
Cultural Event Activator

Analysis and strategies for cultural managers



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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The material for this toolkit was gathered in the frame of the partnership project:

EnTraCT - Enhancing Transversal Competences Toolbox for Cultural Managers

2014-2016

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Gaziantep Egitim ve Genclik Dernegi, Gaziantep, Turkey

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2016

INTRODUCTION

What is the purpose of the Cultural Event Activator? First of all, it is not an exhaustive work, it doesn't pretend to give you answers to all the questions you are asking yourselves about organizing cultural event in your region. The aim of this analysis is to give some incentives to organize cultural events, pool experiences, share some possible strategies for searching finances, encourage you to use the existing potentials: your own potential, the potential of your team or organization you work with, finally the potential of your own local community and the region you are living in. Europe is becoming smaller, travelling is simpler, the contact between different organizations, located in different parts of your country and international contacts as well are becoming more and more quick and easy, there are different possibilities of national and international grant programs, some of them dedicated strictly to cultural sphere. The 21st century creates a lot of possibilities, mostly thanks to the development of the new technologies, new media first of all. Surely, these are great opportunities but on the other hand, presenting also a lot of threats, and the situation is not deprived of troubles. We can mention here a still existing language barrier, intercultural understanding, the problems connected with the ability of the critical use of the Internet content, and, last but not least, the information overload. We have created more information in the last 10 years than in all of human history before that 10 years than in all of human history before that, claims Daniel Levitin, McGill University psychology professor and author of "The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload."

All of this is more information than the brain is configured to handle. The conscious mind can pay attention to three, maybe four, things at once. "If you get much beyond that, you begin to exercise poorer judgment, you lose track of things and you lose your focus," says professor Levitin.

Taking account of all this factors, we tried to focus on some general helpful tips and give an overview of the situation of each of the partner city.

The EnTraCt Project – a Strategic Partnership involving organizations from four different European countries (Poland (as coordinator), Italy, Greece, Turkey) and four different spaces and local communities to analyze: the Polish capital city of Warsaw with over 1,7 million inhabitants, one of the most populous city in western Turkey, close to the Syrian border, the city of Gaziantep (with over 1,5 million), and two smaller subjects, an Italian city from the heart of Tuscany, Arezzo (80 km from Florence, (about 100 000 inhabitants) and a town of Preveza (about 20 000 inhabitants) in the region of Epirus, Northwestern Greece gave the opportunity to exchange experiences, share the ideas, look on some aspects from different point of view, find subjective visions and strive to focus on objective factors, and analyze existing possibilities connected with local communities of each partner involved in the project.

CULTURAL POLICIES

One of the issues which were being analyzed by the EnTraCT team was the actual cultural policies in Europe and in the countries participating in the project.

It goes without saying that the cultural policies influence the development of the cultural sector, demarcate the trends in cultural life by privileging some operations in contrast to the others.

A cultural policy encompasses a broad range of activities involving, inter alia, public support for:

- Heritage, historic sites
- Libraries and different types of museums, including fine arts, scientific and historical museums
- Visual arts, including film, painting, sculpture, pottery, architecture
- Performing arts, including symphonic, chamber and choral music; jazz, hip-hop and folk music; ballet, ballroom and modern dance; opera and musical theatre; circus performances, rodeos and marching bands

The governments pursued programs to promote greater accessibility of culture. Thanks to these programs, significant aesthetic works should be made broadly available to the public and “high culture” should not be the exclusive preserve of a particular social class or of a metropolitan location. The reaches of cultural excellence should be made accessible: in other words the cultural policies should serve the public interest and the access to the culture should be democratic (we can hear and read often about the creation of cultural democracy or the democratization of culture).

In this area we can see the possibility of making projects connected with so called “high culture”. The activities can be supported by both national and international funds.

Some actors of the market having the national State capital are eager to invest in cultural events but rather of bigger scope, special events or recurring events (fairs, festivals).

Regional and local cultural policies can also be seen as strategies or instruments that aim at empowering people to develop their creative talents and civic conscience, thus helping to turn the ideal of democratic societies into reality.

Regional and Local Cultural policy is an increasingly important area of public policy-making that governs activities related to the arts and culture. Generally, this policy domain is being understood as fostering processes, legal action and institutions which promote cultural diversity and accessibility, as well as enhancing and supporting the artistic, ethnic, sociolinguistic, literary and other expressions or heritage of all people in a specific territorial area. More recently, issues of "cultural autonomy" and of "cultural branding" or promoting the socio-economic development of a city or region via highlighting cultural institutions or traditions and artistic events have gained attention among experts and policy makers.

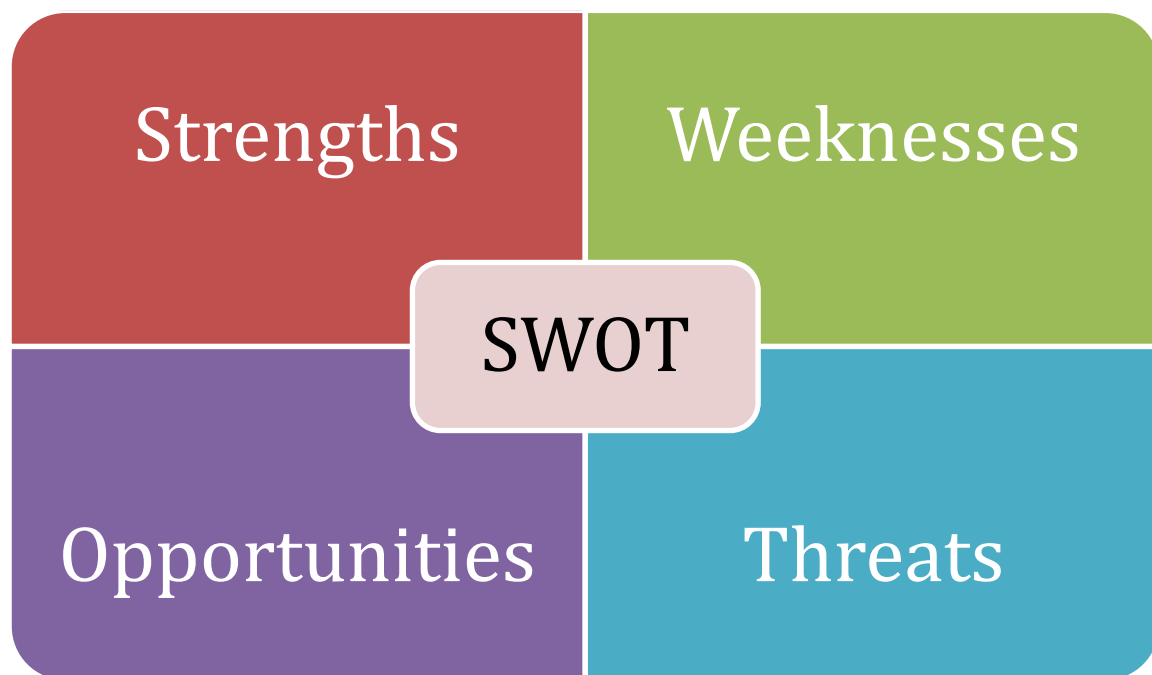
The dynamics of trans-national mobility have led to fundamental changes in the way governments and other societal actors address cultural cooperation in general and exchanges between artists and other cultural professionals in particular. Policy strategies, legislative frameworks and programs or schemes to support mobility are being revised and new priorities are being set which link culture to other fields such as tourism, urban regeneration or economic development through the cultural industries.

As we can see cultural activities can influence the development in the different fields of economic and social life and the governments see the role of culture in political key decisions leading to the promotion of democracy, preservation of national heritage in European countries, intercultural understanding, social inclusion (of migrants, immigrants, minorities etc.) Consequently, the projects approved to be granted by EC or within national funds, have to prove their compliance with the official documents related to the cultural policies. That is why you need to keep up to date, read the official documents : if you refer to the strategies while writing a project, you definitely increase your chances to be awarded the grant.

THE SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT method can be very useful, since it is a strategic analytical tool for assessing strengths and weaknesses, analyzing opportunities available to the organization, as well as faced threats. SWOT analysis can be used at organizational level and personal levels. You can use this method to analyze your own situation, the chances for the development of your organization and finally also the pros and cons for the new event you would like to organize.

Figure 1: SWOT analysis



To carry out the SWOT analysis, you should consider both internal and external factors of influence. The internal factors demonstrates your strengths and weaknesses, the external factors shows the opportunities and the threats you should be aware off.

Top strengths and weaknesses typically include: people (i.e. some employees, staff turnover), reputation of the organization/organized event and generally the offer you have (products, or services), knowledge of the subject you are dealing with and offered services, communication skills. Top opportunities and threats typically include: region and local communities (in relation to the tourism, history and cultural interests), problem of attracting quality employees, training, improving skills, grants and partners to organize the event, increased competition (depending on the local factors).

Of course, the points you consider depends on what you are creating the analysis for (yourself as cultural manager, your team or organization, your city or region, finally maybe the event you would like to create).

Tips to do the list of internal factors:

Be truthful. If you are not truthful during this process, the entire analysis will not be effective.

Be open-minded. Other members of your team can see different elements. Time to be honest and discuss different point of view.

Allow for feedback. As you are brainstorming, make sure all the members of your team are comfortable offering their feedback.

Stay focused. Do not allow the time getting away from you. Keep the group on task.

Keep your list in an accessible spot.

Tips to do the list of external factors remember also to:

Do your research. Finding answers to some of these questions may require some digging.

Be creative. Do not be afraid to think outside the box.

Keep your list handy.

A list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats makes for a handy guide, but you will want to go one step further to create strategies and plans to improve your performance.

Tips to take over the situation:

- **Strengths–Opportunities.** Use your internal strengths to take advantage of opportunities.
- **Strengths-Threats.** Use your strengths to minimize threats.
- **Weaknesses-Opportunities.** Improve weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities.
- **Weaknesses-Threats.** Work to eliminate weaknesses to avoid threats.

In the frame of the project we looked through our possibilities, brainstormed the elements to do a SWOT analysis for our local use.

Some of the elements shows up common and the others different for the participating cities.

The differences were caused by the historical, geographic, political, cultural features characteristic for each city.

The common things emerge thanks to the similarities of our activities, access to the same media and European grants system.

To learn more about SWOT analysis visit:

http://forlearn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/guide/4_methodology/meth_swot-analysis.htm

CITIES OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Warsaw – Poland



There's no denying it, Warsaw has had a troubled history. Positioned at the crossroads of Central Europe, the city has been shuffled between empires and dynasties like a pawn on a chessboard. It's been a roller coaster ride ever since King Sigismund III Vasa moved his court here from Kraków in 1569. Pillaged by the Swedes in the 17th century, and occupied by the Russians for most of the 19th century, Poland was finally freed from the shackles of oppression in 1918. The period signaled a golden age for Warsaw, and saw the city develop on a par with Europe's other great capitals.

The outbreak of WWII brought with it new suffering, however. Occupied by Nazi Germany, Warsaw saw the majority of its 350,000-strong Jewish population die in the ghetto or killed in the gas chambers of Treblinka. With liberation in sight the Polish population rose against occupying German forces in the 1944 Uprising. Expected help from the West never materialized, and Soviet tanks looked on from the other side of the Wisła as the full weight of the Nazi army crushed the rebellion. The Uprising cost the lives of 150,000 civilians, and what remained of the city was systematically dynamited. The darkest chapter of Warsaw's history had been written. Peace brought with it a new challenge: communism. Falling under the Soviet sphere of influence Warsaw was rebuilt in stagnant, socialist fashion, and its reputation as a gloomy, concrete city was born.

But that was the „old” history, now the city is creating a new one. Combining elements of both East and West this is a town of complex character and hidden appeal. The dark, negative images of yesteryear no longer apply as the city moves boldly forward - dynamic and developing. Changes have been meteoric, and the city now hums with energy and optimism.

Nowadays, Warsaw has a very large offer of cultural events. The biggest jazz stars, pianists and independent movie makers invited to the numerous festivals attract tourists from all over the world.

- **May - Night of Museums (*Noc Muzeów*)**

As many other European cities, also Warsaw offers this outstanding cultural event. Most of the Warsaw galleries and museums are open until late at night. One ticket buys you

admission to all participating museums at that night. Crowds wander around, cafes and restaurants are full with visitors grabbing their drink or a bite in-between the exhibitions.

- **May - Juwenalia / Student Festival**

The biggest Warsaw festival only for students. Music concerts, theaters and movies and sports activities are just a pinch of what you can expect.

- **Mid May-mid September - Concerts under the Willow Tree**

The greatest pianist give concerts at the Chopin monument in Łazienki Park which attract around 120.000 guests every season for almost 50 years now.

- **June-July - Warsaw Summer Jazz Days**

Since 1992, in various locations jazz artist are giving concerts all over Warsaw: jazz cellars and concert halls.

- **July-August – Open-Air Jazz Festival**

Old Town Square hosts concerts given by world stars of jazz.

- **September - Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music**

(Warszawska Jesień Międzynarodowy Fesitwal Muzyki Współczesnej)

During the last 50 years the contemporary music festival in Warsaw has gained its international fame.

- **October, 8-17, 2010 - Warsaw Film Festival (*Warszawski Festiwal Filmowy*)**

The biggest film festival attracts thousands of cinema-goers. Every year Polish films and international motion pictures compete for the prizes in many categories.

- **September/October every 5th year - The Frederic Chopin International Piano Competition**

The most important Chopin piano competition hosts the greatest pianists and by now has gained great prestige and worldwide recognition.

To find out about cultural events in Warsaw visit:

<http://www.local-life.com/warsaw/culture>

<http://viacitymap.pl/en/Cities/Warsaw/Culture-and-events>

<http://warsawtour.pl/en/about-warsaw.html>

The SWOT analysis for Warsaw:

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capital city • the city presents a lot of cultural interests • a lot of well qualified people • a lot of institutions which can cooperate • you can find places to organize events for free 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people are very busy – do not have time to take care about their cultural life • tough competition - a lot of events and a lot of cultural organizations • changeable weather – risky to organize open air events • a strongly developed bureaucracy
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing country • a lot of possibilities to introduce a new offer, because the city is constantly changing • development of new, culture friendly spaces • development of cultural tourism 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic crisis in Europe • globalization - a threat for cultural heritage • migrations - to less indigenous inhabitants • lack of grants for culture • terrorist attacks – risky to organize big scale events, risky to travel

Gaziantep - Turkey



Gaziantep, one of the oldest settlements in the world, is the sixth largest city of Turkey and first largest city of South-eastern Anatolia Region, with its population, economic structure, tourism potential and metropolitan municipality. Gaziantep, carrying the imprints of Chalcolithic and Neolithic ages, Hittite, Assyrian, Persian civilizations, Alexander the Great, Seleucid, Roman, Byzantine empires, Islamic, Turkish-Islamic and Ottoman periods, is home to works of art belonging to all of these ages, civilizations, empires and states.

Gaziantep and its environs, invaded by English and French after World War I, evoked admiration in the world with its extraordinary defense mechanism and heroism. Accordingly, Turkish Grand National Assembly awarded the city with the title of “Gazi” (veteran) in

February 8, 2012. Its location between the Mesopotamia, the birth place of first civilization, and the Mediterranean; its strategic position at the crossroad of roads leading to the east, north and east and historical Silk Road passing through the city have influenced the history of civilizations and shaped the present besides making the city a cultural and commercial center in every period.

The location of Gaziantep on the Silk Road, the road of tradesmen, wise men, ideas, religions and cultures, starting from China and leading to Europe, laid the foundations for productivity and commercial ability of the city, which is the gate of Silk Road opening to Anatolia. Gaziantep is an industrial and commercial center where all products of Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia Regions are processed and marketed. With its five organized industrial zones, various industrial fields, small scale industry facilities, free zone, geopolitical location and proximity to port cities, Gaziantep stands on a crucial point in terms of Turkish industry and trade. Geographically the city is the entrance gate and center of South-eastern Anatolia Project with its industrial and commercial potential; while economically influencing neighbouring cities, it also houses various investments made in the field of tourism.

With its historical, cultural and local richness, culinary culture, border town characteristic, private and public sector investments and universities, Gaziantep bears an important efficiency in terms of tourism. In parallel with the economic development of the city, industrial tourism is in demand nowadays. However, Gaziantep tries hard to be an important tourism destination with its cultural potential besides industrial tourism.

In this regard, “industrial tourism”, “culture tourism”, “health tourism”, “congress and fair tourism”, “gastronomy tourism” and “university tourism” are the main tourism models in Gaziantep. Institutions and corporations of Gaziantep contribute to the development of culture, arts and tourism besides development of industry and trade. In this context, local

administrations, Professional chambers, institutions and companies have put their signatures under various studies on tourism.

As a result of such studies, the cultural texture of Gaziantep rejuvenates; the number of museums and accommodation facilities increases day by day; the number fair and congress organizations increases; and transportation facilities enhance. Moreover, the city is on the way to be a diplomatic center with official consulates of Syria and Iraq and many honorary consulates.

To learn more about the city visit:

<https://madeinturkeymagazine.com/travel-article/a-city-of-history-and-culture-gaziantep>

<http://www.allaboutturkey.com/gaziantep.htm>

<http://turkishtravelblog.com/category/destinations/gaziantep-turkey/>

<http://www.kulturturizm.gov.tr/EN,113929/gaziantep-museums.html>

The SWOT analysis for Gaziantep:

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a very big city with a lot of possibilities to implement new ideas • rich historical and cultural heritage • strong cultural and scientific center 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a very hermetic culture • difficult access to internationally educated artists (i.e. musicians playing western musical instruments) • gender inequality – women have difficult access to the cultural events
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing country • a lot of possibilities to get a grant for cultural activities • region that presents a cultural interest for other EU countries • a rich culture of big interest for other countries 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terrorism • proximity of Syrian border • a lot of refugees – the investments goes elsewhere • difficult to attract new audiences • economic crisis in Europe

Arezzo – Italy



Arezzo is a provincial capital within the central Italian region of Tuscany (*Toscana*). Like so many Italian towns, the historic part of the city is on a hill, in a defensive position close to the base of a stronghold. The lower part of town, around the railway station, is more modern, with a well-ordered and prosperous buzz. Arezzo is one of the wealthiest cities in Tuscany, due to its tradition in gold-smithery. Arezzo's most powerful period came in the Middle Ages, before the town was taken over by Florence. Highlights include the sloping Piazza Grande and the cathedral, the **Duomo**, which contains fine stained-glass windows and an elaborately carved tomb recounting the life of Bishop Guido Tarlati. Behind the cathedral is a pleasant leafy park, leading up to the sixteenth-century Medici fortress, which offers impressive views over Arezzo and the surrounding countryside.

Even though the Medieval center was destroyed during World War II, Arezzo still has plenty of monuments, churches and museums remaining that offer visitors a chance to step back into history. The Church of San Francesco is probably the most famous in Arezzo, with the incredible Early Renaissance fresco cycle by Piero della Francesca depicting the *Legend of the True Cross*.

Arezzo offers a lot cultural attractions, including the International competitions connected with choral music - events included in the the EnTraCT project study visit:

- **International Competition of the Polifonico “Guido D’Arezzo” held each year on last week of August.**

Since 1953 it has constituted the most important stage for the coral expressions of the entire world an incomparable variety of repertoires, styles, authors and a precious stimulus for a rigorous interpretative research philologically founded, considering the selective criteria of the groups and the artistic order and organization of the competition. At the International Polifonic competition the winning choir of the national competition “City of Victory” of Vittorio Veneto participates by right; in the category in the Benevitan choir section. The “Canto Monodico Cristiano” choir winners of the Benevitan choir section of the national contest in Benevento, will also participate by right.

- **International composition competition of “Guido D’Arezzo”**

Founded in 1974 as a consequence to the international contest, takes place annually with the ends of enriching and qualifying the coral repertory in the direction of contemporary music. Without doubt the function is the rediscovery of the choral and composing stimulus: up to today over two thousand operas of composers from all over the world have arrived, operas which are awaiting to be categorized in the archives of the foundation.

- **Grand European prize of Chorus Choir**

The gran European Prize for Chorus Choir was born as an initiative of the International Competition of Arezzo. Debree (Hungary), Gorizia(Italy), and Tours (France). After

which other competitions from Varna (Bulgaria) and Tolosa (Spain) were added. The winners of each of these contests reunite the year after to dispute the Grand European Prize for Chorus Choir. The competition takes place every year alternating the premises of the competition promoters.

- **National Polifonic Competition Guido D'Arezzo**

The National competition Guido D'Arezzo began in 1984. Since the 2000 edition it has taken place on the inside of the International competition to favor the comparison and the contact of the Italian choirs with the reality of the whole world. At the National Polyphonic competition by right the winning choir from the National Polifonic competition of Benevento may participate.

To learn more about the city visit:

<http://www.visitarezzo.com/news-events-arezzo-competitions-market-fair>

<http://arezzo.guidatoscana.it/en/arezzo-storia/default.asp>

http://www.seeyouintuscany.com/tuscany_travel_guide/arezzo_area/arezzo/antiques_market/antiques_market.html

The SWOT analysis for Arezzo:

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • historic place in an attractive touristic region • a lot of well qualified people • well-developed voluntary service • the sensibility for cultural heritage is strongly developed • tradition of organizing cultural events • highly developed cultural policies • good climate – long period during the year to organize open air events 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the city is not centrally located – difficult to attract new audiences • repeating events are not always attractive for indigenes
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • possibility of developing international projects • development of the region – cultural tourism • a rich culture of big interest for other countries • region that presents a cultural interest for other EU countries • proximity of other towns and cities with a rich cultural background 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic crisis in Europe • too less money for cultural activities • too less support for new initiatives

Preveza – Greece



Preveza is built on the location of ancient Vereniki which was founded by Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus, in 290 B.C. to honor his mother-in-law, Vereniki. The city was established towards the late 11th century, after Nikopolis was deserted. Many conquerors passed through the city until it was finally incorporated with Greece in 1912. Its port offers connections to the islands of the Ionian Sea. It is located 426 km NW of Athens (via Rio-Antirio) and 440 km SW of Thessaloniki (via the Ioannina-Trikala-Larisa road).

City destinations:

- The three castles: Agios Andreas (18th c.), Agios Georgios (1807), and Pantokratoras (1807). The view from the last one at dusk is spellbinding.

- The Agios Haralambos cathedral, with its clock tower.
- The Museum of Natural History, at Neochori.
- The Museum of the Aktion Naval Battle.
- The Municipal Library. It contains 20,600 volumes and 600 rare books of the 19th century (for their most part) and of the 18th century.
- The scenic seaside promenade flanked by imposing buildings such as the Court of Justice, the Town Hall, the National Bank, and the Old Marketplace.
- The hydrotherapy spa.
- Margarona, a colourful area on the way to the Neochori, Agia Triada, and Agios Thomas settlements.
- The Amvrakikos wetlands habitat, at the estuary of the rivers Louros and Arachthos is considered one of the major European wetlands habitats and is protected by the Ramsar Convention.

Capital of the prefecture, built on the entrance of the Gulf of Amvrakikos. A modern city, Preveza is an administrative, commercial, intellectual and tourist center of the prefecture. Beautiful, traditional buildings adorn the port and the historical center while the pedestrian walkways and cobblestone streets lined with popular taverns and cafes remind us of the islands. The city's rich intellectual and artistic activities include frequent conferences, exhibitions and festivals. One of the festivals, organized by the Greek project partner, is The International Choral Festival of Preveza.

To learn more about the event visit:

<http://heyevent.com/venue/lcxka57f272saa>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5HMADVNsB6DkjPp3MzFkw>

<https://m.facebook.com/InternationalChoralFestivalOfPreveza>

The SWOT analysis for Preveza:

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geographical situation – place of tourist attraction • good weather conditions – long period during the year with a possibility to easily organize open air events • well-developed voluntary service • tradition of organizing cultural events 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small town with difficult access • no train station nor bigger airport in the proximity • difficult to attract new audiences • weak infrastructure to organize cultural events • weak supply in qualified artists in the close distance from the city
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a rich culture of big interest for other countries • possibility of developing international projects • possibility to develop cultural tourism 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic crisis in Greece • economic crisis in Europe • migrations – a lot of political problems causing less incentive for cultural investments and initiatives • less money and investments in culture

LINKS TO EXPLORE

To find more about national programs in line with cultural policies:

<http://ponculturaesviluppo.beniculturali.it/>

<http://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/export/MiBAC/sito-MiBAC/MenuPrincipale/Ministero/Contributi-e-agevolazioni/index.html>

<http://www.intercultura.it/Intercultura-%28English%29/>

<http://www.turkishculturalfoundation.org>

<http://www.teda.gov.tr/?dil=2>

[http://www.snf.org/en/grants/grantees/t/the-friends-of-the-greek-islands-and-the-sea/program-support-\(1\)/](http://www.snf.org/en/grants/grantees/t/the-friends-of-the-greek-islands-and-the-sea/program-support-(1)/)

<http://www.onassis.org/en/public-benefit-sponsorships.php>

<http://www.culture.gr/culture/eindex.jsp>

<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/kultura-i-dziedzictwo/kultura-dostepna/kultura-dostepna-program-dotacyjny.php>

<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/finanse/programy-ministra/programy-mkidn-2016.php>

<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/finanse/srodki-europejskie.php>

<https://iam.pl/pl/kultura-polska-na-swiecie>

To find more about international programs to finance cultural activities you can visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/culture/>

http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/index_en.htm

<http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/grants/>

<http://avrupa.info.tr/eu-funding-in-turkey/which-are-the-priorities.html>

<http://eeagrants.org/What-we-do/EEA-and-Norway-Grants-2014-2021>

<http://on-the-move.org/funding/europe/>

