

Financial crisis, cultural policy, and the resilience of performing arts: Portugal, 2013

Augusto Santos Silva

Helena Santos

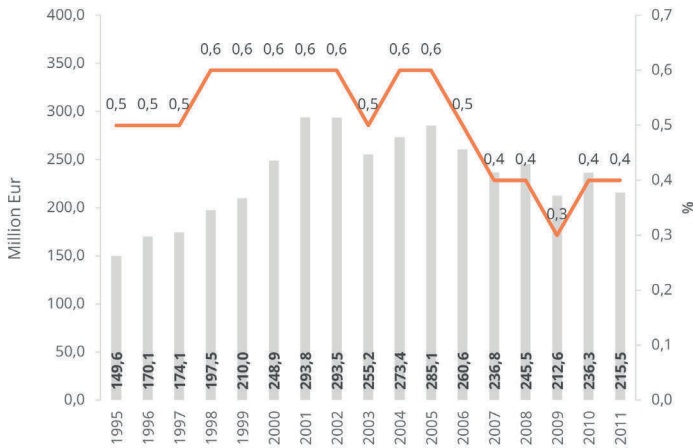
1. The expansion of the Portuguese performing arts: real, still fragile
In Portugal, 1995 was a turning point for the public cultural policies. The foundation of the Ministry of Culture (which had already existed, in the 1970s and the 1980s, but in a precarious and occasional form) epitomised a political project that assumed the centrality of culture, and the necessity of a coherent and long-lasting public intervention in its several dimensions. A new balance between heritage, arts and audiovisuals; the increment and comprehensiveness of public financing; the extension of cultural facilities across the entire territory; and the internationalisation of Portuguese arts and artists, were among the main objectives of such a project. In crucial aspects, these objectives continued and reinforced features of the policies undertaken by governments in the 1980s (mainly in what concerned the cooperation between central and local authorities in order to edify national networks of public libraries, archives and theatres, as described in chapter 3). In other aspects, they were indeed innovative. Therefore, it makes sense to consider, for analytical purposes, 1995 as a milestone.

Due to the fragility of the Portuguese cultural infrastructure and the incipency of state intervention, the budgetary issues were, then, absolutely critical. In fact, the first years of the existence of the new Ministry have been a time of increment of the public resources allocated to culture, the sector's budget following the expansive trend of the overall budget. The political goal of reaching 1% of the total sum was never achieved; nevertheless, an effective reinforcement has occurred. But this was a rather precarious result: culture became one of the first victims of subsequent programmes of fiscal

consolidation (in 2003-2005, 2005-2007, and 2008-2014). Figure 11.1 shows this double tendency, from 1995 to 2011, measurable in terms of resources allocated⁸⁴.

Figure 11.1.

Culture provision in the state budget, 1995-2011 (Million EUR and %):



Source: Neves 2012: 76.

Note: from 2009 onwards, the state-owned corporations in the performing arts are excluded, since they are funded directly by the Ministry of Finance.

Meanwhile, as described in chapter 4, the funds allocated to culture by local authorities (that is, the municipalities) increased in a much more expressive dimension. As a consequence, the amount spent by those authorities clearly surpasses the one with origin in the national government (Gomes & Martinho 2011: 25).

The performing arts constitute one of the key areas of the public cultural expenditure, especially at national level. They also benefitted from the construction of cultural facilities all around the country – as we have seen in chapter 3. Generally speaking, before the crisis of 2008-2010, they were expanding their dimension and centrality within the Portuguese arts field (Gomes 2010). An economic assessment commanded by the Ministry of Culture concluded that, from 2000 to 2006, they had the highest growth rate, either in added value or in employment (Mateus, 2010: 80). Other variables, such

⁸⁴ This book is not the appropriate place to pursue a full and detailed technical discussion of the reliability of the Portuguese official statistics on culture. Our option is to consider the data published by Neves, 2012, to highlight the financial context of the strategies of resilience put into practice by artists during the Adjustment Programme of 2011-2014, which are the subject of the research reported in this chapter.

as some improvement in the education and professional training in dance, theatre and music, also contributed to increase the national capabilities in the area.

Still, given the very low point of departure and the structural restrictions to cultural production and consumption in the Portuguese society, this evolution, effective as it was, was more a start than a steady state, more a promise than an achievement. We can say that Portugal put into practice, in that period, and for the first time, a structural framework for the performing arts – that is, schools, facilities and funding – but still a rather tentative one.

Around 2010, that structure could be summarised as follows. In theatre and dance, most of the producers were small, independent companies – or even merely personal projects. They used their own theatres, or they managed municipal facilities. The main source of income was public funding, by means of the subsidies distributed, in a competitive way and for periods of one, two or four years, by the competent national department (currently named as General-Directorate for Arts). Several companies also received monetary subsidies or used graciously material and human resources provided by the municipalities. In contrast, patronage was a much less important source, captured as it was by the great national theatres and major cultural events. The box-office incomes were normally residual, if one takes apart the so-called commercial plays, which indeed represented a minor partner of this field. The state owned two national theatres, located in the main cities, Lisbon and Porto, whose budget was guaranteed by the government.

Classical music, ballet and opera offered a different situation. The key players were national theatres and companies, that belonged directly to the state (this was the case of the National Opera and its orchestra, and the National Dance Company), or to foundations that resulted from partnerships between the state and private for-profit and not-for-profit organisations (the most important one being the Porto National Orchestra), or between the state and municipalities (the most significant one being the Lisbon Metropolitan Orchestra). The most prestigious classical orchestra was owned by the biggest cultural private foundation, the Gulbenkian Foundation.

Nevertheless, the turn of the century had witnessed a quite interesting development of initiatives of a lower scale, fostered by the extension to music of the calls for public funding opened by the Ministry of Culture. At the same time, the expansion of musical training schools, spread throughout the territory, helped to configure a foundation for independent structures, in jazz, chamber music, or experimental music. The summer festivals and master classes, organised or supported by municipalities and the central administration, also favoured such a development. In contrast, the attempt to launch four regional orchestras, each one under the responsibility of a group of municipalities, did not entirely succeed.

To have an overall view of the situation circa 2010, we may consider all the 142 independent structures that were then receiving public funding on a biennial and quadrennial basis (the one-year funding being allocated to more incipient or occasional projects). 43 per cent worked in theatre, 13 per cent in dance, 24 per cent in music, and 20 per cent combined several arts (Table 11.1): theatre was, therefore, the most representative of the artistic languages. The structures could be either centres of production (such as companies, ensembles, and so on), or dissemination centres (such as festivals and schools). As shown in Table 11.1, the former predominate. And the regional distribution clearly demonstrates the most striking feature – at least, for a sociological approach – of the evolution of the Portuguese panorama: a less uneven coverage of the territory outside Lisbon and Porto (Table 11.2).

Table 11.1.

Financed independent structures in 2011 (in a multi-year basis): artistic domain and type of activity (%)

		Combined	Dance	Music	Theatre	Total	N
Artistic domain		20.4	12.7	23.9	43.0	100.0	142
Type of activity	Production	11.5	44.4	20.6	65.6	40.8	58
	Programming	19.2	5.6	14.7	3.3	9.2	13
	Both	72.4	50.0	58.8	31.1	48.6	69
	nd					1.4	2
N		29	18	34	61	(100.0)	142

Source: Santos & Moreira 2013.

Table 11.2.

Financed independent structures in 2011 (in a multi-year basis): artistic domain and location (%)

		Combined	Dance	Music	Theatre	Total	N
Region	Lisbon	37.9	44.4	17.6	34.4	32.4	46
	Porto	17.2	5.6	5.9	21.3	14.8	21
	Lisbon and Tejo Valley (Lisbon excluded)		22.2	32.4	9.8	14.8	21
	Centre	24.1	11.1	14.7	9.8	14.1	20
	Alentejo	10.3	11.1	5.9	11.5	9.9	14
	North (Porto excluded)	3.4	5.6	14.7	11.5	9.9	14
	Algarve	6.9		8.8	1.6	4.2	6
N		19	18	34	61	(100.0)	142

Source: Santos & Moreira 2013.

2. The key role of public policies, its development and backlash

This new cultural landscape was mainly the effect of the transformation that occurred, in the transition from the 20th to the 21st centuries, in the Portuguese cultural policies. Two changes can be pointed out. The first one was, as already described in chapter 4, the new role of the municipalities as key players, complementing and articulating with the national government – a change that can be dated from 1987, when the first national network based on the partnership between the state and local authorities was launched (the Public Libraries Network). The second change was the enlargement of the competences and resources of the national Culture Department, a process marked, both symbolically and from the point of view of the political centrality and administrative organisation, by its metamorphosis into a Ministry of Culture, in 1995.

Of course, this transformation has been leveraged by an important modernisation of the Portuguese social structure. The data from the national census of 2011, compared with 1991, make it quite evident: variables that are critical to consolidate the social demand for cultural goods, such as education, urbanisation and the growth of professional middle classes (see Donnat 2009), have improved (Table 11.3). Imperfect as they are, the official statistics on the household cultural expenditure confirm the tendency: it reached, in 2006, a level equivalent to 4.5% of the Portuguese GDP (Gomes & Martinho 2011: 25).

Table 11.3.

Three indicators of structural change in Portugal, 1991-2011:

	1991		2001		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
People having attained tertiary education	625,530	6.3	1,193,625	11.5	1,722,511	16.3
People living in cities with 100,000 and more inhabitants	n.d.	n.d.	1,325,094	11.5	1,679,192	15.9
Entrepreneurs, managers and professionals*	712,574	17.3	1,163,542	25.0	1,449,715	33.2

* Authors' calculation, considering all the active workers classified, by the Portuguese Censuses of 1991, 2001 and 2011 as entrepreneurs, managers and professionals (with scientific, intellectual or technical background, and whether employees or self-employed).

Source: Statistics Portugal.

Nevertheless, all these structural changes needed a voluntaristic policy in order to concretise their possibilities. And that was achieved by the articulation between national and local cultural policies. At least, along four critical features. First, the dissemination of cultural facilities (libraries, museums, theatres, multidisciplinary centres) throughout the territory – by means of the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation and modernisation of already existing ones. Second, the stabilisation, in a more regular and multi-year basis, of public funding for independent artistic production, its extension virtually to all artistic domains, and the increase in resources allocated to it. Third, the development of national agencies and institutions – state-owned or integrated in public-private partnerships – that assumed responsibilities of public service and played a pivotal role in the networking of the Portuguese arts field. And, fourth, the expansion of the academic and professional training in arts, both at the secondary and tertiary educational level.

The upward trend of the financial resources allocated to culture in the national budget stopped at the beginning of the 2000s. Culture ceased to be a beneficiary of the budgetary options, and became one of its victims. This is not only a financial issue, it is rather a political one, including but surpassing the financial features.

We don't want to minimise the consequences of the latter, dramatic as they were. As we have already noticed, the structure of the Portuguese performing arts that emerged as a result of both the artistic dynamism and the public policies was rather incipient, fragile and hugely dependent on the public financial support. And, since 2002, when the programmes of fiscal consolidation began, not only did the government's budget decline in general terms but the share reserved to culture also decreased. The overwhelming effects on that structure can be summarised in a single sentence: a developmental process was severely damaged at its very starting point.

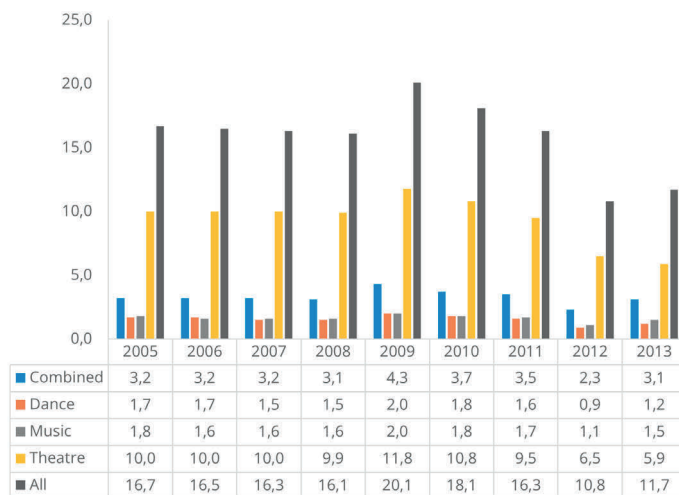
However, no less important was the political devaluation of culture, inherent to the extinction, in the year of 2011, of the Ministry of Culture (to be restored in 2015). The political coordination of the cultural departments of the central administration and the responsibility for the cultural policy was, then, attributed to a secretary of state, reporting directly to the Prime Minister. (In Portugal, the position of secretary of state is less important than the position of minister). Therefore, culture simultaneously lost a global configuration as an autonomous sphere of the public and national administration and its representation at the appropriate political level within the Cabinet.

This combination of financial and political disinvestment had also quite clear symbolic and ideological effects. It meant a retreat of the attitude and rhetoric favourable to the public support for the arts, and an advance of the radical questioning of the usefulness and cost-effectiveness of arts.

In all the three levels – finance, politics, and symbolism – the performing arts were in the very eye of the hurricane. They were the main victims of the budgetary cuts: as shown in Figure 11.2, between 2005 and 2013 the total amount of public funds allocated to subsidise independent structures and projects fell down, and in the last four years that fall was indeed dramatic (the amount available in 2013 meant two thirds of that of 2005, and almost half of that of 2009). This breakdown was accompanied and reinforced by a strong reduction of the resources of the national theatres and companies, and by cuts in the public funding of cultural foundations and other third sector entities. And, of course, the independent, public-subsidised art was one the favourite targets of the populist disaffection vis-à-vis the spending of the so-called money of the tax-payers – a tendency fostered by these times of economic and social crisis and fiscal penury.

Figure 11.2.

General-Directorate for the Arts' funds for independent artistic structures, 2005-2013, by artistic domain (Million EUR):



Source: Santos & Moreira 2013.

Whatever the indicators used, they all clearly evidence the regressive turn in national cultural policy, associated with the financial and economic crisis and the fiscal consolidation programmes of the first 15 years of the 21st century. The decision to downgrade public departments for culture did worsen the case. Meanwhile, the big downsizing of internal demand, due to the loss of family incomes, the growth of unemployment and the degradation of economic expectations, usually

sacrifice, at the frontline, the consumption of cultural goods. The question was how deep and long-lasting could be the consequences for the arts domain, and how should this one resist.

3. The arts field facing the crisis: moving to a survival mode

It is not easy to assess sociologically, using encompassing statistical data, the concrete effects of the economic crisis and political turn. But we can try to estimate those effects and find elements of resilience, within the arts field, considering two sources: a survey applied in 2012 to all the 142 independent entities that were then subsidized, in a multi-year basis, by the Portuguese Directorate for Arts, in the previous four-year period; and an in-depth analysis of 11 such entities⁸⁵.

The evidence suggests that the main consequence of the budgetary cuts was the dramatic reduction of the artistic activities of independent creators, producers and curators. In certain cases, this could mean a temporary suspension, or even the risk of extinction. But the main trend seemed to be the move to a survival mode. Companies reduced costs, downsizing their professional teams, and choosing minimalist approaches in terms of scenography, lighting, costumes, and the like. Projects that required larger resources were passed over, and people focused on small-scale shows: plays for one or a small number of characters, individual dancing performances or involving micro-groups, chamber music, shortened festivals... In some cases, trying to obtain incomes from several sources of funding, the structures seemed to multiply activities – but very small ones, with little artistic dimension, if any.

Various structures tried to share costs, coproducing shows and circulating them through itinerancy circuits. Creators suspended their own creative projects, and responded to external commissions coming from municipalities, festivals, international networks, and so on. The pedagogical dimension of artistic activity was privileged, in order to get some additional resources. And, in individual terms, many artists combined the artistic work in their companies with more standardized, commercial work, for instance in the film industry, television soap operas or advertising. Emigration became again a destiny.

The overall picture seems to describe an entire sector at risk: the structure of theatres and other cultural facilities underused; the agony of many independent producers or their shifting to less creative, less 'authorial' activities; the much greater vulnerability of the artistic core domain vis-à-vis the media and entertainment industry.

But the picture would be incomplete and the appreciation biased if one should stop at the identification of the deeply negative effects of that backlash in public cul-

⁸⁵ Both sets of data were gathered in 2012 by a team headed by Helena Santos and Ricardo Moreira, in the context of a report commanded by the General-Directorate for the Arts. See Santos & Moreira 2013.

tural policies. These policies are not the only factor at work in the cultural dynamics, and the other relevant factors must be considered – namely, (i) the endogenous capacity of the national structure of facilities, local scenes and players that were disseminated throughout the territory, in the 1980s and 1990s; and (ii) the strategies put into practice by creators, producers and curators to resist and eventually overcome the economic crisis and political breakdown.

The best way to characterise them is to point out the ways by which cultural agents do demonstrate some resilience, and the instruments they use to respond to negative external inputs. The evidence provided by the 11 case studies we refer to allows us to draw a sort of catalogue of such instruments (see Table 11.4)⁸⁶.

Table 11.4.

Illustrations from the field: some resilience strategies:

Strategy	Field findings	Relevant cases (N=11)
Networking	Increase in programming exchanges between entities (hosting vs. itinerancy), including public national venues.	Theatre, dance, combined arts.
	Inter-municipal (regional) protocols for production, itinerancy and scheduling the cultural programme.	Theatre company; tendency to be developed by others in short-term.
	Increase in artists-in-residence activities (at a national and, in some contexts, international level).	Theatre, music and (mostly) combined arts.
	Increase in co-productions, in search of lower production costs and higher symbolic benefits.	Music, theatre, combined arts.
	Increase in 'big events' (at a local and regional scale), in order to gather density and 'network power' (either in political or in artistic-symbolic terms).	All cases, although with different expression (depending on the capacity to mobilise political and cultural actors).

⁸⁶ The cases were chosen in order to obtain several combinations of the overall characteristics of the 142 entities. Their general characteristics are as follows: 1 dance company, 5 theatre groups, 3 music entities (1 school and 1 jazz orchestra) and 2 combined arts entities; 4 are production entities and 7 are mixed ones (production and programming); 2 cases are located in Lisbon, 1 in Lisbon and Tejo Valley Region (Lisbon excluded), 1 in Porto, 3 in Northern Region (Porto excluded), 1 in Central Region, 2 in Alentejo and 1 in Algarve.

From production to dissemination	Increase in the scope of educational and social projects all over the region. This might include protocols with primary and secondary schools, and with third sector institutions, in order to define regular activities and repertoire choices.	Theatre, music.
	Increase of the centrality of different sorts of community projects: (i) work with 'lay people'; (ii) audience segmentation (aged people as a new segment); (iii) social inclusion programmes (poor and marginalised populations); and (iv) training activities, namely with amateur groups.	Theatre and music, and, to a lesser degree, dance.
Municipalisation	Privileged, although tense, relationships with local governments, in a threefold movement: (i) physical facilities were guaranteed by the municipalities; (ii) some entities constituted the only artistic supply all over the region; (iii) the artistic entities conferred high symbolic and social reputation to the region.	Mostly in the cases that were distant from urban locations (namely from Lisbon and Porto).
Creative entrepreneurial shift	Joining creative business programmes in order to compensate the absence of public funding.	Theatre, music and combined arts in urban areas.
Internationalisation	When the entities were solid (within the arts field), it might be a way to find better conditions for working and experimenting, as well as for getting internal reputation through international networks. It often depended on the individual reputation of the artist who led the group, which might eventually put the whole entity at risk of disappearance.	Dance companies and combined arts were typical examples. One theatre company, located in a rural area, evidenced the ambiguity between local constraints and international recognition.

Source: Santos & Moreira 2013.

The first one is networking. It can be established in many forms. Several municipalities of the same region associated in a common theatre company, whose responsibility was to produce and present plays in all the localities concerned (see chapter 6). Various theatre or dance companies jointly designed an itinerancy circuit, thus sharing production costs and accessing larger audiences. The national theatres or the dance national company played a pivotal role within the field, hosting independent performances in their venues and on their schedules, or working with independent artists in cooperative original productions. The same did public festivals.

The move from production to dissemination was another strategy in use. The fact is that the budgetary cuts, the fall of audiences and the decrease of complementary supports, be they private patronage, sponsorship or municipal resources, made the production of strictly speaking artistic works extremely difficult or even impracticable. So the independent professionals invested, mostly or only, in cultural dissemination. For instance, a professional theatre company centred its activity in the presentation, all around its region of influence, of well-known plays, mainly those that integrated the national curriculum for secondary education. Others dedicated their work to educational service to an extent they would refuse if times were less hard for creation. With regards to music, this could be a rather frequent situation, as small orchestras of jazz or classical music were often linked to artistic private or municipal schools and leisure centres. And/or several independent structures may compensate the lack of artistic opportunities by means of a kind of training work with local amateur groups.

A third strategy can be seen in the strengthening of the relationship with local authorities and agencies. Taking benefit of the existence of municipal theatres and other cultural facilities and the correlative need to manage and program them, and given the usual weakness of the municipal techno-structure, some independent groups and artists turned out to be, *de jure* or *de facto*, municipal bodies, guaranteeing the professional management and functioning of municipal theatres. An equivalent nearness between music or theatre groups and public or public-private offices of tourism could be witnessed in touristic places.

Another strategy attempted to use the 'creative sector' in order to surpass the public financial cuts in the artistic activities. Several programmes have been implemented in that sector since 2008, and many artists (mostly young) and entities were trying an 'entrepreneurial shift', namely joining the creative business incubators that had been founded. This arts-and-business strategy required instruments and skills that were far from being available within the arts field. It also required a density on the demand side that was still very incipient in Portugal. One of the evident results was the risk of splitting the artistic core activities into fragmented 'cultural services' (see Simão 2013).

Finally, internationalisation could also be an alternative for the absence or decrease of internal conditions for artwork. There are quite a number of examples in modern dance: its experimentalist nature severely reduced the possibilities to reach significant local audiences and, logically, impeded the full use of the approach to itinerancy, education and dissemination. Inversely, the circulation through international festivals, artistic residences or workshops and other contexts of development of the artistic elites and their audiences, could be a real opportunity for artists confronted with deadlocks in the Portuguese art world. We can notice equivalent strategies in the field of music, be it classical or jazz, and in theatre, in what concerns the option for international networking and the circulation throughout the international festivals. In some cases, this turned out to be an emigration process, in which case it ceased to be describable as resilience, but as an exit.

These strategies are not mutually exclusive. As a matter of fact, we could identify, in the cases that were analysed, different combinations: networking with dissemination, nearness to the local authorities with internationalisation, and so on. Nevertheless, there is a sort of dialectics between, on the one hand, networking and internationalisation, and, on the other hand, dissemination, 'creative entrepreneurship' and 'municipalisation'. For the former frequently constituted attempts to resist and overcome the crisis *within* the core domain of performing arts, and appealing to the cultural assets and social capital that are specific to that erudite, high-valued segment of the cultural field (Bourdieu, 1992). And the latter had to exit this segment, surviving by means of a less artistic and a more educational (or even commercial) investment, or bypassing the 'aesthetic distance' (Jauss, 1994) between artwork and mass audiences.

Anyway, an impressive element must be highlighted from our empirical observation, based either on the broad survey or on the case studies: the absence of significant increments in patronage, sponsorship and box office incomes. That is, no form of private funding has been developed by the small-scale independent artistic structures in Portugal, as alternative means to compensate the decrease in public support. For two sound reasons. On the one hand, the consequences of the economic crisis were even more negative in terms of cultural markets and private patronage than in terms of public policies (bounded as these were by some legal and moral obligations). On the other hand, due to the scarcity of resources, the competition between the independent artists and the major cultural institutions was harder, and of course favoured the latter, which tended to capture more significantly the available funds for patronage and sponsorship.

3. Crisis and resilience

All over Europe, whenever it happens, fiscal consolidation severely reduces the amount of public funding available to support artistic creation (hastening a trend that Klammer *et al.* 2006 named *désétatisation*). Culture is always one of the victims of the strategy to consolidate by drastically reducing the public expenditure (an orientation that is far from economic rationality and efficiency, but this is not the subject of this chapter). Of course, in times of austerity, the debate on the legitimacy and cost-effectiveness of public funding of arts tends to be more intense and extreme, and it is more difficult to maintain a social and political consensus. And, as we all know (see Belfiore & Bennett 2007), the quarrel about the 'value of the art' is intimately linked to the existence and perception of public funding.

The Portuguese case was not, of course, unique. Still, it is a relevant one, for comparative analysis, with either Central and Northern European countries (where cultural policies and the arts field are much more structured, under several models), or countries that also entered modern cultural policies quite recently, such as some of the Southern and Eastern European countries.

On the one hand, the breakdown of 2011 was not exclusively financial. It was indeed a major political shift, with a triple nature: financial, administrative and symbolic. It succeeded to two decades (since the mid-80's) whose main trends were (i) a real increment of the public resources allocated to culture, (ii) a rather consistent orientation towards the implementation of public cultural facilities throughout the territory, and (iii) first the emergence, and then the consolidation, of a new key player in the field of the cultural policies, that is, the municipalities.

In 1995, the foundation of the Ministry of Culture was indeed an event, symbolising the renewed centrality of cultural policy, committing its responsibility to a Cabinet minister, reinforcing and articulating all the administrative departments for heritage, arts and film industry. Therefore, the decision, taken by the government in office in 2011-2015, to abolish the Ministry of Culture inserted the financial cuts into a conspicuous and broader movement of political and symbolic devaluation, both of the arts and the policies regarding them.

On the other hand, the convergent policies of the state and local authorities, during the incrementalist period of (let us say) 1987-2002, had been able to implement, in the Portuguese territory, a public cultural infrastructure. Its main axes were (i) a set of basic facilities, such as libraries and archives, museums and heritage sites, theatres and multidisciplinary centres, and (ii) a network of agents, such as artists and artistic communities, schools, companies and curatorships, located mainly in Lisbon and (in a smaller degree) in Porto, but disseminated throughout the country.

Compared with the pre-existent situation, this infrastructure really represented a new evolutionary stage. However, because of the very low point of departure, and the anyway modest number of resources available – not to speak of some variations and imbalances regarding the concrete policies put into action – this was still a preliminary momentum, accomplishing tangible but also fragile outcomes.

The crisis of 2008-2010 produced such overwhelming consequences on the independent cultural structures that they were compelled to enter into a sort of survival mode. Which is indeed a form of resilience, mobilising resources such as the social and cultural networks – on a local, national or international scale – and making use of strategies like the shift to more pedagogical activities or a closer approach to municipalities and public facilities. That resilience allowed them to overcome the risk of collapse, and eventually to take advantage of some positive developments following the reinstatement of the Ministry of Culture in 2015 – the improvement of public funding (Table 11.5) and the rise of the number of subsidised structures (Table 11.6). A detailed analysis of this new period is beyond the scope of this chapter; the point is that without the capacity and means of resilience put in place during the previous crisis by the Portuguese art world (which was the focus of our research), such a new period would not have been possible.

Table 11.5.

Funds for independent artistic structures, managed by the General-Directorate for the Arts, 2008-2023, by artistic domain (Million EUR):

Art domain	2008	2012	2016	2020	2023
Combined	3.1	2.3	3.2	3.8	8.6
Dance	1.5	0.9	1.3	2.0	3.6
Music	1.6	1.1	1.5	2.7	8.7
Theatre	9.9	6.5	5.0	9.4	16.6
Total	16.1	10.8	11.0	17.9	37.5

Sources: Santos & Moreira 2013 and DGARTES (biennial and quadrennial financing).

Table 11.6.

Independent structures financed by the General-Directorate for the Arts (in a multi-year basis), 2011-2023, by artistic domain (Million EUR):

Art domain	2011	2018	2023
Combined	29	35	44
Dance	18	21	22

Music	34	43	45
Theatre	61	68	75
Total	142	167	186

2011: 2009 biennial and 2011 quadrennial financing; 2018 and 2023: biennial and quadrennial financing ('sustainable support').

Sources: Santos & Moreira 2013; DGARTES.

4. Contextual analysis and policy-making

Some years ago, Eleonora Belfiore (2004) warned her fellow sociologists against the temptation to reduce the cross-national analysis of cultural policies to a comparison of the financial resources the national budgets allocate to culture. And she added that, even if the comparison of the models of cultural policy in use in the different countries did mean a step forward towards a more rigorous approach, this comparison had to be seen as an instrument of research, and not its final stage.

The analysis of the Portuguese case entirely supports her argument. The consequences, for arts and culture, of fiscal austerity are not fully understandable unless we situate them within a major shift in cultural policy as such – a shift that put at risk the very existence of such a policy. Thus, the budgetary component of that backlash must be investigated in relation to the political, administrative, ideological and symbolic dimensions. And – as Belfiore proposed – contextualisation remains a key methodological device for the sociological explanation of the design, implementation and impact of those policies. Once again, to consider the Portuguese situation one must be aware of the peculiar evolution of the respective public policies, both national and local, from the 1980s onwards.

Moreover, as Bernard Perret (2008) emphasized, the assessment of cultural policies cannot be abridged into an inventory of statistical indicators. It must also focus on the processes that constitute such policies, trying to understand *comment ça marche*, how they function, with and for whom, by which means, and so on – not only in order to seize all the factors in action in the politics of public policies, but also favouring the collective learning that such an assessment can provide.

Thus, a contextual analysis of (i) the evolution of cultural policy, and (ii) the subsequent strategies of adaptation and response used by the arts field – as we tried to summarise here, in reference to the situation of Portuguese performing arts in 2013 – may prove to be interesting for both academic and policy-making purposes. The Portuguese case makes evident that the development of the artistic and cultural system depends crucially on the dialectics between opportunity, risk and resilience. Against the threat of reducing cultural policies to a mix of minimalism and adorn-

ment, resilience finds its roots both in the endogenous resources of the artists and art worlds, and in the instruments of cultural policy, management and supply implemented in previous expansive periods.

So, the role of public policies for the outcome of that dialectics seems to be determinant – at least considering the Portuguese circumstances. As we have seen, the public support for performing arts and the exploration, by the artists themselves, of other forms and sources of support – like audiences, patrons or the clients and consumers of additional services provided by artists, such as education, dissemination and touristic services – do not relate to each other in an exclusive manner. One is not the substitute for the other. On the contrary, they complement – and also presume – each other (see Klamer & Petrova 2007 for a study on visual arts). A reasonable and stable public funding – assuming a variety of forms, and of course accountable – provides a positive background for the implementation of structures and processes that contribute to lessen the dependency of creators and producers on state agencies and policies. This is the reality that the anti-subsidisation *doxa* simply misunderstands.

We can point out many of those structures and processes that independent artists can use, in order to obtain some degree of freedom regarding public directives, demands and subsidies. The analysis of the Portuguese case suggests the centrality of the following three: rooting, networking, professionalism. They can typically be implemented concomitantly with sound public support, and indeed may constitute a desirable, if not compulsory, offset for that support. They are important assets for resilience in periods of decrease or even suspension of public support.

We name as rooting (and we could also name it as embeddedness, in Granovetter's sense, see Granovetter 1985) the various strategies that create and consolidate a link between artists and their social environment. Depending on the disciplines, projects or cultural and aesthetic affiliations, according to the characteristics of each environment, they can focus on the consistency of programs, the enlargement of audiences, local partnerships, educational services, dissemination, itinerancy, and so on. Networking means the establishment and functioning of flexible structures that allow several artistic teams to relate and reach economies of scale, at the local, regional, national or international level. And, of course, professionalism denotes the improvements in organisation and management – such as workflows, leadership, marketing, fundraising, and so on – that are so necessary for the structuring of cultural enterprises.

Our analysis suggests that none of these three processes is alternative to the absence or reduction of public support; and they all can be seen as positive outcomes of those cultural policies which have included them as key objectives, and have pro-

vided orientation and means to achieve them. Since they are established, they operate as factors of resilience in periods of crisis and backlash.

This is probably an interesting result sociologists can deliver to policy-makers and discussants. It suggests that we will be more attentive to reality and prone to intervene adequately if we cease to think in terms of dichotomies. The option is not between cultural policy and market-driven cultural economy. The option is between an intelligent linkage of public support and artistic autonomy, and its alternative, that is, no cultural policy at all.

