policies for culture
Participative Policy-Making in South East Europe

Cultural policy research
in the countries of South East Europe:
setbacks and prospects

international workshop of the PfC Task Force for Cultural Policy Research
Belgrade, 2-3 October 2004

Workshop dossier

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1.

The State of the Art of Research on Cultural Policy in the countries of South East Europe – a Policies for Culture statement[1]

A new era for cultural policy. Cultural policies in the countries of South East Europe – i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia & Montenegro – have entered a new era. This new era is marked by several factors: the rising exposure of culture to a competitive market environment, the growth of non-governmental organisations and other new stakeholders in culture, the changing relationships between culture and other sectors and policies, and the enlarged European Union in the neighbourhood.

A must for research. The new policy landscape – which is more complex and challenging than ever before – requires the production of new knowledge through its most certain form, i.e. research.

Deficiency of policy knowledge. Policy knowledge produced in the SEE countries, however, is rarely generated through research. Moreover, an anti-research climate has taken hold and some institutes or centres are closed or have had their activities considerably reduced. At the same time, other sources of information, mostly gathered routinely through administrative channels and collegial meetings, serve as the main basis for policy making. This exacerbates the issue of validity of information, especially when different stakeholders in the policy-making process take different or opposing views. On the other hand, the impact of policy decisions, including new legislation, such as studying policy feedback or policy learning, i.e., what, how or why certain things should (or should not) be taking place, is rarely an object of scrutiny.

Questionable evaluation. The lack of independent research deteriorates the quality of information about policy, which serves as a basis for policy evaluation. For example, have, or in what degree, have the objectives of a policy been achieved? In lieu of measurable standards or criteria, very often apologetic self-indulgence or disqualifying criticism of such a policy, makes for the basis of evaluation.

Questionable competence. The competence of a policy adopted without research support becomes questionable in its interfaces with other policies whose sources are more research informeds and also with international partners.

Incomplete legitimacy. The legitimacy of cultural policy not based on research derives leans on political authority or populism of the general constituency, rather than on cultural stakeholders and specific cultural publics.

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[1] This statement, which also represents the background to the present workshop, has been prepared by the Consultative Group of the PfC Task Force on Cultural Policy Research (see below). It has been presented, as a contribution of the Policies for Culture programme, at the conference "Networking for the Arts in Europe" (Cork, Ireland, 20-22 May 2004), at the invitation of the "Forum for Cultural Cooperation with South East Europe" initiated by the European Cultural Foundation.

Responsibility of researchers. Responsibility for such an anti-research climate lies with the of broader research community too. Its interests in cultural policy research is relatively weak and those research institutions that do exist are not adequately equipped with research knowledge and experts. NGOs in culture and neighbouring areas are also responsible as they underestimate the role of research in democratic and participating policy making.

To overcome impediments. In order to remove the walls between the policy community and the research community several steps should be taken:
- to enable actually existing and specialised research institutes or centres to get involved in making cultural policy research of different types (comparative policy analyses, observations, surveys, focus groups interviews, content and discourse analysis, cultural economy studies, etc.);
- alternatively, to contract out research based on big or representative samples (e.g., public opinion surveys), or other research too complex or expensive for a cultural research centre to carry out;
- to promote and facilitate the development of research capacities in each of the SEE countries;
- to set up databases on cultural policies, whose data can be used in longitudinal (future) and comparative (international) research;
- to substantially improve cultural statistics by supplementing specific cultural topics and analytical requests to ordinary methodology of data gathering and data-analysis provided by state offices for vital and similar statistics;
- to combine internationally (European) matching sources for financially funding policy research in individual countries, most especially research co-operation between countries in the SEE region.
- to seek support from and develop stronger cooperation with research organisations from other European countries, as well as international organisations acting in the area of cultural cooperation and cultural policy, in view of supporting the local and regional initiatives in raising awareness and building legitimacy, in providing expertise and financial support.

2.

The workshop

2.1.

Background to the workshop

The Task Force for Cultural Policy Research in SEE

In view of responding to the above-stated needs, challenges and opportunities, the Policies for Culture proposed the setup of the Task Force for Cultural Policy Research in South East Europe, in view of using the existing network of knowledge and expertise developed in the last four years throughout the region and addressing a level and a field which has been little addressed in its previous activities – that of research. In view of its further establishment, a Consultative Group of the Task Force has been set up[2] and a first development meeting took place in spring 2004. It is a result of this meeting and with the continuous support of the Consultative Group that the current workshop is being organised, in view of setting the future agenda of the PfC Task Force for Cultural Policy Research in SEE.

The workshop

The present workshop represents the first larger activity of the Task Force, having four main objectives:

Mapping: To map out gaps arising between policy and research in individual SEE countries, as well as some good examples of productive partnerships between policy community and research community in SEE and other countries.

Raising awareness: To raise awareness of liabilities of the lack of research, on the one hand, and assets resulting from the policy supply with independent research results, on the other.

Capacity building & networking: To initiate – by incorporating research activity into the *Policies for Culture* action triangle – the development of research interests and capacities in SEE countries, which may be supported by SEE states as well as inter-governmental or non-governmental organisations, and which may further be upgraded, e.g. as a regional research network.

*(and the **key objective** of the workshop)*
Setting an agenda: To define most urgent topics of research as well as methodologies to be applied in order to easier convert research findings into policy papers which could have an impact on national and local level. The proposed agenda will also be submitted to the inter-governmental organisations active in this field, and particularly to UNESCO, the EU, the Council of Europe and the Central European Initiative.

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[2] Its members are: **Vesna Copic**, Head of the Cultural Policies Department, Ministry of Culture, Slovenia; **Milena Dragicevic-Sesic**, Professor in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies, University of Arts, Belgrade; **Vjeran Katunaric**, Professor of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb; **Yavor Koynakov**, Director of the Euro-Bulgarian Cultural Centre, Sofia; **Corina Suteu**, President of the ECUMEST Association, Bucharest; Head of the Cultural Management Unit at Institut de l'Homme et de la Technologie, Nantes.

Structure of the workshop

The workshop is therefore structured around two key approaches:

- **A mapping exercise**: analysis of current situation, of its setbacks and opportunities; a discussion of what means applied cultural research and existing methodologies;
- **A prospective approach** - on the basis of the analysis made, as well as of other European experiences in the field, aims to contribute to the design of an agenda for the following years in view of operationalising the Task Force for Cultural Policy Research in South East Europe,

around which the two main workshop sessions are organised. See the agenda included below for the full program.

Working language: English

Venue:
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade
Room 108, 1st floor
Address: Cika Ljubina 18 (neighbouring Knez Mihajlova St.), 11000 Belgrade

2.2.

Workshop agenda

Saturday, 2 October

Session 1
The theory and practice of cultural policy research in SEE

Introduction and moderation:
Corina Suteu, President, ECUMEST Association, Bucharest/IHT, Nantes

10:00 - 10:30   ***1.1. Setting the framework: Applied cultural research for cultural policy in South East Europe***
(What is applied cultural research; who might be using it and for what; who is doing it; which are the existing methodologies; which fields are addressed; how are all the above articulated in SEE; how can it be developed?)

Milena Dragicevic-Sesic, Professor in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies, University of Arts in Belgrade
Vjeran Katunaric, Professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb

Questions and comments

10:30 - 11:30   ***1.2. Recasting cultural policies: The relation between the research and policy communities in SEE***
(How do Ministries of Culture or local authorities relate to applied research in the cultural field - do they have their own departments or specific subordinated institutions; do they commission research to other research institutes; do they require such research at all?)

From data to wisdom: building the knowledge base for cultural policy
Colin Mercer, Director, Cultural Capital Ltd., UK

SEE perspectives
Vesna Copic, Head of the Cultural Policies Department, Ministry of Culture of Slovenia, Ljubljana
Sanjin Dragoevic, Lecturer, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb
Lidia Varbanova, Director, Center for Intercultural and Social Development, Sofia/Montreal

Open floor for discussion

11:30 - 12:00   Coffee break

12:00 - 13:30   ***1.3. Country profiles: Problems & opportunities in cultural policy research in the countries of SEE***

Open floor for discussion

13:30 – 15:00   Lunch

Session 2
Promoting and developing cultural policy research in SEE

Introduction and moderation:
Sanjin Dragoevic, Lecturer, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb

15:00 - 15:30   *2.1. How can the Policies for Culture platform and its-initiated Task Force for Cultural Policy Research in SEE can develop as an instrument for the development of cultural policy research in SEE*

Short introduction by **Oana Radu**, Programs director, ECUMEST

Setting an agenda for research: what issues represent a priority in SEE - a first brainstorning session

15:30 - 16:30   *2.2. European perspectives on the role and practice of research in policy-making and evaluating*

Policy, Planning, and Research With a Purpose or The Art of Making Choices in Cultural Policy
J. Mark Schuster, Professor of Urban Cultural Policy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Joint Editor, Journal of Cultural Economics, USA

The challenges of comparative research in cultural policies
(The experience of ERICarts in coordinating the setup & updating of the Compendium[3]; the role and activities of CIRCLE[4]).
Ritva Mitchell, President, ERICarts /Director, CUPORE - Foundation for Cultural Policy Research, Helsinki

16: 30 - 17:00   Coffee break

17:00 - 18:30   *The programmes of Cultural Policy Review & MOSAIC of the Council of Europe*
Delia Mucica, Director, National Center for Cinema, Bucharest

Open floor for questions and discussion
(How can the acquired capital of knowledge and expertise be used also in SEE; sharing of information and expertise; how could dialogue and cooperation between other European and SEE intiatives be enhanced?

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[3] i.e. **"**Cultural Policies in Europe: a Compendium of basic facts and trends'' (www.culturalpolicies.net), a joint venture between the Council of Europe and ERIC*arts* (European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research).
[4] CIRCLE - Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe, independent think-tank dedicated to developing cultural policy models for Europe (www.circle-network.org).

Session 2 continued…
Designing an action plan for the promotion and development of
cultural policy research in SEE: *a prospective approach*

10:00 - 12:30   *2.3. Designing an action plan for cultural policy research in SEE*

Introduction and moderation: **Corina Suteu**
with the participation of the Consultative Group of the Task Force

Open session for proposals and debate

*Through open contributions from all participants and discussion, the session aims to
contribute to the setup of an agenda for future action, which would include, among
others:proposals for support in the relationship between the research capacities and
policy makers in SEE; proposals for programs of support from the EU, UNESCO,
Council of Europe, Central European Initiative, etc.*
*Interventions from the Consultative Group of the Task Force and generally from the
Policies for Culture programme network, as well as from the above-mentioned
intergovernmental organisations will be sought.*

2.3.

List of participants

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3.

Selected readings[5]

The articles included in this dossier represent a small selection made by Policies for Culture of texts relevant to the topic of the workshop; it is by no means a bibligraphy, nor the only existing references. We consider them as some of the most interesting in providing both useful information and challenging perspectives, thus bringing another relevant background to the workshop discussion and to the setting of a future agenda in the field of cultural policy research in South East Europe.

Note: These articles are not available for online consultation, with the exception of "Improving Research and International Cooperation for Cultural Policy" by Tony BENNETT and Colin MERCER which can be consulted at http://kvc.minbuza.nl/uk/archive/commentary/bennet.html.