

REVIEW OF TIMIȘOARA'S CULTURE 21: ACTIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT

JULY 2017



culture 21

Agenda 21 for culture



In the context of its participation in the Agenda 21 for Culture Pilot Cities Europe programme, the City of Timișoara carried out a day of self-assessment of its policies in the areas of culture and sustainable development. The vehicle for this was a workshop held in April 2017. The basis for this exercise is '[Culture 21 Actions](#)', the document adopted in March 2015 by the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). This provides a common template for cities across the world to examine their strengths and weaknesses in this area. The work also provides a measure by which cities may compare their own assessment with average ratings provided in mid-2015 by a global panel of experts.

The workshop formed a key element of Activity 1 of the Pilot Cities programme in Timișoara. As such, its purpose was to inform the design of a work programme that will, in the coming year and beyond, enable the city to build on its perceived strengths while, at the same time, addressing some of the identified weaknesses. The structure of the workshop was informed by the published Terms of Reference of the Pilot Cities Europe programme. Accordingly, the initial workshop involved a diverse group of participants: representatives of different areas of the municipality, members of civil society, education and private organisations. A list of participants has been included as Annex 1 of this document.

The participants in the workshop examined and assessed the current status in Timișoara with regard to each of the nine 'Commitments' (thematic areas) that constitute Culture 21 Actions. They subsequently attributed a score (between 1 and 9) to each of the 100 Actions contained within these areas. Scores are ranked within three broad stages of progression: 'Emerging' (scores 1-3), 'Developing' (scores 4-6) and 'Advanced' (scores 7-9).

The workshop was initiated by Mr Dan Diaconu, Vice-Mayor of Timișoara, and organized by Ms Diana Donawell, Head of International Relations Office. It was facilitated by Ivor Davies, Lead Expert on behalf of Agenda 21 for Culture, and Jordi Baltà and Catherine Cullen, experts from the UCLG Culture Committee.

The workshop session was preceded and succeeded by a number of visits during this week, and during a preparatory visit by Jordi Baltà and Ivor Davies in December 2016. Here the experts were able to gain experience and knowledge of a number of venues, sites and ongoing programmes and projects that highlight the City's connection with the principles of Agenda 21 for culture.

SELF-ASSESS

In particular, it is important to underline that this work programme has from the outset been understood to complement and extend, in particular, the two other major cultural strategic commitments of the City of Timișoara, namely its Cultural Strategy (2014-2024) and its adoption as European Capital of Culture 2021 (TM2021). This interconnectivity was explicitly highlighted during both visits and, in particular, at the workshop session, as illustrated by the simple diagram in Figure 1 below:

AGENDA 21 FOR CULTURE



This report, known as 'Radar 1', has been prepared by Ivor Davies, expert appointed by the UCLG Committee on Culture and Culture Action Europe to accompany Timișoara through the Pilot Cities Europe programme. It is based on the outcomes of the three groups that participated in the workshops, and in particular the notes taken by workshop rapporteurs and collated by Ms Diana Donawell. These notes, along with the broad results of the workshop, were subsequently analysed in detail and compiled into the form seen here by Ivor Davies.

The report summarises assessments and observations made by the workshop participants. Over and above this, it compares results with those of the 2015 Global Panel. In this way, it highlights strengths and possible weaknesses for culture in Timișoara, in relation to Agenda 21 for Culture and Culture 21 Actions. It also points up some areas that the city may wish to explore, address or resolve. This is a consultative, rather than directive, report. The intention is to build further on the extensive work that led to the Cultural Strategy and TM2021, in due course connecting up with and extending both during the next phases of the programme, through a series of related 'pilot measures'.



GENERAL OVERVIEW

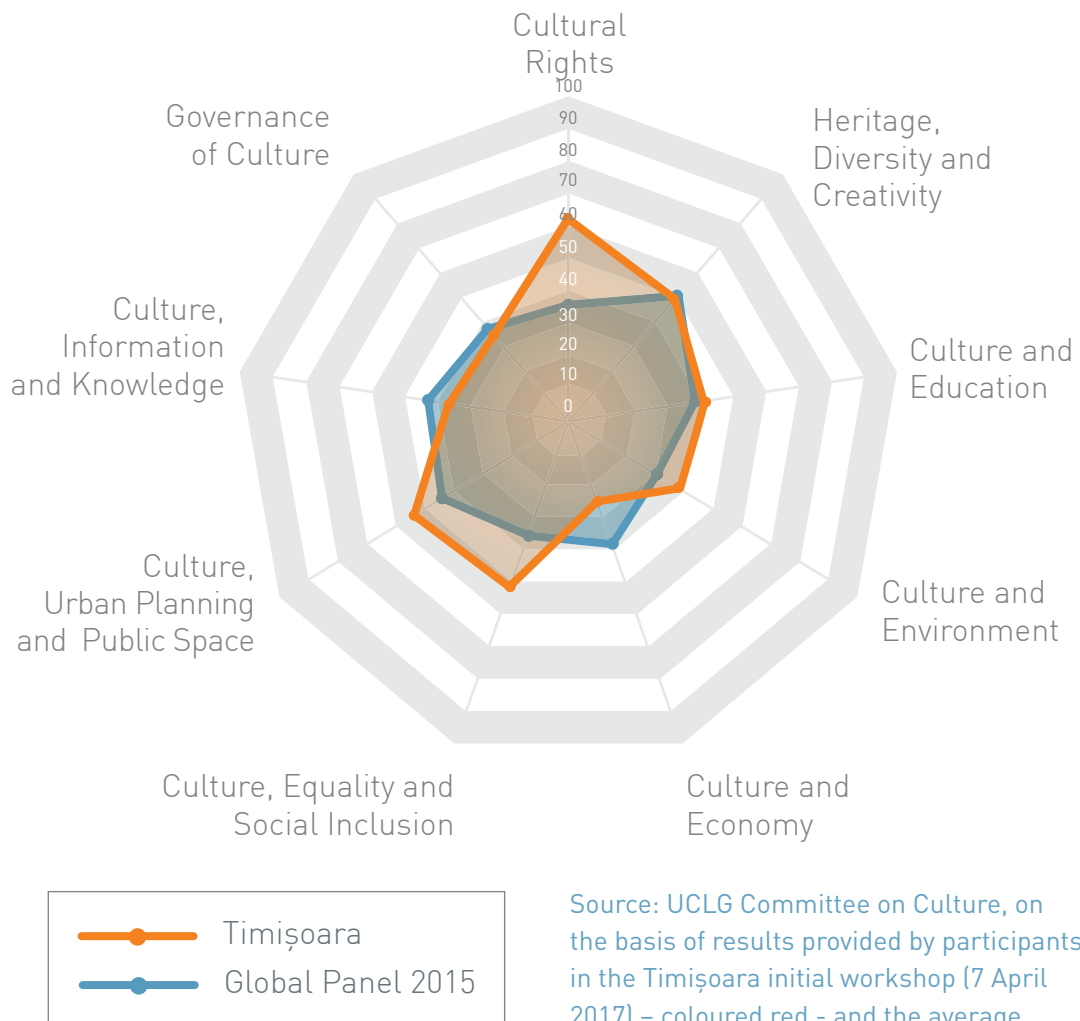
As shown in Figure 2, the self-assessment results in Timișoara present a picture of Culture 21 Actions that in a number of cases approximates, but in a few notable ways diverges (at times quite considerably), from the Global Panel Radar 1 average. These comparisons can be read along each axis of the diagram, in relation to the particular Action. One can infer that the overall picture for Timișoara was broadly positive. In any case, the positivity and engagement shown by participants in the workshop, along with the commitment to promoting culture as an important dimension of sustainable development and improving cultural practices and networks, bode well for both the next stages of this programme and – crucially – the overlap with the forthcoming Cultural Strategy review and further evolution of TM2021.

The highest scores (both in real terms and in relation to the Global Panel scores) were attributed to: 'Cultural Rights', 'Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion' and 'Culture, Urban Planning and Public Space'; meanwhile in contrast 'Culture and Education' and 'Culture, Information and Knowledge' scored a little lower (again both in real and comparative terms).

The nine Commitments

This section of the report sets out and analyses the information provided by the self-assessment workshop, summarized in terms of each of the nine Commitments (each of these comprising between ten and twelve Actions).

Figure 1 : Timișoara’s Self Assessment and data from the Global Panel 2015



Source: UCLG Committee on Culture, on the basis of results provided by participants in the Timișoara initial workshop (7 April 2017) – coloured red - and the average obtained from a global panel of 34 experts in 2015 – coloured blue.



CULTURAL RIGHTS

The group that discussed the Commitment of Cultural Rights in Timișoara scored it at a combined level that is higher by a considerable margin than the outcome of the Global Panel. This is a notable outcome, although it should perhaps partly be mitigated by the somewhat higher scores afforded by this group to its three topics of discussion. There is no suggestion that these outcomes are wrong; however, it highlights the importance of focusing on the qualitative outcomes of the discussion, and not only the raw scores. For example, the subject of cultural rights features strongly in the bidbook for TM2021, so it is perhaps unsurprising that there were a number of positive (current and/or prospective) judgements about the city's relationship with this Commitment.

The scores were all placed by the group within the ranges 'developing' and 'advanced' and in the relatively narrow band between 4 and 8.

In the 'advanced' range of actions were:

- the Municipality adopts measures to facilitate citizen participation, individually or through civil society, in setting priorities, decision-making and cultural policy evaluation. There is a Cultural Projects program, whereby the municipality finances annually and represents NGOs and institutions through grants for non-profit cultural projects of local interest. This is currently too small to meet needs and demands. A Cultural Consultative Council is soon to be created as a basis for regular consultation on the city's cultural policies and projects with local organizations.
- detailed analysis is undertaken of existing obstacles to citizen access and participation in cultural life. This was done in preparation for the Cultural Strategy and included in the bid book of TM2021.
- policies and programs are aimed at broader, more active citizen involvement in cultural practices and creation. The bid book of TM2021 includes projects aimed at fostering the participation in cultural life of all categories of citizen.
- detailed analysis is undertaken of existing obstacles to citizen access and participation in cultural life, leading to policies and programs for increasing involvement. Again these informed the city's Cultural Strategy, and feature strongly in the bid book of TM2021.
- there are policies and programs to increase the number of active members of civil society organizations devoted to culture. There are city measures to increase the number of civil society organizations in cultural activities and, once again, the TM2021 bid book centred on this goal in many of its measures.



Meanwhile, 'developing' Actions identified by the group were:

- while local cultural policies are explicitly based on cultural rights they are not really integrated in a strategic way
- the local government has adopted a guideline text on cultural rights, freedoms and cultural responsibilities, although a Charter of Cultural Rights and Responsibilities is as yet missing. The Cultural Strategy also supports this Action
- there should be minimum service standards to ensure basic cultural services (for example, libraries/books per inhabitant). The city arguably needs a specific masterplan for developing a cultural centre but has, through TM2021, advanced the idea of transforming community centres into 'power stations'
- cultural policies should allow people to have access to and transmit their own modes of cultural expression, in particular the most vulnerable groups and individuals
- increasing the opportunities for women to participate in cultural life is a cultural policy objective, along with measures to eliminate gender discrimination. The participation of women in cultural life was not perceived by the group as a particular issue in Timișoara. The group generally felt that women were not particularly discriminated against locally, at least in this specific way; however it was noted that gender discrimination in cultural life (or indeed guidelines in this respect) does not feature in public documents
- how local civil society organizations working in human rights explicitly include cultural rights among their priorities.



HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

The overall score assigned in the workshop discussion to this Commitment was broadly in line (just below) with that of the Global Panel. Although this is a reasonably strong outcome, the overall score masks significant differences within the action between the various commitments. In reality there was an almost complete spread of scores between 1 (lowest 'emerging') and 9 (highest 'advanced'). This suggests that it is important in this case to drill down to the level of commitments, both in analysing the action and identifying strengths and areas that merit development.

For example, in terms of 'policies and programs for the protection and promotion of linguistic diversity, specifically with regard to minority or minoritised languages' the group felt that Timișoara is highly advanced, exemplified by the German and Hungarian State Theatres, the written press in German and Hungarian, and even Orizonturi româno-italiene (online magazine, in Romanian and Italian). At the other end of the scale however, the group identified the area of current local government support for the existence and accessibility of different facilities, spaces, and venues dedicated to training, creation, and production of culture as particularly in need of development (citing independent examples of good practice that could be built on or collaborated with).

Other perceived areas of advanced practice were the celebration of cultural events to encourage artistic creation and contact between different social groups (albeit with more scope to bring stakeholders together), along with international cultural cooperation programs related to local cultural life, and the protection and promotion of cultural diversity. On the other end of the spectrum however, other emerging areas were identified as:

- policies regarding the protection of cultural heritage in all its dimensions, both tangible and intangible (citing the desirability of specific legislation to protect the city from the problems regarding heritage (e.g. Casa Muhle, Liceul de Artă)
- policies and programs dedicated to scientific culture, in partnership with local civil society organizations, private actors, cultural institutions, and training centres (suggesting that these programs should be more sensitive to interactions between scientific culture, art, local history and everyday life)

Encouragingly, between these two extremes were a number of areas identified as featuring developing practice. These include policies and programs that build excellence through close contact and interaction with citizens and their initiatives, and that explicitly encourage the mutual recognition of the diversity of cultural expressions and intercultural projects. On the lesser end of this scale however sit the two questions of the need for a



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local government department or unit with specific responsibility for cultural policies and cultural aspects of other public policies, and of the scale of the Municipality's dedicated culture budget to enable the sustainable development of local cultural life in line with its cultural responsibilities and national and international standards. Both of these questions re-emerge in the conclusions to this section.

Also identified as developing but with scope for further improvement was the commitment that local cultural products should have a significant and balanced presence within the city's overall cultural activities, highlighting the importance of implementing the cultural strategy recommendations towards more artistic „incubators” and a strong, specialist cultural press:



CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The overall score afforded to this Commitment was mid-range, closely aligned to that of the Global Panel. In fact, the majority of scores resulting from the discussions regarded this as a ‘developing’ area for Timișoara (although a significant minority were classified as ‘emerging’ – NOTE none were afforded the lowest score of 1). The city was seen as ‘advanced’ with respect to one action. Overall, this suggests a mixed picture: that there is a need for existing practice to be built upon, but that this is an action where there is already emphasis in the city.

Again, a clearer picture starts to emerge through the discussions of individual actions. The group found Timișoara to be relatively advanced with respect to provision of artistic education in local schools, along with its accessibility to people of diverse backgrounds.

In addition, in a number of cases, the city was found to be ‘developing’, as follows:

- while there is currently no formal local platform or network that brings together public, civic, and private actors in the field of culture, education, and lifelong learning, it was felt that TM2021 offers an opportunity to create such a platform
- there are some good local examples of cultural institutions - the Philharmonic for example - that receive public support to provide educational activities to young people
- there are mechanisms for sharing information about access to cultural activities and opportunities for cultural education, although these are currently somewhat uncoordinated
- there are a number of examples of schools and other institutions that collaborate in cultural activities of various kinds
- “Educatie civica (Civic education)” is an example of the way human rights (and thus, implicitly, cultural rights) are covered within the schools curriculum

Those actions that the group however identified as ‘emerging’ were:

- the degree to which education and training strategies and providers place significant value on local cultural resources
- the need for a local government-approved strategy linking educational and cultural policy – i.e. moving beyond delivery



CULTURE AND EDUCATION

- there were in fact mixed views, (based on some generally less positive perspectives from within education –[1] and some more positive outside it [4]) on the question of whether the primary and secondary curricula address cultural skills, diversity, creativity, heritage and digital. The overall conclusion [score 2] thus represented a middle way between these two perspectives
- the scope for more local training in cultural management and cultural policies, emphasizing integration of culture within human development



CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

With regard to this Commitment, the group concluded that the City of Timișoara was at a level of development that exceeds that agreed by the Global Panel. This is possibly because of a significant range of environmental actions linked to culture that were identified in the discussion. In fact there was a fairly even spread of score outcomes in relation to particular actions, ranging between 'emerging' and (in one case) 'advanced'.

The discussion identified that Timișoara was reasonably advanced with regard to the Municipality initiating activities, such as Mobility Week, to facilitate and promote citizen initiatives for the sustainable use of public spaces.

Several of these actions were deemed by the group to be just 'emerging':

- the scope for more local cultural policies that explicitly connect culture and environmental sustainability
- the potential value of a local authority working group, linking cultural and environmental policy, along with the transversal work of these two departments . In this regard, the group noted the significance of the current lack of a cultural department within the City Hall, resulting in responsibility for cultural events being assumed variously within various offices or departments
- the need for campaigns promoting local products (production and consumption) to include historical and cultural guidance. It was felt that such campaigns do not really currently exist, at least not beyond general awareness-raising
- the value of the Municipality establishing programmes to preserve and spread traditional knowledge and practices that contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources

Meanwhile, discussions in the following areas led to a judgement of 'developing':

- Cultural factors are integrated into local environmental sustainability strategies. The City Environment Department has undertaken many actions regarding environmental issues in the city, and seeks to connect with external structures, such as Verde pentru Biciclete (Green for Bikes)
- gastronomy, based on local produce, is an important and recognised part of cultural life in Timișoara



CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

- the authority recognizes the cultural importance of natural spaces with specific programs, exemplified by the Bega Boulevard Festival
- there are some examples of cultural organizations receiving public support evaluating environmental impact and carrying out ecological awareness-raising activities
- some platforms linking public and private civil society organizations work in the areas of culture and the environment, for example: Mobility Week, Bega Boulevard Festival, and the Bega Canal Bike track to Serbia



CULTURE AND ECONOMY

In this case the overall score assigned in the workshop discussion to the Commitment was some way below that of the Global Panel. Although there were some divergences between the scores attributed to individual commitments, the great majority were to be found in the emerging category, and four scored just 1. This suggests that it could be a ripe area for further work by the city. (It might also just be interesting to corroborate these relatively extreme findings, if only to ensure that the judgement represents a broader informed perspective – NOTE in adding this caveat we are not calling into question either these scores or the discussions that lead to them -). In fact, among the four actions that were not categorised as 'emerging', only one was assigned to the 'advanced' category. This suggests, at the very least, that this Action may be a fruitful potential area for further work by the city. We will return to this theme in the conclusion.

Drilling down to particular actions, Timișoara was found to be relatively advanced with regard to the existence of appropriate contractual and salary conditions for people working in the cultural sector, along with legal recognition of authors' and similar rights. On the other hand, it was noted that there is some discrepancy in this between the relative positions of public institutions and the independent sector (where significantly fewer and guarantees may exist). It was generally felt that the independent sector is not currently powerful enough to support consistent salaries – along with the additional security afforded by the terms and conditions that accompany these.

The discussions identified the following areas where there is a significant current gap in development:

- local government promotion of public or mixed economy programs increasing financial or human resources for cultural projects
- public recognition of the value of maintaining traditional local trades and crafts (including support for innovation) – the need for a public strategy, over and above seasonal fairs and private initiatives, such as La Blouse Roumaine, crafts etc. –
- a sustainable local tourism model is balanced across the region, connected to local communities and cultural ecosystems – recognising that an Advisory Council on Tourism has been formed - with TM2021 participating
- corporate social responsibility programs that explicitly include projects in the area of culture and engage with the cultural values of the population and local culture, recognising that while companies are interested in becoming more visible, in the case of recruitment in many big companies, decisions are not taken locally but in the capital city or beyond



CULTURE AND ECONOMY

Still regarded as 'emerging', but with somewhat more evidence of development were the extent to which:

- local economic development strategies take the cultural economy into account and work with its participants to ensure that it is a key economic sector of the city or region
- there is regular public analysis of the contributions to the local economy of the public, civic, and private cultural sectors, including direct and indirect impact on wealth and employment creation
- there are in place information and training on author's rights, shared production models and new distribution systems. – identified as a priority in the Cultural Strategy -. In particular, while there are workshops on copyright through UCMR – ADA in Bucharest, Timișoara is not yet directly connected to these
- general employability programs routinely cover cultural knowledge and skills

Meanwhile, in the 'developing' area the group identified two actions:

- the availability of a variety of financing mechanisms for for-profit cultural projects, such as microcredits, venture capital, and sponsorship programs, identifying as a specific issue a 'public-private' dichotomy where projects and events financed with public funds have to be free. In this case pursuing a profitable path in line with such initiatives becomes extremely difficult. There are also few banks (such as Libra Bank) that support cultural initiatives
- the value of partnerships between people active in the cultural sector and businesses, such as through residencies or other systems of innovation and knowledge-transfer – there were however some model individual examples of this approach, such as Jecza – Galeria TRIADE



CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The average scores afforded from the workshop to this Commitment were some way above those agreed by the Global Panel. This is a promising overall outcome but one that, to some extent masks the fact that there was a wide range of levels of development between the various actions. Most were seen to be 'developing', but there were also some toward both ends of the spectrum. For example, seen as 'emerging' was

- local conflict resolution strategies taking into account and recognize the potential of culture: the group felt that, while the potential for conflict latently exists, there is no fallback of a conflict resolution strategy, nor mechanisms to solve potential conflicts that may rise in the future.

Overall, the picture suggests that, in this area, the city has some elements of strength, many more in stages of development and one area in particular that may demand further attention.

Looked at in more detail, among the majority of actions within this Commitment that were deemed to be 'developing' were:

- some local social policies in the areas of health, employment, welfare and social inclusion explicitly include culture as a dimension for combating discrimination. In fact, the group noted that the Social Strategy does not pay special attention to this question, and suggested that an action plan would help address it - and maybe convert strategy into affirmative action
- there should be regular analysis of factors contributing to cultural vulnerability among certain individuals or groups and the processes that touch their lives. The group noted sociological studies undertaken by Timișoara West University and other specialist institutions - though perhaps not consistently or regularly
- whether the relationship between personal welfare, health and active cultural practices is regularly analyzed: the group felt that there is a lack of expertise, relevant studies and statistics in this field, which needs more recognition among public authorities. This is a topic where the group felt the city needed additional help
- the value of a capacity-building program for social service professionals and organizations, to identify and tackle cultural factors preventing access to public services. The group were not aware of any such programs by the Municipality, though, importantly, the TM2021 includes such a program
- Municipality cultural budgets and resources that actively promote the participation of women in cultural activities and organizations, particularly in high-profile,



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senior levels, and also to enhance the visibility and status of cultural activities already carried out predominantly by women. The group did not reach a consensus on whether – and if so to what extent – this would be of specific additional benefit to Timișoara

- publicly supported cultural institutions carry out programs to include disadvantaged groups and/or in neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty and exclusion. Although there are examples of particular intervention, there is no common strategic framework for this
- the steps that have been taken to ensure that cultural facilities and spaces are accessible to all, including people with disabilities. There are some associations and initiatives in the city in this respect, and legislation stipulates all public spaces, including cultural ones, should be accessible to all, including people with disabilities. Some specific steps have been taken to improve access but these are not yet consistent or sufficient
- there is a local platform or network of associations, cooperatives and third sector organizations that carry out activities on the relationship between culture, equality and social inclusion

This leaves the examples of 'advanced' progress in the city:

- there are programs to promote inter-generational cooperation. Two important examples were identified, namely The Philharmonic House developed an initiative promoting inter-generational cooperation and activities, while the Council of Seniors has developed a project in schools
- there are cultural innovation programs for young people that promote social inclusion and knowledge of cultural codes, digital environments and gender equality. Ambasada Cultural Centre provides an interesting example of this - employing young people from within the foster system
- local civil society organizations carry out awareness-raising campaigns, promoting, for example cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and anti-racism, with the support of public institutions and cultural organizations. The group highlighted several examples, including: projects developed by the Intercultural Institute from Timișoara; the Folklore Festival of Ethnic Minorities and the Gastronomic Festival, aiming to preserve and promote the traditions of the ethnic minorities. The group also wanted to emphasize the continuing importance of an anti-racism dimension.



CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

The combined average score for this Commitment that emerged from the group discussion was a little higher than that agreed by the Global Panel. There was a range of scores between all three categories, albeit without reaching the two extreme scores (1 and 9). This Commitment is particularly interesting in that it potentially connects cultural strategy with a range of other spatial and place-based strategies of the city - as can be clearly seen in these notes.

Among those actions regarded by the group as 'developing' were:

- local urban planning or master plans explicitly recognize the importance of cultural issues and resources. The new General Urban Plan is linked to the Cultural Strategy of the city. The group identified the need for more cultural spaces, and a (modular) structure for high-scale cultural events
- a reference guide for everyday use on urban planning policies on cultural impact assessments, and a training program to support its use. It was felt to be important to build these instruments. New cultural infrastructures are planned as part of a broader cultural ecosystem and their potential impact within this ecosystem is taken into account. Some new cultural infrastructure examples were identified, such as cinemas, Bega Channel and the Synagogue
- there are a range of public spaces in Timișoara with particular symbolism that are recognized as public goods
- architectural guidelines exist for renovating existing buildings, the planning of new ones and using traditional construction techniques. There are guidelines on renovating old buildings but the use of traditional materials and techniques in some cases contravene EU regulations. There is a need for harmonisation of national and EU legislation.
- policies for urban transport and mobility consider citizens' access to cultural life, paying special attention to people residing in the city outskirts, people with infants or children and those with other particular obstacles to accessing culture. There are some individual examples of this, rather than an integrated approach.

In a few cases, the group rated Timișoara as 'emerging':

- to what extent the Municipality explicitly considers the notion of "landscape" in its policies, integrating both the natural and cultural aspects of development. This is not specifically addressed in the city's public documents, and should be tackled more openly.



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- how the local authority develops policies and programs that promote people's active participation in urban planning and regional development, such as urban design, architecture and public art. A past example of this was "Atelierul de Urbanism", which was used for public debates but disappeared two years ago. This was seen as a backward step by the group, who felt the idea deserves to be revisited

And in a number of other cases, the group found the city's approach to this Commitment to be quite advanced:

- the Municipality keeps an inventory of the city's tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage, and has established mechanisms for its preservation and conservation according to international standards. The group were aware of mechanisms to preserve tangible and intangible cultural heritage. For example: the documents on the built heritage of the Direction for Culture of Timis County Council (tangible) and activities developed by the House of Culture of the Municipality of Timișoara (intangible). It was though felt, on the whole, that the intangible cultural heritage needs more exploitation
- local government adopts measures to promote the role of culture in the renovation of historic centres and in neighbourhood district and regional development plans. measures were adopted at the city level in 2017, although, at regional level, a development plan is missing that would coordinate these measures
- local government recognizes public space in the city, such as streets, squares and other areas, as key resources for cultural interaction and participation. The group saw this as a considerable local strength, as yearly, several cultural events in public spaces are organised, including diverse festivals in Victory Square, and Liberty Squares and the Park of Roses. A Local Council Street Art decision was adopted in 2017, and there are several projects of this kind included in the TM2021 bid book.
- There are programs to promote and manage the development and preservation of public art. There is a masterplan for promoting art in public spaces, such as the Interart Triade Foundation/Jecza). However, it is not yet consistently applied or developed



CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

The results of discussions on this Commitment led to a combined assessment below that of the Global Panel. The majority of these actions were regarded as 'developing', although several were considered to be 'emerging', among which one (that the relationship is analyzed regularly between grassroots cultural processes and social innovation) was scored as 1, suggesting that the group felt this was currently lacking within the City.

The other actions identified as 'emerging' were:

- that obstacles to accessing and using information and communication technologies for cultural purposes should be regularly analyzed
- that there is limited opportunity for training or awareness-raising activities for cultural professionals on the cultural, social, and economic implications of forms of cultural access and reproduction, such as copyright, copyleft and open source
- developing policies and programs allowing people active in the cultural sector to participate in international cooperation networks. There are some individual initiatives, but not policies and programmes (clearly this is an area of likely future and increasing impact from TM2021)

On the other hand, actions identified by the group as more developed were:

- the presence of legislation that guarantees freedom of expression (including artistic expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of information, respect for cultural diversity and respect for privacy)
- public and civil society mechanisms are in place to monitor these freedoms. The group observed though that NGOs are poorly funded (if at all) and lack both personnel and, more importantly, power and influence in these debates
- there are public policies that guarantee access to free and plural information, and measures to guarantee that information helps promote the right to participate in cultural life. It was however noted again here that Timișoara lacks a specialist cultural press
- local media that reflect plural opinions, give space and profile to the voices of women, and represent local and international cultural diversity. There are magazines at local level: Orizont, Orizonturi cultural italo-romane online
- systems that connect universities, government and civil society to monitor, research and analyze cultural developments and their interaction with other areas of sustainable development. Some initiatives, such as studies and research, have been undertaken in this area



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- policies and programs, centred on citizens and promoting cultural democracy, that focus on creation, production, and digital distribution, for example the “Memoria Banatului” website of people’s stories and life experiences and the “Doua Bufnite” (Two Owls) Bookshop where people can leave letters about a book that influenced their childhood
- cultural institutions that receive public support participate in the debate on information and knowledge and support valuing culture as a common good.



GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

The overall score assigned in the workshop discussion to the Commitment of Governance of Culture was broadly in line (just below) with that of the Global Panel. Notable was the outcome that (with just four exceptions – all in the ‘emerging’ category) the predominant scores to emerge from the discussions around these commitments were ‘developing’ (4-6), suggesting, in general terms, that while good practice exists in this area, it may not yet on the whole be fully realised, integrated or co-ordinated.

Within a relatively narrow range of contrasting scores, there appeared to be a higher estimation of the city’s position with regard to neighbourhood planning and networking among civil society and the cultural sector; on the other hand, areas the group considered to be more developed included the continuing provision of public forums for two-way dialogue between the local authority and the city.

Looking at this in more detail, we can identify the following areas of ‘developing’ practice:

- the local government implements a cultural policy based on the Agenda 21 for Culture and Culture 21: Actions, bringing together public, civic, and private initiatives for joint projects
- the local government promotes cultural planning at neighbourhood or district level (for example, through its Neighbourhood Advisory Councils)
- the degree to which cultural institutions that receive public support are transparent, accountable; they evaluate the public services they provide; citizens are represented on their boards: there was a mixed picture here: on the one hand assessment of cultural institutions and arts managers were contained within a legal and/or statutory framework for the local authority; on the other hand the assessment and decision-making process were not publicly transparent, nor were the public consulted within this process, so the degree of overall transparency was questioned
- the local government recognizes and supports management practices that are representative of local culture, and develops specific and appropriate management practices for common goods - here the local authority was seen to support joint administration practices of common goods (e.g. spaces used jointly)
- an independent platform or network of civil society organizations is established that includes citizens and cultural professionals from all sectors
- there are frameworks to assign responsibilities and foster collaboration on cultural policies between local, regional, and national government – TM2021 could be seen as a significant example of this type of collaboration.



GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

The group identified a smaller number of actions where practice could be said to be 'emerging':

- local government creating public forums whose aims are to steer local cultural policy, encouraging public, private and civil society participation - there had been consultation between the local authority and cultural NGOs, however feedback or follow-up had been limited and insufficient
- public projects generating permanent forums for the consultation, negotiation, and regulation of goals and methods, with the participation of all the parties involved, and that should be characterized by foresight and the dynamics of reflexivity – for example, in the case of Casa Muhle and the Fine Arts High School, pressure from civil society brought about ostensible interventions and the project continued
- programs and institutions in receipt of public support develop and practice gender equality – while there was implicit tangible evidence of practices in line with gender equality principles, these tended not to appear within a statutory framework of public gender equality policies
- policies or programs operating to support the participation of citizens in the management of cultural institutions, programs, and events – it was felt that there was a lack of policies for programmes supporting the broader involvement of citizens in managing public institutions.



CONCLUSIONS

Many visible strengths of Timișoara's cultural field are, perhaps unsurprisingly, discovered in its Cultural Strategy and, in particular, the bidbook and evolving plans for Timișoara 2021, European Capital of Culture. Our aim here is not to replicate these, but to support and, where possible, enhance them and, along the way, to point out further, complementarities and strengths that can be built on – or indeed gaps that can be addressed.

The direct thematic connections with the Cultural Strategy are unsurprising, as this document was in part originally conceived and written in line with the objectives of Agenda 21 for Culture. This connection subsequently reveals itself in many of the Strategy's core Principles, as can be seen below:

- » Recognition of heritage values and their capitalization;
- » Support for contemporary culture;
- » Considering the freedom of expression as a fundamental element of creativity and innovation;
- » Recognizing the importance of links between culture and society;
- » Recognizing culture as an engine of individual and community development;
- » Democratic respect for citizens and cultural operators in the development of public policy;
- » Capitalization of [the] culture's economic potential.

The Cultural Strategy offers five cross-cutting thematic axes:

1. Creative Timișoara
2. Involved Timișoara
3. Connected Timișoara
4. Responsible Timișoara
5. Open Timișoara – cross axis

These principle axes can and should provide an important backdrop for the Strategy's own aims and objectives, those of Agenda 21 for Culture and, in turn, those of Timișoara 2021, European Capital of Culture.

It is of course not the role of this report to revisit and reproduce the detail of other key documents of the city. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind, going forward the potential, for example, for the phases of the Pilot Cities programme to interact with the review and further roll out of the cultural strategy.

And the same is broadly true of TM2021, whose core concept (expressed in the bidbook) is as follows:




'Our concept is to create conditions for the courage needed to generate a new sense of community. This is an appropriate cultural response to the deep crisis of confidence and insecurity which both Europe and Timișoara face in the 21st century. The spirit of Timișoara will be reignited – this time through culture.'

The bid book goes on to develop this point:




'One major step was taken with the adoption of the long-term cultural strategy (2014-2024), making Timișoara the first city in Romania to have such a public policy document, now under implementation. Moreover, public authorities encourage artistic interventions in public parks, streets and squares, bringing culture closer to citizens. In the future, Timișoara intends to brand itself as the meeting point of IT&C and culture. A step in this direction was made by including the Timișoara-European Capital of Culture Association (TM2021 Association) in the Consultative Economic Council of the city, in order to align the city's economic strategy with TM2021.'

It is important to stress here that all three of these 'strategic actions' (and indeed other thematic strategies, such as those for economic development, city planning, the environment and public space, that the city may also be pursuing) have their own specific directions and objectives. Nevertheless, their thematic connections, together with their mutual potential for complementary delivery can, it seems to us, bring a crucially important benefit, both individually and collectively, to the future progress of Timișoara.




Returning then to the outcomes of the Agenda 21 for Culture Workshop week, a number of strengths (over and above the Cultural Strategy and TM2021 per se), have emerged:

-  The city has shown that it can bring together and galvanise diverse teams of expertise and interests to build new ideas and projects
-  The city has an important track record of promoting cultural interaction in public spaces (squares etc)
-  Its geographical position and diverse history and heritage make it a natural crossroads for multiple cultural interconnections




Alongside these strengths, a number of weaknesses (or at least areas that seem to require early resolution or development) have also emerged through this process, for example:

-  The lack of a dedicated cultural strategy team and/or a multidisciplinary group specifically tasked to deliver collectively culturally strategic developments, puts great pressure on a small number of officers and staff working across other areas of responsibility, without a clear, common professional framework.
-  Connected with this issue is the fact that it is difficult for civil society and other sectors to communicate and work with a shared sense of continuity of purpose with the Municipality when it lacks a dedicated 'cultural team' (and point of contact)
-  There is a sense from the workshop groups of a great deal of interesting and important individual activities and initiatives taking place across the city (within the municipality, within civil society, among other institutional interests and individual practitioners) but that these lack frameworks - sometimes strategic, sometimes collaborative, sometimes budgetary - that would give them continuity, a clear common sense of direction and a wider set of measurable delivery objectives

Over and above this, a number of examples of good practice emerged out of the workshop week and other contacts and discussions in the city, for example:

-  The TM2021 bid book includes projects aimed at fostering the participation of all categories of citizens in cultural practices
-  Working on a different scale, Ambasada also provides an interesting new model of civil society cultural leadership and a strategic approach to professional development and progression in the sector
-  The work and strategic potential of the Intercultural Institute
-  The private-public model of cultural structure offered by Fundatia Triade
-  (Mentioned above) the way public spaces are used for interaction and cultural participation

Meanwhile, on the more negative side, the workshop identified a number of common issues, many of which could start to be addressed quite quickly:

-  The lack of official documentation of cultural and other rights, to back up and extend good operational practice in this area
-  The lack of a comprehensive masterplan of places dedicated to culture (over and above the specific proposals in the Cultural Strategy and TM2021 bidbook).
-  The relatively weak networking links both within civil society and between civil society, the Municipality and other institutional interests

This suggests a number of specific measures that could be adopted generically across all Agenda 21 Actions, for example:

- » Creation of a powerful cultural department within the Municipality to see through the Cultural Strategy and, in time, oversee the legacy of TM2021 and its Association;
- » The reproduction of this role and expertise on a smaller scale, in other cultural and related institutions, to help develop institutional capacity-building and fundraising;
- » Development of platforms for encounter among cultural actors and between them and those in other sectors and professional contexts
- » Creation of NGOs with city support, to help the cultural sector;
- » Encouragement of creative industries in order for them to become profitable/self-sustainable;
- » Organization of training with European experts, for knowledge transfer; progress towards a cultural policy Observatory, based on the partnership with the Observatory in Grenoble;
- » Development of sustainable measures against discrimination;
A platform on conflict management for culture (in order to build expertise in this area);
- » Development of neighbourhood cultural centres
A catalogue of traditional products from Timișoara and the region
- » Creation of a public debate agenda where diverse points of view and ideas can be shared and worked through

We offer this analysis to the City of Timișoara for its further consideration, in line with its participation in the Agenda 21 for Culture Pilot Cities Programme.

ANNEX 1:

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PILOT CITIES WORKSHOP

NAME - SURNAME	POSITION
Cultural rights / Culture Equality and Social Inclusion / Culture, Urban Planning and Public Space	
Angela Ciupa-Rad	Representative of the Social Assistance Department / City (social assistance strategy)
Sorin Ciurariu	Director of the Urban Planning Department / City
Diana Donawell	Head of International Relations Office / City – Local Focal Point of the Pilot Cities programme and rapporteur
Imre Farkas	Vice Mayor in charge of social affairs, replaced by Attila Balasz, Director of the Hungarian State Theatre « Csiky Gergely » (as representatives of the Hungarian ethnic minority)
Ana-Maria Ionescu	Coordinator of cultural and publishing programmes and projects, Association of Architects (“Ordinul Arhitecilor”)
Geanina Jinaru-Doboş	Foreign relations, Timișoara National Theatre “Mihai Eminescu”
Letitia Mark	Representative of the Roma Women Association
Cristina Olteanu	Executive Director of “Art Encounters” cultural Foundation
Laila Onu	Director of “Pentru Voi (For You)” Foundation (social services)
Norbert Tako	Manager of “Ambasada” Cultural Centre
Daniel Tellman	Architect

Heritage, Diversity and Creativity / Culture and Economy / Governance of Culture	
Florentina Fekete-Müller	Artistic advisor, German State Theatre
Simona Fit	Planning and monitoring coordinator, Timișoara 2021 - European Capital of Culture Association
Andreea Iager	Manager of “Ambasada” Cultural Centre
Sorina Jecza	President of “Interart Triade” cultural Foundation
Camelia Mingasson	President of “Kratima” cultural Association - rapporteur
Alexandra Pinteau	Representative of the German Cultural Centre Timișoara
Corina Răceanu	Representative of the Intercultural Institute of Timișoara (cultural strategy)
Monica Sava	Counsellor, Office for Events’ Organisation / City

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PILOT CITIES WORKSHOP

Culture and Education / Culture and Environment / Culture, Information and Knowledge

Adrian Aldea	Representative of the Environment Department / City
Delia Crăciun	Manager of cultural projects and communication, Timișoara French Institute (cultural strategy)
Laura Coroamă	Instead of Ms Raluca IACOB, representative of the Association MetruCub
Adrian Frențescu	Representative of the House of Culture of the Municipality
Corina Nani	Associate professor, Department of Design and Applied Arts / Fine Arts Faculty / West University of Timișoara
Gabriela Petcana	Manager of a tourism company, representative of the tourism cluster "ClusturBanat"
Lavinia Petruț	Counsellor, International Relations Office / City - rapporteur
Laura Șmuleac	Vice-dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Agricultural Sciences, replaced by Mrs. Adina HORABLAGA, representative of the University of Agricultural Sciences
Silviu Vert	Assistant professor, Multimedia Centre / Communications Department, "Politehnica" University of Timișoara
Mihai Vâlceanu	Counsellor, Environment Department/ City



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