



SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>-27<sup>ST</sup>, 2015

LEIPZIG

# kultur standort bestimmung

International cultural congress  
and cultural festival

# CONTENTS

# culture | place.positioning

This publication is the result of pioneering cultural policy work, which has strategically driven the Leipzig independent scene over the past two years. The idea to publish a position paper arose in 2013 with the idea for an international cultural congress and cultural festival Culture | Place.Positioning, which took place from the 21st to the 27th of September, 2015.

**culture | place.positioning** represented the most crucial cultural contribution of Leipzig's independent scene for the city's anniversary year 2015. 1000 years after the city's first mention seemed to be a grand occasion for celebrating that which makes the city what it is and what it stands for. To this end, the municipality cooperated with the initiative Leipzig + Culture e.V. to enable projects within the congress. Within this context, the independent scene was enabled to implement their respective projects. This also meant that many actors from the independent scene could actively cooperate with partners at home and abroad.

**culture | place.positioning** was the first international, interdisciplinary conference in Germany that was entirely initiated and realised by the independent cultural scene of the city. With over 40 international experts coming from France, Great Britain, Poland, Greece, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Latvia, as well as from all over Germany; (new) cultural policy terms have been defined, practical examples have been collected and recommendations for action have been elaborated upon. More than 50 participants with backgrounds in science, the independent scene, administration and politics brought their diverse personal experiences to the in-depth discussions.

The congress dealt with the following theoretical concepts: room for manoeuvre, participation, cooperation and expertise. From these four different perspectives, three very distinct cultural and political topics emerged, which serve as the structural basis for the publication. We discuss the results in light of the “significance” of culture in society, the necessary “skills” for the “design” of cultural frameworks and cultural practice themselves.

The main objective of the project has been reached with the publication: It summarises the discussion of current terms of cultural practice, bundles successful practical examples as well as recommendations for action. The latter of which can significantly improve future cooperation between cultural workers, politicians and the public administration.

The following pages contain:

- An executive summary and sociopolitical classification of the contents of the congress,
- A presentation of all speakers and moderators that participated in the congress,
- Prepared “content,” “best practice examples” and “recommendations” as PDF files, as well as
- An extensive archive of materials for the congress.

Compared to the printed publication, this online version allows the presentation of more details about certain aspects by linking with images and filmed footage.

## THE QUESTION

“A culture of dialogue, funding structure, culture of dialogue, funding structure”. This statement could have easily been the guiding light of the congress. It was said by Christophe Knoch, spokesman for the Coalition of the Independent Scene of the Arts Berlin, who pointed out repeatedly that the implementation of such guidelines is the only way to fashion a modern society, in other words to create a mature civil society. The aim of this congress is to strengthen civil society and thereby offers an important contribution to the creation of the process of democracy.

The publication is divided into specific issues that act as a leitmotif guiding the reader through a range of content, which in turn relate specifically to the dialogue between the independent scene and the municipal decision-makers in the field of culture. In this case, the independent scene refers to actors who work in independent agencies in the cultural sector. With municipal decision makers in the cultural field, we are referring to cultural administrators and politicians who are active at the local level and by their function – whether in the city administration or in the politically-framed city council – are substantially responsible for making cultural-political decisions.

How can a lasting and sustainable dialogue between the independent scene and municipal decision makers be realised? What are the topics of cooperation? How can these agencies be designed and what skills are needed here? During the congress, Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt identified “the three dilemmas of cultural politics”, to which this publication has been oriented: Relevance, competence and design.

### **Relevance**

The search for a dialogue between the independent scene and municipal decision makers embodies the desire for a transformation of cultural policy. This presents several challenges, both on structural and on conceptual levels. This opens up the scope for discussion about the dilemma of relevance (see the Chapter 1).

### **Competence**

To ignite transformation processes in cultural policy, important changes are needed in the field of culture both on the part of the independent scene and the municipal decision-makers. The independent scene must restructure itself inwards in order to uniformly represent itself and the decision makers (whether in administration or policy) must gather expertise in order to understand the complexity and diversity of culture in their city. The latter must be able to participate in decision-making. This corresponds to the dilemma about competence (see the Chapter 2).

### **Design**

This transformation of cultural policy can be ensured only by introducing permanent instruments of mediation between the independent scene and local decision-makers in the field of culture. It is of utmost importance that this works via the exchange of various actors. The analysis of this issue should be considered as participation in or involvement with cultural policy. This is the content of the discussion about the dilemma of design (see the Chapter 3).

## CONTENTS OF THE PUBLICATION

### ■ CHAPTER 1

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURAL POLICIES

5

##### 1. Cultural significance: Recognition as a rare commodity

5

- Is the recognition of the value of culture ineffective? 5
- The scarcity of resources is an everyday fact 7

##### 2. Different cultural and political “repertoires”

7

- The financial and symbolic burden of state-run cultural institutions 8
- Social functionalisation 8
- (Creative) economic functionalisation 9

##### 3. A question of definition: What is the independent scene?

10

- An alliance of private agencies? 10
- The independent scene and socioculture 11

### ■ CHAPTER 2

#### ACTORS THAT ARE TRANSFORMING CULTURAL POLICIES

12

##### 1. In the independent scene: The creation of sustainable structures

12

- About self-understanding and cohesion of the independent scene 12
- Basic democratic legitimacy 14
- The institutionalisation of the alliance of the independent scene 14

##### 2. The appointment of municipal decision-makers:

##### defending the importance of culture

15

- It requires vision and instruments 16
- Implementation of this vision within the administration and politics 17
- Manifestation of cooperation: Urban development / cultural politics 17

### ■ CHAPTER 3

#### THE GOAL IS SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATORY CULTURE POLICY

18

##### 1. Providing instruments for mediation

18

- Participatory methods: Common development of cultural policy objectives 19
- Support of communication 21

##### 2. The issue of sustainability

22

- Archiving knowledge 22
- Keyword: Trust 22
- Maintenance of reflexivity 23

## I. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURAL POLICIES

The desire for a dialogue between free agents in the cultural scene and decision makers of cultural policy faces several constraints and challenges, insofar as it provides basic decisions of the previously conducted cultural policy in question. Here one would like to consider the fundamental questions of cultural policy from a new perspective: What is culture and what are cultures? Why is culture a public responsibility? Which culture is to be promoted and protected in a city? These aspects have already been widely discussed. The lengthy discussions, unfolding over decades in Germany as “the people of poets and thinkers” instead of “the people of judges and executioners” have, to some extent led to the high value of culture being legally institutionalised after the fall of the Third Reich. Even if they constitute valuable foundations, these symbolic and representative achievements must be further expanded and recorded, especially in the context of maintaining relevance in these changing times. A changing society requires a continuous confrontation with cultural policies and their various functions on the levels of cities, regions or countries.

The diverse discussions during the Congress have shown that the role of culture is currently not fully recognized. Although the importance of culture in society is determined by (German) law, an acute scarcity of resources dominates the environment, which only allows for a limited implementation and development of contemporary cultural production(1). The contributions of the congress speakers are unanimous: The maintenance of tradition remains an important role. The financial and symbolic loads of cultural institutions in the public sector lead to a certain rigidity of cultural policy. The loudest voice against this is a conception of cultural policy that does not recoil from an increased functionalisation of Culture. According to this view, cultural policy is also economic policy, urban policy and social policy (2).

How can the independent scene compete in this environment? How can it be perceived as an equal player in the arts industry? The most important cultural and political challenge of the independent scene is the blurriness of its definition: What is the alternative scene and who belongs to it? During the congress different definitions and ideas have have been formulated in this regard (3).

### 1. Cultural significance: Recognition as a rare commodity

*“The lasting remains of a society is its culture. It is not only ornament, but the foundation upon which our society is based and for which it is built.” (Enquete Commission, 2007)*

#### Is recognizing the value of culture ineffective?

Some legal texts were written in the past few decades that have precisely determined the importance of culture and endeavoured for its promotion and protection. The Unesco Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression has been in effect internationally since 2005. In Germany, although the significance of culture has not yet been enshrined in the basic law (keyword *question of legalised culture*), the country sees itself as a cultural nation and cultural community (Article 5 of German Basic Law). As the authors of the Enquete Commission “Culture in Germany” noted, “This is reflected in the cultural responsibility of the municipalities, the constitutions of the states and the practice of the nation in its field of competence.” (Enquete Commission, 2007 p.4). In fact, the responsibility for cultural and educational policy is essentially attributed to the states (keyword *cultural sovereignty of the states*).

The responsibility of cultural funding is anchored accordingly in the state constitutions, such as in Article 18, Section 1 of the state constitution for North Rhine-Westphalia:.. “Culture, art and science must be supported by the state and municipalities.” From a legal perspective, because of a lack of precision, the question arises as to whether the supposed obligation to cultural financing is seen as *voluntary*. Would it not be better, to anchor the importance of culture in society as a compulsory task? This question was the basis for a lively discussion in the course of the congress. Prof. Wolfgang Schneider, as expert member of the Enquete Commission “Culture in Germany” reported about one of the first decisions of the Commission; namely the proposal for a constitutional amendment “state objective”, Paragraph 20b: “The state supports and promotes culture.” He took the position that this change would strengthen the legitimacy of culture in local areas. Culture should be treated in a fashion similar to other communal services in the field of “existential support” such as the cleaning of public spaces.

Klaus Hebborn, Assistant Secretary of the German Association of Cities, contradicted by answering that he avoids using the expression “culture as a voluntary task” and prefers to speak of a “municipal responsibility for culture”. Both concepts must be strictly separated from each other: “As municipal responsibility, there remains a hidden design aspect. One could make culture a compulsory task of a municipality, such as the areas you mentioned [garbage collection, road maintenance]. But then one has to be aware that then the freedom of design relatively quickly disappears.” Kindergartens are a good example. They are a required of a city and are managed according to very detailed specifications. Mr. Hebborn stressed that cultural policy is a task that can only be undertaken without governmental intervention. The German Association of Cities orients itself according to this principle.

Michael Faber, Cultural Mayor and Councillor for Culture of the City of Leipzig, has also noted the difficulty of a framing culture within a legal structure. He and other speakers highlighted the Free State of Saxony as a praiseworthy example in this regard. The Free State of Saxony is the only state in Germany that has “regional cultural legislation” in its constitution (Article 11 of the Saxonian Constitution). This clause describes the interaction between cultural regions, districts, municipalities and the state. In this sense it is “not a traditional compulsory law of the state, but rather a law describing cooperation,” said Klaus Hebborn. This regional cultural legislation represents an innovative approach by providing a framework for cooperation between different administrative levels (country, culture rooms, circles, local authorities) and therefore financial responsibility. Other voices at the congress have questioned the aspect of cooperation, however, because there was a danger that the state “only” distributes money to the municipalities and thereby takes no part in the planning of cultural policy. The municipalities are hereby less financially constrained, but they remain individually responsible for the distribution of funds.

In fact, the difficulty does not lie so much in recognizing the value of culture, but more in the allocation of the financial responsibility among the levels of government. In other words the problem lies in the consistent implementation of this recognition. The public sector officially recognises the undeniable role of culture in the democratic development of society, but refuses to provide the appropriate means. There are numerous scientific studies such as that presented by Dr. Mariusz Piotrowski during the congress. In this work published by Prof. Barbara Fatyg, the significance of “living culture” was investigated in regard to how it arises. The investigation found that binding legal instruments for the promotion and protection of culture are missing.

In addition to the proposal for a federal constitutional amendment, there also exist ideas for the implementation of a so-called “cultural impact assessment”, such as that undertaken during the planning for large construction projects. This would constitute a further improvement of the legal framework for culture. The speakers at the congress unanimously welcomed this proposal and extended it to some extent as a basic requirement for any governmental action. This will be explained in detail later.

## The scarcity of resources is an everyday fact

According to the participants in the congress, the social and legal recognition of culture is not yet reflected in currently available funding instruments. Although the public sector's (federal, state and local) cultural budget is generally on the increase, in the context of a social structural change towards a knowledge-based society these financial resources are not sufficient. The Federal Agency for Civic Education has summarized the public expenditure for culture for the year 2009: "According to the cultural financial report published in 2012 by the statistical offices of the federal government and states, public spending on culture rose from 1995-2009 by 22.2 percent to 9.13 billion Euros. 13.4 percent of spending was made by the federal government, 42.2 percent by the states and 44.4 percent by the municipalities / associations of communes." (BPB, 2014)

The issue of financial responsibility attracted a great deal of attention at the congress. Who should take on the role of cultural expenditure? The role of the federal government is becoming more important. The Office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media that was created in 1998 has recently announced an increase in the cultural budget for 2016 by 56 million Euros (4.4% more as compared with 2015). This very welcome development unfortunately does not offer relief of the financial burden of cultural output that rests on the shoulders of the municipalities. The voluntary nature of cultural responsibility results in many cases in situations where the relevance of the budget for culture is called into question in competition with other social important fields. As opposed to child-care or road maintenance, culture is continually presented as a mere icing on the cake for society. In everyday municipal governance, the importance of culture must be continuously asserted and defended.

## 2. Different cultural and political “repertoires”

The recognition of the value of culture is the first challenge. It determines the extent to which culture as a whole is attributed space for manoeuvring. It neither specifies which culture is meant, nor the level of priority given to this unspecified culture. This in turn determines the distribution of funds, which as noted above, are quite limited. The issue of prioritizing certain types of culture is not only a question of money but also points to ideological notions of cultural policies. The question of the categorisation of cultural policy was a focal point of the congress. Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt spoke about the context of the dilemma surrounding meaning and priority. What significance is assigned to culture? What are the values, symbolisms and social objectives that it should convey?

Through her research, French political scientist Pascale Laborier has studied the legitimization process of public action in the cultural sector in unified Germany and proposed the term “repertoires” in cultural policy. By this she means “the composition of theories, arguments and doctrines that gradually form a vocabulary with which the actors present the legitimacy of public action in the cultural field—including its modalities” (Laborier, 1996, p116). In the 1990's, Laborier worked out three repertoires: the legitimist (keyword *high culture*), the relativistic (keyword *socioculture*) and the liberal-rational (keyword *culture as an instrument*). Although the congress showed that the latest developments in the field of cultural production and the formation of an independent scene tend to put these three opposing thought structures to the test, these allocations of meaning still function as cornerstones of cultural policy.

## The financial and symbolic burden of state-run cultural institutions

There were many voices in the course of the congress that both highlighted and denounced the financial and symbolic burden of cultural institutions in the public sector (or state cultural institutions). The state institutions generally collect not less than 95% of the municipal culture budgets. 5% remains for financing other agents. How should one deal with this observation? What are the implications?

Klaus Hebborn, Assistant Secretary of the German Association of Cities, has clearly shown the dilemma of communities, which seek to preserve the status quo via conservatism while seeking to support the future via innovation. Where should the emphasis be placed? In the context of resource scarcity, the public sector tends to preserve culture. In an admirable metaphor of Daniela Rathe, former Cultural Affairs director of the city of Tübingen, this is clear: “The bus is full, someone can only get in when someone else gets out.”

The burden of publicly controlled cultural institutions was discussed in detail in the well-received book “Cultural Infarct”. One of the four authors, Prof. Dr. Dieter Haselbach, sociologist and consultant for cultural institutions, was present at the congress. He defended the thesis of a necessary “de-institutionalisation of institutions”. Although his thesis met with a good deal of criticism and rejection at the congress, his argument in terms of better evaluation mechanisms of the institutions was broadly discussed. In fact, as Prof. Dr. Schneider assured us: “No state theatre or museum must be legitimised” with a concept. Just existing is justification enough. In contrast, independent projects are constantly asked for justification.

This lack of evaluation indicates a certain belief: The publicly controlled cultural institutions are the only legitimate depositories of true civilisation. In this regard, culture is understood as a common ideal and universal good, which is produced by an educated elite and in the course of enlightenment is something that the common people should not be deprived of (*keyword democratization of culture*). This corresponds to the “legitimist repertoire” of Laborier. Many voices in the congress called for a revision of this perceived conception as an outdated of the term culture. This revision can be argued on several levels. While some congress participants refuted the notion that only publicly controlled cultural institutions could produce qualitative culture, other participants questioned the dichotomy between “high culture” and socioculture.

## Social functionalisation

In addition to the burden of legitimist institutions, during the congress two constraints were identified that tend to limit the scope of cultural policy. Attention was drawn to tendency of functionalisation that unfolds both on social as well as on economic levels.

Dr. Skadi Jennicke, dramaturge and Group vice-president and spokesman for cultural policies of the Left Party in the Leipzig city council seized upon “forced functionalisation of culture.” In fact, the challenge of the tremendous influx of refugees has been repeatedly identified as a specific responsibility of the cultural field. This was brought to bear not only in the opening speech by Uwe Gaul, Secretary, Ministry of Science and Art of the Free State of Saxony and in the article by Torsten Bonew, Deputy Mayor for Finance of the city of Leipzig, but also in the contributions of Michael Faber, Deputy Mayor for Culture for the City of Leipzig and Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of Bonn. There is no denying that the integration of refugees represents a hitherto unforeseen cultural dimension and social task, but this should not reduce future allocation of resources for cultural policy.

Several times during the congress it was said that cultural policy is social policy. Thus, the second cultural policy repertoire of Laborier is addressed (the so-called “relativistic repertoire”), which is based upon the consideration of the wishes and diversity of the people. The protection and promotion of cultural resources of minorities, whether ethnic, sexual, social or religious should be undertaken through the formation of an open and multicultural society and lead to an appreciation of everyday life. It corresponds in many respects to the program of so-called “socioculture” (keyword *cultural democracy*).

However, it was repeatedly pointed out that there exists a dangerous trend of cultural policy to be understood as social policy, with the result of it being equated with integration and education policies. Artistic and cultural projects have social impact, but they must not be perceived as solely fulfilling this objective. The social relevance of art unfolds in the freedom of both artists and the cultural sector.

### (Creative) economic functionalisation

The second constraint was described by Dr. Skadi Jennicke as an effect of economisation, which can also be understood as an economical functionalisation of art and culture. The dominant discourse about the creative city (keyword *Richard Florida, creative class and creative city*) means that culture must increasingly be legitimised as an economic instrument. During the congress, several speakers and participants addressed their perception of an increasing expectation (and the resulting constraints) upon artists and cultural workers to make cultural and artistic activities a lucrative and profitable form of employment. It was made clear that municipalities increasingly reduce the social significance of culture to its mere economic effects. It became clear that there exists a certain confusion of concepts regarding culture in relation to the creative economy. With the instantiation and enforcement of Florida’s thesis upon the city to maintain a creative class, culture is not only being perceived as a pure economic factor, but also promoted as such. Several also drew attention to the impact of EU policies in this regard.

There were also polarised reports about the “Cultural Capital of Europe” programme as an instrument of cultural promotion. Michal Hladký, designer and project manager of the European Capital of Culture Košice 2013 recounted how economic and growth-oriented expectations should collude with the artistic endeavours of cultural workers. Among other roles, the Cultural Capital was designed to serve as an instrument of city marketing and help both the EU and the respective municipalities to optimise the respective location. Through his explanations of the necessity of mediation between the different groups of actors, it became clear that the creative economic interpretation of culturally planned projects has become inevitable.

Local politics also reflects this attitude of the promotion of culture as an economic factor. Michał Sowiński, independent cultural producer and publisher from Krakow, has reported on the *festivalisation* of culture in his city. The promotion of culture often focuses exclusively on events within the framework of the festival. In this way, the city of Krakow is hoping to improve its image in order to attract more tourists. This in turn means a limited-time promotion period for the arts and the cultural sector, which degrades cultural work as seasonal work and completely disregards “normal” citizens of a city who live there all year round and have a right to cultural activities. Against this background it is impossible to develop an enduring cultural landscape. This conception of cultural policy corresponds to the third repertoire of Laborier, the liberal-rational repertoire that is based on an alleged “significance-free” approach to culture. In this sense, the public decision-makers understand themselves as mere technicians or administrators and position themselves apolitically, thereby negating any ideological background of their actions, although they must have ideals. In this way, culture exists mainly from the perspective of its effects and not its contents.

As a final point is the question of artists. Where do they remain as part of these three conceptions of cultural policy? Should not cultural policy be developed primarily from the needs of the arts and cultural sector (see the article by Prof. Dr. Schneider)?

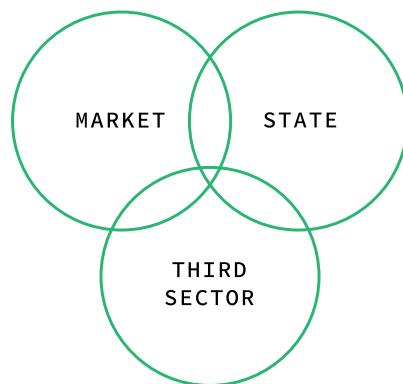
### 3. A question of definition: What is the independent scene?

The presentation of the constraints imposed upon cultural policy make it clear to which extent space is limited for an unrestricted development of art and culture. But where does the independent scene fit into this scheme? How can the independent scene make space for itself? The first question is one of definition: What is the independent scene? During the congress it became clear that there is no common consensus and that it is not (cannot be) specified from which components the independent scene is established. Synonyms such as *socioculture* or *creative industries* were repeatedly mentioned, whereas it was generally spoken of as the antonym of institutions. An analysis of these different attitudes shows some overlaps and clear boundaries of the independent scene with regard to these alternative terms that refer to competing conceptions of culture.

#### An alliance of private agencies?

The first comment comes from the legal perspective. As Michael Faber, Culture Mayor and Councillor for Culture of the City of Leipzig as well as Christophe Knoch, spokesman for the Coalition of the Independent Scene of the Arts Berlin affirm it, the term *independent scene* refers to a form of *independence*. In this context it can be loosely understood as “not controlled by the public sector.” Therefore, the polarities of the *independent scene versus institution* is a crude and inaccurate simplification, insofar as one can speak of “free institutions”. For example, *the sociocultural centre naTo* in Leipzig organises itself, but is nevertheless dependent on certain financial conditions imposed by its funders.

Does a purely legal definition do justice to the issue? At the congress, there were lively discussions about the necessary distinction between the independent scene and creative industries. From a purely legal perspective, a freelancer in the field of creative industries also embodies independent operation. However, many voices contradicted this integration of creatives in the independent scene as an acute reflection of economisation pressure just described. Actors in the independent scene need not operate commercially and in this sense cannot be pigeonholed within the slogan of the creative industries. Here, the third sector model (Building Priller, 2007) seemed to be useful, as cited by Dr. Eckhard Braun, a lawyer and cultural manager at the University of Leipzig:



The area of the market refers to cultural activities that are for-profit and generally financed through the market. The area of the state refers to the actions of all authorities that seek to fulfil statutory duties. The third sector, also known as the non-profit sector or generally understood as civil society, refers to private, non-profit organisations that provide or finance benefits and services in the public interest and for the common good. The independent scene, as we understand it here, is undoubtedly rooted in the Third Sector.

### **The independent scene and socioculture**

After these first clarifications it seems as if a second step necessary for thinking about the relationship between socioculture and the independent scene, which was a source of great confusion during the congress. Some participants used both expressions synonymously, such as Prof. Dr. Schneider, while others sought to express the interaction between the two fields. Annette Körner, Leipzig's cultural and economic policy spokeswoman for the Alliance 90 / The Greens in the City Council and Chairman of the Culture Committee, explained it as a "dovetailing of the independent scene with socioculture".

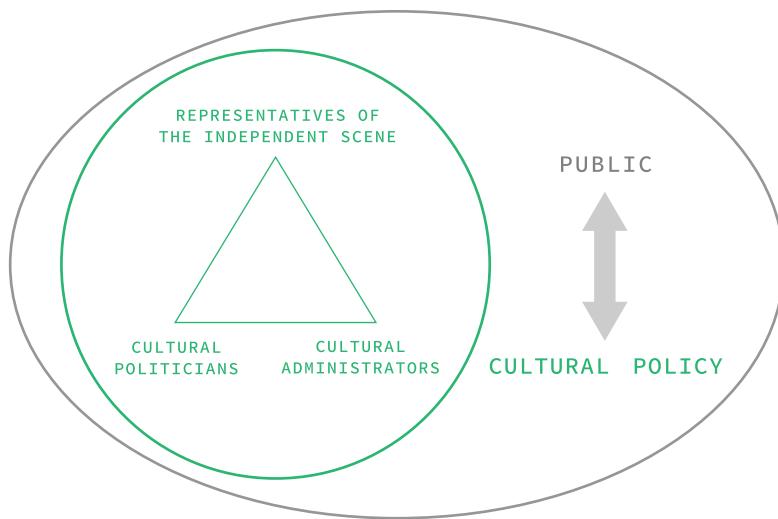
As indicated above, socioculture is based upon a certain conception of culture and therefore also of cultural policy. Socioculture is understood as "a community-oriented cultural practice spanning sectors, themes, departments and generations, which seeks broad participation of the population. [It] is aimed at cultural education of individuals and cultural organisation of society in the broadest sense "(National Association Sociocultural Sachsen e.V.) In other states it is more common to speak of "*community work*". Several speakers have pointed out that despite the recognition of socioculture in the German context since the 1970's, understanding on the part of the public funding agencies has remained very low. Diana Wesser, performance artist, director of festivals and art projects in public space in Leipzig, had the following to say regarding the current situation in Leipzig: "For many people it is still unclear that this form [community work or socioculture] is art. On the other hand, it is not expressed that it is only art. [...] This is an activist project. We want to shape society, not merely work with society or about society."

Socioculture belongs to the independent scene. But the independent scene is not to be equated with socioculture. The independent scene is home to other concepts of the arts and culture as those of socioculture. A statement by Christophe Knoch, spokesman for the Coalition of the Independent Scene of All the Arts of Berlin, made this point very clear: "This notion that only the [publicly controlled] institutions produce serious art [is no longer acceptable]. The independent scene also produces serious art." Here it is clear that other producers from within the independent scene represent a more avant-garde type of art (keyword *autonomy or art for art's sake* (Bourdieu, 1997)). For this reason it is impossible to reduce the independent scene to mere socioculture.

This vagueness of the terminology surrounding the independent scene constitutes a major challenge for cultural policy insofar as it transcends the extant tri-polarised thought-pattern (high culture, socioculture, instrument). Some of them fit into a specific repertoire, but on the whole they cannot be generally found within only one of the conditions as set by Laborier repertoires. What does a transformation of cultural policy need? How can it be designed?

## II. ACTORS THAT ARE TRANSFORMING CULTURAL POLICIES

The transformation of cultural policy in the sense of involvement by the independent scene in the discourse was supported and promoted by certain actors. Who are these actors? During the congress there were four groups of actors: Representatives of the independent scene, cultural politicians from the city, cultural administrators and the public:



A triangle is formed by the representatives of the independent scene, the cultural politicians and the cultural administrators. This was understood as the field of potential cooperation on cultural policy. The public is both instigator and addressee of this socially anchored design process of cultural policy. Of course, the entire field of cultural policy includes other actors, which were not directly taken into consideration here (see the cultural-political cartography developed during the congress).

The discussions have made it clear that the emergence of sustainable cooperation presupposes certain changes, both on the part of the independent scene (1) and on the part of the traditional local decision makers in the cultural sector (2). The following three are particularly important keywords: Visions, expertise and structures. In order to assert themselves as legitimate and recognized players within the field of cultural policy, these actors must work together to develop an independent and thought-out vision for the cultural policy of their city, which they should steer by their respective skills within specific structures.

### 1. In the independent scene: The creation of sustainable structures

The independent scene has to internally restructure itself in order to be able to succinctly present itself externally. The internal structuring covers various issues relating not only to the independent scene's ideas of identity, but also in terms of the legitimacy and the institutionalisation of the representation of the independent scene.

#### About self-understanding and cohesion of the independent scene

The question of self-understanding of the independent scene is tightly interwoven with its conceptual vagueness as discussed above. But how does the independent scene understand itself? Who feels that they belong to it? During the congress various speakers talked about the development of a network and a community in

the independent scene. How is it possible for individualistic freelancers and activists to come together and create a network?

Jonas Büchel, urban planner and cultural manager, co-founder and managing director of the Urban Institute in Riga, talked about his experience from social and urban planning in the context of his activities in Riga. In 2013, six curators from the independent scene came together in the context of the European Capital of Culture Programme 2014. They launched a movement of young cultural workers and activists by defining the city as a crucial development area for artists, cultural workers and especially the whole population. The specific concern was to ensure the temporary use of vacant infrastructure, which led to the establishment of a community in Riga that is eminently active in cultural policy. The movement free Riga triggered a great deal of resonance within the population of the city, because the people understood that this energy has created space for new perspectives (see Best Practices catalogue [LINK](#)).

Christophe Knoch, lawyer and spokesman for the *Coalition of the Independent Scene of all the Arts in Berlin* (KFS) reported on the initial phase of the KFS. In 2012, all sectors of the arts came together. As he described, the coming together of the independent scene was a big surprise for him, especially because it was previously very difficult to make decisions together. At the same time, he did not hide the aspect that the KFS had to deal with a strong sectionalisation in their midst. The making of decisions always comes down to the safeguarding of one's own interests, however the debates on the so-called City-Tax (using 50% of the revenues from the City Tax for the independent scene) overcame the divisions between the sectors and actors. (see Best Practices catalogue [LINK](#)).

In Leipzig, representatives of the independent scene came together in the association of Leipzig + Culture, which was founded in 1999. In 2001, the non-profit decided to respond to years of underprovisioning by organising a project known as "White January". This project demonstrated how colourless the cultural calendar of the city would be when none of the independent scene's activities take place. Its most important campaign was and to this day still is "Five for Leipzig", an action in 2012 that took on a national scope and demanded 5% of all municipal cultural budgets for the financing of the independent scene. (see Best Practices catalogue [LINK](#) as well as the opening lecture by speaker Falk Elstermann).

Every similar network or alliance has designed itself around local solutions to these problems. This has been the result of active commitment on the part of individual actors. How is it possible to carry this initial spark into the longer term? During the Congress, the question of identity emerged as an important issue. After a period of initial euphoria it is important to create a long-lasting connection between the individual actors in order for them perceive each other as peers. In this process, new forms and means of communication within the scene need to be manifested. The exchange of experience and knowledge should be made possible with the aim of creating more ideological and structural opportunities for freelancers. This process often requires intense debate, through which the territory of the independent scene should be defined in relation to that of the entire cultural field and not as encompassing the latter.

In this context, the notion of a divisional system between sectors was repeatedly brought up during the congress. Should the independent scene create its own space, as is currently being handled in the planning for the new Cultural Development Plan of Leipzig? Or should it rather be split into sectors such as music, theatre, dance, visual art, literature, media or socioculture and represented individually in each case? The conceptual confusion between the independent scene and socioculture can cause certain actors in cultural policy and administration to consider the independent scene as a separate division. However, the independent scene is not a division but a large field that is subdivided along traditional lines.

## **Basic democratic legitimacy**

The conceptual vagueness of the independent scene was repeatedly accompanied during the congress with scepticism from the perspective of the public decision makers. With this conceptual vagueness that defines the independent scene, who then should represent it? The legitimacy of the representatives of the independent scene constitutes a necessity for a process of their recognition as legitimate points of contact for the city's cultural politicians and administrators.

Such a legitimisation points to the governance of a network or an alliance. The speakers all agreed with the realisation that this type of coalition should be construed from the perspective of non-hierarchical direct democracy. The following criteria need to be discussed: Who is eligible to participate in such an alliance? Are there any criteria for exclusion? Does this not create an environment of exclusivity? How does one design participation? How should the choice of speakers be organised? Another discussion point was about methods of participation and their promotion within the alliance. Here, the majority of congress participants felt a strong disdain for top-down networks as they have been created exclusively out of urban development policy decisions such as the "Creative Network" in Spandau, which was founded by the coopolis agency at the behest of the district of Spandau. Stefanie Raab, founder and CEO of coopolis - planning office for cooperative urban development, responded to the criticism with a plea for transparency.

Transparency is a key concept in relation to the legitimacy question of such a coalition. How are decisions made? Who is allowed to take the floor? Transparency is important, so that the members of such movements continue to feel that they belong and are represented. It requires a continuous exchange between the representatives and the entire independent scene. This ideal vision of a legitimate representation of the independent scene met with certain constraints. It should not be forgotten that such representation is invariably founded on a voluntary basis: Ultimately, the "doers decide". For that reason, the question of legitimacy is related to the question of the institutionalisation of networks.

## **The institutionalisation of the alliance of the independent scene**

During the congress there was a great amount of discussion about the issue of institutionalisation of an alliance of the independent scene. What form might this take? What conditions are needed? Some dissenting voices have always been against tendencies toward an institutionalisation of the independent scene by arguing that it will necessarily end in nationalisation and some sort of framing regulations. It would mean that the independent scene loses its defining flexibility. Additionally, others see a potential causal link between institutionalisation and disengagement by arguing that a highly structured organisation could lead to a retreat or even withdrawal of its members. This voice, however, was not in the majority. The majority has spoken, in fact, for a solution that assigns permanence and durability to the cultural policy work of the alliance of the independent scene. In this regard, three solutions were presented: The legal entity, the co-ordination centre and knowledge transfer.

Several speakers, among others Markus Lüdke, CEO of Music Land Niedersachsen GmbH, highlighted the benefits of the adoption of a legal form of the collective alliance. This model enables the previously unconsolidated coalition to become a juristic entity and act as a legal point of contact to authorities. This would make it easier to obtain funding. In the congress, the spokespeople from various free scenes speculated upon the most relevant legal form of such a political alliance, whether non-profit, network, association or cooperative. Christine Ebeling, spokeswoman of the Gängeviertel in Hamburg, reminded us that the choice of legal form depends upon the purpose of the respective alliance. In the case of the Gängeviertel in Ham-

burg, the cooperative form appeared most expedient from the perspective of shared usage and provisioning of spaces in and around physical buildings. In the case of Leipzig + culture, the spokespeople have recently decided to register it as an association. Getting to that point was long and very controversial. The Coalition of the Independent Scene in Berlin has not yet achieved consensus on a legal form and for the time being remains a coalition without the status of a legal entity.

The second approach relates to the relevance of a coordination office in an association for the independent scene. As already mentioned, the work of a spokesperson is not remunerated, even though its fulfilment takes a great deal of time. Because volunteer work requires such a great deal of energy, many coalitions often succumb. Christophe Knoch provided several examples in Berlin, such as the Dance Office, which consists of two part-time employees. They have the luxury of time to consider and contemplate. However, it is a problem that the coordination jobs are financed by the public sector and not by the contributions of the members. This could lead to a state of dependence. The discussions during the congress did not delve further into this idea, but it is necessary to think about the range of tasks that should be attributed to a coordinator: The preparation of meetings, in the constitution of statements, the bringing together of the members?

A third approach for promoting the continuity of such coalitions deals with the distribution of the knowledge in their midst. How should communication within the association best be undertaken? How are new members informed of the current status? The spokespeople present from the Alliance of the Independent Scene reported on the difficulty of constantly having to convey the knowledge of the network over and over again. How can you ensure that discussions do not have to start from scratch every time new members arrive? Christine Ebeling, spokeswoman of the Gängeviertel in Hamburg, advised that a data-management system can be a good solution for this. It can enable one to archive minutes from meetings, documents, flyers, etc. and can furthermore facilitate innovative differentiable flows of communication. Mailing lists are also inescapable for ensuring consistent and stable communication at several levels. In addition, there is the possibility, as in the case with this thesis paper, to document the formation of an association or alliance with a book. Such publications, in addition to the inherent aspect of mediation, also have the great advantage of strengthening the identity of the alliance.

Makers of cultural policy should see the emergence of such an alliance as an interaction with emergent social changes within the broad spectrum of activity and career development of the cultural sector and artists in order to bring about a relevant change to cultural policy.

## 2. The appointment of municipal decision-makers: defending the importance of culture

The term “Municipal decision-makers in the field of culture” means culturally-focussed politicians and administrators. Culturally-focussed politicians are representatives of a city or municipality that are competent in the field of culture; such as those that have a seat on a city council or are spokespeople for their parliamentary party on the committee for cultural affairs. These people are regarded as specialists for culture in their political party. They make decisions at different levels regarding the allocation of the budget. Cultural administrators on the other hand are responsible for implementing these decisions. As servants of the public, administrators do not formally have political decision-making power. However, it seems unrealistic to assert that cultural politicians are the only creators of cultural policies that cultural administrators are subserviently required to implement. The administrators are recognised by the cultural politicians as experts in cultural subject matter – and enjoy a clear context of impact that is expressed by the continuity of their activities as opposed to mandate limited by elections. Ultimately, it is the heads of department that serve as an interface between the political and administrative spheres of cultural political power.

What needs to happen so that the local decision-makers in the field of culture can actively participate in the transformation of the cultural policy? In the congress it repeatedly emerged that they need to gather expertise in order to capture the complexity and diversity of culture in their city. From this knowledge, they should be able to develop a conscious and well thought-out vision for the cultural policy of their city or their state in order to apply it within politics or administration. Irrelevant of activity in the political or administrative field, they are faced with the task of demanding an enhancement of the value placed upon culture.

### **It requires vision and instruments**

Many speakers at the congress, including former or active cultural heads of department appealed for the need for a cultural-political vision. The cultural sector is constantly in flux and it requires close monitoring by the public authorities in order to do justice to claims of societal challenges. How can this vision be realised? What skills are necessary for this?

During the congress, the instrument of a “Cultural Development Plan” (CDP) was very thoroughly discussed. Klaus Hebborn, Assistant Secretary of the German Association of Cities, pointed out that CDP’s were, however, after enjoying a strong popularity in the 1970’s and 80’, mostly “exiled” in the 90’s. Today, however, they are experiencing a sort of renaissance. A contemporary CDP is no longer understood as a top-down approach, but rather as a design tool of participatory cultural policy. CDP’s allow and sometimes invite politicians and administrators to cooperate with the population and with the protagonists of the cultural sector on a visionary discourse: What do we want to have achieved in 5 or 10 years?

Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of Bonn, talked of his experience. He was entrusted with a CDP when he took office in 2010. He understood it more as a master plan. To this end he created a *thinktank* in Bonn that was launched in order to cooperatively reflect with the cultural actors of the city about a vision for the cultural policy of their “city in transition”. This text will return to discuss the participatory aspect in the 3rd part. At this point, it is important to emphasise the aspect of attitude. This collision of cultural policy decisions needs visions that must spring from a certain level of knowledge.

In order to fulfill their tasks, cultural politicians and administrators need an overview of the entire cultural field. They must be able to monitor artistic and cultural tendencies. They need specialized cultural training that gives them a degree of skill in appraisal that transcends that of amateurs or hobby artists. It is easy to realise that the significance of culture remains incomplete if such authority for the adoption of a cultural policy mandate are missing or are not yet part of the administrative apparatus. Much criticism has been expressed in terms of this lack of authority of decision-makers: “One would never leave the field of social work or the financial sector to the ‘untrained’, but in the cultural sector it is okay”; “It should not be considered sufficient that an authorized decision-maker merely be a singer in a choir or in the shower”; “It must not happen that a department head of cultural affairs in a German metropolis has never heard of Fluxus.” The development of a visionary and relevant cultural policy needs thematic expertise and insight into the reality of the cultural sector. For this reason, several times over the course of the congress attention was called to the perception that cultural politicians and administrators should engage more with the agents of culture and the arts; and that, for example, visits to cultural events should be understood as part of their work.

An overview of the entire scene would enable them to promote cooperation between the various actors the cultural sector. The issue of cooperation between “publicly” steered institutions and the independent scene was also touched upon several times during the conference. Publicly funded infrastructures exist and independent actors should be able to make better use them. As an example, the expertise of technicians

and managers from these institutions could also be made available. In this regard, the promotion of such cooperation should be a role of the cultural administration.

### **Implementation of this vision within the administration and politics**

The development of a vision is the first step. The second step is the defence and promotion of such a vision within political and administrative levels. As mentioned above, cultural activities must always prove their legitimization when it comes to distribution of public funds. Herein is the task of the local decision makers in the cultural sector: To fight for the role of culture in their professional spheres. Out of this vision should emerge a line of argumentation that differentiates itself from other sectors (environment, economy, education, etc.). Daniela Rathe, former Cultural Affairs director of the city of Tübingen, has clearly brought this task to the point: “Tübingen is a city focussed on the climate. All the money goes into the environment. [...] I am fighting an internal struggle with the other [city] departments. I always say to the social office: “Hey, don’t forget about me!” The director of cultural affairs exhibits her creative will, but is also aware of her role as mediator. She must continuously explain why society’s culture is necessary.

The department of cultural affairs provides an interface between cultural politicians and administrators. Its role is especially important for representing the cultural and political vision on both sides. Mr. Faber, Culture Mayor and Councillor for Culture of the City of Leipzig, was approached at the Congress by spokespeople of the independent scene regarding his department’s guiding role and its significance. His response promised an unwavering “Maybe” on the future cooperation between the spokespeople and his office.

### **Manifestation of cooperation: Urban development/cultural politics**

In this context, the need for dialogue between cultural politics and urban development politics has been very clearly emphasized during the congress. Therefore, cooperation is no longer part of the lexicon of desirable possibilities but has entered the jargon of necessity.

Many studies have shown in recent years how closely cultural production and the usage of space are intertwined. “Culture opens spaces”; “Culture needs spaces”. The question of free space has been greatly discussed during the congress. An important contribution of the speakers, including Yiorgos Papamanousakis, Founder and Managing Director of the company Urban Transcripts, was to represent space as a stakeholder. Space is not only a framework within which culture or art is created and can take place, but has an inherent value in and of itself. It can create potential for living, breathing human beings. Diana Wesser, performance artist, director of festivals and art projects in public space in Leipzig, has also pointed out that the neighbourhood should be understood as an ecosystem, as an organism.

In this regard, many speakers have warned of the acute danger of gentrification for cultural production. According to Diana Wesser, it is not just about denouncing *property-speculators*, but according to the example of Leipzig thinking about “what we had” versus “what we have”. She thus expressed her desire for the general acceptance of an unfinished city, to indicate that not everything can or will be finished. One needs spaces not only to consume, but also spaces where one can realise oneself. This is consistent with the theories of Henri Lefebvre who has shown the need for imaginative spaces in his famous essay “Right to the City”.

Although the G-question [the gentrification question] is indeed currently heavily under discussion, it is unfortunately inactive at the political and administrative level. This requires collaboration between local

decision-makers in the fields of cultural and urban development. Decisions should be taken as a result of the interaction of the two bodies. The city planners present among the speakers at the congress have regrets that there are so few points of intersection between the two fields. They expressed their desire for a kind of “interactive city making” in which the prioritisation of culture should be a foregone conclusion. A cultural impact assessment would be very welcome along these lines. This would allow the risks of planned projects regarding potential gentrification be better weighed than previously.

In addition to the required culture of dialogue between cultural and urban development policies, concrete examples of securing spaces for culture were also discussed during the congress. Philip Horst, founding board member of the artist group Art Republic and co-director of the Centre for Art and Urban Affairs (ZK/U) from Berlin, talked about his experiences while managing the ZK/U. The initiative purchased certain rooms with the help of a Swiss foundation and thereby withdrawn them from the free market. A long term lease agreement allows them to further develop their cultural and artistic activities into the distant future. Other participants spoke of the idea of the consideration of an urban planning contract, which would be a type of taxation on real estate speculation, the proceeds of which would then be distributed to the benefit of the independent scene. More on this in an interview with Christian Gracza.

### III. THE GOAL: SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATORY CULTURE POLICY

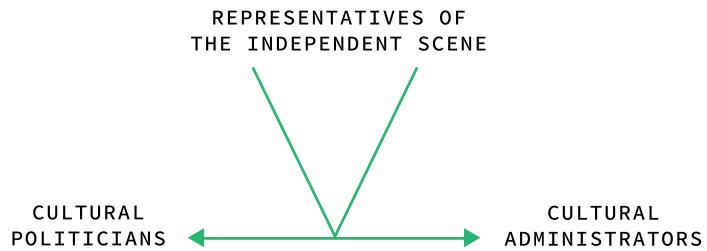
According to the actors’ notion of a transformation of cultural policy, a guideline for the transformation process of cultural politics will be presented in this final section. As has already been indicated, the key word is “participation”. The essential element of the congress was a call (if not a cry) towards a participatory cultural policy. The demand for participation in the design processes of cultural policy is provided by both the actors of the independent scene as well as actors of urban development policies and even from those of cultural policy. The city planners present at the congress wondered why such participation has not yet arrived in cultural policy, seeing as it has been an instrument of urban development for over 20 years. Cultural administrators like Daniela Rathe, former Cultural Affairs director of the city of Tübingen and Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of Bonn, emphasised the point: Participation is contemporary and in the cultural sector it is an aspect that should not be ignored. Klaus Hebborn, Assistant Secretary of the German Association of Cities, summarised quite poignantly: “Culture in the city is much more than culture from the city.” Only a participatory cultural policy can do justice to the claims of a democratic society. In the times of civil society, a culture of dialogue is of utmost necessity.

How can one craft a participatory cultural policy? What tools does it need for mediation? (1) Processes and procedures have been worked out intensively and concretely in the course of the congress, especially in the context of the workshops. An important aspect of such a participatory design is its sustainability. The introduction of instruments of mediation must be designed so that they can continue to operate even after certain actors have been replaced by other actors. How can an ever-changing permanence be designed? (2)

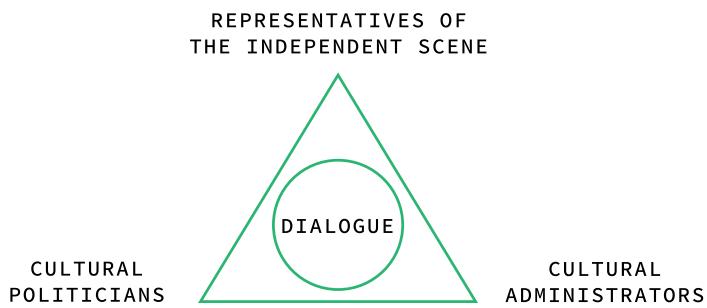
#### 1. Providing instruments for mediation

The representation of the different instruments of mediation requires clarification. The basic result of the discussions, which can be considered simultaneously as a prerequisite and a goal, can be bundled up in one word: Attitude. As Jonas Büchel, urban planner and cultural manager, co-founder and managing director of the Urban Institute in Riga, brought it more than once to the point: The desired transformation of cultural policy

depends largely on the question of attitude. In order for a dialogue to arise, the participating actors must mutually recognize the other actors as legitimate and equal (see the interview with Stefanie Raab). In this way, a space of negotiation may arise. Basically it comes to a transition from a so-called “Tretze situation” to an “arena situation”. Tretze (also known as Neckball, “Piggy in the middle” or “Stupid Hans”) is a simple ball game for at least three persons, in which the two (or more) outer players throw a ball to each other so that the internal player cannot catch it. As childlike as this metaphor may seem, it says quite a bit about the present conditions of the political game of cultural participation. The actors of the independent scene have repeatedly emphasised that they feel trapped in a supplicant position, from which they want to liberate themselves:



They call for a dialogue on equal footing with local decision-makers in the field of culture. They are specifically demanding to be decision makers on equal footing. Cultural policy is to be built in a dialogue:



### Participatory process: Mutual development of cultural policy objectives

In the congress, different examples of participatory methods were presented in the context of urban development and cultural policy: Whether as a “round table”, “cultural council”, “cultural advisory council”, “Jour Fixe” or “think tank”, all of these terms refer to a regular meeting of different categories of actors to discuss a common theme at a table. These are arenas of negotiation. Their structure opens up several questions: Who participates in it? Who decides upon the composition? How often will it meet? Where do the encounters take place? By whom it is to be conducted and moderated? What results are sought and how shall they be implemented in real, municipal action?

Several models were highlighted in the context of the dialogue between the independent scene and local decision-makers in the cultural field. There are four methods, each differentiating itself from the others according to whether the call is limited to three actors (independent scene, cultural administration and cultural policy) or whether further actors in the cultural sector (including representatives of the public institutions) are to be included. In this context, the problem of the extant divisive system is revealed. Here four options are presented using examples from the congress.

- The first possible composition consists of all actors from the cultural sector with representatives of cultural administration and cultural policy, which would for example include the directorship of the opera as well as spokespeople from the free dance scene and representatives of socio-cultural centres. This forms a model of a cultural parliament as it has been recently instantiated in Brno in the Czech Republic. Pavla Spurná, co-founder of Brno kulturní, an association of independent cultural operators and organisations in Brno, reported about the emergence of their Cultural Parliament. After the announcement of the closure of the local opera, a cultural-political movement in Brno came into existence. Thousands of people took to the streets to impede this decision. They then appealed to the public with six statements. The closing of the opera was carried out anyway, but via this development it became possible for the founding of the Cultural Parliament to take place. The Cultural Parliament is a meeting place, where every interested person can speak freely (LINK Catalogue Best Practice). The Culture Forum in Leipzig is another one of the first such collaborations insofar as it brings together actors from culture, politics, science and the independent scene for current artistic and political discourse. The Culture Forum in Leipzig is an annual event that has been organised on behalf of the City Council since 2012 by the Department of Culture. The meetings act as a direct democratic place of discourse production. Together, the breadth of the themes and the composition of the group makes it unfortunately impossible to move on to concrete negotiations.
- The second possible composition consists of all representatives from a specific division of culture and the arts with representatives from the cultural administration and cultural policy: such as for example all actors from the field of theatre ranging from independent actors to independent theatres and even the director of the state theatre. Such round tables have been tested in several places such as in Bonn and in Tübingen. Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of the Federal City of Bonn has launched 10 round tables to which he has invited 15 active cultural producers - "those that have to live with this concept". A thematic representative from the independent scene was represented at each table. Their job was to bring the discussion back to the independent scene. In Tübingen the concept took a similar course. Daniela Rathe, at the time head of Cultural Affairs City of Tübingen, organised sector-specific workshops (24 in total) to which she invited all the actors from one sector to come together. In both cases, the initiative came from the city administration. The selection of participants was also unilaterally decided upon by the administration. This second composition provided a unique meeting place of all active producers from a cultural sector that would otherwise not easily have met each other. The limited number of participants allowed the group to focus on a vision for the sector. However, it is clear that the composition should not be unilaterally decided upon by the cultural administration. In addition, as already mentioned, the divisional system of cultural "departments" excludes interdisciplinary art and similar cultural practices that increasingly play an integral role in the cultural sector.
- The third possible form of a composition consists of representatives from the entire independent scene with the cultural administration and culturally active politicians: This includes spokespeople from all of the sectors of the independent scene ranging from theatre, music, dance, literature, visual arts and socioculture. The round table of the independent scene in Leipzig is a striking example of this form. It brings all of the speakers from all cultural sectors of the independent scene together with cultural ministers, representatives of the parties and members of the expert committee of culture. This enables actors of the independent scene to explain and discuss their specific needs. Here, however, the independent scene is called an extra-section (if not extra-division) of the cultural landscape, which can be somewhat problematic because it pushes the independent scene into the corner and makes it a marginal player.
- The fourth possible composition consists of representatives of one sector of the independent scene, the cultural administration and possibly also members from cultural politics: For example it may include only the spokespeople for the sector of the independent scene of the fine arts. One example is the regular jour

fixe in Berlin, which is held between the cultural administration and representatives of the Berlin network of independent project spaces and initiatives. They meet every two months. The advantage of such a composition is its very concentrated mode of working. The attention of cultural administrators or politicians is completely focussed on the topic at hand. Several such arenas for close dialogue exist in Berlin depending on sector, such as the Initiative for New Music, the LAFT or Tanzbüro. The downside, as put forward by Christophe Knoch, spokesman for the Coalition of the Independent Scene of the Arts in Berlin, is that such a process would be incredibly time consuming if it should represent all sectors of independent culture, and that the sectors could be pitted against each other. This would create a certain competition between the respective sectors.

In addition to these compositions, other formal elements of cooperation were discussed during the congress. The question of place was an important issue. Why should the round tables always take place in the offices of the administration? Martin Schwegmann, director of the Robert Bosch Foundation programme "Actors of Urban Change" highlighted the importance of a neutral location. Such an approach promotes and retains a level playing field. In addition to the idea of a neutral location, there also appeared to be the need for a rotation of the meeting place. The meetings should take place in different production sites of the independent scene in order to allow insights into their respective modes of production. Furthermore, the role of presenters was raised. They should be external moderators who introduce the talks and moderate them so the discussions are not led as usual by the traditional decision-makers. The involvement of an external facilitator would also play a key role in that the negotiations can ultimately take place on an equal footing. For this purpose, several speakers expressed during the congress that the facilitator's role could be described as the management of a point of intersection or intermediate space. As both Dr. Patrick Föhl, founder and director of the "Network for Cultural Consulting" from Berlin and Michal Hladký, Designer and Project Manager of the European Capital of Culture Košice 2013 emphasised: Such negotiations need people who are very familiar with this point of intersection. They can moderate between the actors and thus enable a consensus to be found. Regarding this proposal, there came the legitimate question on the part of the independent scene: Who should pay for such a mediatory function?

### **Support of communication**

In addition to the formal framework of a round table, there was also a discussion about the manner in which the outputs of such negotiations should be conceived. According to Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of Bonn, a public report is published in Bonn after each round table. This raises the question of who wrote the report and whether it should be developed from the minutes.

In some cases, such negotiations have the initial goal of drafting a document. This has been the case not only in Bonn with its development of a participatory cultural development plan but also in Leipzig where the round tables of free culture have been geared toward the design of a cultural development plan for 2009 to 2015.

Whatever the form that a publication of the negotiations takes, it is necessary at any rate to reintroduce the debate to a broader social and political context. Hereby it is important that the content is communicated to the outside so that it can be accurately discussed. In these publications, it must be remembered that running processes (such as the development of new cultural policy objectives, funding procedures etc.) should not be disturbed by media publicity too early. The sensitivity of such topics requires that all participants communicate in a coordinated, responsible and reliable manner.

## **2. The issue of sustainability**

A participatory cultural policy should aim at a sustainable culture of dialogue. Sustainability is an urgent aspect of the cooperation process, which must be considered from the outset. Instruments of mediation should be designed to be durable, so they can continue to function throughout the phases of constant change involved in the comings and goings of actors. How can durable flexibility be designed?

Both on the part of cultural politicians as well as on that of the spokespeople of the independent scene there exists the problem of the change of those involved; only on the level of cultural administration can a certain continuity be guaranteed. For this reason, some type of continuity for the actors must be created – but how?

### **Archiving knowledge**

Cultural politicians have a seat for 5 years in the Committee for Culture. They must quickly familiarise themselves with the cultural-political discourse of their city and understand the resulting challenges that they are required to solve. Getting to know the actors takes a long time, time which very quickly runs out. Annette Körner, cultural and economic policy spokeswoman for the Alliance 90 / The Greens in the City Council and Chairman of the Culture Committee in Leipzig, talked about how she is just getting to know the workings of such structures in order to make the right decisions. She said that the [the party] office brought her the old decisions, so that she can gain an overview of what has already been discussed. The conveyance of resolutions takes place within the party. In this sense, the archiving of the debates and decisions constitutes a voluntary task. It is not clear whether all parties participate in this regard. Furthermore, the question of the archive's structure is important. Is it organised thematically or chronologically? How can members of the Committee for Culture gain a thorough insight of this material?

As Dr. Patrick Föhl, founder and director of the “Network Culture Consulting” from Berlin, mentioned, there is a need for a repository of negotiatory communication vessels where everything comes together. These are the cultural nodes. The continuity and archiving of negotiations result in a higher quality of cultural policy.

In addition to the objective of publishing the negotiations, there should also be an archiving system, in the sense of Liquid Democracy. Every decision and every transaction made with public funds should be published and accessible.

### **Keyword trust**

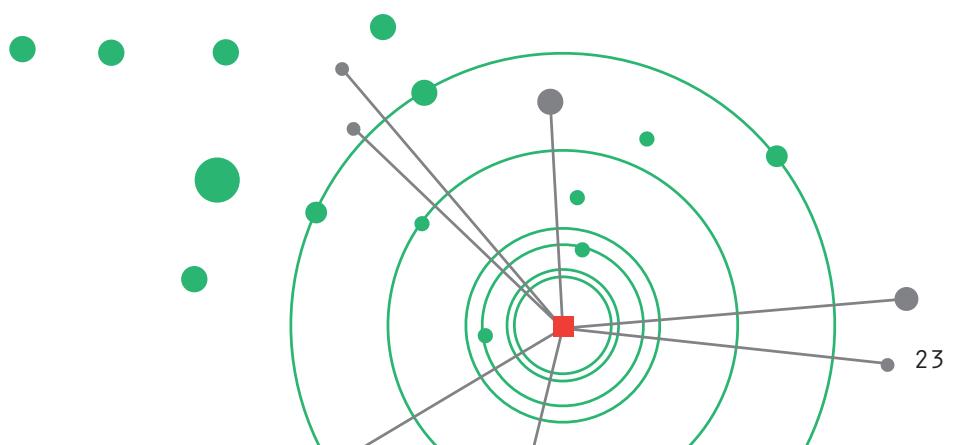
In addition to providing information, participatory cultural policy can only be sustainably maintained as long as the trust between the actors can be preserved. It may sound like a banality, but it is a part of the dialogue. Martin Schumacher, Head of the Department of Culture, Sports and Science of Bonn, has expressed the following: The phase of implementation is very important. As a cultural politician or administrator one should honestly implement that which has been discussed. Participatory cultural policy needs consistency. It should not just be made of “beautiful words” that have been jointly and participatively developed in order to be forgotten in a drawer.

In the case of Bonn, he reported that the round table continues to exist even though the Cultural Development Plan has now been developed. The implementation is being discussed and “supervised”. In addition, every 6 months a report is submitted by the Office of Cultural Affairs, which publicises the process of implementation.

## Maintenance of reflexivity

According to many speakers at the congress, such cooperation can become more sustainable when accompanied by the sciences and knowledge transfer. The inclusion of science can enable the acquisition of a more thorough overview of the subject matter and provide further knowledge. Then it is about creating reflexivity regarding one's own position, the position of others and the interactions between them. In addition to the sciences, a knowledge exchange should be encouraged with actors from other cities and countries. In this way, best practices can circulate and enrich their own context.

The Congress is a case in point in this regard. There was a discussion with more than 40 international experts, among others from France, England, Poland, Greece, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Latvia, as well as from all over Germany. They not only collected examples and elaborated upon recommendations for action, but also established a number of new interesting contacts. A very diverse know-how was brought to the discussion by more than 50 participants from science, the independent scene, administration and politics. Such events combine awareness and convey a certain enthusiasm for continuing to work toward this goal of sustainable and participatory cultural policy.



This text *Contents* is part of the online publication  
of the Congress **culture | place.positioning**:

**KSB.LEIPZIGPLUSKULTUR.DE**

EDITORSHIP

**Séverine Marguin** | [www.severinemarguin.de](http://www.severinemarguin.de)

**Yvonne Meyer**

**Falk Elstermann**

**Sophie Renz**

**Leipzig + Culture e.V.** | [www.leipzigpluskultur.de](http://www.leipzigpluskultur.de)

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

**Jonas Petry**

**Jonas Klinkenberg**

**Anja-Christin Winkler**

PROOFREADING

**Silvie Jacobi** | [www.post-creativecity.com](http://www.post-creativecity.com)

**Julia Lehmann**

TRANSLATION

**Daniel Caleb Thompson** | [ionary.org](http://ionary.org)

GRAPHIC DESIGN

**Susanne Weigelt** | [www.susanne-weigelt.de](http://www.susanne-weigelt.de)

(Logo: Christian Doege)

PROGRAMMING

**Jeremias Volker** | [www.bloodbrothers.io](http://www.bloodbrothers.io)

FILMS

**Thilo Neubacher**

**Anja-Christin Winkler** (video recording) | [www.acwinkler.de](http://www.acwinkler.de)

PHOTOS

**Johannes Ernst** | [www.johannesernst.de](http://www.johannesernst.de)

GRAPHIC RECORDING

**Julia Both, Ellen Backes – 123comics** | [www.123comics.net](http://www.123comics.net)

LIZENZ CC-BY-ND

LEIPZIG, 2015