



RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES FORUM

5 & 6 June 2014, Pogon Jedinstvo, Zagreb

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES FORUM

The Forum on Residency Programmes took place in Zagreb, at Pogon Jedinstvo, on June 4-5, 2014. It was organized by Pogon – Zagreb Centre for Independent Culture and Youth, in partnership with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic Croatia, EUNIC Cluster Croatia, and Clulture Network.

The Forum gathered cultural professionals, artists, experts, and decision-makers. The participants discussed various practices of residency programmes, different support and networking schemes, and the importance of residency programmes for cultural and social development. An essential part of the Forum were the working sessions, during which the participants discussed the needs and possible measures that could be implemented at the national and local levels in Croatia and that are applicable in other countries sharing similar challenges. The following conclusions and recommendations are based on the outcomes of these sessions.

THE VALUE OF RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES

Residency programmes have become an important tool for both artistic and broader cultural and social development. They provide a unique opportunity for exchange across the borders and for building relationships. They are important for inspiration and artistic research and development, as well as for creating stronger and more meaningful links within the society – between individual citizens, our audiences, different social groups and communities, associations dedicated to environmental or social questions, human rights, and other issues, schools, libraries, scholarly centres, local small businesses, and many others. Contrary to the established representational forms such as exhibitions and festivals, residency programmes focus on process and communication rather than the end result and visibility. Finally, residency programmes are crucial in fostering the mobility of artists and cultural workers, as well in developing lasting partnerships and promoting cultural exchange within and beyond the European Union.

THE CURRENT SITUATION: CROATIA

Residency programmes have been organized for quite a while in Croatia, both formally and informally. Most of the exchange happens with the wealthier countries, predominantly with those that support such mobility through their foreign policies, while exchange within South-Eastern Europe is still rare. We have noticed different approaches – from process-oriented to result-oriented – and different fields – literature, visual and performing arts, interdisciplinary and others. There is a striking lack of information as to who, how, and when organizes the residency programmes in Croatia.

Residency programmes are supported through the funds of the Croatian Ministry of Culture, as well as county administrations and local authorities, but this support is often meagre, insufficient, and almost accidental. There are no grant schemes financed from the public funds that would be dedicated specifically to residency programmes, and the awareness and understanding of the administration and the decision-makers is often very low, especially at the local level.

The infrastructure for residency programmes is underdeveloped. There are no residency centres as can be found in other European countries and most of the programmes use the scarce resources that are available, often in an inadequate form, in order to provide accommodation and studios to artists in residence. Some public institutions have some basic and small premises for such programmes within their buildings, and so do some of the municipalities, but these resources remain inaccessible for many independent organizations.

The main reason for this situation is the lack of clear public policy in the field of residency programmes, since such policy has not been developed either on the local or on the national level.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

I. Creating a framework

- clearly defining the field and its values through consultations with the relevant stakeholders
- mapping the existing programmes and resources used for residency programmes and for publishing the data online; one should use the mapping methodology that has already been developed in the field (such as the Res Artis network tool)
- developing a clear national public policy for this field, which would specifically include residency programmes as a part of cultural strategy, through consultations with the relevant stakeholders

II. Support for programmes and projects

- increasing the support and adopting adequate financial regulations for such programmes through international cooperation and other funds, including the support for outgoing and ingoing residences, as well as for training and networking
- launching a call for international cooperation as an ongoing call with four deadlines per year (as it has been organized by the Croatian Audiovisual Centre)
- developing a special funding scheme for residency programmes, which would include: small project grants and multi-annual programme/operating grants for residency programmes and exchanges, networking- and partnership-building grants, and research grants. Such funds could be developed through cooperation with the ministries and other governmental bodies responsible for tourism, foreign affairs, education, and civil society, as well as with the business sector
- initiating a cooperation with other countries in South-Eastern Europe in order to establish a special fund that would support mobility and exchange within the region

III. Infrastructure

- addressing the structural funds of the EU in order to secure their use for residency programmes infrastructure and operating costs (for example, the development of social and cultural centres); informing and encouraging the local authorities and other stakeholders to use these opportunities
- encouraging the local authorities to inform the potential users on the available resources that could be used for residency programmes, as well as infrastructure that could be developed for such programmes

IV. Supporting actions

- building a firm relationship with the state administration bodies responsible for issuing visas and providing the relevant information, including a permanent contact point
- supporting the organization of training, symposia, and conferences in Croatia for the organizers of residency programmes, as well as for their visits, field trips, and fellowships in peer organizations in Europe
- organizing or supporting the existing workshops for public administration on both the national and the local levels: the individuals and organizations responsible for the field or for the visas

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REGIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

I. Creating a framework

- mapping the existing programmes and resources used for residency programmes, both regionally and locally
- developing a clear regional and local public policy for this field, which would explicitly include residency programmes in the cultural strategy through consultations with the relevant stakeholders

II. Support for programmes and projects

- increasing the support and adopting specific financial regulations for such programmes through international cooperation and other funds, including the support for outgoing and ingoing residences, as well as for training and networking

III. Infrastructure

- indicating the existing resources and infrastructure that could be used or developed for residency programmes; securing an access to such infrastructure for various organizations through transparent procedures and clear regulation
- developing infrastructural investment projects that would include residency programmes and prepare them for potential co-investments through the structural funds of the EU

IV. Supporting actions

- tracking the support options offered by the Ministry of Culture for organizing training, symposia, and conferences in Croatia for the organizers of residency programmes, their visits, field trainings, and fellowships in European peer organizations
- educating the administration responsible for the field