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## Deliverable D6.3 – National Events Report 1

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Short Description	The document provides a comprehensive overview of the inaugural national event held in Ankara, Türkiye, in March 2023. Bringing together stakeholders from various backgrounds, the event focused on communication and dissemination.
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## Executive Summary

The CULTURATI National Event, held in Ankara on March 8, 2023, stands as a significant milestone in the early stages of our project. Despite coinciding with a national disaster and humanitarian crisis resulting from the Turkey-Syria earthquake in February 2023, the event attracted an audience of over 100 participants, both online and in person, just shy of our targeted Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of 120. Notably, the event garnered participation from esteemed individuals and high-level attendees.

The meticulously crafted structure of the event seamlessly integrated speeches, presentations, informal networking sessions, and a captivating site visit to the historic Ankara Citadel—a pivotal pilot site for our project. This comprehensive format, successfully executed during the inaugural National Event, will be consistently maintained in subsequent events.

A detailed analysis of attendance figures reveals a diverse representation from various target sectors, including local SMEs, a broader range of cultural and heritage sites, tourism, academia, and local government. While the event effectively engaged participants from key sectors, our strategic focus for future events is to enhance involvement from under-represented sectors, particularly local SMEs and a broader array of cultural and heritage sites, with a specific emphasis on increasing participation from local government representatives.

The impact of the event transcended its physical boundaries, generating noteworthy coverage through news articles, online publications, and social media postings. Future National Events will prioritize strategies to elevate the reach and influence of such coverage.

Anticipated refinements for the organization of future events include implementing a longer lead time, ensuring the availability of tangible project results, and fostering an enriched collaborative experience among project partners. These factors are expected to significantly contribute to the execution of upcoming National Events.

Looking ahead, the next National Event is scheduled to unfold in Istanbul in 18-19 April 2024, providing a prime opportunity to build upon the successes of the inaugural event and further advance the objectives of the Horizon Europe Project.

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## 1. Introduction

The objective of this document is to report on the first National Event of the CULTURATI project, held in Ankara on March 8 2023. The report comprehensively analyzes the event's objectives, within the broader DEC strategy, addressing encountered limitations while providing a detailed breakdown of key aspects.

Key Aspects Explored:

1. **Clearly Defined Event Goals:** The report precisely outlines the event's intended outcomes within the broader DEC6.3 objectives, ensuring a clear understanding of its purpose.
2. **Detailed Program and Execution:** A meticulous examination of the event's substantive content, encompassing presentations, discussions, and activities, is presented to offer an insightful overview of the proceedings.
3. **Quantifiable Participation and Impact:** The report incorporates precise figures and metrics to illustrate audience engagement, stakeholder reach, and potential long-term effects, thereby enhancing the transparency and effectiveness of the event assessment.
4. **Valuable Lessons Learned:** Actionable insights derived from the organization of the event serve as crucial takeaways, guiding future endeavors and optimizing the planning and execution of subsequent national events. This report serves as a valuable resource for understanding the successes, challenges, and learnings of the first CULTURATI National Event. Its findings will inform the strategic planning and execution of upcoming events, maximizing their impact on project goals and stakeholder engagement.

## 2. Strategic Placement of National Events within the CULTURATI DEC

### Framework

The CULTURATI DEC strategy outlines the organization of five National Events throughout the project's duration, corresponding to each pilot site: two in Turkey (Ankara and Istanbul), and one each in Italy, Finland, and the UK. These events are an integral part of Task 6.2, focusing on the implementation of targeted communication, dissemination, and awareness-raising strategies for the CULTURATI prototype's development and research.

The overarching goal is to disseminate information and foster discussions at local, national, and international levels. National Events are designed to cultivate engagement and participation from various target groups, including local authorities, policymakers, key stakeholders in the cultural and creative industries, the tourism sector, and the general public. Specifically, each National Event aims

to facilitate the establishment of a national consortium and network in every partner country. These networks will persistently enhance engagement across diverse stakeholder groups, laying the groundwork for the effective utilization of the CULTURATI prototype in the project's later phases.

### 3. Inaugural National Event: Ankara, March 8, 2023

The first National Event unfolded in Ankara, a mere five weeks after the project's commencement, closely following the partner kick-off meeting held both in-person and online on March 7. The timing was significant, transpiring amidst the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in February 2023, which claimed over 56,000 lives in southern/central Turkey and Syria. Throughout March, national attention and government efforts remained steadfastly focused on disaster relief, navigating ongoing aftershocks and humanitarian crises in the region.

The unfortunate circumstances of the tragedy limited the involvement of crucial public stakeholders, consequently affecting media coverage of the National Event. Despite these challenges, the hybrid event witnessed a noteworthy turnout, surpassing 100 attendees, both in-person and online. Distinguished guests, including the Finnish Ambassador, Italy's Cultural Attaché, the Deputy Governor of Ankara, the President of Turkey's Scientific and Technological Research Council, and the Rector of Bilkent University, Director of Ankara Provincial Culture and Tourism Directorate actively contributed to the event, underscoring its resilience and enduring significance.

The day's agenda comprised three main segments (see Appendix 1):

1. Speeches by distinguished guests, technical presentations, and introductions to pilot sites by members of the CULTURATI team (see Appendix 2).
2. Networking coffee break.
3. Pilot study site visit to Ankara Citadel and Rahmi Koç Museum at the Ankara Citadel.

#### 3.1 Inaugural National Event: Distinguished Speakers and Project Overview

The event witnessed a significant turnout, with over 100 esteemed guests, including notable figures such as the Finnish Ambassador H.E. Ari Mäki and Italy's Cultural Attaché Maria Luisa Scolari. Opening addresses were delivered by key figures, including Rector of Bilkent University Prof. Dr. Kürşat Aydoğan, Deputy Governor of Ankara Turan Yılmaz, and Prof. Hasan Mandan, President of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK).

**Rector of Bilkent University**

In his opening remarks, Prof. Aydođan underscored the project's significance, highlighting that it stands as the first multipartner project coordinated by a Turkish organization in the Horizon Europe – Culture, Creativity, and Inclusive Society Cluster. The CULTURATI project, classified as a Research, Innovation & Action project, aims to provide solutions to the challenges faced by the Cultural and Creative Industries, which, along with the tourism sector, have been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The innovative technologies employed by CULTURATI are poised to address and mitigate the effects on these industries.

**President of TÜBİTAK**

**Prof. Hasan Mandal** emphasized the groundbreaking nature of the project, highlighting its use of state-of-the-art technology to rejuvenate the cultural heritage sector severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. He underscored the global impact of the project, driven by the innovative vision of Turkish and international academics. The project, according to Mandal, will contribute significantly to building a resilient infrastructure for the pandemic-affected cultural and creative industries.

**Ankara Deputy Governor**

Deputy Governor **Dr. Turan Yılmaz** highlighted the cultural industry's role in creating accessible and user-friendly digital platforms. He affirmed that CULTURATI would add substantial value to the cultural and tourism sector, utilizing technologies to protect cultural heritage. Yılmaz commended the project's originality, particularly its creation of personalized themes, and expressed strong support from the governorship of Ankara.

**Coordinator of the CULTURATI Project**

Following these addresses, **Dr. Eda Gürel**, the project coordinator, delved into the project's substance. Under the Horizon Europe heading of Global Challenges and Industrial Competitiveness, CULTURATI aims to design an inclusive culture and arts ecosystem. The project leverages cutting-edge technologies, including cloud and mobile technologies, the Internet of Things (IoT), motion sensors, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Its primary goals include enhancing visitor experiences through customized information and managing on-site visitor flows to ensure social distancing, particularly in scenarios like pandemics.



### **IT Developer of the CULTURATI Project**

The technology component of the CULTURATI project will be developed by key partners, namely IOTIQ, NIMBEO, and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. Additionally, Prof. Dr. Altay Güvenir, the Dean of Bilkent University's Faculty of Applied Sciences, will play a crucial role in contributing to the development of the AI component.

It is noteworthy that IOTIQ's CEO, **Özer Aydemir**, provided a comprehensive overview of the technology employed in CULTURATI during a dedicated session. His insights and expertise shed light on the innovative technological aspects driving the project's development.

### **Innovation Manager of the Blenheim Palace**

The National Presentation of the CULTURATI Project concluded with an address by **David Green**, Innovation Manager of Blenheim Palace, a British World Heritage Site and project partner. Green outlined how CULTURATI is expected to complement ongoing smart technology initiatives at Blenheim Palace, enriching visitors' experiences through customization and capacity optimization, as showcased in a short film highlighting the site's current work, needs, and priorities.

## **4. Evaluation and conclusions – lessons learned**

The following section provides a critical examination of the inaugural National Event in Ankara, highlighting key observations and insights to inform the refinement of future events. From early timing challenges to stakeholder representation and networking dynamics, this analysis aims to enhance the effectiveness of the CULTURATI project's engagement strategies.

**Early Timing:** Holding the first National Event shortly after the project launch presented certain challenges. Limited tangible results at this early stage posed a hurdle for robust engagement with future project phases. Nevertheless, the event surpassed attendance expectations with 107 participants, indicating a promising start. The imperative for future events lies in extended lead times, well-established project outcomes, and heightened team collaboration to maximize attendee engagement.

*In-person attendance at National Event by sector*

SECTOR	% of PARTICIPANTS
Academic	37
Local government	17
IT	12
Cultural and creative industries	9
Press and media	8
Tourism	8
Diplomatic	3
NGO/civil society	3
Government ministry	3

**Stakeholder Representation:** a. *Small Businesses:* Notably, small businesses at the historic Ankara Citadel, integral to the pilot site, were underrepresented. Future events will prioritize maintaining the site visit component, crucial for facilitating interaction between these businesses and the CULTURATI team. b. *Cultural & Creative Industries:* This sector's participation (9%) fell short of expectations. Actively targeting and encouraging their attendance will be a priority in future events, recognizing their pivotal role in forming National Consortia.

**Evaluation and Networking:** a. *Formal Feedback:* Time constraints prevented the implementation of a formal online evaluation system; however, this will be prioritized for the Istanbul National Event. b. *Informal Feedback:* Informal feedback indicates successful introduction of project aims and sparked interest in its future. Maintaining dedicated networking space in future events, particularly with tangible results, is essential. c. *Contact and Outreach:* Collected contact details will fuel future communication and outreach efforts, transforming National Events into platforms for expanding the CULTURATI network and promoting engagement activities.

**Expanding the CULTURATI Network:** National Events will continue to serve as platforms for expanding an active CULTURATI network, promoting project updates and engagement opportunities, and soliciting newsletter subscriptions to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

**Building Media Momentum:** The Ankara National Event served as the inaugural platform for elevating CULTURATI's local, national, and international profile. Generating press releases, online articles, and social media buzz, the event laid the foundation for future National Events to leverage and amplify

media interest. This strategic approach will showcase ongoing project implementation, solidifying CULTURATI's visibility and impact.

As we reflect on the evaluations of the inaugural National Event, it becomes clear that lessons learned are invaluable for refining and optimizing future gatherings. By addressing timing challenges, enhancing stakeholder representation, and fortifying networking dynamics, the CULTURATI project is poised to amplify its reach and impact in subsequent National Events.

## 5. Overview of Publications and Media Coverage

This section offers a comprehensive overview of the myriad publications and extensive media coverage garnered by the CULTURATI project in conjunction with the National Event held in Ankara. The diverse impact of our initiatives is showcased through press releases, online articles, social media resonance, and coverage across various media platforms, as detailed in this compilation below. The ensuing list underscores the project's visibility across local, national, and international landscapes, providing a snapshot of the noteworthy progress and achievements of CULTURATI communicated through diverse and influential media channels.

### **Official CULTURATI Project Website: 'CULTURATI launched'**

The official CULTURATI project website played a pivotal role in disseminating information about the project's launch event. Describing it as the first National Event with the participation of all potential stakeholders, the website provided comprehensive details about the objectives and significance of the event. For further exploration, you can visit the dedicated dissemination page at <https://culturati.eu/dissemination/>

### **National Newspaper: Hürriyet Ankara 12 March 2023 "Bilkent'te Ufuk Avrupa Projesi"**

The coverage in the Hürriyet Ankara newspaper's edition on March 12, 2023, titled "Bilkent'te Ufuk Avrupa Projesi," showcased the prominence of the CULTURATI project. The newspaper article highlighted key aspects of the project, bringing it to the attention of a broader audience in the Ankara region.



**Bilkent News: (Newsletter of the Bilkent University): 21 March 2023 'Horizon Europe Project National Event'**

Bilkent News, the publication from Bilkent University, featured an article titled 'Horizon Europe Project National Event.' This publication provided readers with an overview of the opening speeches and the project's goals, as articulated by project coordinators and partners. The article can be found at the following link [Bilkent News](#).

**The Diplomatic Observer's Facebook Page: Video Recordings of Introductory Speeches**

The Diplomatic Observer is a monthly news and comment magazine that specializes in politics and diplomacy based in Ankara, Turkey. It is published in Turkish, English and German. The Diplomatic Observer's Facebook and Instagram pages played a key role in sharing the video recordings of opening speeches from the event. This social media platform provided a visual glimpse into the event, making it accessible to a wider audience. One of the video recordings can be found at the following link [Video Recording](#).

### **LinkedIn Updates from Project Partners: CULTURATI Engagements**

#### **Eda Gürel, Bilkent University**

Eda Gürel shared insightful updates about CULTURATI, offering a glimpse into the project's activities and achievements. Some examples are provided below:

- [Update 1](#)
- [Update 2](#)
- [Update 3](#)
- [Update 4](#)

#### **Ankara Governorship**

The Ankara Governorship participated in showcasing CULTURATI. Their engagement and insights into the project can be found at the following link: [Update](#)

#### **Özer Aydemir, IOTIQ**

Özer Aydemir shared a comprehensive update on CULTURATI, providing valuable insights into the project's endeavors. The following link provides the details: [Update](#)

#### **Julie Scott, TOUCH TD**

Julie Scott contributed to the LinkedIn narrative surrounding CULTURATI. The following link provides the details of her posts: [Update](#)

## Appendix 1: Ankara National Event Programme

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#### **National Day to Communicate and Disseminate CULTURATI**

8 March 2023

Ankara, Türkiye

Bilkent Hotel and Conference Centre  
(Istanbul Meeting Room)

9:30-10:00 Registration

10:00-11:00 Opening speeches and project presentations

11:00-12:00 Coffee Break for Networking

12:00-14:00 Ankara Citadel Pilot Study Site Visit

14:00-15:00 Ankara Rahmi M. Koç Museum Visit

## Appendix 2: Summary of programme contributions – press release



### HORIZON EUROPE RIA PROJECT CULTURATI LAUNCHED IN ANKARA

The CULTURATI project – *Customized Games and Routes for Cultural Heritage and Arts* – was launched with international fanfare at the Bilkent Hotel and Conference Centre in Ankara on 8<sup>th</sup> of March. Coordinated by Bilkent University, this €3.1m Horizon Europe project is funded by the European Union with contribution from the UK government. It draws together an international, interdisciplinary consortium of 14 partners, combining computer scientists, practitioners from the cultural and creative industries, a multi-disciplinary range of academics, SMEs, public authorities, and not for profit community initiatives from Turkey, Germany, Finland, Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

The launch event marked the start of the project in Turkey, where the CULTURATI application will undergo its first trials at Rahmi M Koç museum in Istanbul, and the historic Citadel site in Ankara. It was attended by more than 100 guests, including the Finnish Ambassador H E Ari Mäki, and Italy's Cultural Attaché Maria Luisa Scolari. Rector of Bilkent University Prof Dr Kürşat Aydoğan, Deputy Governor of Ankara Turan Yılmaz, and Prof Hasan Mandan, President of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) delivered the opening addresses. The speakers highlighted the international significance and cutting edge nature of the project, which will use state-of-the-art technology to build resilience back into a cultural heritage sector that was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The CULTURATI project will enrich the experiences of visitors to cultural heritage sites by creating personalised games and routes, tailored to the knowledge level and preferences of individual visitors. At the same time, the technology will manage visitor flows on site, to avoid over-crowding, enhance heritage protection, and ensure social distancing where necessary. Finally, the CULTURATI project will develop a pioneering co-creation platform, where artists, professionals, institutions and members of the public will be able to come together to develop and share content, allowing knowledge users to become knowledge creators, and vice versa.

The project coordinator Dr Eda Gürel explained the project methodology, and introduced Özer Aydemir, founder and head of IOTIQ, who outlined the role of the partners delivering the technical elements of CULTURATI. The event concluded with a presentation by David Green, innovation manager at Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage Site in England which is a project partner, and one of the project test locations. The technical partners at Bilkent, IOTIQ, NIMBEO and Universidad Carlos III De Madrid have already started work on developing the system software and hardware, and adapting it to the specific requirements of the test case sites – initially in Ankara and Istanbul, with subsequent iterations in Porvoo Old Town, Finland; Monti Dauni, Italy; and Blenheim Palace, UK. Further information events will be held in the participating countries as the project progresses. For more information and updates on the project, visit <https://culturati.eu/>, and follow us with #CULTURATILikeMyWay.