

6th Cross-Border Culture Conference

April 25th – 27th 2018 Dresden | Řehlovice

Summary of the Cross-Border Culture Conference 2018

Building bridges across borders through art and culture was the topic of the 6th Cross-Border Culture Conference, taking place from 25th to 27th of April 2018 in the German-Czech Euroregion Elbe/Labe. The event was organised by the Euroregion Elbe/Labe, the Association of European Border Regions, and Kreatives Sachsen – the Saxon Center for Cultural and Creative Industries. The objective was to bring together cultural actors and multipliers from European border regions to share experiences and knowledge about culture in rural areas as well as to build active networks.

Kick-off

25.04.2018, Lipsiusbau,
Dresden

On the evening of April 25th, the conference started with a get-together with participants of the EUROCITIES Culture Forum, that took place in Dresden as well. It was a great start and fine opportunity to expand one's network on a vast European level.



Workshop-Day

26.04.2018, Cultural Centre, Řehlovice

The day started with a bus ride to Řehlovice in the Czech part of the Euroregion. The cultural centre Řehlovice, located in a charming old farm facility, is a perfect example of using buildings in rural areas for cultural purposes.



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Workshop Session I → Possibilities

11.00-12.30

Within the first working session three parallel best-practice workshops were hosted. They addressed the possibilities and chances for culture in rural border areas with a focus on resources and potentials.

Rural Creative Spaces

Speakers: Franz Tišek, Kulturní centrum Řehlovice
Peter Legemann, Schloss Bröllin

Cues / Topics: Spaces for creative people / Use models for rural real estate / Cultural networks and cooperation

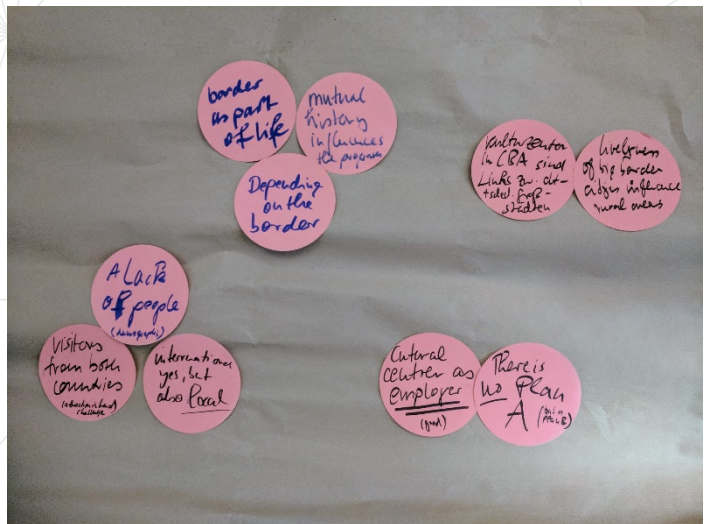
Results / Conclusions:

The border becomes a part of life!

The mutual history of cross-border areas has an impact onto the programming of cultural players in those regions.

Cultural centers play an important role as employer in such regions.

To present a program that attracts an international audience can be a productive way to deal with the lack of people caused by demographic changes.



Ideational impulses for the region

Speakers: Sabine Gollner, Künstlerkolonie Fichtelgebirge, Bad Berneck
Miroslav Koranda, Kuprospechu, Chomutov

Cues / Topics: Culture to improve quality of life / Development of cultural infrastructure / Upgrading the image of a region

Results / Conclusions:

Leading questions for this workshop were:

- What positive effects can cultural work have on the development of cross-border regions?
- How to start projects?
- How to finance the projects?

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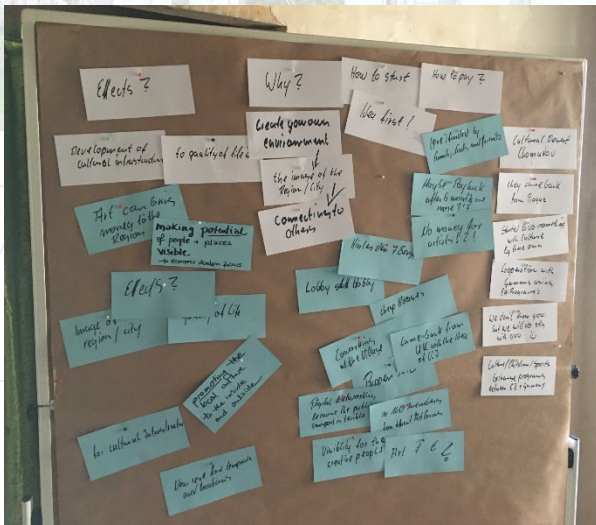


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Both best-practice projects stated an enormous impact for their cultural work onto the regions such as image improvement, reuse of abandoned spaces, intercultural exchange and furthermore.

Both project teams started out to create their own cultural environment within a rather “cultural desert”. To realize their idea private money from family, fellows and friends were used as well as self-commitment and voluntary work. Both presenters criticized that the European Cross-Border Funds do not cover artist fees and that the projects have to be pre-financed the entire budget for more than a half a year. Those funding conditions need to be changed in favor of successful cultural work.

Economic impulses for the region

Speakers: Friedrich Schönfeld, Festival Meadows in the mountains
Daniela Zarodňanská, Culture Matters s.r.o., Prague

Cues / Topics: Value creation by culture and creatives / Anchor companies, also for other sectors / Engine of regional development

Results / Conclusions:

The festival „Meadows in the Mountains“ has been founded in 2011. It takes place in the countryside of Bulgaria close to the Greek border, about 270 km away from the country’s capital Sofia. The region is characterized by rural architecture and a remarkable landscape. Every year about 2.500 people come to the festival.

The event is very eco-friendly: Visitors get there by train and shuttle bus. Electricity is generated in an ecological way and in order to avoid waste, only reusable drinking cups are allowed.

Every year the festival is opened by a concert of the traditional choir of the hosting village. That shows the strong bond between the festival and the local community.

The effects of eight festival years: tourism is growing, some old houses were bought and reconstructed by festival visitors, new small companies were founded, and the old school will soon be restored.



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“Culture Matters” is the name of a public knowledge share platform used by Czech cultural managers and companies. Its members meet at least once a month and discuss miscellaneous problems and chances.

An often-discussed topic is the economic meaning of festivals. Culture Matters is using the “Input – Output – Analysis” of Wassily Leontief in order to measure the effects of on-going festivals onto local companies, restaurants, hotels a.s.o. Within the framework of surveys the festival visitors are questioned on their spending habits during their stay as well their choice of accommodation and furthermore.

Surveys of that kind consume a lot of time and can be expensive. But they are the best and most effective option to gather all important information. This evaluation is used by the organizers to improve and increase the marketing actions of the festival.

Culture Matters also founded an online platform to calculate the economic effect of festivals: www.kulkal.cz (also in English).

Workshop Session II → Frameworks

13.30-15.00

The afternoon working session dealt with rather practical questions like financing, bureaucratic hassle and audience development.

Alternative financing models

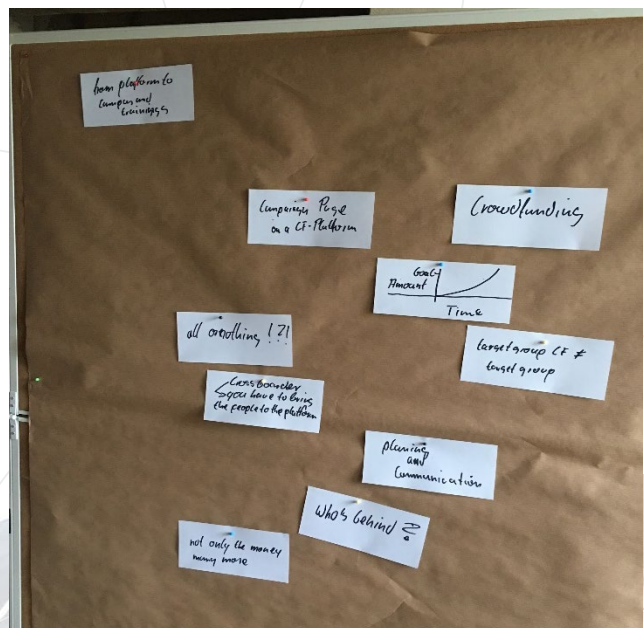
Speaker: Anja Thonig, Crowdfunding Campus, Leipzig

Results / Conclusions:

Crowdfunding is more than just a financing tool: It can help to increase the popularity of a project, to build up a community of followers, and to activate supporters outside the cross-border region.

In order to be successful with a crowdfunding campaign good planning and precise preparation are required.

The most important thing is the communication strategy, which needs to show the people behind the campaign / behind the project. Because people give to people not to projects.



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Artists and the bureaucracy

Speaker: Sebastian Hoffmann, SMartDe, Berlin

Results / Conclusions:

Within this workshop information on work permits, income taxes, and health insurance for touring artists were given. The participants were sensitized for several issues concerning touring artists.

Further information can be supplied by consultant Sebastian Hoffmann who is working for

www.touring-artists.info

The very similar Czech platform

www.czechmobility.info

is currently under construction.



Audience Development in Rural Areas

Speaker: Jessica Züchner, Second Attempt e.V., Görlitz

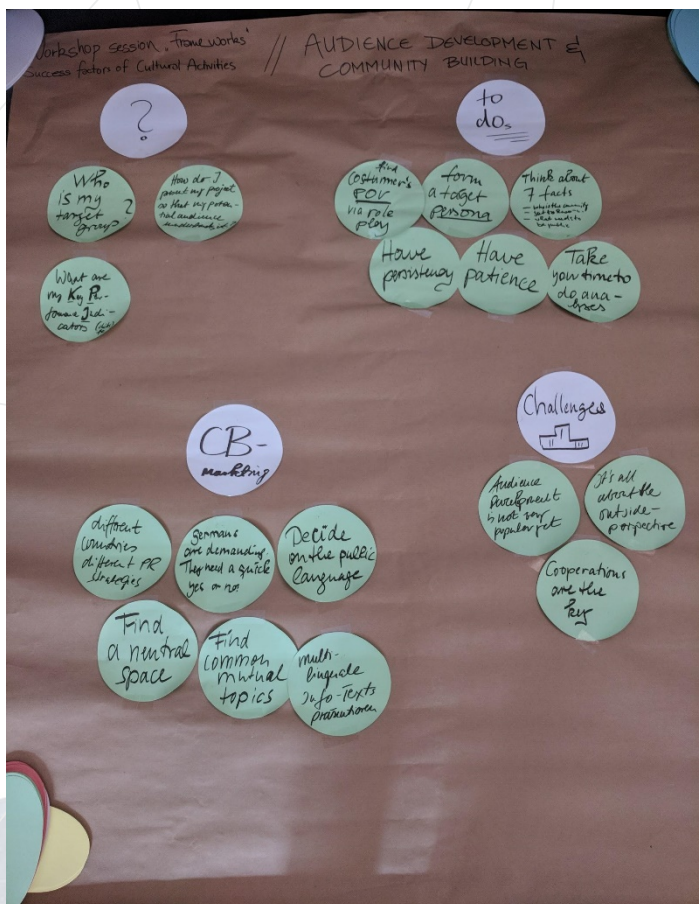
Results / Conclusions:

The participants clustered the information related to audience development into the four topics “Questions to ask yourself before getting into action”, “TO-DOs”, “Cross-border Marketing”, and “Challenges”.

“Questions” bundled all internal assignments that need to be done before starting audience development including forming a mission statement, a philosophy as well as naming one’s target group.

“TO-DOs” contained practical advice on how to proceed on forming a target persona and on taking one’s target group point of view in order to reach the potential audience through marketing actions.

Within “Cross-border Marketing” the participants exchanged experiences concerning



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communication strategies of different countries. They sensitized each other for the differing needs and routines of other countries. Also it was concluded that events and programs in cross-border areas should deal with mutual topics and should be hosted in neutral spaces in order to attract audiences from both countries.

Eventually the topic “Challenges” manifested that successful audience development depends on well led co-operations with the community as well as the ability of taking the outside perspective.

Projects on Landscape, Art and Waterways

Moderator & Rapporteur : Anja Brüll, Project Leader Three Countries Park, Euregio Meuse-Rhine

The workshop dealt with the vital role of water in the landscape, how it crosses borders, and how its management is influenced by culture, i.e. by the cultivation of land and more profoundly by the way how water is perceived, e.g. as a resource, as a human right, an element of life or even a spiritual element.

The workshop topics - relating to WaterLandArt and culture ships – built on the capacity of art to attract people, create awareness, convey messages and stimulate cross-border collaboration, particularly in the field of landscape and environmental management. A concrete example is plastic litter, which is transported by wind and water from one country to another and ends up as a well known global problem in the oceans. Artist more and more pick up this topic and help it enter the media, the public debate and (international) politics.

The following Initiatives were presented at the workshop:

fließart – Waterline (Germany/Belgium), by aquitectura & wikuku, Speaker: Anja Brüll

Wind-water art with kites and flags to celebrate wind and water, to make visible water divides, water ways or missing water in the landscape, and to stimulate participative and cross-border dialogues.

See www.aquitectura.de and www.wikuku.net/waterline.html.

Jellyfish, Glowing Blue and other art works (Bulgaria) by MilaMax Art Studio, Speaker: Mila Stoeva

Art installations - inspired by nature - made from reused plastic, which cannot be further recycled, to make e.g. aware of the global environmental crisis and e.g. the topic of up-cycling instead of down-cycling for a better environmental performance.

See milamaxart.blogspot.com.

La Parade des fous flottants (Belgium) by Le Collectif « les fous flottants », Speaker: Pierre D'haenens

Participative art project gathering citizens, artists and technicians in ateliers to construct artistic floating objects. Awareness-raising on water issues is one objective, but citizens can choose their own topic. This year the parade will take place 1st July on the Sambre in Namur, Belgium.

See www.facebook.com/Les-fous-flottants-150481645514512.



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Thabor Péniche – Urban boat (France/ Germany), Speaker: Alexia Balandjian
Class I canal barge being converted into a floating cultural center, event space and artistic toolbox with a European scope.

See www.facebook.com/urbanboat.

Cargo Gallery (Czech Republic)

Cargo river ship rebuilt into an event and exhibition space. The workshop took place here.

See www.cargogallery.eu.

Discussion:

The Discussion on options of collaboration resulted in the consensus that these initiatives could be brought together in one storyline and a European project. However, this would be a complex process of project development. First steps to start with could be an Erasmus or European Citizen proposal as well as to approach institutional and private donors like water boards or foundations.



Project ideas:

- for smaller rivers up to European rivers like Meuse, Elbe, Rhine, Danube
- creating an exhibition “Travelling Trash” of art made from plastic collected out of rivers, travelling e.g. with the culture boats from downstream to upstream
- organizing a series of participative events with floating art objects (possibly crossing national borders)

Next steps:

- Link up initiatives concerning the Euregio Meuse-Rhine as a starting point.
- Explore options for an ERASMUS Project including further initiatives and countries.

Related initiatives (to maybe link up with):

- Euregio Meuse Rhine: Interreg project LIVES Litter free Rivers and Streams (in case it will be granted)
- The Netherlands: www.plasticsoupfoundation.org , <https://plasticsoupsurfer.org/> , Precious Plastic (originated from University of Delft) <https://preciousplastic.com/>
- Europe/ Belgium: Big jump event = European River Swimming Day (this year: 8 July 2018) <http://www.bigjump.org/> <https://bigjumpbelgique.wordpress.com/>
- Belgium/ Wallonie: <https://www.walloniepluspropre.be/ambassadeurs/> <https://www.walloniepluspropre.be/news/bilan-grand-nettoyage-de-printemps-2018/>
- Danube area: Danube macro-regional Strategy
- Further organizations in coastal countries, e.g. Norway

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Closing-Day

27.04.2018, Cultural City Hall, Dresden

The conference final took place in the cultural city hall of Dresden. Here the participants exchanged impressions and information on each particular knowledge transfer. In the framework of a feedback round information on topics, speakers and organisation structure considering the next Cross-border Culture Conferences were given.

Finally, Valentina Marcenaro from the City of Dresden shared some background insights to Dresden's planned application for European Capital of Culture in 2025. One important aspect in that application is to include the rural areas around Dresden and even in Czech Republic in the whole process. Euroregion Elbe/Labe will play its part in that field.

This documentation was created by Kreatives Sachsen e.V. and Euroregion Elbe/Labe.

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