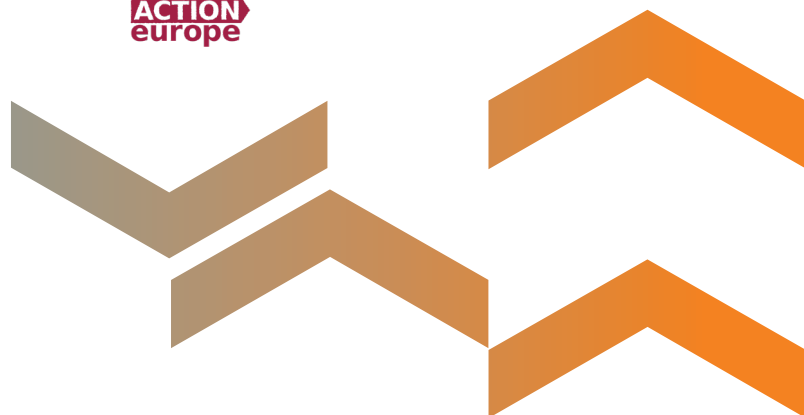




culture 21
UCLG Committee

PEER-LEARNING
TERRASSA
BARCELONA

JANUARY 2019



ACTIVITY

Peer-learning.

DATE

26-29 September 2018

PLACE

Terrassa and Barcelona,
Catalonia, Spain

PEOPLE INVOLVED

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PILOT CITIES EXPERTS

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CULTURE ACTION EUROPE AND UCLG

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PEER
LEARNING



CONTEXT

The **Pilot Cities Europe programme** is an initiative of the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and Culture Action Europe, which aims to foster peer-learning and capacity-building on culture and local sustainable development among European cities. Alongside self-assessment, policy innovation and participatory governance activities implemented in each city, peer-learning activities enabling bilateral and multilateral exchanges are organised on a regular basis.

In this context, a peer-learning visit to Terrassa and Barcelona was organised on 26-29 September 2018. Because of the close location of the two cities and their rich, complementary approaches, the visit combined a visit to Barcelona, including some of its work as a Leading City of the Agenda 21 for culture, and one to Terrassa, including presentation of its work as a Pilot City. The visit to Barcelona also addressed intercultural policies and programmes, this being a theme relevant to the work programme of Swansea as a Pilot City.

More specifically, aims of the visit included the following:

- To present and discuss the **general context of cultural policies in Terrassa and Barcelona**, and how they relate to local sustainable development.
- To introduce activities conducted by Terrassa in the context of its **work programme as a Pilot City**.
- To become familiar with **key cultural agents and projects in Terrassa**, including the **TNT performing arts festival**, during which the visit will take place.
- To address the **place of intercultural aspects in cultural policy** and in local sustainable development, as exemplified by some projects in the Ciutat Vella district of Barcelona
- To provide an **informal networking space** for participating cities and other stakeholders to meet and exchange views.

The visit involved participants from the Pilot Cities of Gabrovo, Galway, Izmir, Leeds and Swansea, as well as the host cities and several experts involved in the programme, and representatives of Culture Action Europe and UCLG.

This report summarises the activities conducted and highlights some of the lessons learned and comments made by participants following the visit. For further information, please visit the pages of **Barcelona as a Leading City** and **Terrassa as a Pilot City**.

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INTERCULTURAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN BARCELONA

On 26 and 27 September, three meetings and visits addressed aspects related to intercultural policies and programmes in Barcelona.

Among them was a visit to **Espai Avinyó**, a venue established by the City of Barcelona's Intercultural Action Department and the public consortium for Catalan language learning, in order to foster a reflection on cultural diversity and to promote intercultural approaches in culture and language. The visit to Espai Avinyó included a presentation by Ramon Sanahuja (Director, Migration Services) and Cristina Velasquez (Coordinator, BCN Intercultural Action programme) on the general context of the city's intercultural policies, as well as a presentation by Aixa Drammeh and Alba Tarroc (officers, Espai Avinyó) of the activities conducted at this venue. In this context, the following aspects can be highlighted:

- »»» In view of the city's increasing diversity, the City of Barcelona has progressively adopted an **intercultural paradigm** in its public policies, which combines the recognition of diversity, equality in rights, and the promotion of positive interaction and intercultural dialogue – these three principles have all the same importance and are connected to one another. There is an understanding that diversity needs to be made visible in the public space and that a sense of shared belonging in the city needs to be promoted as well.
- »»» The intercultural paradigm needs to be mainstreamed across all policy areas and the city at large – e.g. by seeing libraries as intercultural hubs, and fostering an intercultural approach within security forces. It needs to operate at both city and neighbourhood level, recognising diverse contexts and involving many stakeholders, and it should be seen as a long-term effort, which progressively bears fruit and is integrated by more organisations.
- »»» The city's **Intercultural Action programme** includes a range of action strands, including the so-called 'Barcelona Anti-rumour strategy' (which aims to challenge existing stereotypes and prejudices towards diversity, to prevent racism, etc. and currently involves over 1000 individuals and organisations; activities have reached over 10,000 people); the mainstreaming of intercultural aspects in a broad range of city and neighbourhood policies and programmes; training activities for citizens and NGOs; intercultural projects; and Espai Avinyó.
- »»» **Espai Avinyó** operates both as a language learning centre, which enables foreigners to become familiar with Barcelona and its diversity, and a hub promoting cultural diversity and helping to visualise it across the city. To this end, it regularly produces cultural activities (e.g. exhibitions, talks, etc.) and collaborates with other venues and organisations across the city.

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»»» Reaching out to all neighbourhoods and to those who would not come to Espai Avinyó, addressing a wide range of themes related to culture and everyday life, and using a diverse range of genres and media (concerts, exhibitions, performances, debates, film, guided tours, etc.) have proven essential.

In the morning of 27 September, a visit was conducted to **Fundació Tot Raval**, a civil society platform of approximately 50 social, educational, cultural and business organisations in the Raval neighbourhood of Barcelona, which was set up in 2002, following a period of massive transformations in the area – after a progressive loss of population between the 1960s and the 1990s, urban regeneration changed the physical aspect of the area and attracted wealthy inhabitants from other parts of Barcelona, while an influx of international migration in the late 1990s led to a more diverse human landscape. Tot Raval works to foster citizen participation, social responsibility and intercultural coexistence in the area. A presentation by Marina Rius (General Coordinator) and other members of staff introduced the general context of the foundation and some of its specific projects, including the following:

»»» **Raval(s)**, an annual cultural festival that presents the cultural diversity of the area, involving over 120 organisations and 300 volunteers, and attracting visitors from across Barcelona.

»»» **#RavalKm0**, a project which combines training opportunities, cultural activities and broader opportunities for small shops and businesses in the area. The most visible element of the initiative is a lighting project based on the stories and pictures of local inhabitants, which are presented in streets and squares in the weeks before Christmas. A different photographer is engaged in each edition, and several neighbours are trained in lighting techniques, with a view to broadening their employment opportunities. A parade involving many local organisations serves to launch the project, which also involves many small shops as partners and public and private organisations as donors.

»»» Finally, **Support your cultural facility** is a project initiated by the educational department of Fundació Tot Raval to foster partnerships between cultural facilities and schools and other educational centres in Raval. It emerged from the observation that local neighbours rarely visited cultural venues in the area. In this context, a series of specific projects involving most educational centres in the area (from kindergarten to adult education, including primary and secondary education and vocational training) have been devised.

One of the organisations strongly involved in Fundació Tot Raval and its cultural programmes is the **Barcelona Maritime Museum (MMB)**, which was the focus of the next visit on 27 September. A presentation by Teresa Soldevila, the officer in charge

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of corporate social responsibility programmes at MMB, presented its activities in this context. Of particular interest in this context were the following observations:

- »»» In addition to its mission related to heritage preservation and dissemination, MMB has actively integrated a **community participation component** in its ways of working, as part of its willingness to stress its social or public value, be inclusive and solidary and have a commitment to sustainability.
- »»» In this respect, MMB sees itself as one neighbour in Raval and regularly **collaborates with other cultural, social and educational organisations in the area**. This also involves the provision of free spaces at the museum for community activities (e.g. school concerts, NGO meetings, etc.) and the organisation of tailor-made activities (e.g. in the choice of exhibition themes, guided tours, etc.).
- »»» MMB has taken part in Fundació Tot Raval's **Support your cultural facility** programme for five years, the scheme progressively becoming more complex – increasingly, young participants are involved in designing and curating activities, targeting them to disadvantaged local groups (e.g. people with disabilities, elderly people).
- »»» Other projects include *Young Sailors*, which engages young volunteers from Raval in a learning process around ships and sailing and turns them into guides as well as ambassadors for the museum; and *Digital Invasion*, which enabled young migrants to produce electronic music and receive social media training, while also providing a good opportunity to meet new friends and become familiar with a city where they had only recently arrived.
- »»» Finally, MMB sees itself as a civic and social actor, which has provided support to local community groups in initiatives to improve the area, and which aims to engage and collaborate in as many activities as possible, both within and outside its premises.

CULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK IN BARCELONA

In the afternoon of Thursday 27 September, the delegation visited the premises of the **City of Barcelona's Culture Institute (ICUB)**, the local government's body in charge of cultural policy. The general framework of local cultural policies and the *In Residence* educational project were presented by Jaume Muñoz (International Relations officer) and Carles Giner (director, *In Residence*) respectively.

As regards the general work of ICUB and the cultural policy framework in Barcelona, the following aspects can be stressed:

- »»» Established in 1996 as a public agency within the framework of the local government of Barcelona, ICUB works to promote cultural development at the city level. In 2018,

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its budget amounted to 6.4% of the total budget of the municipality. 38% of ICUB's budget is transferred to private and non-profit cultural organisations.

- ▶▶▶▶▶ Meanwhile, it has been estimated that 82,300 people work in the creative industries in Barcelona (that is 11% of the total employed population). There are 7320 companies in creative sectors (10.5% of all companies); among these, 50.4% operate in standard creative sectors (architecture, design, publishing) and there is an increase in non-traditional industries (software, research and development, advertising).
- ▶▶▶▶▶ A **strategic plan** was adopted by ICUB in 2006, placing emphasis on culture and proximity (i.e. decentralised cultural opportunities, outreach work, etc.), quality and excellence in cultural production, and the promotion of a more connected cultural ecosystem.
- ▶▶▶▶▶ In this context, relevant initiatives have included the Art Factories programme (working spaces for artists in former industrial spaces), support for the connections between education and culture, audience development initiatives, the promotion of books and reading, and new mechanisms of cultural governance, including the **Barcelona Cultural Council**, which has, among other things, responsibility in the provision of annual grants to local cultural projects and organisations.

In Residence is a project launched in the context of the cultural policies of Barcelona, which fosters the presence of artists of different disciplines in secondary schools across the city. It involves 24 artists each year, and over 10 editions it has involved 42 of the approximately 60 high schools in Barcelona, which can apply to participate in it – this is a voluntary, rather than a compulsory initiative. Artists conduct 10-month residences, with 2-hour weekly sessions. The presentation focused on 13 keywords or concepts that serve to define the project, as follows:

- ▶▶▶▶▶ Active participation of teachers and teenagers.
- ▶▶▶▶▶ More than 20 teenagers and their teacher (projects also encompass a community component).
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Transforming the spaces of high schools, through the arts.
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Embedding the resulting pieces in the high school (rethinking the school as a cultural centre).
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Working with artists of different ages; each artist only takes part once.
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Asking along the residence process (a constant process of questioning).
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Public presentation of the results of each residence, in the context of a cultural venue or festival.

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- »»»» In the heart of contemporary museums.
- »»»» Cooperation in public spaces and events.
- »»»» Giving voice to teenagers (who are e.g. engaged in presenting the work to the general public).
- »»»» Hybridisation of artistic expressions.
- »»»» Omnipresence of the world of high school (reflections on educational institutions and practices).
- »»»» A horizon of uncertainty (raising questions and ideas about the future).

The meeting closed with a discussion on several aspects related to the cultural policies of Barcelona and the development of In Residence.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO TERRASSA AND ITS WORK IN THE PILOT CITIES PROGRAMME

Following the activities in Barcelona on 26-27 September, the delegation departed for Terrassa, where the programme would continue the following two days. In the morning of Friday 28 September, a welcome meeting was held at Casa Alegre de Sagrera, a heritage building which also hosts a local museum collection. In that context, the following presentations took place:

- »»» Amadeu Aguado, Deputy Mayor for Culture of the City of Terrassa, introduced the city, as well as the **local government's interest in promoting culture and international relations**. The combination of these areas is illustrated by Terrassa's active engagement in international networks, including in UCLG (through participation in the Pilot Cities programme and the **Intermediary Cities Forum**, among others), Eurocities (including in its Culture Forum), and the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (Terrassa was recognised as a **City of Film** in 2017).
- »»» Jordi Pascual, Coordinator of the **UCLG Committee on Culture**, thanked Terrassa for its engagement in the preparation of the visit and presented the **Pilot Cities programme**, highlighting the collaboration with Culture Action Europe. He invited all participants to raise difficult questions throughout the visit.
- »»» Tere Badia, Secretary General of **Culture Action Europe**, presented this organisation, which somehow operates as a 'network of cultural networks' in Europe, and which also contributes to the participation of the cultural sector in the Pilot Cities programme.
- »»» Pietat Hernández, Director for Culture of the City of Terrassa, provided some background as regards Terrassa's **participation in Pilot Cities**, presenting this as a 'leap forwards' from traditional local engagement. Reviewing the results of the **self-assessment exercise** conducted in 2016, she explained that the work programme had given priority to those areas in which realistic progress could be achieved, including cultural rights (mainstreaming a gender perspective, fostering accessibility), culture and economy (e.g. by including the cultural and creative industries in local economic impact studies), culture and education, culture in public space, and the governance of culture. Several of the initiatives undertaken in this context would be further examined in the course of the visit.

LOCAL CULTURAL POLICY IN TERRASSA

In the course of the visit, Pietat Hernández presented a comprehensive framework of Terrassa's cultural policy. In particular, the following elements can be singled out:

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- »»» General guidelines for cultural development and policy in Terrassa were defined in the **White Paper on Culture**, resulting from a broad process of engagement and discussion which involved many individuals and organisations. It was the final result of a process of reflection which had been launched by the Local Council on Culture and the Arts and had involved a Congress on Culture, among others.
- »»» While the process was long (4 years), it was also rich and helped to strengthen connection among cultural stakeholders in the city. This can be exemplified by the fact that **all political parties approved the resulting document**, thence adopting a commitment to implement its activities if they took office.
- »»» The White Paper identifies priority themes and actions in **five transversal areas** (e.g. cultural connectedness, social cohesion, governance, innovation) and **seven sectors** (performing arts, heritage, visual arts, folklore, music, etc.). It also identified the need to be more engaged at international level. In the view of Pietat Hernández, the reflection gained in Pilot Cities provided a very valuable experience in then being able to engage in an international process such as Pilot Cities.
- »»» Over the years, **several phases can be identified as regards the governance of cultural policy** in Terrassa: a focus on providing services to citizens (1979-1992), the setting-up of sectoral councils which require active dialogue (1992-1997), a transition process towards more representative participation (1997-2005) and the establishment of a Council which involves seven sectorial working groups and one plenary body, with joint involvement of public authorities and civil society organisations.

FESTIVALS PROMOTING INCLUSION, ACCESS AND CONTEMPORARY CREATIVITY

Two of Terrassa's most visible arts festivals were presented by their directors in the morning of 28 September. Some of the main elements of the presentations are summarised hereafter.

The **Elixir poetry festival** was presented by its director, Rosa Boladeras, and by international relations officer, Anna Boladeras. The festival was included in **Terrassa's work programme as a Pilot City**, with a pilot measure that aims to promote universal accessibility to culture for everyone, including people with disabilities, and an intergenerational focus. The following aspects can be particularly highlighted:

- »»» First launched with the aim of **giving a space to poetry in the city**, reaching out to the local population and addressing social issues, over six annual editions Elixir

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has grown in recognition and audience (from 200 to 2500 attendees). It is a private initiative, with support from the local council as well as many other public and private stakeholders.

- »»» Elixir aims to provide access to culture to everyone, including in neighbourhoods where cultural offer is often less easily available, and to **involve people with diverse abilities** – further to their role as audiences, there is an aim to engage them as part of the organisational team in the future.
- »»» A **feminist approach** is integrated in the vision and organisation of the festival, including by including many female poets in its activities and addressing relevant themes.
- »»» **Communication and dissemination** of the festival involves a strong engagement in social media, and also relies on many partnerships and collaborations with cultural venues and organisations (e.g. libraries, the local film school, etc.) as well as social and educational partners (e.g. schools), which contribute to its being better known and reaching out to diverse audiences.

On the other hand, **TNT** is a performing arts festival that explores new and alternative formats and trends and has become very well-recognised in its field, in Terrassa, Catalonia and internationally. TNT builds on Terrassa's record in the performing arts, including a well-established **theatre school**, several venues and a **production centre**, which is in charge of the organisation of the festival. It is held annually in late September and provided an excellent setting for the visit of the Pilot Cities delegation in 2018. Its director, Pep Pla, presented the festival to participants, highlighting, among others, the following aspects:

- »»» TNT aims to **reach both local audiences** (at least 50% of tickets for each show are sold to Terrassa inhabitants) and **international producers and programmers** (the 2018 edition attracted 150 foreign festival and venue programmers).
- »»» Several activities involve departments and bodies of the local government (e.g. libraries, neighbourhoods, inclusion, etc.) and other local organisations. Particular emphasis is placed on **targeting children and young people**, including through activities in public space, reduced rates and the engagement of children in selecting shows for the festival programme.
- »»» TNT has managed to build a **distinctive reputation as an innovative, challenging performing arts festival**, presenting work that will rarely be seen in other places, including in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. Progressively, it has contributed to placing Terrassa on the international map. This is also facilitated by TNT's engagement as co-producer of many works (over 150 pieces in 11 years), which later tour internationally and give visibility to Terrassa.

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Later that evening, participants in the visit attended the performance of *Cold Blood* (Michèle Anne de Mey, Jaco Van Dormael and Collectif Kiss & Cry) at Teatre Principal, the opening event of the TNT festival in 2018.

THE GENDER DIMENSION IN CULTURAL LIFE

Terrassa's **work programme** in the context of Pilot Cities devotes some activities to exploring the gender dimension in cultural life and cultural policy. Anna Villarroya, a lecturer at the University of Barcelona who is currently providing technical assistance to the City of Terrassa in this context, presented the general framework of this work and facilitated a discussion on the topic. The following aspects can be highlighted:

- Work undertaken in the context of Pilot Cities in Terrassa aims in particular to **apply gender criteria in the make-up of the Local Council of Culture and the Arts and in the analysis of the local cultural sector**. Following an initial review of existing policy documents (e.g. the White Paper on Culture) and of references to gender in Culture 21 Actions, work is currently underway to analyse gender equality within the Local Council of Culture and the Arts and to collect data on audiences in publicly-organised cultural events.
- Furthermore, amendments are being introduced in the **guidelines for the organisation of events in public space**, where new regulations to comply with gender equality will be introduced. Awareness-raising activities on gender equality and the prevention of discrimination and harassment may also be conducted.
- Likewise, an **external audit of one public cultural venue** is foreseen, which should provide the opportunity to review existing practices from a gender perspective and produce recommendations which could be relevant in other venues as well.

A **discussion** ensued, which addressed similar challenges and initiatives in other European countries (e.g. the 'Waking the Feminists' initiative in Ireland), the understanding that promoting gender equality may in certain contexts involve fostering men's participation in some activities and roles, the connection with working conditions (often, the professional roles involving more women are also those where working conditions are worse) and with notions of excellence, and the need to improve the availability of data, which may serve to challenge prevailing perceptions.

The Committee on Culture of UCLG also indicated its aim to pursue work in this area in several ways, including by addressing it in some of the sessions of the forthcoming **third UCLG Culture Summit** (Buenos Aires, 3-5 April 2019), as well as other research and learning initiatives.

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SUPPORT TO FILM DEVELOPMENT

In the afternoon of 28 September, a visit was organised to **Parc Audiovisual de Catalunya (PAC)**, an extensive audiovisual production complex, established in the site of a former hospital in the outskirts of Terrassa, near the natural park of Sant Llorenç del Munt. A guided visit was facilitated by Cristina Brandner, General Manager, and Jordi Hernández, Technical and Innovation Director of PAC. The following aspects can be highlighted in particular:

- ▶▶▶ PAC provides **integral services to producing companies** in film, TV, advertising and related areas. Further to the provision of spaces for shooting and production, as well as ancillary services, it hosts a cluster with over 40 audiovisual, innovation and media companies. It has progressively become one of the production sites of choice for many national and international audiovisual projects.
- ▶▶▶ The location of PAC, further to its being close to Barcelona and to a diverse range of natural landscapes (hills, sea, etc.), also contributes to efforts to develop the northern part of Terrassa.
- ▶▶▶ PAC is one of the key components of **Terrassa's 'city of film' programme** (part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network), which relies on the existence of a wide, diverse and strong ecosystem of stakeholders, addressing all of the stages of the film value chain and providing opportunities for access and participation for the population at large. In this respect, an **Audiovisual Working Group** has been established in the context of the Pilot Cities programme.
- ▶▶▶ Other film-related activities in **Terrassa's work programme** as a Pilot City include film screenings in local libraries and in public spaces, as well as guided tours to relevant spaces and venues across the city.

WORK IN THE FIELD OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

A significant component of Terrassa's cultural policy concerns cultural heritage, including in particular medieval remains and industrial heritage, as well as collections kept in the city's **Municipal Museum**. The latter, covering different historical periods, is spread out in several locations, among which **Seu d'Ègara** (Monumental church complex of Sant Pere de Terrassa) especially stands out.

In the afternoon of 29 September, a visit to Seu d'Ègara was conducted by the Pilot Cities delegation, which served to become familiar with both this Romanesque complex of churches, their roles and evolution over the years, and with existing plans to apply for

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UNESCO World Heritage status. In October 2018, the site was inscribed by Spain in the Indicative List, a preliminary step towards the formal submission of an application for consideration by UNESCO.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS ACTIVE IN CULTURAL LIFE

Throughout the visit, several presentations and visits helped to acquaint participants with relevant cultural organisations in Terrassa. Short summaries of these experiences are presented hereafter:

- Established in 1878, **Centre Cultural El Social** promotes culture, leisure and sport activities, including theatre, choirs and folk dances as well as many other activities. With approximately 800 members, its premises are a hub of activity and a meeting place for many, and the organisation is also connected to many activities taking place elsewhere in Terrassa.
- Amics de les Arts i Joventuts Musicals**, established in 1927, is a grassroots organisation involving 500 members, which promotes a wide range of cultural activities (through specialised sections in plastic arts, photography, film, theatre, classical and choral music, jazz and literature), as well as public conferences and debates. It provides meeting and activity spaces for a wide range of groups and serves as a cultural and civic hub.
- Founded in 1959 as part of Amics de les Arts i Joventuts Musicals, **Jazz Terrassa** is one of Terrassa's best-established cultural organisations. It manages a public venue with a regular concert season (which also hosts rehearsals and recordings), and organises a renowned jazz festival. It is also engaged in several other initiatives to promote jazz in Terrassa (e.g. an educational programme, concerts in public space, etc.).
- The **Federation of Folklore Groups** is an umbrella organisation of approximately 40 groups and organisations promoting music and performing practices related to traditional Catalan culture, fostering collaboration among them and enhancing citizen participation and dissemination of activities in this area. The Federation organises a series of joint events in public space throughout the year and has also facilitated participation in some activities abroad.
- The **Chamber Orchestra Terrassa 48** is a resident ensemble in the Municipal Auditorium of Terrassa, where it has performed for 19 years. A string orchestra with a strong research strand, it has also developed an educational programme involving open rehearsals, courses and concerts.
- Tub d'Assaig** is an umbrella organisation for the circus sector, initiated by a group of artists and stage designers who were in search of rehearsal spaces. Over the

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years, it has contributed to establishing a circus hub in Terrassa, with a range of activities that include education, festivals and performances, the provision of residence spaces for other groups, and administrative support to companies. Recently, the City of Terrassa has refurbished an old factory that will provide new rehearsal spaces in this area.

»»» **Casa de la Música** is part of a network of five venues in different Catalan cities, which work to promote music development in their respective cities, engaging with the relevant local context through education and training (school sessions, teacher training, specialised professional courses, etc.), rehearsal and production spaces, concerts and audience development initiatives.

In the afternoon of 29 September, the delegation paid a visit to the studio of artist **Anna Taratiel**. Further to the presentation of her work, she described her own professional journey – after several years living abroad, she had recently come back to her hometown of Terrassa and set up a working space with some other local artists.

REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED



As the visit came to an end, participants were invited to reflect on the conclusions they had extracted. Here are some of their views:¹

Our peer-learning visit to Barcelona and Terrassa was an inspiring and thought-provoking one. Swansea's particular interest currently lies in the area of diversity and intercultural practice and we are grateful that the programme included visits relevant to our focus.

From an intercultural perspective, the visit to Espai Avinyo was pertinent, with both Wales and Catalonia being bilingual regions and both being host to people from diverse backgrounds. The team shared the three principles of equal importance that guide their intercultural policies, which set the tone for our time in Barcelona. This framework will be useful to reflect upon when designing our own diversity policy/strategy in the near future:

The *Inter-culturalism Policy* provided a clear overview of their commitments to local communities/schools etc and their wider ambitions. These frameworks were communicated in a passionate and genuine manner with a sense that everyone was working within the same methodology with unified goals.

¹ Contributions have been edited slightly, for the sake of brevity.



REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The visit to Fundació Tot Raval was also valuable and there was much to learn from their work in using intercultural policy to integrate and celebrate one of the most densely populated districts in Europe. We were interested in their holistic approach incorporating the arts and wellbeing agenda, the focus on environmental and social responsibility and the training opportunities created. Another good example of their work was the Foster Your Cultural Centre project involving the majority of the schools in the district, where teachers and Tot Raval staff work together to devise a project tailored to each school.

We found the Barcelona's Maritime Museum provided some good examples of neighbourhood inclusion, involving people of various age groups and backgrounds, participating in different festivals and providing free spaces for activity. This is something that our museums also strive to do to varied degrees depending on size and capacity.

Terrassa is similar to Swansea in its population size and in the post-industrial challenges we face. It was inspiring to see how culture is being used as a tool for regeneration of local disused buildings in the case of the Audiovisual Park and the new Circus hub.

The visit highlighted the importance of having a coherent strategy easily communicable and providing direction to staff and partners. We are currently in the process of creating this document within Cultural Services.

One of the overwhelming positives of the Barcelona-Terrassa visit was meeting the other participants, developing support networks across our peers in other cities, discussing shared challenges and opportunities, and having experts to call on for advice. We look forward to continuing these relationships, and are aiming to foster just such an atmosphere when Swansea hosts.

Jo Furber and Amina Abu-Shahba, Swansea

It was my first participation in this peer-learning visit in the context of the Pilot Cities programme and it was extremely interesting to get acquainted with the cultural policies of both cities – Barcelona and Terrassa.

The city of Terrassa is bigger than Gabrovo city, but I found many similarities between the two of them, that could be a very good basis for a future partnership. Our main goal is, apart from being a Capital of humor and satire and an industrial city with an emphasis on new technologies, to establish Gabrovo as a place with rich and quality cultural life. The city of Terrassa, from what I saw has already achieved this goal.



REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Terrassa is a Creative City of Film, recognized as part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in 2017. Gabrovo city was accepted also as a Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art in 2017 and I think on this basis we could achieve favourable partnerships in the context of the Network and in accordance with its main specific objective – urban sustainable development. United by a common goal of imposing creativity at the heart of sustainable urban development, we could work towards the realization of new ideas for common initiatives and projects.

Project Elixir was such a very good example for me and especially the fact that this festival is organized only by women and is aimed only at women. I was also interested in the subject of women's rights, which is obviously on the agenda and extremely current. And the fact that the project is implemented in different places around the city, but its main focus is on neighbourhoods and with attention to disadvantaged people - an exclusively social project.

This is how we want to do our activities, especially to include people from the districts, to bring cultural events from the center of the city and to include the neighborhoods as well as the disadvantaged people. I was also curious about the moment with the dissemination of the event information and the ways to reach the audience.

An active collaboration between the public authorities and the private organizations was also impressive, this, I think is the key moment of utmost importance for the cultural policies process in Gabrovo. Improving the capacity of people, engage with cultural problems in both the municipality and the non-governmental sector and, above all, encouraging non-governmental organizations to be active in creating cultural products, attracting artists, cultural managers from abroad, attracting actively involved representatives from business and civil society.

The city of Terrassa was, indeed, a very good example for me, concerning this issues and highlighting this active working system of stakeholders.

Velimira Hristova, Gabrovo

The White Paper on Culture is an initiative of the Council of the Culture and the Arts of Terrassa. It was impressive to see the work that had gone into this with stakeholders from across the city to consider the value of culture in relation to both the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development alongside the Culture 21: Actions commitments, which underpin this Pilot Cities programme.



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It was reassuring to hear from cultural producers about their engagement in the policy development and the commitment of the city to deeper and wider engagement in the shaping, delivery and value of cultural practice.

Of all of the pilot measures identified in the Work Plan the work on gender balancing stood out. The presentations on the first morning in Terrassa at the beautiful Casa Alegre de Sagrera by Rosa Boladeras, Director of the Festival Elixir Poetry festival, and her colleague Anna Boladeras was an interesting and practical application of the ambition to create gender balance within cultural production and presentation. It was important to hear the work framed not as a 'Women's' festival of poetry, but as a festival of poetry where women headlined. I was particularly struck with the idea of the 'secret celebrity', where the festival is endorsed by well-known female cultural figures, but they are not used to sell the festival. "People come because they enjoy it, and are 'rewarded' with a well-known contributor". This approach is interesting in terms of how we relate the structures of hierarchy and gender within cultural production.

Whilst not a specific pilot measure, I was interested and impressed to see the scale of workspaces for artists and cultural producers. The walking tour of Condicionament, Vapor, and El Social, and the presentation in situ of both Tub d'Assaig and the artist Anna Taratiel gave a rich introduction to the physical infrastructure that supports cultural practice in the city. I can think of few cities of the size of Terrassa, with so much space for production.

I would have liked to have understood a little more about the economics of cultural production. I felt I was missing a little background information as a visitor coming in, not just to Terrassa, but also to Spain, Catalunya and the province of Barcelona. I would have liked to know more about the support available for cultural producers at these four levels of public administration. Who pays the artist and when? How do the circus groups raise their funds, how are the festival and folkloric organisations financed? Is it possible to survive in the city as an artist? How much support comes from the municipality and how much is private?

Other observations

'Culture makes people say Ah about your city... If you are a small boutique you need to be specialized when living next door to a shopping mall' Pep Pla, Director of Festival TNT.

The question of identity, cultural specificity and reputation are ones that are repeated across our Pilot Cities. Where a city is not the capital, with the richness of a cultural offer, the smaller or neighbouring cities strive to create a cultural distinctiveness of



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their own. Across the Pilot cities, questions of unique production and development rub against visiting 'world class culture'. How much should the cities risk the unknown or less known to be unique, and how much should they provide the same offer as their bigger neighbours. If we are counting numbers, then audiences of the known blockbuster will be better, but is this the measure of success?

This tension is one we see again and again. The TNT festival has been going for a number of years. At lunch in the courtyard, shared with TNT guests and artists, I took the opportunity to speak to 3 programmers from the UK who come every year. I asked why of all festivals did they continue to come to this one. Their reply was simple, that they could trust the quality and that it was a good mix of the 'known' and the pleasant surprise.

Barcelona

In Barcelona I particularly enjoyed the presentation by Marina Rius at the Fundació Tot Raval. What a strong example of a civil society platform working across the diverse communities, languages and cultures of the Raval neighbourhood. Like others I enjoyed the photographic lighting project by Maria Espeus and understanding the Raval Km0 festival as means to create locally relevant arts practice alongside opportunities for skills learning and employment.

Clymene Christoforou, Expert, Pilot Cities

I was very pleased with the content which was delivered during the four main elements of the Barcelona visit, offering a broad range from high-level strategy and politics, through institutional profiles, to detailed exploration of projects.

It quickly became apparent that Barcelona is on a different trajectory from Swansea and has a very different political appreciation of the place of culture in public life than is the norm in the UK. The growth in cultural spend as a proportion of total budget and the continued investment in opening new facilities and services is a long way from the reality of Swansea's continuing struggle with austerity and retrenchment. I would nevertheless endorse the value of a visit to Barcelona as a source of inspiration and a reminder that, even as this complex city faces many challenges, it retains a profound belief in culture.

I was particularly pleased with the presentation of Tot Raval as an example against which Swansea could gauge itself. The ability of such an umbrella institution to remain fresh, relevant, representative and untrammelled by bureaucracy over such a long period in such a complex environment, should reassure Swansea that it can find successful models for both St Helens Road and The Hub.

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At Espai Avinyo I was pleased with the evident passion of the officials but also with the clarity and strategic focus of the work which was described. Again whilst the scale of financial investment is beyond Swansea's scope, I think it can take note from the way Barcelona makes policy, translates it into long-term sustainable work programmes, and brands it as something which both motivates and bonds staff, and is coherent and accessible to the public. Ramon Sanahuja described a philosophy and a body of work which has been maintained through the lifetime of four different political administrations in the city council. In Britain – even in cities where the same party has remained in local control throughout – this would be inconceivable. The British system is characterised by fluctuating top-down national policies and short-termism and institutional amnesia in local government.

Phil Wood, Expert, Pilot Cities

The work of Tot Raval was remarkable in its inclusionary approach in a multi-ethnic (12% of the population of Pakistani and 9% of Filipino origin) and multi-cultural (4 mosques) and poor neighbourhood (lowest household income in the city). "Raval Km0" festival represents the culmination of efforts spent with the inhabitants of Raval in order to create a collective and diverse identity. One of the outstanding and exemplary features for Pilot Cities is the inclusion of education (through teachers and students) in the processes of cultural work.

The Maritime Museum is one of the major cultural institutions in Barcelona with 1 million visitors/year. It also has close ties with Raval not only with free or guided museum visits but also through varied activities in music, sailing etc. as part of their social responsibility scheme.

The City of Barcelona's Culture Institute's presentation provided a comprehensive insight to a metropolitan cultural policy. Some of the highlights of the presentation were the governance structure of the Institute and its decision making process, the Arts Factories programme aiming at the conservation and re-use of post-industrial spaces and, designed to support young artists for cultural participatory cultural action as well as Ciutat Oberta. Biennal de Pensament (*Open City. Biennial of Thought*) representing a new generation of urban event in a transdisciplinary approach.

The second part of the visit scheduled by the municipality of Terrassa and its Directorate for Culture consisted of gatherings with local actors and institutions representing the public, private and civil society dimensions of the city's cultural policy. The local administration representatives' introductory presentations set the



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tone on the prioritised concepts driving the cultural policy decisions: audiovisual, literature, performing arts, neighbourhoods, gender and the creative economy.

The cultural policy of Terrassa elaborated in the White Paper on Culture was likely designed to consolidate and coordinate the existing cultural actions and investments in the city in an orderly strategic approach.

The cultural policy of the city can be analysed along two essential lines: the traditional institutions like Amics de les Arts or El Social with a history going back to the 19th century and the 2nd Republic (1930s) periods based on membership and citizen participation on the one hand, and the innovative events and institutions modelled on public-private partnership like Festival TNT (attracting an art lover crowd from different parts of Catalonia, including Barcelona) or Parc Audiovisual (created in the site of an old hospital to become a hub for film and advertising industries in the region). One could also include artists-driven independent initiatives like Tub d'Assaig working to promote another dimension of performing arts supporting creation and training. This array of multiple cultural organisations and events was also completed with a vigilant awareness on heritage (be it cultural, industrial or architectural) and to integrate it in the contemporary life of Terrassa's inhabitants.

The local municipality and the region seemed to be the main supporters (and funders) of the cultural and creative policy practice with the help of an international bank from the region. The sponsorship of the local businesses was not visible throughout the visit.

The learnings from Terrassa's experience for other pilot cities can be listed as:

- Facilitating and coordinating (almost arm's length style) role of the municipality for the entire cultural and artistic process and its varied actions.
- Balancing different artistic and cultural expressions and articulating them in a sound policy in conformity with priorities.
- A series of artistic and cultural events well planned and distributed in the calendar year.
- The close interaction within the cultural milieu thanks to the communicative efforts of public actors.
- The constant emphasis on equality for women and for people with disabilities.

Serhan Ada, Expert, Pilot Cities

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