
Contribution by Péter Inkei to the Forum celebrating the 60th anniversary of the French Cultural Ministry at the Sciences Po, Paris, 7th June, 2019
The Cracow Conference

*Culture & Development 20 Years after the Fall of Communism in Europe, Cracow, 4 - 6 June 2009*

A keystone of the Council of Europe mission addressing the cultural dimension of the post-1989 transition.

The 33-page background paper was edited by Péter Inkei, assisted by Milena Dragičević-Šešić, Mikhail Gnedovsky and Baiba Tjarve, helped also by Vesna Čopič, Cornelia Dümcke and Zsuzsa Hunyadi.

The paper was complemented with an annex of 26 statistical graphs.
Major current issues, unforeseen in 2009:

• Overwhelming impact of the digital shift on production, dissemination, but above all consumption and reception of cultural products

• Global migration dominates policy attitudes, distorts the notion of inclusion

• Populism, overwrites value hierarchies, leads to schisms in societies
The east-west gap remained or even increased

- **National values, memory politics prevail**  
  (1, 2 😊)
  „Cultural values are predominantly conservative. Policy priorities reflect this state by the strong emphasis on national heritage (including myths of limited authenticity).”

- **Demographic crisis of rural areas**  
  (6 😐😊)
  „The spectacular advances of telecommunication offer unprecedented access to information and culture... much of the traditional handicap in rural living conditions, also manifested in cultural demands, offer and habits, has decreased.”
  „Smaller settlements have lost many (often all) of their public institutions – especially cultural – and many of the young inhabitants.”
Civil society’s role – mixed picture (11 😊 🤨 😊 🤨)

„The third sector sprung up as if from zero and has become a decisive component of the cultural life...
The emerging alternative art spaces and groups have been important sources of creativity and channels of innovative ideas...
Third sector cultural organisations are too often considered as rivals and troublemakers...
Lack of sustainability is a crucial problem.”
„True volunteering has begun to catch up in numbers...
New professional networks and organisations act as vehicles of professional communication, promotion of best practice and facilitation of innovation and change....
With the gradual increase of involvement of third sector agencies by the state, they have begun to lose the critical stance towards state and market.”
The east-west gap remained – contd.

• No emphasis on social inclusion (migration interferes)

(7 😞 😊)

„After (or to prevent) cataclysms of co-habiting cultures, tolerance and respect have become the official policies.”

„Public authorities tend to put the main emphasis on the dominant culture… The idea of intercultural dialogue has little influence on the political agenda.”

• Public financing – an inverse development

(1, 8 🙁)

![Graph showing public spending on cultural services (COFOG 08.2) as a % of GDP from 2004 to 2017. The graph compares East and West regions, with the East consistently showing higher spending than the West.]
An inverse development

Total and cultural public expenditure, 2004 = 100%
An inverse development

% of GDP spent on culture (COFOG 08.2), 2014-2017 averages
An inverse development
The share of culture (COFOG 08.2) in central government budgets
2015-2017

The share of culture in local public budgets, 2015-2017
A time-proven analysis (😊😊)

• „The Baltic and Visegrad countries plus Slovenia have completed the processes of transition, complemented with Croatia whose cultural system and policy is the closest to the accomplishments of the Central European countries.

• Policy goals and measures are less clear and coherent in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Moldova, representing a conglomerate of socialist and capitalist tendencies taking both good and bad sides of both systems, including corruption, with strong tendencies of introvert self-sufficiency.

• Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro demonstrate declarative approaches towards European standards in policy making, still with many inherited elements from the previous system (like state publishing companies, for example, or largely dysfunctional network of cultural institutions).

• In Georgia and Armenia cultural policy making is mainly inward looking and dominated by nationalism; and similar tendencies prevent Macedonia to be treated along the previous group.

• Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania do not have sufficiently coherent cultural policies and are little integrated into European schemes.

• Finally Azerbaijan claims to follow European principles but the actual performance, with patronising dictatorial features, is more similar to that of Russia or Belarus.”