Cultural planning "in random": benchmarking cultural policy trends and changes in Croatia with the experience of European Capital of Culture project

Mario Kikaš

cul—
pol

Content

Summary

The bidding process of the Croatian cities for the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) was primarily marked by the fact that a large number of cities participated in it, namely, submitted and "defended" their application documents before a panel of independent experts for the designation of the European Capital of Culture. As many as nine Croatian cities applied to the initial call of the European Commission for submitting their bids, while four cities continued with the bidding process in the "second phase", after which, Rijeka was finally designated as the European Capital of Culture. In most of the cities applicants, the strategies of cultural development and the application documents *per se* were the first written traces of cultural policies of the cities in question as well as the first example of the systematic drawing up of local cultural policy documents in the Republic of Croatia. Taking that fact into consideration and the intensive process in which numerous representatives of the cultural field participated, we viewed the bidding process for the European Capital of Culture not only as an essential indicator of the present state and of the continuity with the previous phases of cultural development in Croatia but also of the changes that followed after the bidding process. At the same time, we took into consideration the wider context and specificities of the integration of Croatia into the European (cultural) environment whose final phase has just been symbolically marked by the designation of the European Capital of Culture. In the bidding process itself, it became clear to what extent the measures of the European Capital of Culture project were in discord with the possibilities and needs of the cultural sector in Croatia and "new member states" of the European Union as well as with the internal cultural and political problems most evident in the discordance of the various levels of managing in culture. This paper is based on relevant literature on Croatian cultural policies and on the European Capital of Culture, on the hitherto experiences of implementing bidding processes and on the statements of the members of project teams from all ten Croatian bidding cities. Their statements have been collected in the focus groups organized within the framework of the meeting on the Programme: European Capital of Culture and Local Cultural Policies held on 9 December 2016 in Zagreb.

Introduction: First in the New Cycle

According to the calendar of the European Parliament and Council of Europe[1], the year 2020 was designated for awarding the "title" of the European Capital of Culture to a Croatian city that will share the mentioned title in 2020 with a city from the Republic of Ireland. That is the first time after the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union that a Croatian city will be the holder of the most prestigious project of the European Union in the field of culture and beyond. The process which evolved since 2014, when the first cities announced their readiness to apply, namely, enter the bidding process for the European Capital of Culture, to 24 April 2016 when, by the decision of a panel of independent experts, Rijeka was designated as the first Croatian Capital of Culture, was extremely complex due to cultural-policy and broader political reasons.

One of the reasons of the mentioned complexity was that it implied the first process of its kind in the newest member of the European Union and that presupposed, in terms of cultural-political decision-making, "taking things as they come" (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1996:26). Such a decision-making principle as the main attribute of our cultural policy had been already mentioned in the national report submitted to the Council of Europe in 1998, although it seems that it is as valid today as it was then. In the last twenty or so years, the *ad hoc* formulation, shaping and implementation of cultural policy continued to be the dominant form of the practice of public policies in the field of culture in Croatia. "Shaping things along the way" surfaced in the late nineties partly from the context in which the state found itself in at the time: the sudden and wartime transition, which in the field of culture implied the satisfaction of certain basic and current "functions" but not long-term or any other forms of planning. The entire transition evolved "taking things as they come" with all its consequences in the economic and social spheres as well as in the sphere of establishing democratic principles and public policies. This process did not bypass culture either in which in the nineties the institutions and management frameworks, inherited from socialism and void of their own substance and educational socialist function[2] were simply substituted by the function of production and representation of

---

[1]The decision was brought on 3 May 2014 and apart from the ECOC calendar schedule of from 2020 to 2033, clear criteria were prescribed on the selection of cities and certain priorities determined regarding the initiative on the European Capital of Culture which the bidding cities (and accordingly the future title holders) should satisfy in the selection, preparation and implementation of the annual programme.

[2] In the normative-historical pegging of the fields of cultural policies, measures of cultural policy that belonged to the period of socialist modernization in our midst (and period of the welfare state in the West) are presented as a specific addition to the broader set of policies which pertained to the so

the nation. In other words, "there was no definite point of intersection between the socialist system and transition to the capitalist one" (Žuvela, 2015:17). The principle incepted at that time continued later on only in a somewhat changed context and with a changed approach, greatly conditioned by the requirement of the accession to the European Union and European cultural space. However, unfortunately still without a long-term strategy, synchronization and coordination of the various protagonists of cultural policies, from state, regional and local administrative bodies to civil society organizations that were established in a parallel "random manner", making the cultural landscape in the new millennium more vivacious but also more complex than what Cvjetičanin and Katunarić were faced with when writing the mentioned report.[3] The unwritten principle of the unwritten Croatian cultural policy established by the mentioned authorial and research twosome could be perceived in the first and second phases of the process of selecting the future European Capital of Culture, and were most apparent in the deficient coordination of local and national management levels. As it will be deliberated further on in the paper, the very participants of the process accentuated this problem (in the first place the members of the "project teams" from the candidate cities) as the sore point of our cultural policy (and public policies generally), regardless of the ECOC project. That project, namely, the bidding process and preparation of the bid book, only served in this case as an indicator of the already recognized trends such as, for example, the lack of open dialogue between the public administration and the cultural sector, lack of extra and intra-sector cooperation on all levels, lack of networking and dynamics of international cultural cooperation, and finally, the neglected, marginalized and instrumentalized position of culture in the public political and social discourse. Facts on this marginalized position are manifested in the low level of state investments in culture, which was reduced in the course of the last decade to less than half percent of the national budget (Primorac and Obuljen Koržinek, 2017:37-38). On the other hand, if we dwell on the content of culture in the programmes of political parties, in this regard as well culture holds a marginal place. Political parties either do not deal fully with culture or do not deal with it at all (com. Primorac and associates 2017:569).

---

called socialist state (education, public health, etc.) which in the West lasted to the early eighties and in our midst to the nineties.

[3] In the process, the authors have established the inception of the so called independent culture, namely, a specific kind of cultural and artistic production created around the organizations of civic society which were at that time mostly financed by the *Open Society* Foundation. In later date reflections Vjeran Katunarić will designate precisely the artistic and cultural practices created within such frameworks and their later organizational and institutional forms as the momentary protagonists and implementers of strategic deliberations on cultural policies in the early two-thousands (Vjeran Katunarič's presentation at the Conference „*Prospects of Development of National Cultural Policies within the Context of the European Union: critical dialogues,* held in Zagreb on 19 May, 2017).

The following reason of the complexity of the mentioned bidding process is the fact that the propositions of the competition follow the decision of the European Parliament and Council of Europe on the new legal framework of the initiative from 2020 to 2033. The decision in question is accompanied by a study of the European Parliament from 2013 devoted to the long-term effects of the ECOC project on the host cities, which also contains recommendations and proposals of action measures for future title holding cities (after 2019). The study was prepared for the Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament by Beatriz Garcia and Tamsin Cox, and is a continuation of sorts of the practice according to which the entry into a new cycle of the regulation and implementation of the ECOC initiative is to be accompanied by specific research which is to summarize and critically assess the work done up to that point in time, proposing at the same time measures for the new period of implementation of the ECOC initiative. More specifically, it implied the revision and enhancement of the legal and managerial framework of the ECOC project, which had an impact on the very structure of the bidding process, on what had been emphasized in the bid book (as the essential document on the basis of which the city candidate is awarded the project) but also on the very implementation and monitoring of the realization of the project which is yet to happen and on the effects of which we are as yet to witness. Nevertheless, in spite of the mentioned changes, the framework of the ECOC initiative itself in this period has maintained continuity with the previous cycles and that means with the legal framework and cultural policy of the European Union.[4]

Bearing this in mind, the Croatian cities were the *first,* not only in terms of being holders of the first European capital of culture from the Republic of Croatia but also first in terms of cities that have entered the bidding process according to new rules – "the post-2019 ECOC principles" (Garcia and Cox, 2013). These principles introduced new guidelines for preparing the bid books in the period from 2020 to 2033, which marked the fourth phase of development of the ECOC project according to the typology based on the decisions of EU institutions that apply to the development of the project from 1985 to the present and its regulation of European public policies.[5]

---

[4]As the European Union does not have a „summarized" cultural policy, Article 151 (namely, 167) of the umbrella EU Act is taken as the most frequent reference in the establishment and rhetorical framework of that policy, namely, the *Agreement on the Establishment of the European Union* and *European Agenda for Culture in the Globalized World* from 2007, which among other, promote cultural diversity, exchange and cooperation, namely, (inter)cultural dialogue as the basic values of the EU cultural policy but also as key elements in the EU's „soft policy" in international relations. In this way the various changes of the legal framework and implementing measures of the ECOC initiative are never substantial but rather „operational in nature" (Garcia and Cox, 2013:45) and are the result of the summation and assessment of hitherto effects of the initiative on the European project.

[5] The first phase (1985-1996) included the then 12 members of the European Community. At that time the European Capital of Culture project had no established legal framework, namely, the Member

However, apart from symbolic and technical specificities related to the rules and procedures of the application process itself, the bidding of Croatian cities was also marked by some contextual particularities. They arose from the general framework and broader socio-political context in which Croatia and the European Union found themselves in the course and completion of the bidding process and planning and implementation of ECOC 2020. In addition, they also arose from the specific features of the cultural-political context in which the bidding process evolved and which was characterize, the at first glance, interesting but not less "problematic" fact that as many as nine Croatian cities began the comprehensive and logistically time consuming and financially demanding bidding process for the European Capital of Culture[6]. In the so called first phase of the bidding process, the representatives of Dubrovnik, Đakovo, Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Split, Varaždin, Zadar and Zagreb submitted their bid books, entering thus a process which in spite of professional wishes and aspirations to view culture as a more complex and less instrumentalized phenomenon, was not devoid of basic competitive reflexes and consequently of the protocol and practices that accompany such an event. This numerical fact, however, calls for a deeper problem-oriented analysis of the cultural-political context of the "Croatian ECOC", its reasons and conditioning as well as the results of the bidding process of the Croatian cities for the European Capital of Culture – an issue to be elaborated in more detail in the second part of the paper. In the text that follows we shall present a thorough analysis of the bidding process itself and of the produced materials by the bidding cities as well as analyse the focus-groups with the representatives of "project teams" from all nine cities participants of the process for the selection of a Croatian city for the European Capital of Culture, in order to conclusively evaluate the entire process and address it critically.

States "simply" nominated their cities. In other words, that phase of the ECOC could be called a festival- type event because it had no clear strategic foundations and long-term planning. In the second phase (1997-2004), 14 countries acted as "hosts" to the European Capital of Culture in their 19 cities. During that period ECOC became a more important part of the European policies and EU cultural programmes (*Kaleidoscope* and then *Culture 2000*). In the third phase, ECOC finally attained its legal framework and clear decision-making procedures by including panels of independent experts which decided on the host city, namely, which „moderated" the bidding process itself and later monitored the implementation of the project in the selected city.

[6]Somewhat more concrete facts followed. The five largest cities in the Republic Croatia submitted a bid on the call for applications for the European Capital of Culture (Zagreb, Split, Rijeka, Osijek and Zadar), which, together with the remaining four smaller cities (Dubrovnik, Đakovo, Pula, Varaždin) made up as much as one third of the population of the Republic of Croatia. Taking into consideration the ratio of the size of the state, namely, the size of the population and interest for the initiative for the European Capital of Culture, Croatia is at the very top in Europe.

The European Dimension or How We Are Dealing with the Conceptual Framework of the European Capital of Culture?

Given that we have described the specific traits of national and local cultural policies, their relationship toward the broader European framework and additionally the particular specificities of the concrete European Capital of Culture Project which we supplemented with the significance of the (geo)political, economic and conceptual dimension of the *first* participation of the Republic of Croatia in this project and process, it certainly wouldn't hurt to indicate a few points that will help us in the later orientation toward a somewhat narrower topical and analytical framework. We consider this to be essential for a number of reasons but primarily for dispersing the picture of the monolithic quality of Europe, European cultural space, European cultural policy and consequently of the European Capital of Culture as a project framework. In addition, because ECOC is a specific exponent of distinctive values, that are no longer stable and unambiguous as they seemed in the third phase of development of ECOC (immediately after the large expansion of the European Union when the post-socialist Central European countries, Cyprus and Malta became members) not to mention the earlier phases. We wish to point out that the ECOC as an initiative is not devoid of changes in the wider European context, of periodical crises and at times is even their outcome, i.e., mechanism of facing them, coming to terms with them or else overcoming them. In other words and as a number of authors indicated, the inception of the ECOC initiative coincided with the (cultural)-political reaction to specific identity and communication crises of the then European Community, namely, fear of the European political leadership of the unfavourable support to the European project, which appeared as early as the seventies (Langen, 2010 according to Garcia and Cox, 2013:37).[7] Thus, ECOC can be interpreted not only as a public policy initiative, namely, mechanism of cultural policy but also as a particular ideological framework of the European project, something that the Finnish sociologist Tuuli Lähdesmäki observed in her study on the discourse on Europeanism in the context of the ECOC 2010 programme in the Hungarian city of Pecs. According to her, the ECOC programme creates and "ideological framework for urban cultural

---

[7] We have in mind Adonnino's Committee founded in 1984 as a reaction to the mentioned inadequate communication of European values and European Union membership benefits among its citizens. The Committee published the document *People's Europe* in which certain institutes were proposed that are today part of the EU Acquis communautaire. Neither ECOC nor the concrete cultural-political measures were incepted or proposed in the existing document but were certainly founded on similar conceptual postulates. The time frame of the socialist decadence, the weakening and reformation of political parties to the left of social democracy (Euro-communists) and anticipated changes in the European East were also important factors in understanding that period (1980s) in which ECOC was initiated and conceptually the European Union as well as it is structured today.

events (...) as well as for their understanding and experience" (Lähdesmäki, 2012:3). If we, namely, wish to go a step further, ECOC, apart from implying primarily a programme that results in concrete cultural-political, environmental, infrastructural, social and economic indicators, it also "represents" a particular enactment and implementation of the existing European discourse, including all its contradictions that have especially come to the fore in the last few years.

Bearing in mind that ECOC is not merely an isolated event or technocratic cultural policy measure, it is necessary to place it on a diachronic level parallel with the state of the European project and its related ideological mechanisms. In the process, care should be taken of the diversity of the EU countries given their historical experiences and the very process of their integration into the EU but also of the polarization among states which is the result of recent relations, discussions and opposing views regarding the future among the representatives of political elites of the European Union member states. In this instance as well, Croatia should be viewed as a "separate case", which in no way means as an isolated or incomparable one. On its transition and Euro-integration route, it differed in all the essential elements from the other post-socialist countries. Croatia's integration in the EU did not evolve in a "cluster", as was the case with the countries that jointed the European Union earlier (enlargements in 2004 and 2007). That meant that the European policies as well as the narrative on Europe, and consequently their extensions in culture had some of their own particularities in the "Croatian case", which should be singled out. The accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union took place, to put it mildly, in the "turbulent period" (Tišma et al., 2012:7) of recession caused by a global economic crisis and consequently crisis of the European monetary system, which had an impact not only on the quality of life of EU citizens in social and economic terms but also on the functioning of European democracy. For example, the Republic of Croatia held a referendum on the accession to the European Union (which was at that time only the second instance in contemporary Croatian history that this, most powerful democratic instrument of the direct influence of citizens on decision-making, provided by the Constitution, was applied) at a moment when the most frequently used phrase by the media to describe the state of EU Institutions was precisely *democratic deficit.* The notion of democratic deficit was additionally underscored by mechanism of overcoming the crisis and austerity measures in which economism was put before the values that were for a long period of time the fixed attributes of the "European project", such as democracy, solidarity, European citizenship, European social model or principle of subsidiarity. At the time of Croatia's accession to the European Union (which implied a longer and more complex process than the other

states before it had to pass)[8] and became a full-fledged member in 2013 the European Union was not only passing through a turbulent period but, we can say this with full conviction, through the most difficult and longest crisis since its inception, which began with the French "no" at the referendum on the European Constitution (compare Neuman Stanivuković, 2012), and which in various phases and intensity lasted up to the British "yes" to exiting the European Union in 2016 and is continuing to the present.

The partially revised concept of the European Capital of Culture was established precisely in the described period. Although this "crisis period" is almost invisible behind the meta-language of EU documents and propositions ECOC 2020-2033, the fact is that the greatest emphasis in the texts (both in expert papers on ECOC as well as decisions related to ECOC) was placed precisely on the European dimension as the fundamental component of the initiative and then its conceptual framework which was mentioned previously. This goes to prove that the "perpetual crisis" of Europe and the European Union was hardly ignored and that the success of the programme of the cities holders of the ECOC title was often evaluated precisely according to the extent they were European, namely, to the extent they adopted European themes, values and policies as well as how innovatively they approached their articulation, promotion and affirmation. When the "most successful" ECOC title holders were evaluated in the ten previous years one often got the impression that precisely the European dimension (as one of the criteria of the ECOC programme and its successful implementation) has remained understated, namely, unrealized. In normative terms, that syntagm, in spite of the existence of different interpretations and views, would indicate the subjecting of the ECOC programme to topics with European relevance (and not solely local characteristics and problems), intensive cooperation and exchange between European artists, relevance and accessibility of programmes to all European citizens, etc., but actually with the goal of "raising European awareness" (Sassatelli, 202: 435), that is, as a direct measure of "creating a European cultural space" (Sassatelli, 2008:226). Considering that the "crisis" context undoubtedly has an impact on the field of culture as well, and consequently, on cultural policy that is not enclosed in a "ostensible apolitical set of practical operations" (McGuigan, 1996;7) or autonomous from an "objective and reflexive context" (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1998:4), the following questions arise: what does the European context represent today, what does it represent on various local levels in the concrete Croatian case as

---

[8] The process of Croatia's accession to the European Union marked an entire decade. Croatia applied for full membership in 2003 and negotiations began as late as 2005 and with numerous standstills ended in 2011 when the *Treaty of Accession of Croatia to the European Union* was signed. The Republic of Croatia thus became the 28th EU members on 1 July 2013

well as what are its cultural and political aspects that can be discerned from the process of selecting a Croatian city for the European Capital of Culture?

We shall therefore assume the European dimension not only as a normative framework and one of the criteria[9] of the panel of independent experts for selecting the future ECOC title holder city but as a specific coupling of two aspects of that initiative: the first is conceptual, namely, discursive, while the second aspect is cultural-political. In that sense, in the absence of other regulatory mechanisms, strategic intentions and acts, the bidding process for the Croatian European Capital of Culture can be taken as a measure of the general state in the field of culture and process of integrating Croatia in the European cultural environment. It can therefore be taken as a measure which records the relationship of society and the cultural sector according to the language and propositions of European values in times of crisis, but also as a projection that enables a somewhat clearer view of relations in the cultural field, strategic considerations, existing human resources and their reflections and ultimately of the relationships between various protagonists of the cultural policy – from the national, through local and regional levels to the level of civic society participants who played a crucial role in this process too in transmitting knowledge and actively partaking in the very project activities of the cities candidates.

The Nonlinear Development of Culture: From Pessimism to Optimism and Vice Versa?

In spite of the justified reproaches that culture is on the margins in our public policies (com. Cvjetičan and Katunarić, 2012:7) it is equally sensitive as well as susceptible, to political instrumentalization. This is quite clearly reflected by the fact that precisely the cultural sector symbolically attained the pioneering role in the Euro-integration processes, namely, in the so-called Europeanization. This distinctly gives the ECOC bidding process an additional dimension that we pointed out in the introductory part of the paper. In other words, just as different experiences of individual countries exist in regard to the historical trajectories and consequently different varieties of socialism and transition among the new members, equally different are their experiences of European integrations and their dimensions within the countries themselves given the multitude of local environments and their economic and cultural

---

[9] Within the set criteria of this European project the cities that apply, must among other, explain the contribution of the project to the long-term strategy of local cultural development, offer a plan of long-term financing of managing the projects and strategy of the outreach to and development of the public, along with of course an appropriate artistic and cultural content, i.e., programme on which they are based on and from which the fulfilment of the other criteria is derived.

characteristics, but - for us even more important in this regard – considering the multitude of sectors and thereby of different paths of sector adjustment to common EU policies, their regulatory, legal and financial frameworks (i.e., funds). While one gets the impression that the general population was skeptical toward these new frameworks [10], it was implied that the cultural sector supported the "European project" since it would otherwise not function at all.

Europe is the closest geographical, political and cultural context with which we communicate, effectuate cultural exchanges and cooperate in the field of artistic production. We cannot run away from that in spite of parochial reflexes and the consequential "atmosphere of cultural pessimism" (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1998:8) which characterized culture in the Republic of Croatia in the first decade of its independence. The more direct approach to European cultural space achieved during the so called second transition was characterized by a optimism of sorts and relative political stability organized around the so called alliance for Europe, namely, consensus of all relevant political options (represented in the Croatian Parliament) regarding accession to the European Union. In the field of cultural policy, and then cultural production, regardless of the continued policy of "formulating things along the way" a specific sort of reformism was present which unfortunately was not the product of the realization of the strategic document *"The Strategy of Cultural Development* endorsed by the Parliament in 2002 but never implemented. Although concrete instruments envisaged in the strategic document were not brought, optimism was apparent in a few successful "reformist interventions", i.e., institutional innovations before all in the transformation of audio visual creative activities and their regulatory framework through the establishment of the Croatian Audio-Visual Centre (2008). This provided long-term stability to that branch of the cultural industries and became an example of a successful model of the institutional organization of a complex cultural sub-sector, such as the film industry. At the local level the inception of *Pogon* - Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth (2008) represented a reformist implementation of the model of the so-called public-civic society partnership in an infrastructural project in the field of culture. And conclusively, the establishment of the *Kultura nova* Foundation (2010) which deals

---

[10] Attimes, this „scepticism" was over-emphasized. If we compare the data of the last Euro-barometer research, we can observe that the views of the citizens of Croatia on the EU do not deviate too much from the European average, in spite of the fact that in the course of the previous year (from 2015 to 2016, author's observation.) the positive image of the EU in Croatia decreased by as much as 16, and at the EU28 level by two percentage points thereby reaching the same 35% (European Commission, 2016:3), which is partly the result of the crisis period we just spoke of. The segment in which the citizens of the Republic of Croatia are greatly below the average of the rest of the EU is the participation in political processes. The Republic of Croatia, namely, has the fifth lowest election turnout for the European Parliament (at the 2014 elections the turnout was 25.24%), meaning that the majority of Croatian citizens do not regard the EU as the seat for bringing decisions important for their daily lives, namely, that they still have not noticed that those decisions had an impact on the quality of their lives.

with the independent sector active in the field of contemporary art and culture, which is, we will agree, the artistically most potent, and in Europe and the world the most present and recognizable part of our culture. Examples of successful exceptions are mentioned for which it could be said that they confirm the rule and the previously established principles of our cultural policy, namely, the absence of systemic interventions in culture. It should be pointed out in this context that being such isolated examples they have become/remained fragile in regard to political influences, especially after the termination of the so called "European consensus", which in spite of periodic tectonic shifts became a period of stable functioning of the political system and parliamentary model, upheld by two powerfully centrist political parties – both from the left and right side of the pole.

The reformism of the mentioned "European consensus" which evolved in the field of culture, in the so-called second transition was accompanied by the inclusion of the Republic of Croatia and its cultural sector in the programme *Kultura 2007 - 2013* of the European Commission. This implied the indirect inclusion of more than 90 domestic cultural institutions, art organizations and civil society organizations active in the field of culture and the arts in more intensive European cultural exchanges, participation and financial sustainability in the European cultural space (com. The EU Programme, 2014). In the broader context this meant that precisely the sector of culture was the first to gain its "European dimension", that is, the first sector on which the advantages of the European Union and it policies were reflected as opposed to other sectors, particularly the economy, which was characterized by privatization processes, sudden loss of jobs or a much slower and more burdensome adjustment to European frameworks and common policies.[11] On the other hand, in that period the cultural sector remained existentially intact – no collapse of cultural institutions was recorded in terms of their closing down or loss of jobs, while the non-institutional sector, in spite of more flexible and precarious conditions of survival, succeeded in becoming the protagonist of progressive artistic practices and a favourably evaluated representative of domestic culture and art outside the borders of our country.

---

[11] The most blatant example of the negative consequences of the accession to the European Union, which we are using only as a graphic counterpoint of the state in culture, is the agricultural sector which is mostly based on family farming estates. With the accession to the EU they were left adrift to the competition of agriculturally more developed EU countries and their food industries. In order to reflect the state that struck the Croatian village after accession to the EU, the following statement speaks for itself: "In 2013, after being a EU member state for six months, the total achieved Croatian agricultural income amounted to 5.475 billion HRK, which is in comparison to the previous year a reduction of as much as 12.7%, while compared to the period of five years previously (2008) the fall amounted to even 3 billion HRK" (Đulić, 2014). As opposed to the cultural sector primarily situated in urban environments and consisting of educated individuals, who became familiar with the European project vocabulary and system in which it was necessary to act in order to survive, the rural sector, without a clear plan, human resources and a powerful homogenous entity (union of associations, political party, trade unions?), that would bear pressure on centres of political decision-making, has become the greatest loser of the EU integration process.

Therefore, it is not surprising that in the bidding process, if we summarize all the cities that have applied, namely, their bid books, the response of the cultural sector to the propositions of the European Capital of Culture were more than satisfactory in terms of the "acceptance" and implementation of the language and framework that have become part of the daily practice of the sector. Regardless of the shortcomings in regard to the absence of a written cultural policy and long-term planning reflex, the bids of the nine Croatian cities to the call for applications for the European Capital of Culture overcame all the shortcomings and "harnessed" the local cultural sector, primarily in order to analyse and list their own potentials (in the cultural sector, and more broadly) and then attempted to strategically channel them toward the transformation of each of the individual environments and cultural life in them. At the same time, full awareness was maintained of the time in which the project was developing, over burdening it at times with the resolution of crisis situations that were not closely linked with cultural policies and cultural planning. In any case, they were undoubtedly strivings that indicated the necessity of strategic approaches for the transformation of culture in individual and greatly differing local environments toward which the first step was taken owing to this process.

The panel of independent experts routinely observed the lack of the "European dimension" in all nine projects which entered the first selection stage of the Croatian ECOC (com. Selection Panel: 2015). More or less in the application of all the cities candidates this shortcoming was recognized, namely, the focus on local problems that the European public would not consider to be of common interest. This created a picture of a specific kind of gap between the expectations of the "centre" according to which the level of adjustment to the conceptual framework of the ECOC and European Union is measured, and the response of the local environments from the periphery which saw in the project the framework for their own local transformations, regeneration, activation of non-existent sectors often lead by unjustified optimism of the power of cultural and creative industries to radically transform the cities and broader local environments. The Croatian cities candidates have dealt in different ways with these questions in their bid-books, coordinating expectations and the rules of the Euro-project language and accompanying topics with their own wishes and needs for transforming local environments.

When we look at the individual bid-books themselves [12], we can observe in the Dubrovnik book attempts were made to deal with the rapid and irregular tourist development of the city which made it less and less accessible not only to its

---

[12]A comparative research of the bidding for the European Capital of Culture would represent a somewhat more ambitious undertaking and a different approach to the very material which surmounts the genre framework of the topical paper such as this one. Instead of a detailed analysis and comparison of all the bidding aspects, we dwelt with their common cultural and political specificities with only a panoramic overview of the bid-books and their leitmotifs.

population but due to its scale, even to the very visitors to the city. In the Đakovo bid, emphasis was placed on the geographic location of the city in the "heart of Europe", at the crossroads of routes of cultural and civilizational exchanges throughout history but also on the nostalgia for the historical period in which the city was a "true European capital of culture" (Đakovo, 2015:15) during the time of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (in the later 19th century). "Its position on the map" was also underlined in the Osijek application in which the city was presented as a bridge between diverse cultures and historical trends but likewise as a city that wishes to use its potentials in other, innovative and more creative ways precisely through communication with its wider European environment. Pula's bid book perhaps gave the most direct answer to the current context, developing its nomination precisely at the time of the refugee crisis, which was indirectly transferred to the local environment, namely, the border between the Republic and Slovenia in Istria that was promotionally accentuated in Pula's campaign in the second selection stage and its bid book. An attempt was made in the Pula 2020 programme to react to the "growing xenophobia and violence between religions and cultures" (Pula, 2015:3), which produce fear and passivity and to do so by activating citizenship, demilitarization of the daily life and space in the city which would be repurposed into a specific form of cultural and democratic infrastructure.   Rijeka, with similar attributes of a multicultural, open port city, that is located (neither) in the Mediterranean (nor) in Central Europe (or) in the Balkans addressed the previously mentioned "economic, political, social and moral crises" (Rijeka, 2015:4). These crises are common to the city, region and Europe and jeopardize the (liberal) values on which contemporary Europe is founded and the proponent of which is Rijeka, in addition to being an "important liberal centre of urban culture" (Rijeka, 2015:7). The crises in question are localized by the perpetual transition of the city from its industrial modernity into a post-modernist story of a city of education, creativity and tourism that is strived to be realized by the year 2020 and beyond. In Split's bid book, the city was presented as blocked (by what was named as old values) on its way to activate all its potentials as the second largest city in the country, a Mediterranean port, a city of invaluable ancient heritage. Culture was thus taken as an instrument of the "city's transformation", a phrase that is most frequently used in the European Capital of Culture initiative along with the individual ambitions of the bidding cities. The Varaždin bid book included nine other municipalities in the areas of Zagorje, Međimurje and Podravina and approached culture as a training range for the development of its broader region, in line with the propositions of the ECOC which allow cities to nominate a wider region after some similar examples, such as Essen (that is, Ruhr) in 2010 or Marseille (namely, Provence in 2013). As opposed to cities whose existing identity and its fixedness represent an aggravating circumstance, in its bid for the European Capital of Culture Zadar embarked on discovering a new identity of the city whose history is characterized by discontinuity, conflicts and lack of communication – values and intentions contrary to those which make up the European dimension of that project. Zagreb entered the bidding process contrary to

Zadar with the parole of a multitude of identities and their contradictions the potentials of which it intended to activate through the European Capital of Culture itself.

Each application, regardless of their differences, highlighted the ambitions and distinctive traits of a none the less competitive process, ultimately presenting, if not the actual problems of individual cities, then undoubtedly their current states, political circumstances and their reflections on cultural life including the paradoxes stemming from them. In that regard it seemed necessary to overcome the research practices dealing exclusively with the competition winners and following their development, that is, ranking them either among the successful or unsuccessful ECOC. In the absence of other measuring units, the process really served as an occasion to re-evaluate and summarize the practices of local cultural planning required in the ECOC application, or else to record, which is very important, to what extent ECOC as a competition process influenced the local environments and their cultural sector after the completion of the process. Accordingly, ECOC is the last of the items in the "nonlinear" history of Croatian cultural policies that is characterized alternatively by pessimism and optimism and at times their coexistence, best illustrated in the following part of the text in which the results with the focus-groups project team representatives of all the cities are summarized.

After the European Capital of Culture and Systematization of Knowledge and Experience

Within the framework of project *EU Competences and National Cultural Policies: Critical Dialogues (CULPOL),* coordinated by the Department for Culture and Communications, IRMO, a day-long meeting was held on 9 December 2016 entitled *Programme of the European Capital of Culture and Local Cultural Policies* in the course of which the focus group met.[13] They consisted of the representatives of "project teams" from all nine cities participants of the selection of a Croatian city for the European Capital of Culture. The project teams were usually made up of the representatives of cities, i.e., city administrative bodies (most frequently administrative bodies for cultural or social issues or else departments for European funds – depending on the sector organization of the local self-government units), as well as representatives of the cultural sector (institutions in culture or independent cultural scene) and free-lance artists, art academy lecturers, researchers in the

---

[13] The meeting was organized in partnership with the Ministry of Culture with the participation of the representatives of Croatian cities candidates for the European Capital of Culture and interested external associates of the CULPOL project. More on the meeting at: http://culpol.irmo.hr/odrzan-pocetni-sastanak-culpol-projekta/

domain of cultural policies, etc. Taking into consideration the mentioned conceptual framework, namely, "massive response" of Croatian cities to the call for the selection of ECOC, the specificity of the political-historical time in which the competition took place as well as its cultural-political repercussions, we considered it essential to look into precisely the bidding process finding in it some routine patterns of our unwritten cultural policy as well as different mechanism of confronting the specificities of the local, national and European context and perception of ECOC as an essential instrument in those processes. The process also has psychological consequences characteristic of working conditions organized in such a way – the intensive engagement of a group of individuals, which due to the work dynamics and deadlines has to be "isolated" from its surroundings. In so doing we are speaking of projects that precisely intend to transform those surroundings or are at least assumed to do that , so upon their completion feelings of "disappointment", "deflated enthusiasm", "depression" and "loss of motivation and optimism" arise, namely, of the futility of undertaken work and of the unstructured knowledge and awareness accumulated and acquired in the process. In addition, after talking with the representatives of ECOC teams, one gets the impression, which has its wider repercussions in the consideration of local cultural policies and their groundedness in sub-national, national and supra-national frameworks, of the complete aloneness of the project teams. Aloneness in the sense that the entire process was left exclusively to local initiatives which had either the full or inadequately support of local administrative bodies, and at times were openly obstructed or, even worse, completely ignored. Attempts were made to structure not only this knowledge and experience but feelings as well into cyclical focus-groups consisting of the representatives of project teams from all the cities and whose experience of working on ECOC were compiled with an emphasis on their advantages, obstacles or possible potentials observed in the process.[14]

It is not surprising that the general stance of the gathered respondents was positive, namely, that the idea of organizing focus- groups was welcomed and characterized by the majority of the representatives of the bidding cities as a required therapeutic process they lacked after the completion of the competition itself. This gave rise to an objection of sorts to the overall bidding process – the absence of a system that would "take care "of the "loser" cities. In the hitherto deliberations and policies on ECOC there was an issue that was never dealt with and that was the channelling of the immense knowledge, cultural and human potentials which were developed in the course of the process for the attainment of specific cultural-political goals with long-lasting effects in spite of the fact that the project in these cities would never be

---

[14] Work in the comparative focus-groups was organized within three topical frameworks: 1.The main obstacles in the ECOC application; 2.The positive effects of the ECOC process and bidding; 3. How to use the acquired knowledge for the further development of local cultural policies and communities. After all the participants covered each of the topical groups the main conclusions of the discussion groups were presented and a join debate of the participants held.

implemented on the envisaged scale. This type of "follow up" approach or else particular "exit strategy" for cities which were not awarded the ECOC title, as observed by a participant in the discussion, is not provided for at all in the ECOC project framework and as yet an adequate manner of solving this problem has not been designed on the national level of cultural management. Only informal attempts are being made to "alleviate" this problem matter by indicating the positive example of "cities losers", such as Gdansk in Poland, which after losing the ECOC title in 2016 maintained the organizational structure of the bidding phase and continued to implement part of the projects from the bid book. Unfortunately, in the Croatian case, there were no such examples or systems and cultural planning that would allow pursuing the Polish example, although a number of city representatives pointed out that parts of the project from the bid book had a future even after the completion of the bidding process. A number of these projects will find their place among the supported projects within the framework of the public needs in culture in a number of cities, while others are in various phases of applying for European Funds, such as the Osijek infrastructural projects in the old city centre which were at the time of completing this paper already in the phase of implementation. In any case, this attempt of "saving" specific ideas and human resources created in the application process has remained exclusively on the level of local cultural policies, which cannot independently realize the complex and systemic approach to issues linked to the cultural development of cities, in spite of the fact that most cities finally do have strategies of cultural development.

In that regard, Zadar's bidding is an interesting and positive example because in spite of the fact that it was not supplemented by an independent cultural strategy, according to a statement of the project team members, activities are continuing even after the completion of the process through constant internal communications among the members resulting in the implementation of five to six projects from the application programme. In Dubrovnik according to Ms. Ana Hilje, Head of the Administrative Department for Culture and Heritage, about 30% of the projects included in the bid book, with which Dubrovnik reached the second ECOC selection phase, could be implemented. However, due to constant political turbulences and change of local authorities the feasibility of the intentions, and consequently, of action plans for long-term city development policies remains questionable.

This conclusion is not valid only for Dubrovnik, which was during the bidding process most exposed to frequent electoral cycles and political disruptions. It is evident that in the context of our local policies and long-term planning, we are dealing with almost a general state since any planning and prediction remains within the sphere of possibility and greatly depends on the (dis)continuity of political authority, which was pointed out by the very participants of the focus groups. Therefore, the continuation of parts of the projects conceived in the ECOC bidding process does not depend so

much on the will and wishes of the members of individual teams as on the local political context which much more often arose as an obstacle rather than an incentive to the teams: from the fact that a number of mayors completely ignored the process, which was confirmed by the representatives of project teams (Split and Zagreb) to procedural barriers created by the existence of valid convictions against a mayor (Dubrovnik). In that sense, the ECOC process confirmed some long since described characteristics of the unwritten cultural policy in Croatia in the last two and half decades, such as politicized institutional centralization, namely, fixation on representative, institutionalized forms of culture and insufficient functional differentiation confirmed by the disproportion in the allocation of support of the public administration among the public, independent and private sectors. Nonetheless and regardless of the state which the ECOC process, due to already mentioned reasons and to a paradox of sorts of the European cultural project, which is actually a local project that does not wish to be that, did not "shake up" sufficiently, the project teams succeeded to a great extent to maintain their autonomy. With the acquired and fought for autonomy and because of the propositions of the project itself they imposed certain changes which are commendable in the long term for cultural planning in some local environments and for developing a sustainable cultural system. In that sense, two mutually connected mechanisms should be singled out. The drawing up of cultural development strategies in specific cities (and in most cities such documents were not even written until entering the ECOC bidding process) and the establishment of cultural councils in environments in which they did not exist, which greatly contributed to the democratization and transparency of decision-making in the field of culture.

In spite of the different experiences in the development of the strategies[15], their scopes and methodologies, manners of adoption and voting, and most importantly, the non-existence of action plans efforts that would operationalize these strategies, all the participants were of the view that the development and voting on the strategy of cultural development on the local level was a step to be welcomed and that cultural strategies were the documents that should be referred to in communication with local authorities. According to the statements of the representatives of Varaždin, Split and Osijek, the cultural councils in those cities functioned more autonomously (in the case

---

[15] According to the proposition of the European Capital of Culture initiative, the drawing up of cultural strategies, namely, long-term local cultural planning is one of the criteria in the selection of the future city holder of the title. That implied that all the Croatian cities had to develop a strategy in order to even participate in the process. Out of nine cities, only Pula had the practice of drawing up strategic documents, while the other cities linked their strategies to the ECOC bidding process. Zadar is the only city which did not have a „clear" cultural strategy but entered the bidding process on the basis of a number of partialized documents which in sum can make up a kind of cultural strategy. They included the general Strategy of Development of the City of Zadar 2013-2020, the Strategy of Development of the Independent Sector of the City of Zadar from 2013 and General Strategy of the Development of Tourism in the Zadar County.

of Varaždin they have just been established) since the adoption of the strategy of local cultural development, namely, since the engagement in the ECOC bidding process. Thus, the accepted strategic plans became, "in the absence of a clearly articulated cultural policy both on the national and locals' plans, key documents determining the long-term objectives and guidelines of cultural development. By their content and implementation, the strategic documents are set as a link between local and national development aspirations and needs in culture and the European ones" (Žuvela, 2016:65). More or less all the attending participants agreed with the view that the positive effect of ECOC was the adoption of development strategies with an indication that it represented a huge potential for the development of a national cultural strategy and policy that did not exist in such an explicit form but also commented that much more important than the strategy was the in-depth penetration into the system of institutions in Croatia that are bureaucratically structured and therefore actually more or less self-oriented. Ultimately, it would be very difficult for such a system to carry through a project of such proportions and as ambitious as ECOC.

Along with the fact regarding the drawing up of cultural strategies in eight out of the nine bidding cities as a ground breaking endeavour considering that long-term planning was an abstract, mythical construct of solitary, as a rule, politically and financially limited visions of local culture, one more feature dominantly marked the ECOC bidding process in Croatia, confirming the hitherto practices in our cultural policy and manner of functioning of the cultural field. The participants of the focus-groups pointed out that the ECOC bidding process "unlocked" human resources on the local level and achieved (until then minimal) inter-sector and intra-sector cooperation between cultural institutions and the independent cultural sector, indicating at the same time the absence of appropriate professionals on all levels. However, what could be observed from the findings and composition of the focus-groups was that in most Croatian cities in the first selection cycle and in all the cities finalists the contribution of the representatives of the independent artistic and culture scenes was considerable. With their knowledge and long-term experience in international cooperation and multi-year project planning, they were, as associates, in opposition with the institutional bureaucracy that formally administered the bidding process. This is in line with the previously indicated fact that the independent cultural scene was the protagonist (although not exclusive, but certainly dominant) both of the European-project discourse and main beneficiary of EU financial resources in the pre-accession period (com. EU Programme 2014) and then after Croatia's accession to the EU, which enabled its participation in European cultural and artistic exchanges on a much larger scale than the institutional sector. In other words, this enabled the independent scene to understand and manoeuvre much more easily the propositions of the ECOC project, which was actually conceived to expect in the bidding process maximum flexibility and complete dedication to the project, which has become something almost routine for the independent cultural sector. Taking into

consideration the relevant international experience the cultural workers and artists from this sector have gained, it is not surprising that in the cities with a developed independent scene they played an essential role or else were part of the project teams in the internal "migration" in some other cities. After the completion of the first cycle of the bidding process and falling out of the capital city from the further "competition", a large part of the independent scene in the state dispersed into the project teams of other cities, particularly in the segment dealing with the shaping of the artistic programme and presentation of the project itself.[16]

In spite of the observed "polarization" (Zlatar, 2001:64) between the independent sector and the institutions in culture, in the exchange of experience within our focus groups, examples of certain collisions of the two sectors were also discerned, before all within the framework of the exchange of human resources in the ECOC bidding process, which is a commendable shift. Given that the "legal framework which regulates the cultural field on local levels provides cities with full autonomy in managing the local cultural sector, primarily the public institutions in culture founded by the local self-government units" (Žuvela, 2015:49), it is not surprising that part of the criticism of the participants of our focus-groups was directed precisely toward large systems (most frequently Croatian National Theatres, which represent real cultural factories and symbols of the bureaucratization of the cultural system in addition to being the recipients of most of the budgetary funds while remaining in the process "indifferent" toward projects such as this one (Split, Zadar, Osijek). Regardless, however, of this almost chronic malady of the domestic cultural system, the impression still remains that in most of the environments that took part in the bidding process cooperation between the institutional and non-institutional sectors was imminent as well as the changes this cooperation could bring about (Dubrovnik, Rijeka, Split) for both sectors and their daily operation and understanding. In a number of cases, the strengthening of cooperation with other sectors was also pointed out with a few critical comments pointing out the necessity of such cooperation while maintaining required caution against traps of the "instrumentalization" of culture" which are characteristic of ECOC projects, as remarked by one of focus-group participants.

---

[16] As an example we shall single out a number of cities whose representatives pointed out this aspect on a number of occasions. In Dubrovnik, the Lazaret Art Workshop actively participated in the bidding process, as the most important and institutionally oldest representative of the independent cultural scene in the south of the country and a specific artistic diaspora in the city which linked the greater part of its professional development with activities in the sector of independent culture in Zagreb. The Split team was made up of convergence of the representatives of the art educational institutions (Split art academies) and the independent cultural sector, just like in Osijek. As far as "migrations" from the centre (Zagreb) to the periphery are concerned: all the biddings were characterized by the "inflow" of creative forces from Zagreb in various aspects of the bidding process – from the conception of programme activities, work on raising capacities and developing a public to the very designing of the bid book and conception of the visual identity of the cities candidates.

Critical Comments and Conclusions

In addition, of the ECOC bidding process serving as a measure of slight tectonic shifts in the Croatian cultural field and to an even greater extent of continuity, the subsequent reflections we collected from our focus groups provide some guidelines for critical comments on the ECOC from the Croatian perspective. The most important question that sprang up was the extent to which ECOC as a project was appropriate for the transformation or regeneration of cities through instruments of culture, namely, cultural policy, particularly in the new EU member states whose development was not linear and progressive but disrupted by various crises, unexpected changes and shocks along with the preservation of cracked continuities. Generally speaking, the ECOC title in its declarative form appeared as a promise of urban regeneration and economic renaissance of the culturally staggering or insufficiently recognized cities. However, the belief in the cultural transformation through a project that until 2007[17] did not cross the border of Western Europe was faced with challenges of the diversity of experiences in culture and differences of socio-political realities in countries of Central, East and Southeast Europe. One of the participants of the focus groups and associate in Pula's bidding for the title concluded that such a concept of the European Capital of Culture created an illusion that culture and cultural policy can transform urban environments. Culture has also become in such a instrumentalist matrix a mechanism of solving specific social problems such as inequality, exclusion of part of the population from political processes, solution of social crises caused by changes on the labour market (transition from the industrial to the post-industrial phase of capitalism), opening of new jobs and inauguration of new economic sectors into our urban environments, etc. This idea has dominantly marked the domestic bidding books, without leaving an impression that the negative consequences could be avoided, such as a financial crash, gentrification and commodification of the city regardless of the possible positive effects in processes of cooperation, networking and insight into advancements in the deliberations and practices of cultural planning and development which have in part already been achieved in the bidding process itself.

In accordance with the conclusions presented by Garcia and Cox in their study for the European Parliament (com. 2013:61) the European dimension of the ECOC project should arise from the dialogue on Europe's diverse experiences, which in our opinion was lacking in the entire bidding process of the Croatian cities. The only dialogue that took place was precisely the one between cities "rivals", their networking, joint

---

[17]Although ECOC was held in nine European cities in 2000, including Warsaw and Prague, it is only from 2005 that we count the systematic inclusion of the new member states in the ECOC initiative, namely, its calender and cultural-political framework established for the period 2005-2019. The first city to receive the ECOC titile in that system was Sibui in Romania in 2007.

projects which will continue even after the completion of the process, establishment of long-term exchanges between the cultural sector stakeholders from various cities in that process.[18] The concrete proposed measures that resulted from the dialogue dealt with the need for its continuation and for the systematization of the experiences of the Croatian biddings for the European Capital of Culture which, if that does not take place, will be recorded only as part of the archives of our "random" Cultural planning, just like some previous strategies and attempts at planning. In other words, the capital created in the very bidding process should be the starting point for long-term cultural planning.

The second conclusion which arises from the work of the focus-groups, from the research in the field of cultural policies and particularly from the ECOC as a mechanism of cultural policies and accompanying discursive and conceptual framework of the very project, deals with the need for a reform of that concept that will take into consideration to a much greater degree the local specificities of particular national frameworks and urban environments as well as their development and transformation potentials with a clear emphasis on the creation of conditions for the autonomous development of culture and not exclusively its instrumentalization and commodification. It was emphasized a number of times that presently the local levels, their cultural protagonists and emerging cultural policies are the ones that have done most of the work while the other protagonists have only established procedures and adhered to them. If nothing else, at the cultural policy documentation level we have 13 serious development plans (nine in the first cycle and four in the second) that were in the midst of the just finished local election campaigns massively quoted in various political camps – again instrumentalized for short term purposes of the election campaign after which culture would again remain on the very margins of political and wider social interests and priorities.

The very experiences mentioned by the focus-group participants in various cities speak in favour of that, particularly in terms of the inadequate coordination of the project between the European Commission, state level and local levels, namely, conceptual, political and developmental inadequacies and non-compatibility of ECOC with local cultural policies. However, this non-compatibility stems from a deeper problem and is connected to the lack of elements of advocating the European political dimension in the cultural system itself. The principle of subsidiarity, as one of the

---

[18]Although part of this cooperation in the bidding can also be explained by „representational reasons", the very fact that the cultural sector in the Republic of Croatia, and consequently its infrastructure and human resources are limited – requires constant cooperation and networking. Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the cities candidates remained in communication linked to the project even after the completion of the ECOC bidding process (for example: Split – Osijek, Osijek – Dubrovnik). Discussions and focus-groups which served as a base for this paper were the reason for a new meeting and intensification of the communication and we hope for the continuation of cooperation.

fundamental principle of the division of power in the European Union and its distribution to lower local levels of authority in the sector of cultural policy simply does not exist in our country and is the main cause of the "isolation" and "deflated enthusiasm" which arise from the work on such projects. It is high time to reverse the issue and instead of accommodating various specificities of local environments and their non-existent developmental cultural policies to the ECOC concept, adjust ECOC to various local experiences and possibilities if the project is to go on and if it is to be an instrument of cultural and not only narrative policy.

References

1. Cvjetičanin, Biserka i Katunarić, Vjeran (ur.) (1998). *Kulturna politika Republike Hrvatske. Nacionalni izvještaj*. Zagreb: Ministarstvo kulture Republike Hrvatske.

2. Cvjetičanin, Biserka i Katunarić, Vjeran (2012). »Hrvatska kultura u Europskoj uniji«, *Zarez*, br. 325–326, str. 7.

3. Đakovo 2020 (2015). *Đakovo – the Heart of Europe*. Đakovo, 2015.

4. Đulić, Goran (2014). »Selo bez perspektive«, *Bilten* (22. travnja 2014.)

5. European Comission (2014). *European Capitals of Culture 2020-2033. Guide for cities preparing to bid.* Brussels: European Comission.

6. Europska komisija (2016). *Standardni Eurobarometar 86: nacionalni izvještaj. Javno mijenje o Europskoj uniji*.

7. Garcia, Beatriz i Cox, Tamsin (2013). *European Capitals of Culture: Success Strategies and Long-term Effects*, Brussels and Strasbourg: Policy Department B, Structural and Cohesion Policies.

8. Ministarstvo kulture (2014). *Kultura 2007. – 2013. Sedam godina europske Kulture u Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: Ministarstvo kulture Republike Hrvatske.

9. Lähdesmäki, Tuuli (2012). »Discourses of Europeanness in the reception of the European Capital of Culture events: The case of Pécs 2010«, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 21(2): 191–205.

10. McGuigan, Jim (1996). *Culture and the Public Sphere*. London: Routledge.

11. Neuman Stanivuković, Senka (2012). »Croatia as the 28th EU Member State: How Did We Get Here and Where Should We Go From Now?«, *Papiers d'actualité/ Current Affairs in Perspective*, br. 1, Fondation Pierre du Bois, http://www.fondation-pierredubois.ch/Papiers-d-actualite/croatia.html#_edn1 (2. svibnja 2017.).

12. Primorac, Jaka, Obuljen Koržinek, Nina i Uzelac, Aleksandra (2017). »Access to culture in Croatian cultural policy: Moving towards explicit policies«, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 23(5): 562–580.

13. Primorac, Jaka i Obuljen-Koržinek, Nina (2017). *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. Country Profile: Croatia*. 18th edition 2017. Council of Europe/ERICarts, www.culturalpolicies.net (20. svibnja 2017.).

14. Pula + 2020 (2015). *Pula – Demilitarise. From Fortress to Forum.*

15. Rijeka 2020 (2015). *Rijeka – Port of Diversity.*

16. Sassatelli, Monica (2002). »Imagined Europe. The shaping of European cultural identity through EU cultural policy«, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5(4): 435–451.

17. Sassatelli, Monica(2008). »European cultural space in the European Cities of Culture", *European Societies*«, 10(2): 225–245.

18. Selection Panel for the European Capitals of Culture 2020 in Croatia (2015). *The Selection Panel's report. Pre-selection.* Zagreb: European Commission.

19. Tišma, Sanja, Samardžija, Višnja i Jurlin, Krešimir (ur.) (2012). *Hrvatska i Europska unija: prednosti i izazovi članstva*. Zagreb: Institut za međunarodne odnose.

20. Zlatar, Andrea (2001). »Kulturna politka«, *Reč - časopis za književnost i kulturu i društvena pitanja* 61 (7): 57–74.

21. Žuvela, Ana (2015). *Kulturna politika i mjesta kulturnog stvaralaštva – startne pozicije. Radna bilježnica za društveno kulturne centre. Povodom Radnog skupa* „Prema institucionalnom pluralizmu: Razvoj društveno-kulturnih centara", Zagreb, 12. – 14. studenog 2015. Zagreb: Zaklada Kultura nova, str. 19–61.

22. Žuvela, Ana (2016).*Krojeno po mjeri? Prakse i tendencije kulturnog obrazovanja u Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: Biblioteka Kultura nova.

Sažetak

Proces kandidature hrvatskih gradova za Europsku prijestolnicu kulture (EPK) obilježen je prije svega činjenicom da je velik broj gradova sudjelovao, odnosno predao i „branio" prijavne knjige pred povjerenstvom nezavisnih stručnjaka za dodjelu Europske prijestolnice kulture. Čak devet hrvatskih gradova prijavilo se na inicijalni poziv Europske komisije za predaju kandidatura, četiri su grada nastavila svoj kandidacijski proces u „drugoj fazi", a projekt Europske prijestolnice kulture konačno je dodijeljen Rijeci. U većini prijavljenih gradova strategije kulturnog razvoja i same prijavne knjige bili su prvi pisani trag kulturnih politika tih gradova, ali i prvi primjer sustavne izrade dokumenata lokalnih kulturnih politika u Republici Hrvatskoj. Uzimajući u obzir tu činjenicu kao i intenzivan proces u kojemu su sudjelovali brojni predstavnici kulturnog sektora, na proces kandidature za Europsku prijestolnicu kulture gledali smo kao na bitan indikator trenutnog stanja i kontinuiteta s ranijim fazama kulturnog razvoja Hrvatske, ali i promjena koje će uslijediti nakon kandidacijskog procesa. Pritom smo uzeli u obzir širi kontekst i osobitosti integracije Hrvatske u europski (kulturni) prostor, čija je završna faza upravo simbolički obilježena Europskom prijestolnicom kulture. U samom procesu kandidature pokazalo se do koje je mjere projekt Europske prijestolnice kulture neusklađen s mogućnostima i potrebama kulturnog sektora u Hrvatskoj i „novim članicama" Europske unije kao i unutarnjim kulturno-političkim problemima, koji se najbolje uočavaju u neusklađenosti različitih razina upravljanja kulturom. Ovaj se tekst temelji na relevantnoj literaturi o hrvatskim kulturnim politikama i o Europskoj prijestolnici kulture, na dosadašnjim iskustvima provedbe kandidacijskih procesa te na izjavama sudionika projektnih timova svih devet hrvatskih gradova. Njihove su izjave prikupljene u fokus-grupama organiziranima u sklopu sastanka Program Europska prijestolnica kulture i lokalne kulturne politike, koji je održan 9. prosinca 2016. u Zagrebu.

Note about the author / Bilješka o autoru

Mario Kikaš is a cultural worker from Zagreb, the editor of *RAD* magazine and a member of Organization for Workers' Initiative and Democratization. From 2012-2014, Kikaš was a member of editorial board of the biweekly magazine for culture Zarez. He regularly publishes articles in several Croatian and regional media (Kulturpunkt, Le Monde Diplomatique, Bilten, Vox Feminae) on a wide range of issues: cultural policy, LGBTIQ and feminist activism, international relations, political relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to his media work, Kikaš is a collaborator on various projects in arts and culture: a member of a team responsible for the creation of Dubrovnik's artistic programme for the 2020 bid for European Capital of Culture, a member of the Committee for the evaluation of the quality of the applications for programmes of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts and Culture *Kultura nova* (2013-2015) and in 2017 he was selected member of the Artistic Council of Croatian Audiovisual Center.

Mario Kikaš kulturni je radnik iz Zagreba, urednik časopisa *RAD.* te član Baze za radničku inicijativu i organizaciju koja se bavi suradnjom sindikata i civilnog sektora. Od 2012. do 2014. godine član je uredništva časopisa *Zarez*. Stalni je suradnik nekoliko domaćih i regionalnih medija i umjetničkih organizacija kao što su *Kulturpunkt*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, *Bilten*, *Vox Feminae* i *BLOK*. Iako je objavljivao tekstove o mnogim temama, uži interes su mu izvedbene umjetnosti, o čemu objavljuje tekstove u stručnim časopisima *Frakcija* i *Teorija koja hoda*. Od 2014. do 2016. godine bio je sudionikom šireg tima u pripremi umjetničkog programa kandidature Dubrovnika za Europsku prijestolnicu kulture. Od 2013. do 2015. godine član je povjerenstava za procjenu kvalitete prijava na programe Zaklade *Kultura nova,* a u 2017. je godini izabran za umjetničkog savjetnika za komplementarne djelatnosti u Hrvatskom audiovizualnom centru.

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

cul—pol

Institut za razvoj i međunarodne odnose

Odjel za kulturu i komunikacije

LJ. F. Vukotinovića 2, HR-10000 Zagreb

Institute for Development and International Relations

Department for Culture and Communication

LJ. F. Vukotinovića 2, HR-10000 Zagreb

Tel. +385 1 48 77 460

Fax. +385 1 48 28 361

culpol@irmo.hr

http://culpol.irmo.hr/

http://www.irmo.hr/