

## 2021 ENCATC Education and Research Session PART 2

### Session 7: A new agenda for cultural policy?

**CHAIRS:** Elena Theodoulou-Charalambous, President of the Board of the Organization for European Programmes and Cultural Relations, Cyprus

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#### **Developing a new cultural policy agenda for Pistoia: The current and projected role of artists and creative workers in the territory**

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**Type:** Abstract

**Keywords:** Cultural policy; Policy implementation; Artists; Creative workers

#### **Description of the proposal:**

Pistoia was chosen as “Capitale Italiana della Cultura” (Italian capital of culture) in 2017. Following this event, one of the most important attempts has been to bring some of the main stakeholders of the territory together, namely l’Associazione Teatrale Pistoiese, the Municipality and the Province of Pistoia, Regional Government of Tuscany, the Foundation of Cassa di Risparmio di Pistoia and Pescia, Diocesi and CCIAA of Pistoia, to enable the valorisation of cultural heritage in Pistoia. To this end, diverse strategies were adapted such as the development of a strategic plan, the regional public competition for funds for restoration of cultural goods and enhancing collaboration via leadership and fundraising to forge the feeling of ownership for all actors involved. There are hindering and fostering factors to the success for an implementation of an efficient cultural policy and sustainability of the strategic plans involving the cities’ cultural resources. One of the main hindering factors can be related to not being aware of the needs, thoughts and preferences of the artists and creative workers. Therefore, we applied a methodology in which we triangulate the aims of the policy makers and implementers for the cultural plan with the vision and desires of the artists and creative workers in regards to the cultural and creative production/experience/consumption of the city and related policies.

**Theoretical background:** We use the stakeholder theory in order to understand the different interests of the stakeholders. Despite the fact that the research based on how different stakeholders interact with each other is not the main central theme of this paper, the interaction between the elite stakeholders and the public actors is an important aspect to explore. Wang and Aoki (2019, 166) found that there might be a clash of interests at the locality level, between the government-developer coalition and residents’ function-based place-attachment and residents’ heritage consciousness and immediate living needs. Therefore, different interests, tensions, wishes and perspectives on cultural heritage valorisation need to be considered in order to explore the mechanism behind the making of the cultural policy decisions.

**Research Questions:** This paper proposes to understand what cultural and creative industries in general, and valorisation of the Pistoia’s cultural life in particular, mean to the main stakeholders and how they establish the collaboration during this process of negotiation, fundraising and prioritising the cultural production/experience/consumption in a strategic manner. What is the local governments’ and other stakeholders’ rationale for the future of cultural and creative life of the city?

What are the needs, priorities and concerns of the artists and creative workers regarding the strategic plan? What are the foci of the multifaceted paradox and what are the current and projected roles of the artists and creative workers in the territory in the forthcoming scenarios considering the societal changes and impacts of the current COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent the policy makers’ aims and the ideas of the artists and creative workers are parallel and divergent?

**Methods and expected results:** Explorative process tracing aiming at semi-structured in-depth interviews are conducted with the stakeholders in Pistoia to observe the planning and to

determine the past and current obstacles. These interviews are triangulated with document analysis. Hence, we will surmise the policy documents, strategic cultural plan(s), stakeholder meetings' policy briefs and regulations since 2017 related to the case study of Pistoia. Furthermore, the researchers involved in the project are engaged in participant observation as they follow the developments on how the decision-making takes place regarding cultural policies at the regional and local level.

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#### **Presenter: Yesim Tonga Uriarte**

Yesim Tonga Uriarte is an Assistant Professor at the Analysis and Management of Cultural Heritage Department at IMT Lucca. She obtained her PhD from the same department and holds an MA in Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education (Maastricht University) and a BA in Economics (Bogazici University). Her research interests cover temporary organizing in CCIs, evaluation of cultural events, project-based cultural organisations, cultural policies and their relations with multiple environments.

## Cultural capability revisited

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**Type:** Abstract

**Keywords:** policy, education, democracy, capabilities, ecosystems, inclusion

**Description of the proposal:** In the past decades, the legitimization of cultural policy in Europe has weakened due to sociological deconstruction, diversification, neoliberal strands in government and populist rhetoric (e.g. Belfiore, Becker), in combination with societal changes such as digitalisation, diversification, segregation and austerity (e.g. Hadley, Kelly, Belfiore).

This spawned wide and urgent calls for a new underpinning of cultural policy (e.g. Dutch and English Arts Councils, European Commission, Warwick Commission), for more encompassing views on the meaning and value of culture (e.g. Gielen, Belfiore, Kelly, Wagner) as well as for practical policy goals and outcome evaluation tools (e.g. Holden, Van den Hoogen, Raad voor Cultuur, Bunnik, Belfiore).

Clearly, a wider dissatisfaction with (or contention of) the deficit model of cultural policy is growing in strength and a new 'democratic' case for the meaning and value of culture, inclusiveness, new audiences, cultural capabilities and the importance of local ecosystems is emerging (e.g. Belfiore, Holden, Wilson, Hadley).

In the Netherlands similar strands of thought are being developed in the context of cultural education and –participation, known as "Cultureel Vermogen" (CV). This approach differs from both the 'cultural democracy / ecosystems-line' (e.g. Holden, Wilson, A.N.D.) and the inclusiveness / cultural rights approach (e.g. Kelly, Stevenson, Ahmed, Eu.C.) in that it draws upon a broader view of culture-as-process (e.g. Luhmann, Baecker, Laermans, Gielen, Van Maanen) from which a new framework for cultural policy is derived, bringing novel perspectives on culture as process to the table (Drion, LKCA). Notably, CV offers a reflective tool that proposes four constituent elements of cultural capability (singular) in and of society. These in turn may serve as focus for dialogue in the ecosystem and the fostering of cultural capabilities (plural) for all citizens.

Cultureel Vermogen is currently subject to an extensive trial in the Netherlands and is reviewed at several national and international conferences in the Netherlands (Leeuwarden, Utrecht). It is being developed further in a PhD research at the University of Groningen (by the author). In this paper the author opens the framework of CV for the wider research community and clarifies the concept in relation to the on-going debate (in both the Netherlands and the EU) on the interpretation of culture, cultural democracy, cultural capabilities and cultural ecosystems. CV may offer a new, integrative and (more) consistent focus for cultural policy, while clarifying the importance of the arts in the broader framework of culture-as-process. In doing so, it also offers a unifying perspective on the current debate on the position of the arts in society and the role and substance of culture and arts education in particular.



**Presenter: Geert Drion**

Geert Drion (1960) is an independent researcher and consultant. He studied Music (BA), and Cultural Policy & Management (MA). He was manager of several cultural institutions and taught as assistant at the Utrecht University and Radboud University Nijmegen. In his work he reflects on new ways to organise the cultural in the public sphere. He is currently working on a PhD (on the process-conception of culture) at the University of Groningen.

## Cultural sustainability and the evaluation of the social impact of cultural projects

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**Type:** Abstract

**Keywords:** cultural sustainability; social impacts of culture; project evaluation; theory of change

**Description of the proposal:** To what extent is the social sustainability of cultural projects measurable? Does it depend fundamentally on the resources available or on elements such as the type of programs and target groups to which they are addressed? Is it possible to use the same conceptual framework and system of indicators even though their results have to be relativized according to each social and territorial context? Despite existing growing literature references centered in conceptualizing cultural sustainable development (Dessein, Soini & Horlings, 2015; Hawkes, 2001; Hristova, Dragičević Šešić & Duxbury, 2015; Martinell Sempere, 2020; Throsby, 2001; Wiktor-Mach, 2018) and on the social impact of culture (Azevedo, 2016; Belfiore & Bennett, 2007; Galloway, 2009; Matarasso, 1997, 2019), there is much less empirical research focused on how specific cultural projects generate societal value, their sustainability and evaluation (Duxbury, Garrett-Petts & McLennan, 2015; Evans, 2005; Gallou & Fouseki, 2019; Grincheva, 2016). Our paper proposes an adapted version of the Logic Model of inputs- activities- outputs-outcomes-impacts (Anderson et al., 2011; Savaya & Waysman, 2005), integrated with elements such as the typology of programmes implemented, the specificity of each territorial context and target groups, in order to propose an analytic framework adaptable to the assessment needs of both policy makers and cultural operators. The logic model is then analysed through the lens of the theory of change (Dhillon & Vaca, 2018; Vogel, 2012; Weiss, 1995), in order to try to explain how and why the desired social change is expected to come about.

The empirical and conceptual approach used in this paper benefits from the first results of the MESOC project (H2020), focused on the assessment instruments of measuring the social impact of culture in 3 main dimensions: health and wellbeing, participation and civic empowerment, and urban regeneration. We have focused our analysis on the impact of citizen participation and empowerment, given its relevance to the goals of human and sustainable development (Anand & Sen, 2000). We applied the model to around 20 projects with similar objectives in different European cities to contrast the role of the territorial context, the typology of programmes? and target groups in selecting the most appropriate outcome and impact indicators to measure the sustainability of the intended social and cultural development. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect relevant project information, followed by an in-depth interview with the project managers. Subsequently, a Delphi methodology with experts, policy makers and cultural operators was carried out to contrast the effectiveness of the empirical results obtained towards the evaluation and the design of cultural projects with an explicit intention of achieving social impact. Our final goal is to better understand the framework and the complex process of generation of social impacts in cultural projects.

