

## **BRANDING AND IMAGINING THE CULTURAL CITY: CASE STUDIES - CITY OF SKOPJE AND CITY OF PROBISHTIP- REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Our starting point here in this article is that culture is not just some kind of an extra option of the municipalities in Republic of Macedonia, but it is an essential component for social regeneration, improvement to citizens' quality of life as well as economic development.*

*The existence of culture itself does not imply that the direction of its development is specifically determined in a form of series of goals and objectives which should be carried out through the assistance of certain measures, tools and activities, and exactly all these elements define the concept/notion of Local Cultural Policy.*

*Cultural Policy is about citizenship because it is about resources which define, enable, constrain and shape (both positively and negatively) the most fundamental of human capacities: Identities.*

*In our article, we would like to argue tendencies in the country encountering the concepts of Centre - Periphery; Policy - Politics, National – Local, Authenticity - Contemporary, and Past - Future presenting two case studies from cities in Macedonia. One, city of Skopje where the collision of political decisions on local and national level produced collages of views for cultural development and city branding and the case study of the city of Probishtip where critical approach to heritage and history lead to a successful cultural heritage tourism program.*

*Broad engagement in all planning and implementing processes at local level and a central focus on development of active citizenship can change the organizational culture of local authorities and our life in general.*

### **KEYWORDS**

*Cities; Local cultural policy; City development; Citizenship; Cultural Planning; City branding.*

## INTRODUCTION

### City Cultural Policies

Across the world, culture has become an increasingly important contributor to the revival of cities. Successful cities have a rich and varied cultural offer which improves quality of life and marks them out as desirable places to live, work in and visit. The broad range of cultural sectors – arts, heritage, sports, leisure, built environment, tourism, natural environment and the creative industries - form the distinctive features that contribute to the success of contemporary city life. None is significant on its own, but their collective contribution is multi-faceted and very powerful.

Throughout world history, cities and municipalities were initiators and carriers of cultural development. Within the space of socio-cultural centres (which not always coincide with cultural institutions), people discover and develop their talents, actively involving themselves in cultural activities. In these centres, social cohesion, interaction, solidarity, providing help among neighbours, participation in the life of the neighbourhood, cultural heritage preservation, etc. are encouraged and strengthened. The city also represents how people have addressed opportunities and how their performances are within their place and at the same time established and developed a set of principals, ethics, attitudes, and approaches, in general values, to guide its development.

Nowadays, each city needs to respond to this globalised world and each one can make more out of its potentials. Each city has its own crucial moment where they should re-assess and redefine their image and identity.

One of the main tasks of the city public policies is to (re)define its city identity, based on collective memories of people, cultural heritage (intangible and built) and a vision for the future, which had succeeded in gathering consensus among main political agents, but also among public opinion makers

(intellectuals, educators, media practitioners, etc. (Sesic-Dragicevic 2007)

This process of re-positioning and re-defining the city cultural policy requires a move in the mental maps, state of mind and organization as well as an understanding that strategic synthesis between creativity and creative thinking, culture, economy, urban design and the arts can evidently help in defining, reinforcing and projecting their identity. This interdisciplinary approach toward the process of redefining the city cultural policy could be of great benefit for both: economic and social position of the city.

However, it should be emphasized that this process is not a short term process and it will consume some time to open out in its fullness. According to Landry C., maximizing the power of culture as a centre of one society involves a number of steps, including providing the evidence that culture counts on; persuading the not-persuaded; harnessing resources and putting words and ideas into practice.

From the other side, creating local cultural policy depends on cultural resources as well, that in a way are defining the city identity, and even more, the future of the city, its vision and aims. Cultural resources are the rare and in a way extraordinary materials of the city and its value base. Creativity is the method of exploiting these resources and helping them to be developed. One of the main tasks of cultural planners is to recognize, manage and exploit these resources correctly. Cultural resources are not only buildings, but also people, their skills, talents, than symbols, activities and the tremendous diversity of local products (crafts, services etc.). Cultural resources are as well the historical, industrial and artistic heritage (architecture, urban landscapes or landmarks), local traditions of public life (festivals, rituals, stories), amateur activities, language, food, clothing etc. And at the end, cultural resources are the range and quality of skills in the so called “cultural industries”.

Taking into consideration those varieties of cultural resources, it could be concluded that each city can have a unique position, place; each city could be a world centre of something particular, of course, if it has a wish for and if it tries hard enough.

## The Macedonian Context

### *General directions of the Macedonian Cultural Policy*

After the proclamation of the Republic of Macedonia as independent and sovereign (1991), the new political and cultural elite have accepted the democratic and civil orientation of the state, emphasising the era of pluralism in the orientation. The concept of civil society as a future for the country was accepted as well. In respect to this vision, it should be stressed that in the recent years Macedonia has been part of a wider process of adaptation to relations between the nations, cultures, histories and territories (specific for the SEE), thus tracing the discourse of stimulating a dialogue, strengthening the democratic culture and the culture of democracy, and not changing the political decision making. Anyhow, the vision of such a society was, and in some segments still is far from reality.

Ralf Dahrendorf once said that at the beginning of the process of transition, political change can be achieved in six months, economic change in six years and cultural change in 60 years. After almost 20 years we can see that things are not so simple: changes go in different directions.

Immediately after the independence, the Government decided to centralise its power of decision making. Cities (municipalities) had very limited authority; everything was depended of the Central Government-The Ministry of Culture. New laws were enacted, which for the beginning of the transitional period might have been a good solution, however, the centralisation later lead to many problems. In the sphere of cul-

ture a law was enacted, in which the decision making power was, and unfortunately still is (some changes are done in the meantime), in the hands of one man, i.e. the Minister of Culture. With this centralization of the government, the process of metropolization of Skopje took place. The City of Skopje became a cultural centre of the country and very few other cities had a change to develop some local cultural initiatives.

The Republic of Macedonia, as a member country of the Council of Europe, has prepared a National Cultural Policy, which was presented as the 4 year National Programme for Culture (Ministry of Culture 2004). The draft National Programme was a subject of public scrutiny for several years, and due to the difference in opinions held by different political entities, it was finalised only in 2004. This is a first document of its kind, in Macedonia, after its independence in 1991. According to the National Programme for Culture 2004-2008, (which is still valid in 2009, because new one is not produced) the main cultural policy objectives are:

- decentralisation;
- development;
- protection and (re)creation of cultural heritage;
- creativity, with special focus on young people;
- creating favourable conditions for outstanding cultural achievements; and
- cultural management.

The Ministry of Culture has announced some of the priority objectives for 2009, such as: a larger cultural budget, protection of the cultural heritage, capital investments in new buildings for cultural institutions etc.

However, the explicit strategic objectives of Macedonian's cultural policy have not been developed to the level necessary for systematic cultural policy. It is more a mixture of intuition, ad hoc approach and systematic elaboration, as on

other levels of policy. The results of this combination are still to be described and defined. The period between 1991 and 2009 can be characterised as a period without general determined cultural policy, a period with strong centralisation, unclear responsibilities, and a period where the emphasis was on obsolete schemes of bureaucratic institutional financing.

The process of decentralisation started in 2005 and increased (authority) responsibilities were granted to local municipalities, among other in the field of culture. In the course of this process, a political decision determining which cultural institutions will remain to have the status of national, and which will be transferred under local authority. The outcome was that 49 cultural institutions (Houses of culture, Museums, Libraries, Theatres, Cultural centres) were transformed from national to local institutions. 29 municipalities had a chance to gain public cultural institutions on local level.

The central government did not make any strategy for this process of transformation. Moreover, the Local governments also were not prepared to make changes in the field of culture. Therefore, 4 years after the decentralisation most of the cities did not make any relevant changes and continued to work under the same cultural programmes used in the past.

#### *Main Elements of the Local Cultural Policies in Macedonia*

The municipalities in Republic of Macedonia so far have no explicitly defined Cultural policy neither a prepared strategy for Cultural Development. Not having a Cultural Policy is a kind of Cultural policy. Anyway, there are some reasons for not having a clearly defined cultural policy in the municipalities with all parameters and indicators.

The first reason is that municipalities in Macedonia, completely depend on national policy. Having in mind that the Macedonian government has centralised the system immediately after the independence, and especially the Ministry of Culture, which was described by many external experts as one

of the most centralised ministries of culture in the region, the cities had very limited possibilities to do something regarding the cultural sector. And analysing the National Cultural policy in the past, it is very difficult to define something regarding the local cultural policies.

Thus, from 1991 until 2005 all responsibilities of the public cultural institutions were held by the Ministry of Culture. In this period, and even today, the main infrastructure that is used for all cultural activities in the municipalities is based on the public cultural institutions. All decisions regarding the programmes and activities of the public cultural institutions are made directly by the Ministry of Culture and they rarely meet the needs of citizens.

All institutions continued to work as they have been working in the system before Macedonia became an independent country. In the meantime, no capital investments have been made in the public institutions. The public institutions are in a bad condition, as well as the human resources that are engaged in those institutions.

The second reason for not having a defined cultural policy in the municipalities is the monopolisation and centralisation of the Macedonian cultural life in Skopje. Most of the resources that existed and most of the efforts had been put in Skopje as the capital of Macedonia. Other cities had no or very few opportunities or they did not create an opportunity for development in the cultural sector.

The third reason is the lack of scientific approach and research in the cultural sector in the municipalities. But this again is not typical only for the municipalities of Macedonia, but also for the cities in the Balkan region in general.

The last reason for this situation regarding the cultural policy in the municipalities is the issue of human resources. Usually people who are leading the cultural sector are political figures and not experienced or well educated for this particular

field. There was lack of cultural thinking and cultural sensitivity among the politicians or the people who were leading the cultural life in the municipalities.

Nevertheless, the civil sector in Macedonia, particularly The Performing Arts Centre Multimedia from Skopje has started with the initiative for determining local cultural policies in municipalities in Macedonia. It was a first initiative of this kind, related to process of creating of local cultural policies.

This civil initiative had served as an indicator of the cultural situation, because it implied analysis of current and general challenges of the cultural life in 5 municipalities as case studies, as well as finding possible solutions for it. The general goal of this initiative was to define an efficient system of mechanisms in the area of culture that would lead to a systematic cultural development of the municipalities that are chosen i.e., to define the local cultural policy of the municipalities. The initiative promoted discussions, concept of active citizenship, identified challenges, exchanged best practices and disseminated knowledge concerning the current role of culture in urban governance, from city objectives (policy making and programs) to the methodologies (research methodologies and strategic planning).

It was evaluated as a positive example of how cities should approach the issue of creation of policy or re-defining the cultural policies on local level. Probishtip was one of the cities involved in this initiative.

### **Case Study Review: The City Of Skopje<sup>1</sup> And The City Of Probishtip<sup>2</sup>**

One model for comparison of different local authorities` interest in culture includes the following indicators: the organization and number of civil servants engaged in local public administration working in the domain of culture; the number of local cultural programs and projects being funded; the number and type of functioning cultural institutions in the city; the forms of cooperation and financial support from the Ministry of Culture and the international visibility of the city.

The city of Skopje is not only a cultural centre in comparison to the city of Probishtip but also in the whole country. Skopje has larger administration working in the domain of culture; a wider network of active national and local state and private cultural institutions; numerous cultural and art projects are annually implemented; and has large financial support by the Ministry for culture.

The city of Skopje, as attractive and culturally self-referent city holds considerable potential to lobby for its developmental objectives, while the city of Probishtip - a small-size

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<sup>1</sup> The capital city of the Republic of Macedonia, situated in the north-central part of the country with 506926 inhabitants and the following ethnical composition: Macedonians (338358), Albanians (103891), Turks (8595), Roma (23475), Vlachs (2557), Serbs (14298), Bosnians (7585), Others (8167) (Census of Population, households and Dwellings in the Republic of Macedonia 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Small-size city situated in the north-east part of the country with 16193 inhabitants and the following ethnical composition: Macedonians (15977), Albanians (0), Turks (6), Romas (37), Vlachs (37), Serbs (89), Bosnians (1), Others (54) (ibid).

industrial city severely impacted by the industrial decline and transition - has limited access to funds for development.

But are the cities' preconditions and outcomes systematized and integrated in a coherent city development and branding process widely accepted by the citizenry or are these confined to fragmented project-based development coined by narrow interest groups?

Both cities use a different city development approach and city branding practices. In the intense competition for national and global visibility both stress the need to create unique, innovative and competitive "city branding".

The city of Skopje, along the high concentration of population, urban poverty and communal infrastructure overloads which directly and adversely affect the quality of life of its citizens, is in front of a challenge to build itself as a metropolis, as a vibrant, exciting place which is "more than a town". The city of Probishtip, along the lack of finances from the national and local budgets, old and massive institutions and strong migration of the creative force is before a challenge to resurrect its cultural heritage and transform from predominantly city of miners into a "mystical town".

The comparison of the city development practices is made in reference to the persistent dilemmas in the theory and practice of cultural policy: Center vs. Periphery; Policy vs. Politics, National vs. Local, Authenticity vs. Contemporary and Past vs. Future.

#### *Centre vs. Periphery*

The tension between the power and resources at the centre and the interests and ambitions of the periphery is a long-standing issue in cultural policy. In the Macedonian context, the economically developed, politically strong and culturally overburdened centre is opposed to the economically deprived, house-projected and culturally unattractive periphery. So far, the city development projects favoured the growth of the centre and

reduced attention to the issue of social equity in city development and especially the social and economic inequalities that persist in the cities today.

The city of Skopje is an administrative unit incorporating 10 autonomous municipalities, all headed by a mayor and a separate public administration dealing with cultural affairs. The municipalities build around the core of the city were designed as a residential area. Therefore, cultural infrastructure was built in the city centre and culture was intended to be consumed mainly in this area. As a complex totality where diverse and multi-layered cultures (local, rural, ethnic, class) collate, the mayor and public administration for culture are facing a challenge to harmonize the various political opinions, the citizens' needs and the infrastructural opportunities of the different areas in the city and give policy responses to: Whose culture is imposed as public culture? Whose culture is supported? Who occupies the public places? Should the city impose monolithic cultural identity and how it should integrate the specific identities of each of the municipalities?

In contrast, the city of Probishtip is one administrative unit headed by a mayor and local public administration, part of which is dealing with cultural affairs. While it is rather simple to put in practice equal city development approach and tackle social injustice, it is difficult to confront the current unattractiveness of the city for living, investing and visiting. The intensive economical development in the period before the 90's in addition to the improvement of the cultural infrastructure had its effects on developing high cultural habits of the citizens. But the tradition of fragmented cultural events seasoned with the unsuccessful economical and social transformation of the city challenged for new strategy in the city development and branding.

And while the city development practice of Skopje is based on opportunism that all organized cultural events con-

tribute to its development, the city of Probishtip has in 2008 initiated a cultural development strategy building process. Linking cultural policy to economic development and especially with strategies for cultural tourism was the best approach to reassert the assets and advantages that already exist in the city.

While the city of Skopje is overloaded with projects which visually and conceptually violate the central area and reshape its cultural image<sup>3</sup>, the city of Probishtip revitalized the surrounding cultural heritage and created a “mystical story”. Namely, Probishtip linked the traditional craftsmanship – manually excavating millstones from the surrounding caves – with the very famous cave where Saint Gavriilo Lesnovski practiced ascetic life. Also this was linked with the monastery of St. Gavriilo Lesnovski built in 1341. This is a project with potential to become a new cultural heritage of this region.

### *Policy vs. Politics*

The policy for local cultural development should be based on evidence and research rather than ideological and/or elitistic views on culture. It's commissioning should change the way politics is involved in strategic planning and provide a shift from ideological and sectional interests towards a practice of assembling relevant information on citizens' needs and mapping resources.

Public policies which are research-based stand outside the political environment and give channels for citizen's involvement in the design of the local life.

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<sup>3</sup> Some of the projects are: an orthodox church “St. Konstantin and Elena” at the city square, the rebuilding of the Old Army House, the rebuilding of the Old Macedonian Theater House, 30 meters high monument of Alexander the Great on the city square, Museum of the victims of the communism, 30 sculptures and 10 monuments on historical figures, all lined on 1.5 km long walking zone in the central area.

Some of the recent events in the city of Skopje can be viewed in this direction. The cultural re-branding of the city of Skopje is focused on its architectural plan which is reshaped under severe political and ideological ideas. The ongoing architectural projects in the central area raised a discussion on whether there is a vision of how the city should look like and how it should be developed. The changes in DUP (Detailed Urban Planning) of the city of Skopje, made by the City Councillors are legally allowing the procedure for building an orthodox church at the city square. This can be interpreted as a clear political influence by the governing party on the local decision-makers who defended the idea in spite of the wide publicly expressed disagreements by the former Mayor and a large group of citizens.

The participants of Forum-Skopje 2009 - a meeting of architects, artists, cultural workers, sociologists, philosophers, theoreticians and city planners - took place in Skopje between 8 and 14 June 2009. Here, the lack of a structured institutional discussion concerning the semantics and symbolic meaning of the ideas for constructing churches and contemporary kitsch architecture in a un-visionary urban plan was identified as a problem. The conclusion was that all ideas concerning the city development and branding and the means used for their appropriation should be critically folded and observed in light of the spatial, historical and social context of the city<sup>4</sup>.

As a protest to the reshaped and visually violating cultural image of Skopje, an anonymous group of architects, urban planners, artists and cultural workers under the pseudonym of

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, please visit <http://www.forumskopje.com/>

Pavel Shatev<sup>5</sup> placed a golden toilet bowl in the centre of Skopje and titled the work “Discharge”.

In contrast, the political willingness of the local authorities in Probishtip to share and delegate part of their power (especially in the policy making processes) and to support the efforts of the proactive citizenry resulted in creating a short and long-term strategic city developmental planning. Culture was conceived as a crucial segment in the development of the democratic life in the city. The comprehensive policy for re-branding the city from “City of mine” into “City of millstone and mystique” along a strategy where the traditional is collated with the contemporary was continuously consulted with the citizenry who felt responsibility, representation and ownership within the municipality.

#### *National vs. Local*

City development and city branding processes should exceed the political elitism and centralization of power in one body-the state. It should introduce principles of collective responsibility, public ownership and participatory decision-making into policy making and implementation.

The state is unquestionably the dominant subject on the international (supranational) cultural scene and it can not avoid the task of defining a cultural policy on national level (Dragojević, 1994). The national level of cultural policy planning assumes the role of the state as a promoter and protector of national cultural interests and values. Its distinctive difference from the local level of cultural policy and city development planning is not the size of territorial coverage, but its organic indelibility and the presence of a residential community as an

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<sup>5</sup> Controvert Macedonian revolutionary, 1882-1951, whose political ideas on Macedonia are today in part translated in the political ideology of the governing party VMRO-DPMNE

eminently cultural and spatial parameter of the local community (ibid).

The cultural tendencies in the city of Skopje are a clear example of transgression of national cultural interests into what is prescribed to be a local cultural interest and interest of citizens of Skopje. Some of the cultural actions in the centre undertaken by the Ministry of Culture haven't been justified as city interests but rather as part of the governmental project of antiquing national identity where Skopje is the main battlefield for demonstrating political power and superiority. Moreover, the current mayor of Skopje and the Mayor of the Center municipality, directly concerned with these projects, as members of the governing political party do not oppose these decisions. The subordination of the role of the local authority and the citizens of Skopje in favour of the national planners of the image of the city gives rise to practices of authoritarian governing where the voice of the citizens is not heard and respected.

On the other hand, the local cultural policy of Probishtip is a good example of how the process of cultural change in the city should be planned, structured and managed. It clearly defines the goals, activities, measures and responsible bodies. A wide spectrum of authorities, political leaders, artists, cultural workers and citizens was involved, consulted and their views were taken into consideration. The involvement of national institutions was decreased and therefore citizens perceived the process self-initiated and analogue to their needs.

#### *Authenticity vs. Contemporary*

Authenticity presents a great challenge for the cultural policy because of its immanent connection to the “true” and “untouched” spirit of the city and its culture. The anticipated opposition among authenticity and the contemporary re-imagining of the city opens a dilemma of commodification and touristifi-

cation of the life in the city versus the authenticity of local cultural products and human relations

Authenticity based on cultural heritage has been extensively exploited in the promotion of city tourism in the country. The renaissance of the authenticity of the cultural past had its impact on the process of revising the notions of national identity and national culture and gave rise to a myth-making process of the cities' cultural image while underestimating the power of contemporary culture in city branding.

In the recent years, significant funds and capacities were invested in re-discovering the cultural artefacts from the past. Their value was revised and marketing strategies for their promotion were designed; still, a constructive dialogue about the relation between cultural heritage, contemporary cultural practices and visions for the future was not initiated.

The cities of Skopje and Probishtip had different approaches to this issue.

In 2008, the government decision to rebuild several buildings, hallmarks of pre-earthquake Skopje, in their original form and location in the central area, together with the decision to rename streets, highways and buildings with names of ancient Macedonian figures was presented as a project for reconstructing the authenticity of Skopje. Art historians, architects and a group of citizens interpreted these ideas as a pathological resurrection of the past and creation of a new "reality and truth" which will propagate the supremacy of one ideology over another (the demo-christian ideology over social-democratic ideology). They conclude that the current ideological and instrumental view on culture, the domination of the ethnic majority and the exclusion of different minorities from the public sphere, the aggressive surveillance and expected congruity and subjugation to the governing parties will have strong cultural and psycho-social effects on the new image of Skopje; a new image build upon the conservative ideology that the current government promotes (Vilić, 2009).

The project of Lesnovo caves, funded by the city of Probishtip and the Programme CARDS<sup>6</sup> is a good example of how cultural heritage can be preserved and aimed to create interesting tourist attraction. The millstone, authentic in the economic activity of the inhabitant of the region will be used as an inspiration for the design of a contemporary fountain in the city centre. This example opposes the artificial makeovers taking place in Skopje and intends to sustain a unique sense of tradition and a way of life in the community while designing contemporary branding of the city.

### *Past vs. Future*

City development and city branding policy should be a platform for harmonizing the past and the present in one place and a platform for articulating future options. It is an ongoing debate for cultural policy about the role and use of the past in the city development and branding, the ownership over the past and its commodification into future initiatives.

The recent developments made in both cities, in Probishtip as part of a structurally guided process, and in Skopje as a fragmented events-based process, express their relation to the past and their future.

The cultural practice in Skopje, as Nebojsa Vilić, an art historian, describes it, is "schizophrenic wandering between the instrumentalised past, the politicized present and a future lacking ideas". The paradigm based on non-proactive engagement and the lack of novelties in any form, produces complete cacophony, code noise and disorientation of the cultural message. These are an expression of an era without ideas, in which Skopje lives and creates non-progressive view of the future

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<sup>6</sup> CARDS is Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation of the European Union

(Vilić, 2009)., The idea to re-brand Skopje into a city of public sculptures while putting up 30 sculptures at once into a 1.5 km long walking zone, in Vilić's view, is not only distasteful but equals to madness.

Instead, the modest practice of Probishtip in designing a contemporary fountain in the city centre using an authentic millstone will have an added value to the environment and will constitute future cultural heritage.

## CONCLUSION

Currently there is a crisis of the concepts of cultural policies. The fast transformations of the socio-economic conditions, such as globalisation and political and economic integration are challenges standing before the establishment of any new concept of cultural policy, particularly countries in transition as well as Macedonia.

However, the redefining of the local cultural policy is a global on-going process where cities are trying to shift from the traditional top - down models. This new process of redefining should actively renegotiate cultural needs, and it should earn the attention it deserves in a global context. It should be stressed also that one of the main subjects of this new process of redefining the local cultural policies is the complex matter of citizen's participation.

Establishing a proactive, responsible community and fostering citizens' participation in cities' cultural policy making is easiest on local level. Formulation of local cultural policies in a participatory way, gradually become an essential ambition also in the "new" democracies of SEE.

Giving local cultural communities a central role in the policy- formation dialogue, and involving all civic and public stakeholders concerned in the discourse on urban cultural development should become a European standard principle for all cities across the Europe and not only European Union.

The process of creation of policies for local cultural development and city branding is anticipated differently by cities in Macedonia. While both, small and capital cities have interest in increased national and global visibility, and we often witness the smaller cities learning the good practice from the bigger cities, the opposite can be the case in Macedonia.

The city branding practices in both cities, Probishtip and Skopje, are structured and guided in different manner which differently affects citizen's perception of its own city. The lessons learned from both approaches can be summarised as the following:

- polices for development and city branding should be initiated as a systematic process of cultural planning where "the cultural element", cultural consideration and cultural resources are there at every stage of the planning and policy development process (Mercer, 2002);
- the creation of polices for development and city branding should be perceived as a process that integrates the major goals and actions of a municipality and one that links organizations into a cohesive entity rather than as project-based cultural programmes and solicit initiatives on local level by fragment actors;
- the creation of polices for development and city branding should be research-based and involve data collection and systematic analysis;
- polices for development and city branding should be transparently created and validated by the citizens. The need for active citizenship development is a challenge of the participatory democracy at local level in the country. Colin Mercer has advocated widely for cultural citizenship and has provided clues to some of the tools that allow cities and nations to progress towards this objective. "It is crucial to participatory pol-

icy-making and to getting the community and citizenry actively involved as both subjects and objects of the planning process. In this context we are talking about cultural planning which involves citizens in discovering or rediscovering values and resources for cultural policy development” (ibid.);

- the creation of policies for development and city branding should balance approaches to the contemporary art and creative work, the restoration of cultural heritage and be designed to include rather than exclude diversity vivid on local level;
- the relationship between the public and the private sector needs to be clearly decided and the contribution of all actors relevant at local level valued;

It could be concluded that it is not possible to create a clear local cultural policy without a systematic analysis, data collection and research. There is no long term planning and monitoring of cultural development without qualified individuals and good quality of team working. Since all processes of planning should rely on knowledgeable and skilful professionals, attention should be put on continuous investment in education and transfer of skills. It is always necessary to place particular attention on the diversity of the group and its actual and possible future abilities in defining and transforming overall cultural policy.

In the end, there is no good quality of public cultural policy without a clear and transparent procedure for decision making. Without clear mechanisms for involving the citizens in the decision making process at local level, there is no development.

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