

CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR LEMESOS

TIMEFRAME: 2024-2034

Author: Ellada Evangelou, PhD
June 2024

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Premise –

We stem from a location situated around the cradles of western civilization, participating during the millennia in cultural mobility and cross pollination, and contributing in our own way. Culture has evolved and flourished time and time again, at times because of us, or even despite of us.

We consider the writing of this strategy as a continuation of a dialogue that can determine the success or decline, and the social cohesion in cities, in ways with which culture and economic prosperity go hand in hand.

Our mandate is also to keep in mind, that at the bare minimum, our culture should assure that a city is at the very least livable, that the responsibility for creating, maintaining and developing culture, cannot be at the expense of human dignity.

The Author

ABSTRACT

Η Πολιτιστική Στρατηγική του Δήμου Λεμεσού, μιας πόλης με πληθώρα αντιθέσεων, βασίζεται στις τεράστιες δυνατότητες και το καθαρό πάθος των ανθρώπων της, στο παρελθόν, το παρόν και στο μέλλον της.

Οι τρεις προτεραιότητες του Δήμου είναι η Κινητοποίηση της Δημιουργικής Βιομηχανίας, η Συμπεριληπτική Ανάπτυξη, και οι Συνέργειες και Συνεργασίες, έτσι ώστε η Τέχνη και οι Κοινότητα να αναπτύξουν μαζί ένα λειτουργικό οικοσύστημα.

Μέσα από βαθύ προβληματισμό και έγνοια για βιώσιμη αλλαγή, το σχέδιο περιγράφει τις ανάγκες και τη στήριξη των τεχνών και του πολιτισμού για τα επόμενα 10 χρόνια.

#ΟΠολιτισμοςΣτοΕπικεντρο

The vision for the Cultural Strategy of the Lemesos Municipality, in a city abundant with contrasts, is based on the immense potential and the passion of its people, on its past, present and the future.

The priorities of the Municipality are the Action of the Arts and Creative Economies, Inclusive Development, and Relationships and Synergies, in ways that the Arts and the Community occupy together a functional ecosystem.

By engaging in deep reflection and prioritizing sustainable change, the Strategy describes the needs and support for the arts and culture in the next 10 years.

#CultureAtTheCore

VISION – (to be read as a story)

A Cultural Strategy for a city of Distractions

- The truth is, it's not hard to get distracted.
You are walking by the beach, the sun hits your eyelids and temporarily blinds you, but you really don't mind. The smell of the sea and the seagulls above compensate.
- It's not hard to get distracted as you're walking around the medieval castle, with your bright pink wig on, dancing to the sounds of salsa with dozens of friendly strangers. The smell of trash doesn't really bother you.
- It's not hard to get distracted.
You drown out the sound of traffic as you're sitting in a breezy square with the sound of music in the background, good vibes and smiling moustachioed servers carry your tasty food as they crack a joke.
- It's not hard to get distracted, as you're watching a ballet performance in a gorgeous theatre at the heart of the city, ushered in by professional staff. The ticket price was pretty high, but it was worth it.
- It's not hard to get distracted, as you're going down the steps of the roman amphitheatre, having just escaped the chaos in the entrance of the theatre: you hear the violins tuning in the ancient cockpit, a sign of a lovely evening of moonlit music performance coming up.
- It's not hard to get distracted, under the shade of enormous tower buildings lacing the coastline, conveying a feeling of prosperity and agelessness.

In Lemesos, it's really very easy to get distracted.

Seeing beyond the façade is challenging, but it will allow the city and *all* its people to dream and to envision the future. Once the complex challenges it hides in plain view are brought to light, this will reveal its immense richness and true essence:

- **A nurturing local community, with deep roots in culture and entertainment, but selective in how it engages with the foreign, the unknown, the innovative, with striking inequalities resting on a profound sense of local identity.**
- **The cultural richness-es and nostalgic flashbacks that are selectively showcased, often resting on bias based on financial potential, age, race, gender and sexual orientation.**
- **The many communities, languages and cultures that co-exist in harmony, and occasional tension and bitterness.**
- **Hospitality and generosity for visitors and tourists, hand in hand with little consideration regarding sustainability, environmental and other.**
- **Art as a hobby is widespread and supported, but art as a profession is precarious for the vast majority of art forms.**

1. OBJECTIVES OF CULTURAL STRATEGY:

The Objectives are at the core of Strategy and are linked with the Strategic Programming Timeline (Section 5), as a means to link the theoretical with the practical approaches to this study. Each of the three Priorities is numbered (A1, A2, B4, C3, etc), and act as references to the Actions of the Strategy, referring to the principles that formulate specific actions.

A. Activating the Arts and Creative Economies in Lemesos -

1. Rethinking spaces of culture and decision-making/management frameworks: for existing municipal spaces of culture and affiliated organizations, the creation, restructuring and fine-tuning of decision-making bodies, artistic leadership, management and coordination mechanisms. For future planning around infrastructure, include incorporate participatory frameworks.
2. Capacity building and skills-sharing for artists and creatives: create/renew support frameworks (projects, collaborations, fundraising) for the training of artists in a variety of fields, related to the arts and arts management, as well as fundraising. These frameworks will include skills-sharing between artists, through formal and non-formal frameworks, inter-generational and peer-to-peer learning.
3. Reimagining public funding: restructuring of the present municipal funding philosophy and methodology, towards a more transparent, inclusive, and fair mechanism.
4. Complete and diverse fundraising for the arts sector: The diversification of fundraising on behalf of the municipality (e.g. EU funding for local authorities, private donors, business sector through CSR, etc) for the further support of the arts sector. The fundraising to include capacity building for the field.
5. Lemesos 2030: an overall energizing and planning of the municipality, the cultural sector and other stakeholders for the support and implementation of the ECOC 2030, based on an artistic, social and financial system of growth and sustainability.
6. Dynamic cultural heritage: create and develop further, the existing structures that make tangible and intangible cultural heritage a living part of creative economies. Programs and projects involving cultural heritage as a living and vibrant part of the cultural life of Lemesos.
7. Working with the digital and the virtual: The seamless use of the physical, the digital and the virtual in the creation, dissemination, inclusiveness and sustainability (artistic, social, and financial) for the creative sector.

B. Connecting Communities / inclusive development

1. Audience development (core/non-core/visitor/tourist): a deep understanding of the audiences for culture in Lemesos, their character and diversity, and a purposeful and methodical development scheme for all audience groups, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
2. Democratizing space, its development and it's (cultural) use: the renovation or establishment of public space, municipal, and private (cultural) spaces to allow for access to diverse audiences and population groups, facilitating access for artists, and creation of prospects of sustainable collaborations around these spaces, and alleviating the inequality of opportunity that exists at present
3. A Levantine and European city, a port and a natural haven: the (historic and ever-changing) character of Lemesos to be acknowledged through the cultural manifestations of its past and its present, the languages, communities, networks and cultures that have made it their temporary or permanent home, and how much of that is defined by the geography of the place, aspiring to make it a harmonious place of culture
4. Challenging inclusion/exclusion narratives & practices: through facilitating social contracts between population groups, the cultural and social sector will challenge narratives of exclusion such as racism, homophobia, and patriarchy, as well as those stemming from social inequalities such as migration and institutional discrimination. At the same time, these contracts will stand actively critical to narratives of ownership, which result in exclusion.
5. "Put the *folk* back in the *folklore*": create the conditions and frameworks (creative and financial) for the systematic inclusion of folklore into the active life of the cultural sector, through the building of sustainable partnerships and ownership by the community.
6. Cultural Justice & Access for all: acknowledging the social inequalities that hinder the access of all to cultural activities, institutions, and spaces, either as artists, audiences or other stakeholders. Create the conditions for access for all, by creating critical environments around rapid construction, cost of living, brain-drain, elitism, etc.
7. Activate historic pasts and populations: explore deeply and responsibly the legacy of the city, in terms of the populations, culture and heritage of the past, create the conditions for the inclusion of stakeholders in the creative present and future of the city, energizing mechanisms of critical nostalgia in the process.

C. Supporting Relationships and Synergies

1. Tapping into mechanisms of learning: create and enforce partnerships with public and private institutes of elementary, secondary and higher education, as well as private arts institutes. In addition, create links of exchange and mutual learning, with amateur arts groups and social enterprises, a part of non-formal education.
2. Making Skills and Competences part of the game: recognizing and using skills gained through formal vocational schools for artists, as well as non-formal education possibilities, such as Erasmus+ projects, volunteering, internships, as part of the cultural currency of the city, credited in CVs and as currency for working in culture, professionally or as an amateur. This will align the city with EU practices.
3. A spiderweb of connections - cross sector collaborations: creating sustainable and purposeful collaborations between the cultural sector and, fields such as commerce, technology, business and finance, tourism and others, as a means to diversify the tools and types of intelligence that will create and support culture, as well as to explore other means of fundraising.
4. Visions, dreams and aspirations – making space for Flagship initiatives: led by visionary and inclusive thinking of a common future for the city and its people, the strategy proposes that the municipality gives the space to local artists to initiate a series of flagship projects, that will spearhead the next phase of the cultural life of Lemesos.

2. ACTIVATING, TRANSFORMING AND MAINTAINING SPACES OF CULTURE

Spaces play a pivotal and central role in the life of the city, especially in Lemesos where the landscape and use of space change rapidly. The section below provides a blueprint for the Activating, Maintaining and Transforming spaces of Culture, both municipal and private.

Spaces of Culture:

MUNICIPAL:

- Municipal University Library¹
- Public Art Gallery – Pavlides Residence²
- Municipal Museum of Folk Art³
- Papadakio Municipal School of Music
- Pattihio Municipal Museum – Archive
- Municipal Center of Arts – Apothikes Papadaki
- Pattihio Municipal Theatre⁴
- “Marios Tokas” Municipal Garden Theatre
- Municipal Cultural Center ‘Panos Solomonides’⁵
- Municipal Archive Museum Solonas Michaelides⁶
- Cyprus Theatre Museum⁷
- Cyprus Medieval Museum – Limassol Castle⁸
- Beach promenade amphitheatres
- Municipal Buildings “Ploutis Servas”⁹
- Lemesos Carnival Museum

Activating	○ Register the administrative and management models of each space ○ Map the decision-making framework for each space (how are decisions made?) ○ Clarify the relationship with the municipality (management, funding, maintenance, outreach, inclusion in municipal programs, participation in EU programs) ○ Register the expenses and the revenue from each space
Transforming	○ Through an expert-led study, formulate a custom-made approach for the management, growth and sustainability of each space

¹ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/library>

² <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/dimotiki-pinakothiki>

³ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/museum-laikis-texnis>

⁴ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/patixeio-dimotiko-theatro>

⁵ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/panos-solomonidis>

⁶ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/solonas-mixailidis>

⁷ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/theatriko-mouseio>

⁸ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/en/mesaioniko>

⁹ Social programming, emerging from EU project – Δημοτικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικών προγραμμάτων

	○ Formulate clearly the role of the municipality in each space ○ Engage relevant community of artists with a consultation around the use of the space
Maintaining	○ Formulate a strategy for each space, with a short-term (1-3 years) and mid-term (3-5 years) planning ○ Create an embedded mechanism of evaluation at the end of the 5 years, for the creation of a new strategy

PRIVATE / Other Administration:

- Turkish Cypriot Market – Theatro ENA
- Rialto Theatre
- Molos Coastal and Amphitheatre promenade
- Trakasol Storehouses – Old Port Area
- ETHAL (Limassol Theatre Development Company)
- Kourio Amphitheatre and Archeological space¹⁰
- Polychoros +εργείο
- House of Letters and Arts (Στέγη Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών) – Coordinated by the Sintonistiko
- Evagoras Lanitis Center – Carob Mill
- ‘Ploutis Servas’ Exhibition space – underground, Heroes Square (renovation)
- Archeological Museum of Limassol
- Amathounta Archeological site
- KOLA (Κόλλα) Factory of Culture¹¹
- ETKO Event Venue¹²

Activating	Create – strengthen links through qualitative research to map the relationship between the spaces and the city: - What is the role of each space in the cultural life of the city? - What entities are they associated with? - What kinds of services are they offering? - How are they funded? - What networks are they part of?
Transforming	Drawing a plan for the inclusion of the spaces in the ecosystem of the city: - How can they become part of the creative economy of the city? - How can they support and become supported by the Municipality? - How can they join fundraising efforts?

¹⁰ Kourion is not part of the vicinity of Lemesos, however it is included here since it is a space associated with the cultural scene of Lemesos, since it draws large groups of inhabitants, visitors and tourists of the city.

¹¹ <https://rzt.agency/projects/kolla-factory-of-culture-landscaping>

¹² <https://etkocypus.com/>

	- How can they energize their networks in the context of the ecosystem of culture in Lemesos?
Maintaining	- Joint fundraising & events - Collaborative decision-making processes for the ideation, organization and management of events - Systemic inclusion of spaces in Municipality events - Support and participation in each other's networks

Sports Facilities:

- Fytidion Sports Center: renovated outdoor sports multicenter, site of historic GSO sports club [Φυτίδειο Αθλητικό Κέντρο ΓΣΟ] ¹³
- AETOS Football field: an off-the-center (in Ayios Ioannis) renovated football field [Γήπεδο ΑΕΤΟΥ] ¹⁴
- Lemesos beach sports center / Κέντρο Αθλημάτων Παραλίας Δήμου Λεμεσού ¹⁵
- Ayia Fyla Sports Multispace, sports facilities in the refugee housing district / Αθλητικός Πολυχώρος Αγίας Φύλας ¹⁶
- Sports instruments in locations around the city [Όργανα γυμναστικής σε Μόλο, παραλία Εναερίου, πάρκο Αναγέννησης, πάρκο στην οδό Φιλελλήνων και Πάρκο Γκογκέν] ¹⁷
- Sports hubs with calisthenics sports equipment and basketball courts are in development in the following squares: on Evagoras Lanitis Ave (Ekali), on Azaleas Str. (Ekali) and intersection of Atlantos and Epidavrou Str. (Omonia).

¹³ Prospective [Museum](#) of Sports History at the site. Administered by CUT, with an [online booking system](#).

¹⁴ Reports of the prospective creation of [green park space](#) to the east of the football field.

¹⁵ [Official page](#).

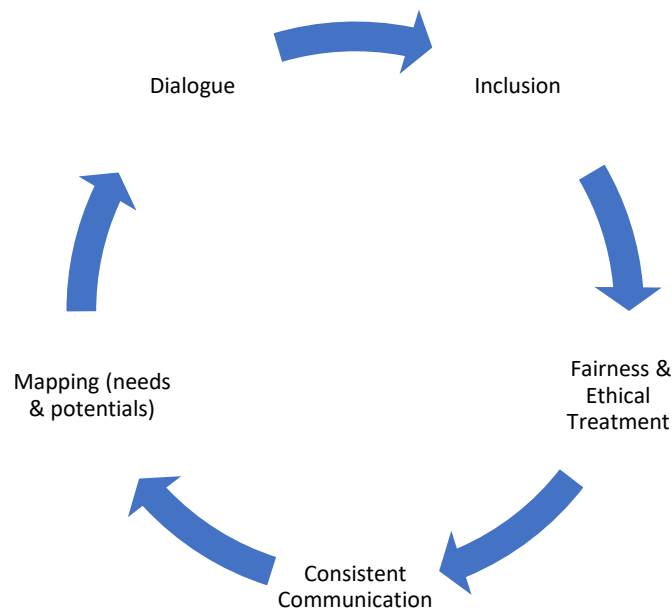
¹⁶ [Inauguration](#) of space.

¹⁷ [Article](#) reports that the equipment at the Molos park are accessible for people with disabilities.

3. COMMUNITY-BUILDING & EDUCATION

Community is at the core of the Strategy, which simply cannot exist without individuals and groups around it. The ecosystem described below allows for a wholistic approach in how these communities are nurtured, and how educational processes can act as catalysts in that process.

Community Building & Social Cohesion



- **Mapping of Needs and Potentials:** frequent mappings of the cultural sector, which will focus on two main pillars, what the individuals and groups have to offer (what are their assets) and what are their needs. Based on this information, more informed dialogue between the municipality and cultural sector can take place.
- **Dialogue processes:** established dialogue processes across the communication between the Municipality and the arts organizations, as well as the community at large. Consultations, focus groups, qualitative and quantitative research, and other methods.
- **Inclusion:** community-building processes need to be inclusive to individuals and groups from various socio-economic strata, to more contemporary and classic artforms, various methodologies, and others. Moreover, it should be linguistically and ethnically inclusive, inclusive of persons with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, etc.
- **Fairness & Ethical Treatment:** access to information, funding, spaces and opportunity to all, based on criteria across the board. This can mean access to

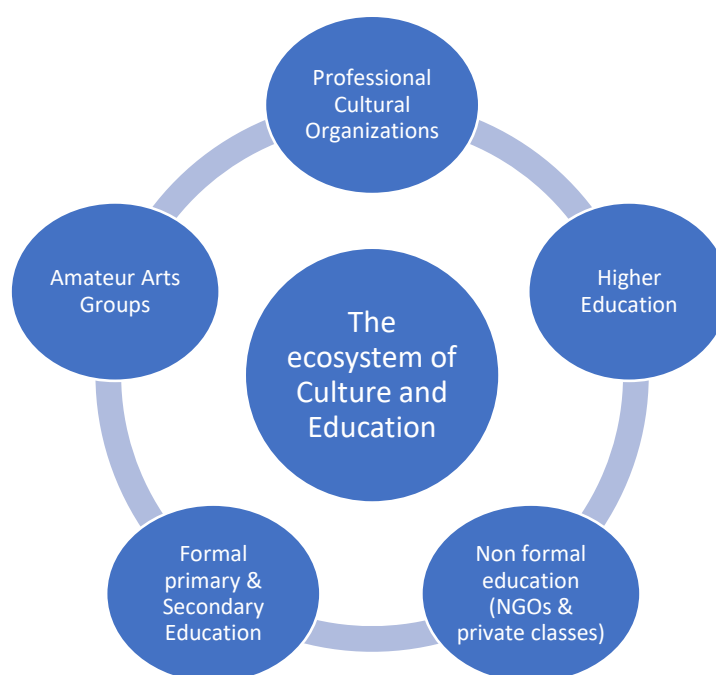
community centers and public spaces, multilingual communication, equity in media access.¹⁸

- **Consistent Communication:** Community engagement and dialogue are present in all manifestations of the implementation of the Strategy. Mechanisms are developed within the Municipality to take into account in a productive manner of the opinions of artists and society at large.

Education:

A stereotype about Lemesos, is that everyone has taken an art class at some point in their lives and has been exposed to culture.

However, the connection between the professional art scene and the educational side of culture presents a disconnect. Highlighted here are the components of this ecosystem, and proposals for their connectivity.



- Connecting Amateur Arts Groups / Non formal education and Professional Artists/Arts groups:
 - Annual compilation by the municipality of all amateur art groups and non formal education entities, in a publicly accessible list
 - Professional artists & groups to inform non professional artists & art students/practitioners of their work, in order to attending artworks and performances as part of their training and work

¹⁸ The Limassol District Intercultural Strategy 2023-25 has promising elements, and the commitment of 7 municipalities in and around Lemesos.

- Professional artists to be a resource for non professionals and non formal education in the context of projects and trainings, both as paid professionals and as consultants
- Connecting professional artists with formal elementary and primary education:
 - Maintain connections with arts teachers in formal education (music, art, theatre, design, etc), with information sent to primary and elementary schools
 - Professional artists to offer Open Studios, workshops, site visits and other opportunities for students to interact as part of their curriculum, student clubs, excursions
 - Inform schools of artistic and accompanying educational activities, online and offline
- Connecting non formal education with formal education (primary and elementary):
 - Development of Erasmus + proposals as collaborations between formal and non formal education
 - Opportunities for volunteerism for students of formal education in non formal education opportunities, as a means to create a connection with the social agenda of NGOs
- Connecting Institutions of Higher Education¹⁹ with the arts (professional and amateur):
 - Higher education can constitute an overall resource for expertise and research-based analysis, with collaborations on the development of research proposals and projects.
 - TEPAK: ²⁰ The strategic planning of the institution relates in various meaningful ways to culture, and therefore this suggestion relates directly to them. To be more precise, in their planning document, there is a reference to ‘academic excellence in research in (...) culture (...)’, in addition to international outreach and connection with the community, as well as an orientation towards digital possibilities.

As all of these constitute priorities of the present Strategy, there are a number of connections that can be made:

 - Create sustainable partnerships with educators and departments in the context of EU and regional projects, focusing on the priorities of both institutions.
 - Connection between spaces of culture in the city and the activities of TEPAK students, so that that they can become familiar with the arts infrastructure of the city and create sustainable connections.

¹⁹ Accredited institutions: https://www.dipae.ac.cy/archeia/idrymata/iste/katalogos_iste.pdf

Cyprus University Of Technology (Tepak), Absolute Institute Of Technical Education, Collegio Mesogios (Κολέγιο Μεσόγειος), C.D.A. College, Frederick Institute Of Technology, Intercollege, The Limassol College T.L.C., Susini College, The Cyprus Institute Of Marketing, The C.T.L. Eurocollege, Cyprus College – Lemesos, Cyprus International Institute Of Management, The Cyprus Academy Of Art.

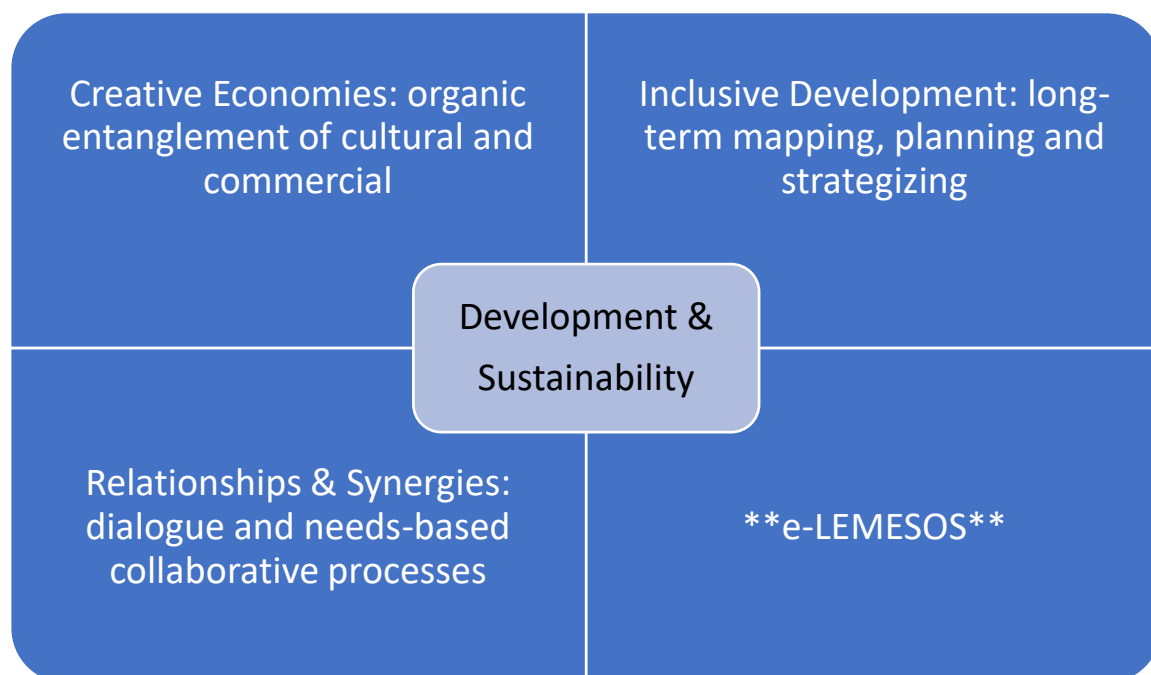
²⁰ The Strategic Planning for Development for TEPAK 2023-30 (<https://www.cut.ac.cy/university/strategic-plan/>) offers an analysis of the priorities of the institution moving forward. Many of those related to Lemesos and to its culture.

- Consistently connecting the students with the municipality, its spaces and activities through residencies, internships, independent studies and other applied learning opportunities. The Municipality can issue certificates for non formal education competences and skills.
- Create contact points for volunteerism and interaction between Municipal authorities and students/educators, in order to have sustainable dialogue and development.

4. CREATIVE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Securing that the Creative Sector of Lemesos is in a steady route of development and sustainability, this strategy suggests that the three pillars at the core of this approach support long-term conditions and planning.

The chart below acts as a reminder that, Creative Economies, Inclusive Development and Relationships and Synergies, together with a digital framework for the cultural life of the city in the form of a platform, are at the core of the sustainable nature of the present Strategy. All planning needs to involve development and sustainability as part of its core planning, building the future from the present. As many pioneering programmes and spaces are associated with personal initiatives and the generosity of citizens of Lemesos, the essence must shift to the conscious responsibility of the city to maintain, develop and sustain cultural frameworks and to support artists.



5. STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING - TIMELINE

When	Activity	Leader	Partners	Funding	Objectives
<i>2024-2027 – Evaluations and Planning / ECOC Preparation / Outreach</i>					
2024-2025	ECOC Bid	Lemesos 2030	Cultural Sector	Municipality & donations	A5
2024-2025	- Planning & Opening of Municipality Office for EU Programs & Outreach - Design of Cultural Strategy Monitoring Plan	Municipality	Lemesos 2030	Municipality & EU Programs	A3, A4, A5
2024-2025	Creation of Lemesos Museums Network with municipal and private museums	Municipality & TEPAK	Lemesos Museums	Municipality & EU Programs	A4, A5, C3
2024-27	Evaluation & Planning of municipal cultural decision-making frameworks (Municipal Cultural Committee, Cultural Office, Intercultural Strategy)	Municipality	TEPAK	EU	A1, A3, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7
2024-2027	Mapping, Evaluation & Planning for municipal spaces (including new management schemes, fundraising, partnership-building, etc) ²¹	Municipality	TEPAK, Lemesos 2030, Coordinating Council of Lemesos Cultural Organizations	EU	A1, B2, B3, B4, B6, B7

²¹ Spaces include (but are not limited to): Municipal University Library, Public Art Gallery – Pavlides Residence, Municipal Museum of Folk Art, Papadakio Municipal School of Music, Pattihio Municipal Museum-Archive, Municipal Center for the Arts-Apothikes Papadaki, Pattihio Municipal Theatre, ‘Marios Tokas’ Municipal Garden Theatre, Municipal Cultural Center ‘Panos Solomonides, Municipal Archive Museum Solonas Michaelides, Cyprus Theatre Museum, Cyprus Medieval Museum – Limassol Castle, Beach Promenade Amphitheatres, Municipal Buildings “Ploutis Servas”, Carnival Museum

2024-2027	Mapping, Consultations and Frameworks of use of abandoned spaces , for the cultural sector (abandoned cinemas,	Lemesos 2030	Municipality, ETEK, TEPAK,	Municipality, EU Structural Funds	A5, A6, B4, C3, C4
2024-27	Evaluation, Inclusive Planning & Pilot Programming for major annual events (Carnival, Wine Festival, Kataklimos) ²²	Municipality	Deputy Ministry of Tourism, Lemesos 2030	Municipality & Deputy Ministry of Tourism	A3, A6, B2, B3, B4, B6, B7
2026-28	Mapping, Needs Assessment & Study for New Lemesos Museums policies and programs: innovation, audience development programs, technological applications, staffing, EU programs for networking & development	Municipality & TEPAK	Lemesos Museums Network	EU Programs	A1, A4, A5, A7, B1, B2, B6, C2
2024-2026	EU & Regional Funding Awareness and Capacity Building campaign (Creative Europe, Erasmus+, EEA Grants, Interreg, etc)	Municipality & Lemesos 2030	- Organization for European Programs & Cultural Relations - EU Directorate for Culture - Youth Board of Cyprus - Ministry of Finance	EU	A4, B4, B5, B6, B7, C2, C3
2024-27	Planning & implementation of “Lemesos Online Cultural platform”	Municipality (operation outsourced to NGO)	TEPAK & NGO	EU	A4, A7

²² Data collection regarding audiences, effectiveness of funding and social engagement.

2024-2027	Creative Industries Action Plan for the City of Lemesos	Municipality & Deputy Ministry of Tourism & Deputy Ministry of Culture	- Cultural Sector - Limassol Tourism Board - Limassol Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Ministry of Finance	A2, A6, B3, B4, B5, B6, C2, C3
2024-2027	Capacity Building Campaign for the educational capacity of the arts sector	Municipality	-Cultural Sector -Ministry of Education -Deputy Ministry of Culture	-Municipality -Ministry of Education -Deputy Ministry of Culture	A2, A6, B3, B4, B5, B6, C2
2025-2027	Writing & Application of EU and regional funding proposals	Municipality	-Municipality - Cultural Sector		A2, A4, A6, B6
2025	Inauguration of Museum of Sports History ²³	Municipality	Lemesos Sports Authority (GSO)		A1
2025	Inauguration of the 'Museum of the city' ²⁴	Municipality		-Donation Papadopoulos family -Municipality	A1
2025 – 2026	Audience Mapping & Development Planning throughout the municipality-related cultural sector	Municipality	-Deputy Ministry of Culture -TEPAK	-Deputy Ministry of Culture -Municipality	A1, B4, B6, C3
2025-26	CSR Development Planning: 'Adopt an Artist' outreach plan for corporate support of Lemesos-based artists	Lemesos 2030	Municipality	Municipality	A4, B4, B5, B6, C3
2026	Inauguration Heroes Square "Square of Everyday Heroes"	Municipality	Architects (Stratis & Pasadakis)	- 'Thalia' Social cohesion program	A1, B2

²³ The [article](#) gives an account of the effort of the municipality to complete the museum. The timeline has been delayed to 2025.

²⁴ [Reports](#) on the construction had aimed for 2023, but the opening has been postponed to 2025.

				-EU	
2028- 2030 – ECOC / New Structures Inaugurated / Pilot Programs in Action					
2028-2030	ECOC Programming, Fundraising & Preparations (if Lemesos is selected)	Lemesos 2030	Municipality, Cultural sector, NGOs, business & tourism sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A1, A3, A4, A5, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, C3, C4
2028 onwards	New municipal decision-making processes in effect	Municipality	Cultural sector, NGOs, business & tourism sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A1
2028 onwards	New space management schemes in effect	Municipality	Cultural sector, NGOs, business & tourism sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A1
2028 onwards	New format of major annual events in effect (Carnival, Wine Festival, Kataklimos)	Municipality	Lemesos community, Cultural sector, NGOs, business & tourism sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A6, B2
2028 onwards	Educational programs for annual festivals in effect (Municipal & private)	Cultural NGO	Cultural Curators, Educational institutions	Deputy Ministry of Culture	C1
2028 onwards	- Lemesos ‘Best Practices’ Showcase: grassroots arts development program by MITOS Center of Performing Arts (The Yard Residency), Rialto Artists Development, Dancehouse, others. - Touring of performances in Cyprus and Internationally	-Center for Performing Arts MITOS -Rialto	-‘Culture Moves Europe’ -EU & regional mobility programs -Cultural NGOs	Deputy Ministry of Culture & Municipality	C3, C4

2028 onwards	Lemesos Environmental Portofolio: Anthestiria & Campaign for Environmental Sustainability	Cultural & Environmental NGOs	Municipality	- Commissioner for the Environment -Ministry of Agriculture -EU Program	C3
2030	Implementation of ECOC (if Lemesos is selected)	Lemesos 2030	Municipality, Cultural sector, NGOs, business & tourism sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A5
2031 – 2033 - ECOC / Development and Evaluation					
2031-32	Evaluation of ECOC (if applicable)	Lemesos 2030	Municipality, TEPAK, others	Municipality	A5
2031	Transition of Municipality Cultural office to Lemesos2030 Office (if applicable) (<i>enforce</i>)	Lemesos 2030	Municipality		A-B-C
2033	Evaluation of Cultural Strategy 2024-34	Municipality	Local & International partners	Municipality	C3
2033	New Sustainable Structures inaugurated	Municipality	Culture Sector	Municipality, EU & regional programs, donations	A1
2034 Composition of Cultural Strategy 2034-2044					

6. MAIN CHALLENGES²⁵

The aim of the following section is to give an overview of the Challenges face by the Municipality. Information has been yielded by existing research, interviews, liaising with Municipal authorities and online sources. Exact resources and links can be found in the footnotes.

The study finds that there is a lack of:

- **Communication** – organization and dissemination of information on cultural events and spaces to audiences, locals, visitors and tourists. Lemesos appears cut off from the rest of the island and European/regional cultural frameworks, and focuses on specific events only, e.g. Carnival, Wine Festival, and archaeological sites.
- **Planning** – strategic, inclusive, and purposeful planning and funding is limited within the municipality, its spaces, and the entities it supports and controls. It appears that there is little contemplation on behalf of the municipality on the changing needs of society, resulting in repeating patterns of activity rather than renewing and re-planning.²⁶
- **Social engagement** - Events such as the Carnival and Wine Festival, are focusing on two factors, entertainment and commercial gain, with scant participatory curation, social engagement, educational opportunities, human rights or environmental considerations. Rare social engagement, for example through consultations, is carried out relating to other events or space management.
- **Support** – for the development and sustainability of professional and amateur groups (including kids), through programs and frameworks. Initiatives that have appeared through the years offering sustainable support, as well as diversification of fund-raising, e.g. through EU programs either is discontinued or does not take place at all.
- **Intersectionality** – connecting cultural event and organizations with other related sectors, e.g. cultural heritage, tourism, cultural diplomacy, academia, for the production of new projects and approaches to the production of art and to the overall cultural life of the city.
- **Online - offline connection** – despite scattered efforts and relationships, the consistent virtual communication, capacity building and overall connectivity has not been placed on a regular level, with dedicated multi-lingual mechanisms, e.g. pages, platforms, maps, artists inventories.
- **Economic equity** – artists and arts organizations within specific population groups of the city receive disproportionately low compensations and production expenses, enhancing the sense of injustice and brain drain of artists from the city.

²⁵ Quantitative data drawn from: *Lemesos 2030: Focus Groups Results Report*, by Theodoros Kourou, Limassol, Nov. 2023.

²⁶ Example of a socially-engaged carnival: <https://www.napolike.com/torna-il-carnevale-di-scampia-con-il-corteo-di-carri>

7. EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE & CULTURAL FRAMEWORKS

In the three parts that follow, you can find the existing Infrastructure, Cultural Programming and Existing Administrative and Management Frameworks, both municipal and private. This does not constitute an exhaustive mapping, but provides the reader with an idea of “what we have”, as an added understanding of “what we need”, and the proceeding analysis and timeline.

A. INFRASTRUCTURE²⁷

The city has a vast array of infrastructure related to the arts, both indoor and outdoor spaces, owned or administered by the Municipality, or functioning as private enterprises. Municipal spaces have various regimes of management and financial relationships with the municipality, from closely connected to loosely associated. A number of municipal cultural spaces were donated by private donors, a demonstration of the strong civic identity in Lemesos.

Theatre/dance/music/performance spaces, the main ones are:

- Indoor spaces, with seating capacity varying between 80 and 500 audience. Those are Rialto, Pattihion Municipal Theatre, Technochoros ETHAL, Turkish Municipal Market-Theatre ENA, Polychoros +Ergeio, Old Vinegar Factory,
- External spaces, with capacity up to 2000 people: “Marios Tokas” Municipal Garden Theatre, Kourion Amphitheatre (archaeological monument), outdoor amphitheatres along the sea promenade, Heroes Square.

Art Galleries:

Municipal art galleries:

- Public Art Gallery – Pavlides Residence
- Municipal Center of Arts – Apothikes Papadaki.

Moreover, the city has a number of private galleries and art spaces, where exhibitions and educational activities take place.

Cinemas: These buildings are all privately owned. With the decline of cinema in the past decades, the majority of cinemas have been abandoned, but potential for the renovation is strong. Below is a list of the abandoned cinemas of Lemesos and their present status:

- Taxim/Apollon – abandoned & destroyed by fire – Turkish quarter²⁸

²⁷ Note: this list does not include infrastructure owned or managed by educational institutions, e.g. schools or universities.

²⁸ The article reports also on the neglect on behalf of the municipal authorities for the conservation of historic buildings in the city, leading to their decay and destruction.
<https://www.philenews.com/kipros/koinonia/article/1469733/kegonte-to-ena-meta-to-allo-ta-istorika-ktiria-tis-lemesou/>

- Regal – abandoned, Old city
- Giordamli – in process of renovation

Museums: Several municipal and state museums are housed in Lemesos, among them the Archeological Museum, the Municipal Museum of Folk Art, Pattihion Municipal Museum, Cyprus Theatre Museum (affiliated to the Municipality), and the Medieval Museum (housed in the medieval castle), Lemesos Carnival Museum.²⁹

Archives: Three main archives are associated with the Lemesos Municipality, and those are housed at the Cyprus Theatre Museum, at the Pattihion Municipal Museum and in the Solonas Michaelides Archive.

Multi-use Cultural Spaces: Among Municipal spaces, the Municipal Cultural Center ‘Panos Solomonides’ and Municipal Buildings “Ploutis Servas” are prominent, whereas there are several private spaces that host cultural events of a vast array, such as the Trakasol Warehouses, Limassol Youth Multifunctional Center (Youth Board), and Evagoras Lanitis Center, COLA (Κολλά) Factory of Culture, ETKO Event Venue, Carob Warehouse .

Large Concert Venues: The Spyros Kyprianou Center (capacity 6255 audience, including 42 spaces for people with disabilities), in addition to private large concert halls, that also function as clubs.

Archaeological / Cultural Heritage Assets (in and around the city)

- Limassol Old town
- Turkish/Roma quarter
- Beach pedestrian walk
- Urban architecture
- Amathous ancient city
- Port legacy (Ottoman era feudal agriculture in surrounding area & British colonial era asbestos mining in Amiantos)
- Medieval legacy (Lemesos Medieval castle, Kolossi Castle)
- Ottoman legacy (port and Agios Antonios mosques, Ottoman cemetery)
- Village arts and crafts (pottery – Phini, Commandaria & wine making, Platres Colonial holiday resort, grape / olive / carob by-products)
- Sculpture Park

New / forthcoming infrastructure :

- Old Tsirio stadium – Renovation³⁰
- Stegi Politismou – planning under way³¹

²⁹ This is the latest museum to be inaugurated in Lemesos (March 2024). Mentioned in Nadia Anaxagorou ‘Η συμβολή του Δήμου Λεμεσού στην πολιτιστική ανάπτυξη της πόλης 1960-2006», *Λεμεσός: Ταξίδι στους χρόνους μιας πόλης* (Δήμος Λεμεσού, 2006) 277-296.

³⁰ <https://politis.com.cy/25464/article>

³¹ Article from Municipality: [HERE](#)

- Renovation of Heroes Square [start June 2024 – end June 2026]

B. CULTURAL PROGRAMMING³²

The city boasts strong annual events, that establish a link between the past and the present of the city. These events draw thousands of people, both locals, visitors and tourists:

- Wine Festival (Γιορτή του Κρασιού)³³
- Carnival of Lemesos (Λεμεσιανό Καρναβάλι)^{34,35}
- Kataklimos (Κατακλυσμός)³⁶
- Flower Festival (Ανθεστήρια)³⁷
- Festival of Philharmonic bands³⁸
- The Great Ballets (Τα μεγάλα μπαλέτα)
- Euro-Mediterranean Festival of Folk Dances

Festivals and other cultural events organized by private cultural organizations and foundations attract a targeted and/or specific audience. The list below is not exhaustive, but features annual or repetitive events:

- Center for Performing Arts MITOS “The Yard” Artists Residency
- Contemporary Dance Platform (Πλατφόρμα Χορού) (Rialto)
- Dance Showcase (Rialto)
- Summer Dance Festival (in public spaces)
- Cyprus Film Days (Rialto)
- International Short Film Festival (Rialto)
- Euro-Mediterranean Folk Dance Festival
- Music Full Moon Festival (Μουσική πανσέληνος)
- Cyprus Documentary Film Festival
- Jazz and World Music Showcase (Rialto)
- European Chorus Festival, bi-annual (Aris Choir)
- Limassol Art Walks
- “Casts of an Island 2024” Exhibition by the Cyprus Contemporary Art Center – PSI Foundation³⁹
- Cyprus International Theatre Festival (first took place in 2024)

C. EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

Municipal:

³² Provided by Lemesos 2030, Questionnaires on their activities and association (among others) with municipality, by 29 major cultural organizations of the city.

³³ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/limassol-wine-festival-2019>

³⁴ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/limassolcarnival-information>

³⁵ The Carnival is a financial boost for the city, as per the [article](#).

³⁶ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/Kataklimos>

³⁷ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/Anthestiria>

³⁸ The latest annual festival added by the municipality: [HERE](#)

³⁹ Information on the [Exhibition](#) and the new foundations which supported it.

- Cultural Office – Limassol Municipality⁴⁰
- Cultural Committee – Limassol Municipal Council
- Limassol District Intercultural Strategy 2023-25 (Πλάνο Πολυπολιτισμικότητας)⁴¹

Others:

- Coordinating Council of Lemesos Cultural Organizations (Συντονιστικό Συμβούλιο Πολιτιστικών Φορέων Λεμεσού)⁴²
- Conservation of historic buildings / Cultural heritage⁴³
- Dance House Lemesos⁴⁴
- Rialto Theatre⁴⁵
- Deputy Ministry of Tourism: Offices, services and programs

International:

- International intercultural Cities Network⁴⁶
- Mediterranean Network for Intercultural Cities (Council of Europe & Anna Lindh Foundation) – Award: EURO-Med Capital for Dialogue 2021⁴⁷
- Twinned cities – 11 cities from Europe, the Middle East and China⁴⁸

Planned – not implemented

- Donation-based Fundraising program “Ταμείο Πολιτισμού” - coordinated by the Sintonistiko (Συμβούλιο Πολιτιστικών Φορέων Λεμεσού) in collaboration with the Limassol Municipality⁴⁹

8. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT (core, non-core, visitors, tourists)

⁴⁰ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/politistiko-tmima>

⁴¹ A [document](#) prepared in common with the municipalities of Lemesos (coordinator), Agios Athanasios, Mesa Gitonia, Germasogia, Kato Polemidia and Ipsonas, under the program ‘Intercultural Cities’ of the Council of Europe. The plan covers the years 2023-25. To the present day, there is evidence for very few actions to implement the planning of the document.

⁴² Founded in 1992, has 47 members: <https://www.syntonistiko.com/>

⁴³ [Program](#) for the conservation of historic buildings of cultural heritage by the Ministry of Interior.

⁴⁴ <https://www.dancehouse.com.cy/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.rialto.com.cy/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/limassol>

⁴⁷ <https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/limassol-euromed-capital-dialogue-2021>

⁴⁸ <https://www.limassol.org.cy/el/didimopoiimenes-poleis>

⁴⁹ Project description published by the Limassol Municipality and Sintonistiko as «Πρόταση Υλοποίησης Έργου», on 4.11.2013. Update and announcement on the implementation of the project in 2019 from the [Municipality](#) and the [Sintonistiko](#). The project is yet to be implemented.

This section described the audience landscape in Lemesos: who are the regular art-goers (core), who are the irregular art-goers (non-core), who are the visitors and who are the tourists. Due to a lack of data on the cultural habits of locals, visitors and tourists, the information below comes from general statistics (Cyprus and EU), as well as from interviews with key people in the city and outside.⁵⁰

Suggestions as to the Audience Development of Lemesos, can be found in the Strategic Timeline.

Demographics of Lemesos:

Population (2021)⁵¹: 258.000

Population of Cypriots: 79.5%

Population of non-Cypriots: 20.5%

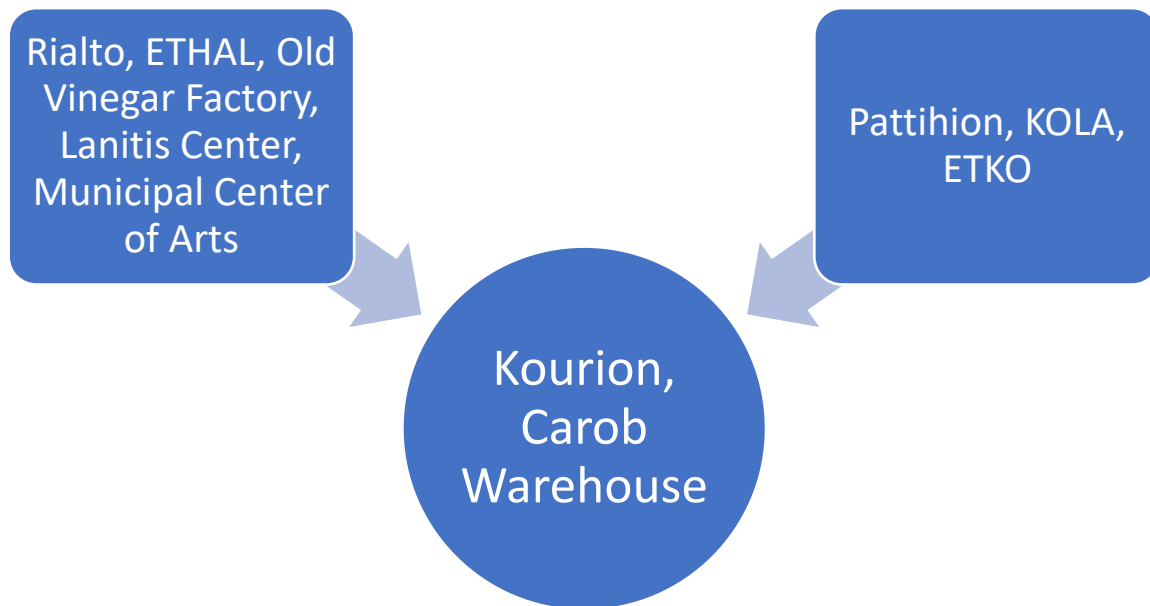
Languages: Cypriot Greek, Greek, Russian, English, Romanian, Bulgarian, Arabic, Filipino, Tamil, others.

Core audience:

- Demographic: Lemesos-based individuals, mostly Greek-speaking and Russian-speaking, age group 30-70, middle and upper classes
- Attendance in arts events: regularly (once a week at least)
- Informed: They are informed of what is happening, have memberships and pre-purchase tickets to events.
- Art forms: This core group is related more to 'high art', such as classical music and ballet, theatre, arts exhibitions.
- Venues: The core group's attendance is venue-specific, and can be mapped to represent mostly separate use of space. Kourion presents an interesting exception of common use of space (see map below), in addition to the new spaces inaugurated by the Russian speaking community, such as the Carob Warehouse.
- Numbers: 1,000 – 2,000 overall

⁵⁰ Interviews were conducted between March 2024-June 2024 with: Eleana Alexandrou, Director of Lemesos 2030, the Head of Office of Deputy Ministry of Tourism in Lemesos, Yücem Rasimolu - President of Leymosun Kültür Vakfi (Kyrenia).

⁵¹ [2021 Census](#)



Example of venue overlap for Greek-speaking and Russian-speaking core audiences:

Non-core audience:

- Demographic: Lemesos-based audiences, comprising mostly Greek speakers, but include other communities living in Cyprus, age group 16-70, from all social classes
- Attendance in arts events: occasional arts-goers. Their habits relate to once-a-month or less for high art and/or attendance in large scale outdoor events, involving popular entertainment
- Informed: They are not in tune with what's happening, they rely on social media, public advertisements and word of mouth within their communities. They are aware of large annual cultural events.
- Art forms: attends a more diverse array of cultural events, including high and popular art, festivals and social gatherings. The three large annual events, Lemesos Carnival, Wine Festival and Kataklimos, draw large crowds of non-core audiences.
- Venues: This audience group attends cultural events in a variety of venues in the city, public spaces and its environs.
- Numbers: 100,000 overall

Visitors:

a. Seasonal/ Occasion-based

- Demographic: audiences based in other locations around Cyprus, e.g. Pafos, Nicosia, Kyrenia. They comprise Greek-speakers, Turkish-speakers, Russian-speakers, English-speakers and others. Their age group 16-70 and they come from all social classes.
- Attendance in arts events: visit Lemesos based on the occasion, with large crowds being drawn by the predominant Lemesos Carnival.

- Informed: They are not in tune with what's happening, they rely on social media and public advertisements. They are in tune with annual cultural events.
- Art forms: This non-core audience attends mostly larger entertainment-oriented events (Carnival, Wine festival, Katakismos), with a small percentage attending for high art events, such as an exhibition opening at seminal art spaces, e.g. Lanitis Center, Spyros Kyprianou Center or Pattihion.

Notes:

- for the Carnival Festival, over the past few years, seasonal visitors make up a great number of those participating in the final Carnival Parade.⁵²
- the numbers of visitors to archeological sites is far higher than the number of visitors to museums. This establishes museums in the city as less popular sites.⁵³
- Venues: attends cultural events mostly in public spaces.
- Numbers: 150,000 overall

b. Educational

- Demographic: Limassol and Cyprus-wide Republic of Cyprus public schools, Greek-speaking children between 6-18.
- Attendance in Arts Events: Attendance in theatre plays, visit to cultural locations
- Informed: Information comes from within the school system, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Art Forms: Theatre, Cultural heritage.
- Venues: Theatre Museum, Kourion Archaeological Site, Medieval Castle, Kolossi Castle
- Numbers: up to 5.000

Tourists:

Demographics:

- a. Tourists come to Cyprus via air travel, from EU and neighbourhood countries, predominantly (arrivals for Jan. 2024)⁵⁴ United Kingdom, Israel, Poland, Greece, France, Germany, United States, Lebanon, Netherlands, Sweden, and others. Arrivals in Cyprus were close to 4 million in 2019, with 12.4% of those staying in Limassol. Tourists stay between 8-10 nights on the island, and spend between \$54-80 per person per day.⁵⁵
- b. Tourists come to Cyprus via cruise ships on daytrips⁵⁶

⁵² According to this [article](#), in 2024, the number of participants in the parade was 30.000.

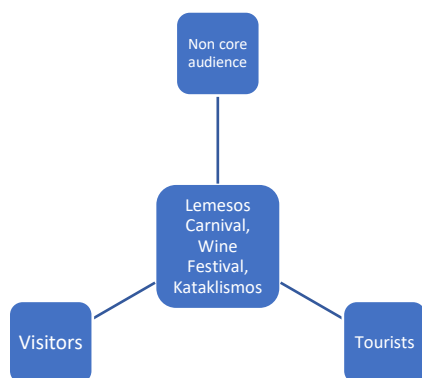
⁵³ As per the referred [article](#), the most popular sites are Kourion, the Medieval Castle of Limassol and the Medieval Castle of Kolossi.

⁵⁴ <https://www.cystat.gov.cy/el/PressRelease?id=68826>

⁵⁵ <https://library.cystat.gov.cy/Infographics/Cystat-Tourism-EL-2019.pdf>

⁵⁶ Potential for Cruise ships energizing tourism, the example of Liverpool: <https://theguideliverpool.com/how-liverpool-cruise-terminal-changed-tourism-in-the-city/>

- Attendance in Arts Events: no available information, although attendance in the large outdoor events (Carnival, Wine Festival, Kataklimos) are available and visible in the city by default.
- Informed: Interest in cultural events is strong among tourists, but information is not available to them in the city. Few cultural spaces and events inform tourists on their events.
- Art Forms: interest in all art forms.
- Venues: outdoor festivals, walking in the city & outdoor art exhibitions, Kourion for performances, Amathus and cultural heritage sites
- Numbers: approximately 500.000 tourists stay in Limassol every year. This number does not include daily visitors who reside elsewhere on the island.



Note: the three large outdoor festivals draw audiences from most audience groups.