

ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

Tunisia

PRÉCIS

Tunisia is the only democracy to have emerged from the Arab Spring in 2011. It aims to build a strong national identity grounded in democracy and decentralization principles stated in the new 2014 Constitution. Tunisia's ECP, despite an over-reliance on public funding, is carried out mostly by non-state actors. In addition, Tunisia is increasingly being integrated into a network of cultural and educational exchange by the European Union. Today, the country is in a state of political uncertainty and faces high migration of talents. Therefore, connecting with the diaspora is also a crucial component of its ECP.

Outstanding Fact:

Tunisia's successful transition into a democracy could signal an alternative to the long-standing split dividing the Arab-Islamic world on political Islam.

KEY INDICATORS 2019

Population	Rank/number	77 th / 11.7
GDP	Rank/number	94 th / \$ 38.8 billion
GDP per capita	Rank/number	126 th / \$ 3,317
Cultural Economy	As share of GDP	0.26
Education economy	As share of GDP	4.83
R&D economy	As share of GDP	0.60
Media economy	As share of GDP	n/a
Geopolitical position	Hard power	74
	Sharp power	n/a
	Soft power	n/a
	Diplomacy rank	n/a

OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

Number of countries present	over 52
Number of institutions abroad	over 26
FTE staff	n/a
ECP freelance and local contract staff	n/a
Government financial support	n/a
Comparative ECP group	minor

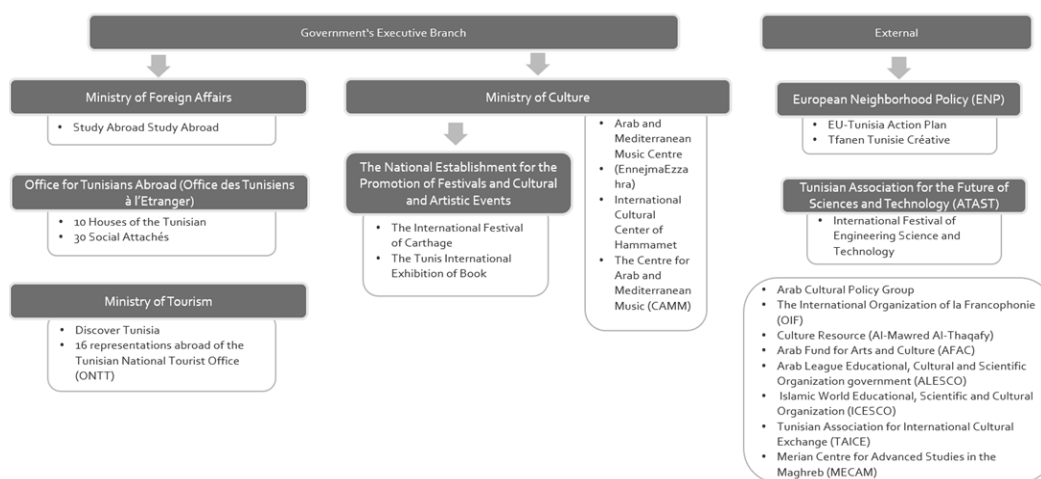
Main Objectives

- Build a strong national identity grounded in democracy and decentralization principles
- Support Tunisia's cultural exports, integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) in cultural fields, and increase the international mobility of Tunisian artists
- Provide cultural access to Tunisians abroad and strengthen ties with diaspora communities

Policy Context

- The new constitution of 2014 prepares the country for comprehensive decentralization throughout Tunisian society, including culture, education, and science.
- The constitution and the Development Plan 2016-2020 have contributed to a more conducive policy environment in Tunisia to encourage innovation and cooperation in its cultural landscape.

INSTITUTIONAL MAP



Tunisia's ECP is marked by participation of civil society and cooperation between the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism. ECP activities are operated on a limited state budget and carried out by outward-facing institutions situated under the ministries of foreign affairs, cultural affairs, higher education, etc. In addition to major ministries that take roles in organizing and coordinating international exchange in relevant ECP fields, many organizations like the EU have also involved Tunisia in programs and projects to enhance its cultural engagement regionally and internationally. Tunisians abroad are a key component of the country's ECP, with activities directed mainly under the Office for Tunisians Abroad.

FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
Culture and the Arts			
Number of countries present	6	n/a	Data refer to Office for Tunisians Abroad
Number of institutes and branches	10	n/a	
Education – Tertiary			
Number of countries present	-	-	Ministry of Education
Number of domestic higher education institutions	277	266	
Number of students			
- Inbound	2,768	-	
- Outbound	24,248	-	
Science and Research			
Number of countries present	n/a	-	
Number of projects	28 ⁽²⁰¹⁸⁾	-	
Media			
TV	-	-	
Audience weekly (million)	-	-	
Radio (Radio Tunis Chaîne Internationale RTCI)			
Number of languages	5	-	
New media			
Social network users (million)			
- Facebook	7.3	-	
- Messenger	4.1	-	
- Instagram	1.9	-	
- Twitter	0.115	-	
Social networks following			
- Discover Tunisia	508,875 (Facebook)	-	
	20,900 (Youtube)	-	
	11,200 (Twitter)	-	

CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- Tunisia's ECP has shown two major trends. One is the high participation of non-state actors, including civil society organizations and international donors. The other is the proactive inclusion of Tunisia by the EU into a network of educational and academic exchanges.
- After President Kais Saied seized power through quasi-coup in 2021, Tunisia was thrown into greater political uncertainty at a time of mounting economic challenges. Faced with a possible authoritarian regression, Tunisia's status as the sole democracy emerging from the Arab Spring comes under threat.
- Although Tunisia adopted a progressive constitution and embarked on its path to full democracy, a large body of its law and practice is still lagging behind. Political instability, insufficient infrastructure, and ineffective planning have contributed to the stagnant situation of Tunisia's external cultural relations.
- In collaboration with the African Development Bank, the National Strategic Plan (NSP) of "Digital Tunisia 2020" was launched in 2016 to improve ICT access and usage and make Tunisia an international digital destination. Enhancement of e-business is one pillar of the plan, from which digital cultural and creative industries can benefit.

FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary with additional data and data sources is here: "*Tunisia – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*"
- A full set of references are presented here "*Tunisia – External Cultural Policy: References*"
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: "*Tunisia – External Cultural Policy: A Report*"

Imprint

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