 200** public exhibition spaces, nearly **1 200** public places for presenting live shows, **569** public cultural education establishments
- Ministry of Culture workforce: nearly **9 400** officials (2020)
- Ministry of Culture operator workforce: nearly **14 000** officials (2019)

REFOCUSING THE ROLES OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE



INTRODUCTION

Introductory remark

The Ministry of Culture has long included communication in its field of competence (public broadcasting, media support, etc.). However, for reasons derived from the specific logic of the functioning of this field, the issues developed in this structural report relate exclusively, unless explicitly stated otherwise, to the scope of the Ministry’s activities under the “culture” role.

This report was drawn up based on observations that the Court has been able to make during inspections carried out in the culture sector since 2015, supplemented by those relating to the work carried out in this field by the regional and territorial chambers of accounts. References to that work are provided in the appendix.

The policy pursued by the Ministry of Culture since its creation in 1961 has resulted in a tremendous expansion of cultural activity throughout the territories. With the considerable development of the offering in all areas of heritage and creation, the increase in funding sources from local governments or the private sector, and, in return, the intensified consumption and cultural practices, the French cultural landscape has undergone profound changes in the space of a few decades.

France’s cultural facilities in 2019

<i>Listed monuments²</i>	<i>Exhibition venues¹</i>	<i>Theatres</i>	<i>Music and dance venues</i>	<i>Music, dance, and drama conservatories</i>	<i>Cultural higher education</i>
44,540	1,161	953	198	449	120

As a result of this development, the central role of initiator played by the Ministry of Culture has ceased to be essential, which has earned it criticism, for several years, of its ability to again be the instigator of a cultural policy carrying momentum. To the point that some have come to question whether or not it still had a real usefulness as such, in view of the importance assumed by the major operators, and while a significant part of policies have been decentralized. The work carried out by the Court has led it to observe that the Ministry of Culture, in some ways a victim of the success of the project of which it was originally the backer, would now benefit from separating out the missions on which it intends to concentrate, prioritizing its efforts.

1 - THE GOVERNMENT'S CULTURAL POLICY IN SEARCH OF A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

A - The structuring of the cultural landscape and bringing the ministry's role into perspective

Since crossing the threshold represented by the near doubling of its budget in 1982 (from 4.2 billion FF in 1981 to 7.5 billion FF in 1982), the Ministry of Culture found itself in a position to considerably expand its policy of supporting cultural activity over time, the effort made having been gradually increased by all the governments which succeeded one another, until 2010. Although the funds allocated by the State to culture then experienced a brief reduction phase between 2011 and 2014, they then began to rise again. Totalling €3 billion in 2019, the ministry's expenditures represent, given the evolution of prices and changes in the scope of the budgetary role of "culture", about 1.3 times the 1982 level.

Thanks to these budgetary allocations, the ministry was able to both intensify its actions and expand its scope. Inspired by the idea that culture covered all the distinctive features, traditions, practices and lifestyles of a society or a social group, it opened up its field of intervention to activities that until then did not fall under the "classic" definition of culture: photography, circus arts, street art, songs, comics, design, etc. In these fields, as in those it previously covered, it has developed a vigorous policy of support for creation and dissemination, largely through the establishment or consolidation of cultural institutions of all kinds (museums, theatres, performing arts companies, media libraries, schools, etc.), not only at the national level, but more broadly at the local level, where it has come to support the growing commitment of local governments.

Local governments have indeed taken advantage of the first decentralization laws to invest in the field of culture. In constant euros, they have almost doubled the resources devoted to culture for forty years, reaching €10 billion in 2019, or more than three times the budget of the State's "culture" role. This evolution has thus resulted in the considerable development of the network of cultural institutions, particularly in the territories in which most of them depend legally and, for the most part, financially, on local governments.

The Ministry of Culture has also sought to structure the scope of its interventions through an institutionalization policy, with the creation of specific administrative categories (public cultural cooperation establishments) or labels (national drama centres, national choreographic centres, national stages, contemporary music scenes, etc.) giving rise to the right to financial aid and support. In addition, it gradually transferred a large part of its programming and management skills to national operators that it established as national public establishments where this was not already the case. The latter have multiplied and, for the most part, developed very significantly, relying on the management autonomy conferred on them by their statutes in order to free up own resources for this purpose to supplement their financial means.

In the course of the 2000s, the State also set about building a legal and fiscal framework aimed at encouraging private sponsorship in the cultural sphere. This has become a fully-fledged means of financing culture (around €400M in 2019, to which must be added the cost of the associated tax benefits for the State). In many cases, it now turns out to be the decisive condition for carrying out certain projects or operations. In addition, as the Court was able to observe during its inspections, the private sector, already present as manager or in financing the operation of certain monuments or performance halls, has started, thanks to very favourable tax measures, to develop in other areas as a full-fledged player, particularly in artwork exhibition venues, such as the LVMH or Pinault foundations in Paris.

Finally, a direct result of State action (e.g., with the fixed book price) or a consequence of the revitalization of the sector to which it has contributed, culture now counts as a significant economic activity (€36B in 2019, more than 500,000 jobs, not counting indirect effects, such as tourism).

Carried out continuously for forty years, this policy has resulted in the considerable multiplication of stakeholders working in the field of culture (public and private, State and regional), an abundance of cultural activities on all levels (creation, distribution, promotion of heritage, etc.), but also a certain dilution of the roles of the Ministry, whose financial weight in relation to local governments and the private sector is in any case brought strongly into perspective.

B - An increasingly managerial Ministry

Over the years, the budgetary leverage available to the Ministry has lost its pre-eminent role. Given the growth differential between the evolution of the ministry’s budget and that of local government appropriations devoted to culture, as well as financing from private sources (sharply increasing own resources of establishments, development of sponsorship and private cultural spaces), the Ministry’s power of direction and encouragement has undoubtedly diminished.

The continuously growing share of cultural spending by local governments

(€M)	2006	2010	2014	2018	2019
Ministry of Culture budget (implemented)	2,632	2,985	2,554	2,913	2,947
Consolidated local government cultural expenditures	6,816	7,472	10,160	9,244	9,830

Sources: Ministry of Culture/DEPS and Court of Accounts

With the proliferation of cultural stakeholders drawing on the public subsidies it distributes, the Ministry of Culture is devoting an increasingly large part of its activities to the distribution of public funds. There is also a sprinkling of aid according to a policy of as a dispenser of cash and entitlements that is difficult to question, which makes the priorities of the State's cultural policy less and less clear.

The allocation of ministerial credits to cultural institutions and stakeholders is, for a large part (45% in 2019), pre-empted by the funding of large national institutions (subsidies for public service expenditures and the payroll of staff still managed by the Ministry of Culture). The rest is distributed to myriad stakeholders and institutions spread across the country, sometimes in very small amounts. This share taken in its overall budget by the financing of national operators continues to increase (it was only 38% in the early 2000s), the financial margins of the State to support other stakeholders have been reduced.

This particularly applies to the aid allocated to the performing arts which, apart from the financing of the large labelled structures, leads to a fragmentation of allocations, heavy in management, but which the Court observed that it is part of an ecosystem difficult to change in view of the complexity of cross-financing which this sector receives. However, both the Ministry and the professionals themselves have long recognized that massive public funding (budget subsidies, tax assistance, not to mention the very significant effects of the intermittent regime) have led to an over-abundant supply, therefore to an imbalance between creation and distribution. To date, the Ministry of Culture has refrained from opening up on this subject, admittedly extremely sensitive, which should undoubtedly be an important reform project, that the effects of the pandemic undoubtedly make even more urgent.

This blurring of the main lines of ministerial policy is also found in the field of heritage, where the administrative and financial dimension has taken precedence over a resolutely assumed approach in terms of choices and priorities. In this context, the large operators and their projects in the Ile-de-France region have been favoured, to the detriment of municipal and rural heritage, which is however the most vulnerable, because it is supported by owners without great means. This insufficient consideration for the heritage policy in its proximity dimension made the Ministry less sensitive to the territorial issues of this policy, the regional directorates of cultural affairs (DRAC), decentralized services of the State, having to “make do” with resources weakened by the lack of attractiveness and recognition from the historical monuments sector. As the Court was able to observe, it follows that the triggering conditions and the rates applied to aid for the maintenance and restoration of heritage vary according to the DRACs, without a homogeneous doctrine emerging clearly establishing criteria of choice and appropriateness.

Finally, the continuous increase in the scope of the Ministry to which has been added the financial weight of major projects, the costs of which have for the most part significantly drifted, resulted in a certain dispersion of resources depriving the State of the means to satisfactorily secure the conservation of its own heritage, e.g., as illustrated by the deteriorating condition of the cathedrals.

Corroborating the observation of an increasing dilution of the Ministry’s main lines of action, the Court’s recent work on artistic higher education establishments has highlighted the absence of an integrated strategy in this area, where the steering of the Ministry is reduced to the performance “as time goes by” of administrative and budgetary supervision of each of the establishments concerned.

C - An administration that is less and less well-equipped

The Ministry of Culture has suffered in recent times from strong ministerial instability and a weakening of its supervisory and expertise resources. Since 2007, eight ministers in less than fourteen years have succeeded one another in the Ministry of Culture, plus just as many, if not more, cabinet directors, and general secretaries, which has affected the continuity of the direction and the strategic steering of the State's cultural policy. While the rapid turnover of ministerial teams has been partly offset by the relative stability of general managers in their post, they, responsible for very extensive sectors of activity, have increasingly let themselves be absorbed by their administrative functions to the detriment of implementing structuring political projects, perceived as uncertain because they can be abandoned with each change of minister.

The Court noted that the central administration is moreover confronted with the continuous attrition of its pool of managers and technical experts for multiple reasons. The level of remuneration offered in central administration is less and less attractive, not only with regard to other ministries, but especially the salary that the same agents can obtain on secondment positions with operators, not to mention in the private sector. In addition, the interest in positions among operators exerts a strong power of attraction for high-level agents: the possibility that they offer to exercise effective managerial responsibilities and to participate in concrete projects leads many of them to abandon the central administration.

The recent change of scale of the regions with the 7 August 2015 Act Establishing the New Territorial Organization of the Republic (NOTRe) was not supported within the DRAC, if only to compensate for travel time. This inadequacy of resources to programmes was notably observed by the Court in the work it carried out on the stimulus measures taken to moderate the effects of the pandemic: while very large allocations have been released to support heritage maintenance and restoration work in the territories (some DRACs have received up to 60% of additional appropriations for this purpose), the insufficient number of agents coming under the administrative processing chain of work authorizations has created bottlenecks which hamper the ability to initiate the projects, therefore the desired effect to relaunch the economy.

The human resources issue of the Ministry of Culture cannot be detached from the development of the environment in which it operates. Whereas it was once an unrivalled protagonist, it now has to reckon with the stature and the capacity for initiative of the leaders of the major operators created by the Ministry itself, but also with the rise in power, as stakeholders of the cultural policy, of major local elected officials which further amplified the expansion of the regions. As a result, faced with these now powerful stakeholders (the first of which are theoretically under its supervision), the Ministry no longer appears sufficiently equipped to ensure that the conditions for political and management dialogue with other cultural stakeholders remain balanced.

Combined with the continuous expansion of its scope of intervention and the growing fragmentation of its programme, the weakening of the central services of the Ministry of Culture and the inadequacy of the resources of its decentralized services hamper the performance of its strategic function of inspiring and managing national cultural policies.

D- Problematic management

Due to the success of the project on which the Ministry of Culture's programme has mainly focused since its creation, its central administration finds itself having to manage an increasingly diverse and disparate field: regulatory and administrative management of the various sectors that fall within its area of expertise, management of operators to whom it mainly plays the role of resource allocator, management of decentralized activities or the mechanism for allocating grants from widely variable amounts to a broad range of stakeholders, under conditions which tend more and more to participate in a logic of subscription, devoid of quality criteria or institutional mechanisms making it possible to assess the relevance of the aid or even of check the regularity of its allocation. The recent flash audits conducted by the Court on the specific support provided by the Ministry in the field of heritage and performing arts confirm this observation.

In addition, the many audits conducted by the Court, including the most recent ones, on public establishments under the authority of the Ministry, raise questions about the conditions under which the latter exercises its supervision. Engagement letters that are non-existent or signed well after the appointment of directors, performance and objectives contracts covering periods largely already begun at the time of their signing or overlapping the mandates of directors, vague strategic objectives, too many indicators which are often irrelevant to ensuring appropriate monitoring of the activity and performance of establishments, an unstructured management dialogue where technical considerations, when they exist, often take precedence over the co-construction of strategic thinking: these almost systematic observations testify to an overall unsatisfactory performance of supervisory functions.

With the implementation, at the end of the 2010s, of more open, transparent procedures, and the establishment of stricter rules on the duration of mandates, the Ministry sought to streamline its appointment policy in the establishments falling under its supervision. However, the conditions of appointment of the leaders of large national establishments, which still remain fairly discretionary, the position of these leaders with regard to the sectoral departments of the Ministry relegated in the 2010 reform, to the rank of services, complicate the performance of supervision which is also too weak to conduct a balanced strategic dialogue with the operators.

Given these various constraints, the Ministry's room for manoeuvre is increasingly reduced to initiating one-off projects of varying significance, such as the launch of a major project leading to the erection of a new building (e.g., the Mucem or the Paris Philharmonic) or to the restoration of an old one, together with a renewed usage project (e.g., the Grand Palais or the castle of Villers-Cotterêts Palace), the creation of a new operator (e.g., the National

Music Centre) and, in a less visible way, the support, admittedly often decisive, in terms of legitimization or financial closure, given to a multitude of projects in the regions.

Ultimately, apart from a few general initiatives, such as free admission to museums for young people or, more recently, the “Culture Pass”, the policy of the Ministry consists mainly in the continuation of a policy of subsidies and as a cash dispenser, with as a consequence, in many cases, the increase of the financial expenditures weighing durably on its budget. The development of a national cultural policy responding to the challenges of the time, or in phase with it, is no longer perceived as the priority role of the Ministry, from which all the others would flow.

2- FOR A MINISTRY REGAINING ITS STRATEGIC ADMINISTRATION MOMENTUM

The fact that the Act Establishing the New Territorial Organization of the Republic established cultural policy as a policy shared between the State and the regions, departments, and municipalities does not relieve the State of its specific responsibilities in this matter. All the more so as the affirmation of this principle has not resulted in specifying the respective roles or areas of expertise falling to each of these stakeholders. If the State can no longer claim to act systematically as the leader of cultural projects co-financed by others, it nonetheless retains, in addition to the powers of its exclusive jurisdiction, the legitimacy of carrying out a political and societal project in cultural matters. And it turns out that, in our country, culture has long been considered as one of the essential components of this social project, as the fight for “the cultural exception”, of which France has been the spearhead, and as evidenced, in general, by the singularity of the profile and the role characterizing the Ministry of Culture with regard to its foreign counterparts, but also of the expectations that it arouses.

The new situation resulting from the swarming and decentralization of cultural players leads to questioning the need, or even the appropriateness, of maintaining this unique positioning. One could indeed consider that by having contributed powerfully to the development, structuring, and revitalization of a sector of the culture which has acquired in many respects a capacity for autonomous functioning, the Ministry has, all in all, accomplished the essence of its original mission and that its pioneering vocation must give way to a more modest, even trivialized, conception of its action. But we can also imagine that cultural issues have not lost any of their exceptional dimension with regard to developments in the contemporary world.

The continuous expansion of the commercial sphere, the transformations induced by the digital revolution and the conquering offensives of the GAFAM companies (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft), the rivalry of the powers for which “soft power” has become a weapon in its own right, or even the questions about the motives from which the perspectives of “living together” raise many important questions, which call for answers in which culture seems to be an essential component, and the Ministry in charge of it a necessary protagonist. These are the new challenges which seem called upon to take over from the cultural landscape

development policy successfully carried out over the past decades. To be able to meet them adequately, it appears desirable that the Ministry of Culture should initiate the transformations that will allow it to concentrate on the missions to which they now refer.

A- Redefining the State's strategic objectives

Changes in the cultural landscape generated by the Ministry, changes in cultural practices, even in the relationship to culture, and the major issues arising from globalization are all factors which argue in favour of a comprehensive review of roles that the State will have to assume in the decades to come. In its report released last June entitled, “Exiting from crisis: A public finance strategy”, the Court called, particularly for the culture sector, for a review of the roles of all public stakeholders, with a view to abandoning certain roles that the public sphere would not necessarily be called upon to assume, to further streamline the powers exercised by several categories of public administrations in charge of the cultural domain, to decentralize activities which could be carried out more effectively by another public authority or at another level, and to reorient public action towards vulnerable regions. An essential exercise that should lead it to refocus its action on its strategic objectives, such a review of missions appears to be the prerequisite which will allow the Ministry of Culture to resume its place as a “pioneer”.

Establishing the objectives and renewing the tools of the national cultural policy should proceed from a vision of culture participating in the general educational mission pursued by the State and considered as a privileged vector of the collective bond – which particularly implies a strengthening of actions aimed at young people. This vision seems inseparable from the objective of providing access to culture for the greatest number of people through the pursuit of cultural democratization efforts, the invention of new forms to develop artistic and cultural education, as well as the promotion of inclusive initiatives, which requires a strategy of targeting actions and aid aimed at disadvantaged regions and populations.

A review of the State’s cultural actions presupposes a methodical re-examination of the issues attached to each area of intervention: the conservation and transmission of the collective heritage to future generations; support for the freedom to create and the encouragement likely to be given to new forms of creation, by prioritizing taking charge of the risks that only the State is able to bear; and the conservation, development and promotion of know-how, by consolidating the arts and crafts sectors and by developing higher education in the arts with the aim of excellence and its recognition at the worldwide level.

In accordance with the function of initiative and the role of coordinator that the Ministry is required to play at the national level, it will be able to look into the conditions enabling it to fully assume its role of “flagship” for those areas of culture that involve other ministries. The Court was recently able to observe that, for all the monuments, buildings and heritage works belonging to the State, or even higher artistic training, relations with the ministries responsible for higher education and national education are almost non-existent. The federation of

initiatives to promote French and European culture on the international scene, by integrating the importance of “soft power”, could be helpful in participating in this reflection.

It also appears desirable to include strengthening the management of the digital issue among the priority focuses of its action, in order to make that a major lever of its programme, particularly in terms of the conservation, promotion, and dissemination of culture, but also as a vector for content densification. And, on a more general level, continuing the effort initiated to strengthen the forward-looking function seems to be one of the major concerns of this review, so that the ministry can be constantly at the forefront of its field, taking into account technological, economic and societal changes.

B- Completing the movement of deconcentration and transfers to local governments

In order for the Ministry to be able to effectively refocus on its missions of stimulating and steering cultural policy, it appears necessary to continue to its conclusion the movement of transferring operational activities that it used to exercise directly to operators under its supervision or to local governments and that the remaining scope of its responsibility thus be fixed unambiguously.

This perspective is particularly valid for the sphere of national museums, which, prior to the 1990s, was almost entirely managed by the Ministry. Admittedly, if the largest national museums have been, one after the other, transformed into public establishments and have, as a result, acquired their autonomy of operation and, for the most important, of management, there still remain some fifteen museums which fall under the Ministry. Although placed under the status of service with national competence (SCN), in reality they do not have any room for manoeuvre enabling them to develop. A similar observation was made by the Court during its audit of Mobilier National, whose very great difficulty in reforming is essentially attributable to its SCN status, which deprives it of room for action.

Moreover, the creation of cultural operators from the Ministry's services has not systematically resulted in the transfer to all such establishments of the personnel who work there. Despite recent movements in this direction (Musée d'Orsay, Versailles Palace public agency, and National Monuments Centre), and for which the Court had stressed the need, there are still, mainly in the museum sphere – not counting museums with SCN status – public establishments (Musée Picasso, Musée Guimet, Mucem, Fontainebleau Palace public agency), some of whose staff continue to be paid and administered by the ministry (so-called “title II” officials). Completing the transfer of such staff should enable the establishments concerned to conduct a real human resources policy, and therefore to have all the levers to optimize their overall management.

In the same vein, the attempt by the State, under the aegis of the commission chaired by René Rémond in 2003, to transfer national monuments to local governments that appear to be more closely related to local management met with a very weak positive response from

the latter, obliging them to remain in the fold of the National Monuments Centre. Such an undertaking should be relaunched, however. It would also apply to certain museums still classified in the category of national museums, but which, in view of the collections for which they are responsible, could be decentralized and thus benefit from more dynamic management thanks to local support from local governments. Return to the policy of transferring to local governments “national” monuments or museums whose development would be better able to make clearer the dividing line between the national and territorial levels.

It therefore seems essential to complete the logic of deconcentration and transfers to local governments of operational management activities, the usefulness of which remains ensured by the State at the central level is hardly evident.

C- Reorganizing the Ministry around its core vocation

Beyond the desirable transfer of certain operational activities still managed at the level of its central administration, it appears that the failures of its organization, the excessive mobilization of its agents on daily management and reporting work prevent the Ministry of Culture from focusing on the political priorities of its activity and taking full advantage of the potential for very high-level technical expertise at its disposal. This situation argues in favour of reforming its organization and its functioning, based on the prior redefinition of its core vocation resulting from a review of its missions.

To this end, a comprehensive reorganization of the processes that structure the activities of the Ministry seems inevitable. Based on the findings that the Court established during its audits, it appears that this public transformation project should lead, as regards the missions which continue to fall under State intervention, to a re-examination of the investigation, decision-making and management process in order to increase its efficiency and fluidity, and this with a view to leading to the implementation of a comprehensive multi-year management mode based on objectives and results.

The objective of concentrating the activity of the central administration on tasks at the strictly national level may involve pushing the deconcentration of decision-making and management processes as much as possible to the level of the DRACs and draw the consequences, in terms of the human resources allocated to them, from the subsequent development of their missions. As a consequence, adjusting the scope of activities incumbent on the central administration will encourage a better articulation of the duality of business management (general departments) and that of resources (general secretariat), through a redefinition of the scope of the departments.

In addition, insofar as the operators under its supervision participate in the action of the ministry, a review of their business model would benefit from being integrated into this reform process. These operators have indeed been undermined by the pandemic, with recent flash audits showing that museums and live performance operators have seen their own resources collapse without future attendance forecasts allowing to expect a return to the previous level.

They would therefore benefit from pooling the functions that are common to them in order to reduce their overall costs (particularly in the museum sphere) or to facilitate their exercise thanks to the provision of collective services (particularly among small operators). In addition, the establishment of a general management control framework could enable them to have a shared repository.

Finally, the prospect for the State to ambitiously assume its refocused missions seems to have to go through the development of a human resources policy specific to the category of senior executives, based on the enrichment of managerial tasks, the development of a real forward-looking management of jobs and skills, and an incentive remuneration policy with the aim of increasing the fluidity of the pathways between the ministry and its operators.

The necessary transformation of the Ministry of Culture to adapt its functioning and its organization to changes in its new system and better fulfil certain missions which come under its sole impetus has not escaped the notice of its managers. The “ministry transformation plan” launched in July 2019, with the triple objective of strengthening interdepartmental policies, making culture a priority for young people, and repositioning the action of the State seemed to want to provide answers to this diagnosis. While some of the avenues then opened up led to ad hoc reforms, the pandemic and the change in the teams in charge of steering the overall process seem to have led to the freezing of the plan. However, the possibility of the State regaining a new impetus in the field of cultural policy is not conceivable without a preliminary reform of the Ministry, which leads it to refocus on a limited number of roles and to perform them in a more strategic way.

REFERENCES TO THE WORK OF THE COURT OF ACCOUNTS

- The Court of Accounts, and the regional and territorial chambers of accounts, have carried out a great deal of work in recent years on which the drafting of this report has been based, particularly:

Regarding the Court of Accounts:

- *State heritage support during the pandemic*, flash audit, November 2021;
- *The Ministry of Culture's support for the performing arts during the COVID-19 crisis*, flash audit, November 2021;
- *The State budget in 2020 (results and management) – Culture role*, April 2021;
- *The Public Information Library*, referred, February 2021;
- *Higher education in plastic arts*, communication to the Senate Finance Committee, January 2021;
- *The National Higher School for Industrial Creation*, final observations, July 2020;
- *The State budget in 2019 (results and management) – Culture role*, April 2020;
- *Mobilier national, the national furniture department and the National Manufactures of Gobelins, Beauvais and Savonnerie*, annual public report, February 2020;
- *The international promotion of engineering and cultural brands. The case for National Museums*, communication to the Senate Finance Committee, June 2019;
- *The real estate issue within the establishment of the Palais de la Porte Dorée*, referral, May 2019;
- *The State budget in 2018 (results and management) – Culture role*, May 2019;
- *The National Archives. The ways and means of a new ambition*, communication to the Senate Finance Committee, November 2017;
- *National theatres*, annual public report, February 2016;
- *The Paris National Opera*, special report, September 2016.

The report is also based on the results of numerous audits by the Court of bodies which have not given rise to publication.

About regional and territorial chambers of accounts:

- *Île-de-France region - Cultural policy – Regional Chamber of Accounts (CRC) Île-de-France, November 2021;*
- *Lyon National Opera Association (Lyon metropolitan area) – CRC Auvergne-Rhône- Alpes, November 2021;*
- *Limoges Opera House (Haute-Vienne) – CRC Nouvelle Aquitaine, October 2021;*
- *Public establishment for cultural cooperation (EPCC) "Louvre-Lens Museum" (Pas-de-Calais) – CRC Hauts de France, September 2021;*
- *“National Choreographic Centre, Roubaix Hauts-de-France” Association (Nord) - CRC Hauts de France, July 2021;*
- *Contemporary music authority of Grand Angoulême “La Nef” - Angoulême (Charente) – CRC Nouvelle Aquitaine, June 2021;*
- *Public establishment of cultural cooperation “La condition publique” (Nord) – CRC Hauts-de-France, May 2021;*
- *Public establishment for cultural cooperation (EPCC) Le Quai - National Dramatic Centre (CDN) - Angers (Maine-et-Loire) – CRC Pays de la Loire, May 2020;*
- *“Beauvais Theatre Management Committee” Association (Oise) – CRC Hauts-de-France, November 2020;*
- *Cross-border cultural centre Association “Le Manège” in Maubeuge (Nord) – CRC Hauts-de-France, May 2020;*
- *Public establishment for cultural cooperation (EPCC) “Heritage trails in Finistère” - Daoulas (Finistère) - CRC Brittany, December 2019;*
- *Brittany Regional Contemporary Art Fund (FRAC) in Rennes (Ille-et-Vilaine) - CRC Brittany, October 2019;*
- *Association for the development of musical activities in the Aisne (Adama) - CRC Hauts-de-France, October 2019;*
- *Mixed union of the “Ardèche music and dance” conservatory in Privas (Ardèche) - CRC Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, May 2019;*
- *New Caledonia Conservatory of Music and Dance – Territorial Chamber of Accounts (CTC) New Caledonia, May 2019 ;*
- *“Arts, Leisure and Culture” Association of Méru-les-Sablons (Oise) - CRC Hauts-de-France, April 2019 ;*
- *Réunion Local public company of regional museums (SPL RMR) (Réunion) - CRC La Réunion, February 2019;*
- *“Lille 3000” Association (Nord) - CRC Hauts-de-France, February 2019;*
- *“La Renaissance” of Mondeville Association (Calvados) – CRC Normandy, October 2018;*
- *Cabourg Film Festival Association (Calvados) – CRC Normandy, October 2018;*
- *Te Fare Tauhiti Nui (TFTN) - House of culture (French Polynesia) – CTC French Polynesia, July 2018;*
- *Fontevraud-Cultural Center of the West Association (Maine-et-Loire) – CRC Pays de la Loire, June 2018;*

- *“Picardie Orchestra” Association (Somme) – CRC Hauts-de-France, June 2018 ;*
- *The Compass Rose - Villeneuve d’Ascq (Nord) – CRC Hauts-de-France, May 2018 ;*
- *“The Channel, national stage” Association (Pas-de-Calais) – CRC Hauts-de-France, May 2018 ;*
- *Amiens House of culture (Somme) – CRC Hauts-de-France, May 2018.*

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