Existence of a national strategy

The last strategy for the culture area was created in 2000 and adopted in 2002, and it is entitled “Strategy of Cultural Development”. Young people are recognized therein as cultural actors and producers which should be observed as opportunities or options for cultural development: “The existence of creative talent, intellectual openness and curiosity, especially among young people, in which should, however, yet be systematically invested in order to build strong focal points of creativity, such as milieus of innovation (technical, institutional, design, financial support, stimulating social environment, etc.), alternative culture labs (carried out by non-governmental and non-profit organizations), international projects in favour of more elastic i.e. locally modified and structurally diversified forms of global production, markets, networking, communication, etc. The latter is particularly necessary in a new economy characterized by unexpected changes and tendency towards improvisations, individualism and competitiveness (the “networked society”) in order to find locally sustainable solutions that are appropriate to the small economy and culture to which recipes of great and successful (countries or corporations), built on the basis of their own experiences or of exclusive interests, are not sufficient and can be harmful.” In addition, the same document stresses the need to carry out systematic research on youth needs as set out as one of priorities: “Enable systematic empirical research of free time, especially of young people, and appropriate cultural statistics (as per Eurostat model)”, as well as providing conditions for youth participation: “to systematically introduce the facilitations for participation of young people in culture by identity cards, blocks and discounts in ticket prices.”

Although this document, the Strategy of Cultural Development, recognizes the field dynamics and the
rapid changes that are taking place therein, in the meanwhile, no new or updated strategy for developing creativity and culture has been developed, nor a separate document that would youth oriented and their position in the context of development of culture and creativity, but it is part of the National Youth Program. The National Youth Programme is currently in force for the period 2014 to 2017, according to which culture is set as a factor that significantly contributes to the formation of identity and individuals' sense of belonging to the community. Here it seems important to note that there is some kind of shift forward in defining the role of culture in the life of citizens, namely the youth in this case, because the area of the Action Plan in the current plan is titled Culture and Youth, unlike its name in the previous National Youth Programme [1] which covered the period from 2009 to 2013 where the area was entitled Youth Culture and Free Time. This change is also important because it places the focus on the socialization and emancipatory role of culture in young people's lives and emerges outside the leisure setting. Such a change is emphasized by the current plan [2]: "Culture influences the creation of a new symbolic field and contributes to the construction of social values based on the principles of openness, diversity, solidarity, social cohesion and co-operation. The key is the benchmark and the assumption of the development of a responsible, inclusive, tolerant and equitable society. That way culture can play an important role in shaping the attitudes and values of young people, and can have important positive effects on socialization, personal formation and social affirmation of young people. At the same time, culture is not only an important aspect of spending free time for young people and/or young people not only can be beneficiaries of cultural events and cultural product consumers, but often young people act (pro)actively through various forms of self-organization in the field of art and culture. Using available resources, young people act as independent actors in the production of cultural content of general and public interest, accessible to other young people and open to the public."

Scope and contents

In the analysis of the situation concerning culture and youth, the National Program highlights the problem of accessibility and/or access of young people to culture and various cultural contents: "[...] their approach is often very endangered for various reasons – the lack of time and/or money; an offer that does not respond to the real needs of young people, the inadequacy and insufficiency of organisational resources, the insufficient of support for cultural and artistic expression of young and for-young people, geographical constraints - life in poorly developed environments, inadequate public transport, etc. The studies and researches that the European Commission has carried out in previous years (e.g. InterArts, Access of Young People to Culture, Final Report) have shown that ensuring access of young people (as actors and organizers, users, buyers, consumers, audiences) to culture and art is one of the key preconditions for their full participation in society. [...] Without an adequate approach to cultural life, young people do not have the same opportunities to develop their social and cultural ties and capital. [...] Also, it is very important, when considering the issue of youth access to different forms of cultural life, to take into account the differences in ways of facilitating access to urban and rural environments. When it comes to the access of young people to culture and artistic programs, state institutions have various policy measures that can directly stimulate and facilitate access, in the range from ticket subsidies, season tickets, organized group visits, free and free of charges access to cultural events and institutions, etc. Besides, taking into account the fact that many public cultural institutions still lack access to facilities for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, the state administration bodies should take particular account of this aspect of access to culture in order to provide adequate accessibility to public buildings. Thus, it is the responsibility of attracting young people as regular users in the hands of decision-makers, but also issues related to facilitated access of young people to cultural facilities and content must be high amongst the priorities of the leading persons and employees of cultural institutions and other
organizations in culture. However, as the existing legislative and institutional framework does not contain solutions to the barriers regarding the access of youth to culture, it is important to include this matters in strategic documents such as the National Youth Program, specific decisions of competent state administration bodies, action plans and other documents."

The key measures stated in the culture program are directed towards:
1. -Promoting youth education in contemporary culture and art; designated competent authority: Ministry of Culture, Implementing Associate: Ministry of Education, Science and Sports;
2. -Equal opportunities for access to culture for all young people, especially those at risk of social exclusion, designated competent authority: Ministry of Culture, Implementing Associate: Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds;
3. -Providing financial support to youth programs and activities of culture for youth; designated competent authority: Ministry of Culture; Implementing Associate: Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts; Sub-measure: Support to non-profit media youth projects for youth; designated competent authority: Ministry of Culture;
4. -Ensuring diversity, stability and development of spatial resources for the implementation of youth and for-youth culture programs and activities; designated competent authority: Ministry of Social Policy and Youth and Ministry of Culture, -Implementing Associate: Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, State Property Management Office, National Foundation for Civil Society Development, Foundation "Kultura nova";
5. Implementation of scientific research in the field of culture and youth; designated competent authority: Ministry of Culture; Implementing Associate: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport.

**Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy**

There is no single strategic document on the development of cultural field as a whole at the level of the Republic of Croatia. The [Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Culture 2016-2018](#) is available on the website the Ministry of Culture. Given the fact that it is about an internal document created within the Ministry of Culture, without the extensive participation of various stakeholders in the field of culture - cultural workers, artists, representatives of executive authorities and decision-makers and other reference bodies and institutions - we can consider this to be the internal program orientation of the institution itself, not a national cultural development program that encompass targets and measures targeted at young people in the field of culture and creativity.

**Revisions/updates**