

## MAKING LYON A SUSTAINABLE CITY: A CULTURALLY COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY



TERRITORIES **COOPERATION** COMMUNITY  
CULTURE **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** **SOCIAL**  
DIVERSITY **CITY** ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Context

The municipality of Lyon is home to 480,000 inhabitants, but the city centre lies at the confluence of the Rhône and Saône rivers and is France's largest metropolitan area, with more than 1.5 million people. It is an economically dynamic area, with a strong university presence and a nice living environment. Many different migratory populations converge in this area; its population is comprised of 8% foreigners and 12% immigrants. Some areas have five times the number of these populations. It is a city with historical heritage and has been classed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an innovative area. It is a city with a densely cultural and diversified landscape. The city has had to face major urban, social and environmental challenges throughout its development. There are still great disparities within the area. With an unemployment rate of almost 10%, the city struggles with distribution inequalities and given the many difficulties, almost 1/5 of residents live in priority areas. For 30 years, the municipality and the metropolis have implemented urban and social cohesion policies to try and resolve the disparities in the area. In addition, for the last 10 years, they have been putting together local sustainable development strategies to deal with the current challenges.

- **1980's: social development of districts.** Priority areas were defined in relation to socio-economic and urban obstacles. Urban and social work control teams set up initiatives and activity programs based on the population and their 'urban and social distribution'. Festive or memory and identity-related operations were developed, as well as support for urban culture and immigration.

- **1990's: social development at urban level.** This policy originated from a stigmatizing approach to the areas. Interventions were expanded and integrated into to all public policies. Creative teams transformed the city's areas into artistic and participatory testing grounds. The creators found sources of funding from various cultural funds. They asked that their creations be exhibited outside of the districts, and called for the attention of the press, local representatives and cultural institutions.

- **2000's: mobilization of culture's 'common law'.** The levels of intervention in the area stacked up: district, communal, and metropolitan. All public politicians were invited to contribute. Cultural establishments were invited to provide the area, and its most fragile populations, with their knowledge and skills. Social and urban cohesion policies, as well as those for culture and festivities, were combined. The stakeholders all shared the positive impact of art and culture on the town's development. The city's services launched a think tank for sustainable development, which mainly focused on energy and environmental issues.

THESE PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON PARTICIPATION, DIVERSIFICATION, DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGING AND IMMIGRANT CULTURES, INTEGRATION THROUGH CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PRACTICES AND DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT.

- **2010 onwards: towards sustainable development.** Issues regarding the environment and sustainable development have evolved and have been relayed by elected representatives, technicians, experts, artists and associations. Urban and social cohesion policy suffers from stigmatisation and needs to be part of a more positive global approach. 'Culture, city policy, sustainable development: towards a shared future' Focus Days started this transition.

'Making Lyon a sustainable city: a cultural cooperative community' is part of the continuation of social development policies in districts made in the 80's, which arose from 'equality marches' initiated by the young people in Lyon's suburbs, many of whom are from immigrant backgrounds.

## 2. Lyon and Culture

Lyon's cultural policy, 'For an urban, human and sustainable culture', is linked to a national history of strong intervention from the State. By conserving its heritage, the public's involvement with this work has long been at the heart of this 'cultural democratization' policy. Lyon's cultural landscape has been shaped by its local history of industry and trade: ranging from printing to the dissemination of knowledge, from silk to the Beaux-Arts, from the chemical industry to cinema. It is characterized by:

- a dense and diversified network: structured channels, training and dissemination: dance, theatre, visual arts, music, reading and knowledge,
- a strong commitment from the city: more than €100 million; 20% of the municipal budget,
- group events: Festival of Lights, Nuits Sonores...,
- meetings: IFLA 2014, Fab Laboratory.

This heritage must form synergies with numerous operators from emerging channels such as immigrant cultures, private initiatives and civil society, small venues and the fashion industry. There is a pool of knowledge and means made available to the commune, its politics and contemporary issues. The primary areas of improvement are:

- **Funding:** at a time where communities are making cutbacks, how should public funding be distributed between institutions (our heritage) and other operators? How should private and public funding be linked? How should this supply and services be priced? How can we rethink cultural burdens such as centrality?

- **Citizen:** what is the best way of integrating diversity (in socio-economic, territorial, background and religious terms), ensuring that a supply policy leads to a policy that takes into account the citizens' practices and needs, driving the transition between democratization and cultural democracy meanwhile taking the poorest populations into account?
- **Territorial:** how can we secure involvement within the area, make influence and proximity work compatible and contribute to metropolitan dynamics and solidarity?
- **Institutional:** how can we integrate and combine culture with all the local social, urban, economic, digital and environmental stakes?
- **Creation:** how can we support the renewal of stakeholders, initiatives and their form by as well as sharing the wealth and continuity of the work carried out by our institutions? How can we create good working conditions and rewards?



Ever since the Agenda 21 for Culture was proposed to the international community to work on culture and sustainable development, Lyon has used it as a source of inspiration. However, after the turn of the century, the city took a slightly different path and aimed at mobilizing policies and cultural operators for priority areas and specific populations. These programs focused on participation, diversification, development of emerging and immigrant cultures, integration through cultural and artistic practices and digital development. Since 2010, the transition has been developed towards a greater consideration of sustainable development issues for the town's cohesion.

Agenda 21 for Culture has been a reference point for carrying out this transition. All the of Agenda 21's principles, expected commitments and recommendations have been studied. The main themes and principles of Agenda 21 have been unreservedly recognized. However, it became complicated to undertake all the points of commitment. Some were more distanced from work done in the community, in terms of its history and experience, like cultural economy, for example. But Lyon is working on the concept of public service culture and the implementation of economic fashion/cultural activities. Other issues have not surfaced, such as ecological responsibility and linking up urban green art, which is one of the community's strong points. As for participatory democracy, the use of a cultural council seemed outdated, as Lyon's approach is based on a network of district councils.

Other tools have been mobilized:

- Fribourg's declaration based on cultural rights,
- the ISO 26000 RSO standard for societal responsibility of organisations,

- the European Council of 'Intercultural Cities', for intercultural inclusion.

### 3. Objectives and implementation of the project

#### 3.1. Main objective

As a city of 2 million people, Lyon is full of wealth and disparities, knowledge, tensions, festivals, polarization, influence and banishment. As a 'Sustainable City', it must be physically compact, have a restrained energy, eco-friendly and green. As for those who run the city, it must be balanced, united, respectful, enriched with social and intercultural relations and optimistic. The aim of 'Making Lyon a Sustainable City' is to organize a community of stakeholders, who are well informed, respectful of each other, cooperative, reactive and who draw their beliefs, strength and creativity for cultural resources from the area.

THIS HERITAGE MUST FORM SYNERGIES WITH NUMEROUS OPERATORS FROM EMERGING CHANNELS SUCH AS IMMIGRANT CULTURES, PRIVATE INITIATIVES AND CIVIL SOCIETY, SMALL VENUES AND FASHION INDUSTRIES...

#### 3.2. Project Origin

'Making Lyon a Sustainable City: a culturally cooperative community' brings together almost 1,600 people, civil society organisations, local State services and authorities from different areas: housing associations, district councils, public education, schools, social workers, teachers, urban professionals, land and economic developers, cultural groups, artists, creators and cultural institutions. This community shares one goal: 'make the city sustainable'. It considers culture as a combination of diverse practices, productions and services emanating from inherited cultural institutions, common and individual heritage, creative stakeholders and cultural products.

Culture is an inseparable collection of these different aspects. The community has experienced a hybridization of culture and creation through the projects it has developed. These are powerful driving forces for developing territories, people and communities. Having been launched in the 80's, the city's operational transition towards sustainability started properly in 2010. From then on, it has been important to discuss what sustainable development could mean for the city: which elements could be pose potential risks for the city and therefore require careful attention; what types of management and responses can transform these risks into wealth and positive development? How can cultural operators take charge and contribute to reducing and resolving these risks?

In 2010, the local experiments already in progress were registered and developed. Valuable tools were mobilized, primarily: Agenda 21 for Culture, Fribourg's declaration, the ISO 26000 standard and the European Council's Intercultural City network. Work in the community formed a local adaptation that used 7 focuses for its cross-sectional commitments:

- 1 - Contribute to developing the priority areas and urban renewal,
- 2 - Greater consideration of specific populations,
- 3 - Greater consideration of diversity,
- 4 - A life-long commitment to educating people,
- 5 - Greater sharing of knowledge,
- 6 - Greater consideration of environmental issues,
- 7 - Improvement of the democratic process.

If these elements are not taken into account, it could have a negative impact on the city's cohesion. The management of these issues is a factor of harmonious development. Cultural operators are expected to show a responsible commitment, either on behalf of their public service missions for those already supported by the community and the State, or through support from other initiatives.

#### 3.3. Project design

##### ***A cooperative community***

A culturally cooperative mission at the heart of Lyon's cultural affairs department is livening up the community. Since 2006 it has been co-commissioned and co-funded by local communities and the

State and is run by 4 people. Cultural commissions in each priority district bring stakeholders together to develop the diagnosis of the territory and its main guidelines using the area's cultural project. These commissions can be linked with district councils and are great places for exchanging information, co-building projects and assessment. This organisation is complemented by project group work. The use of thematic commissions for each cross-sectional commitment helps to develop a diagnosis and shared strategies, as well as encouraging the pooling of information at community level. A website has been set up to make information available about the area and its ongoing programs and initiatives. A bi-monthly e-letter will send news updates, projects, publish meeting dates and calls for projects.

On an annual basis, there are days dedicated to community gatherings that have been expanded to include the metropolis and other French cities. These are designed for people to share thoughts and to validate collective guidelines. It is a chance to form a network and present initiatives to each other. In addition, researchers, philosophers, experts or external stakeholders are invited to participate. This celebration of city transformation gives rhythm to community life. In 2013, this participatory system expanded to urban areas with the use of a technical group, who incorporate the principles of cultural cooperation. The Urban Community of Lyon's development council has expressed its opinions on the role of culture and the inclusion of diversity in its urban and social solidarity policies. In 2014, development ideas included the implementation of work platforms on social networks and citizen cultural councils to strengthen inhabitants' role in the process.

THE AIM OF 'MAKING LYON A SUSTAINABLE CITY' IS TO ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY OF STAKEHOLDERS, WHO ARE WELL INFORMED, RESPECTFUL OF EACH OTHER, COOPERATIVE, REACTIVE AND WHO DRAW THEIR BELIEFS STRENGTH AND CREATIVITY FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES FROM THE AREA.

#### ***A reactive community***

Every year, there are 150 ongoing cultural and artistic projects. These projects help realize the objectives defined within the framework of the area's cultural projects or within the context of cross-sectional commitments. For large cultural establishments, the commitments are written as part of a cultural cooperation charter. They are part of public service missions. More than 180 commitments have been written into work cycles that last a minimum of 3 years.

Calls for projects support the initiatives. 70-80 operations are funded every year. The budget for direct intervention is €1.3 million: 50% from the city, 25% from the region, 25% from the State. Various evaluative and shared procedures have been implemented by actions, the area, thematic commitments and by the cultural cooperation charter. The dissemination of these practices began within the context of the metropolitan future. They then progressed to the Rhône-Alpes region (Saint Etienne city), to national level (Paris, Toulouse) and international level (Helsinki, Liège).

## **4. Impacts**

### **4.1. Impact on the local government**

- Technical and political cross-sectional approaches
- Territory development and local public initiative
- Greater co-building of initiatives
- Better knowledge of the area and its citizens' needs
- Greater consideration of diversity
- Development of a participatory democracy
- Development metropolitan level processes
- Making Lyon a national example

### **4.2. Impact on culture and local cultural officers**

- Involvement from cultural operators in cooperative project strategies
- Open-mindedness
- Development of cultural services that are adapted to and complement the usual provision of culture

- Strengthening methods for assessing cultural policy
- Better connection between cultural institutions and other cultural operators
- Better knowledge of the area and its citizens' needs
- Better knowledge of citizens' cultural practices
- Development of urban, social, educational and economically-related cultural projects



#### 4.3. Impact on the area and population

- For priority areas:
  - Greater inclusion of districts into the rest of the city
  - Development of the city's image
  - Quality of living environment (art, greenery)
  - Implementation of service initiatives
  - Increase and diversification of the provision of culture within the city's different areas
  - Increased presence of artists and institutions
- For residents:
  - greater participation
  - mobility
  - recognition of practises, (especially immigrant populations)
  - increasing and adapting to their cultural service requirements
- For the city:
  - reducing disparities
  - more social cohesion
  - increased participation

#### 4.4. Cross-sectional Impacts

Making the city sustainable involves two key approaches: territorial and cross-sectional. Assessment tools for the different areas already exist and are being finalized for the cross-sectional commitments. As for gender equality, the focus work on 'social responsibility' involves:

- A better assessment of gender distribution in cultural sectors: a social assessment of the city, gender distribution at management level in cultural establishments. With regard to observations made at national level, Lyon is well positioned.
- The creation of a 'G point' in the municipal library; a resource centre for gender issues.
- A lively and fair debate on gender diversity in cultural practices.

- An association for equality in cultural sectors has organized an annual festival for the last 4 years.

Work on environmental issues will include:

- Developing projects that combine art, greenery and public spaces. Thierry Boutonnier's 'Prenez Racine' (Take Root) project (COAL Environment Art Prize winner) will be continued.
- Developing the eco-friendly positions held by cultural stakeholders.
- The city's cultural services' will achieve a carbon balance.

AS A 'SUSTAINABLE CITY', IT MUST BE PHYSICALLY COMPACT, HAVE A RESTRAINED ENERGY, ECO-FRIENDLY AND GREEN. AS FOR THOSE WHO RUN THE CITY, IT MUST BE BALANCED, UNITED, RESPECTFUL, ENRICHED WITH SOCIAL AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS AND OPTIMISTIC.

## 5. Relative Information

The city of Lyon was a candidate for the first 'International UCLG Prize - Mexico City - Culture 21' (January-May 2014). The Awards Jury produced a final report in June 2014 and asked the UCLG Culture Commission to promote this project as a practical example for the implementation of Agenda 21 for Culture.

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