

Policies for Culture (PFC) was developed from 2000 to 2008 as a regional framework programme for South East Europe by the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam) and the ECUMEST Association (Bucharest). Since the year 2000, Policies for Culture has aimed to encourage a participative principle in the design, implementation and evaluation of new effective cultural policies throughout the countries of this region. From 2000 until 2005, Policies for Culture has supported more than 20 action projects all over South East Europe. These local initiatives promoted interaction and dialogue between citizens, the cultural sector and the responsible decision-makers. To date the principle of participative cultural policy-making is still shared and further developed by a number of new follow-up initiatives all over the region and also beyond South East Europe.

After eight dynamic years of development, networking, capacity building, debates, research, publications and dissemination on cultural policy-making, the Policies for Culture programme has officially been closed by the end of 2008. The website www.policiesforculture.org stays online as an archive of backup information on participative policy-making in South East Europe featuring all the PFC past project activities, publications and reports available in English and/or the different local languages. The details provided below reflect the vision and areas of action of the programme until the point of its closure.

OBJECTIVES & APPROACH

The programme was structured around the triangular working relationship between civil society, the executive, and the legislature in the policy-making process affecting the cultural sector. It was based on the recognition that public policy in the field of culture can only have a sustainable impact if the civic stakeholders whom it is to affect participate in its formulation. Emphasis was placed on finding channels of communication between these levels (which are not used to interacting); and, by encouraging participative policy making in the field of culture, on empowering the independent sector to voice its opinions. To this end, Policies for Culture - inspired initiatives engaged policy makers and the cultural sector of South East Europe in a serious reflection process on local and national cultural policies. They encouraged all players involved to translate ongoing policy debates into concrete actions that have contributed to a sustainable bottom-up strengthening of the cultural sector in the municipalities and countries of the region.

KEY AREAS OF ACTION

PRACTICAL ACTION

Until 2005, Policies for Culture has facilitated the development and supported the implementation of a variety of local initiatives aimed at turning theory into concrete action in the form of action projects, respectively:

Albania

- "Why do Reforms Stop?" - Policies for Theatre & Film Production (2003)

Bulgaria

- Construction of a local cultural strategy of the city of Plovdiv and setting up an effective structure for an active social dialogue (2001)
- Technological Park Culture I & II (2001-2004)
- Cultural Policy and Legislation: A New Approach to Sharing Responsibilities (2003)
- Cultural Policy and Legislation: A New Approach to Sharing Responsibilities (associated project: 2003)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- "Together for Culture" - Cultural Strategy of the municipality of Prijedor (2003)

Croatia

- Participative Policy Making: Cultural Strategy of the City of Zagreb (2002-2003)
- Clubture - Policy Forum: Towards a new position for the independent, not-for-profit and non-institutional cultural sector in the policy-making process (2003)
- Cultural Strategy of the City of Rijeka (2003-2004)

Moldova

- Launching a process of exploring, identifying and implementing new funding mechanisms for cultural institutions and activities in the Republic of Moldova (2003-2004)

Macedonia

- Policy Debate Center, Skopje (associated project: 2001-2003)



- Empowering the Independent Cultural Sector & Institutionalising Participation in Local Cultural Policy Making in the municipality of Prilep (2002-2004)

Montenegro

- Platform for a New Impact of Culture in Montenegro (2003-2004)

Romania

- A model of social dialogue for the construction of a regional cultural strategy for the Timis County (2001) & dissemination of results and methodology (2004)
- ARCult - an expertise and service support agency for the Romanian independent cultural organizations and operators (2002-2004)
- Private-Public Partnership. Towards a Cultural Strategy for the Arad County (2002-2003)

Serbia

- Cooperation & Dialogue in building effective Local Cultural Policies in the municipalities of Kragujevac, Sabac, Sombor and Uzice (2002)
- Cultural Policy in Zlatibor County - a Second Step (2003-2004)
- Strategic Development of Suburban Culture, Obrenovac (Belgrade) (2003-2004).

ANALYSIS & RESEARCH

The need for cultural policy research has been a recurrent topic in the various programme activities in its last four years. Throughout the region there is an urgent need for independent research to evaluate policies and their actual impact, and to use research results as a basis for good quality decision-making. In 2004 and 2005, Policies for Culture specifically addressed this area by the means of a **Task Force for Cultural Policy Research**. It aimed to use and further develop the rich pool of knowledge and expertise represented by the Policies for Culture network in order to respond to the strong need for consistent and professional reflection, analysis and research in the field of cultural policies in the region.

INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION

From the early days of the programme until 2008 the Policies for Culture website aimed to enhance the flow of cultural policy information and acquired expertise in South East Europe (and beyond) by developing and making available a variety of reports, publications and other information (re)sources, namely:

- the programme website – www.policiesforculture.org - which developed into a virtual resource space in the field of cultural policies in South East Europe;
- the **electronic periodicals** – two complementary publications providing news and information, on the one hand, and analysis and opinion on key cultural policy issues throughout the region, on the other hand (**e-bulletin** and **InSIGHT**, respectively);
- the **case studies** of action projects developed in the framework of the programme;
- other reports and publications.

THE POLICIES FOR CULTURE NETWORK

Since its beginnings, Policies for Culture has been based on a broad range of partnerships involving cultural operators, professional artists, local and national cultural authorities as well as administration, parliamentarians, media, university institutions, cultural and policy research centres, cultural policy experts and policy institutions all over the region and the European Union. The professional ties developed through the programme continue to keep the goals of the programme alive throughout South East Europe and the wider EU neighbourhood. To date the numerous members of the Policies for Culture network continue to lobby and develop further action in the field of participative cultural policy-making in South East Europe.

BEYOND SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Since 2004, experience gained through Policies for Culture action in South East Europe has been used to promote and facilitate participative cultural policy making also in countries outside South East Europe. Over the past years the European Cultural Foundation has translated project knowledge acquired by Policies for Culture into numerous capacity development projects in Slovakia, Kaliningrad (Russian Federation), Turkey and Ukraine.

TO LEARN MORE about the approach and programme activities, visit our web page or contact the programme team at the coordinates www.policiesforculture.org, info@policiesforculture.org.

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