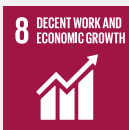


ORADEA'S ART NOUVEAU



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY, AND CREATIVITY
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING, AND PUBLIC SPACE

DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC, PUBLIC SPACE,
REGENERATION, RENEWAL, LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE,
CONSERVATION, JOBS, EMPLOYMENT

1. Context

Oradea, the capital City of Bihor County, is an important economic, social and cultural centre in north-western Romania. It is the 10th largest city in Romanian and has a population of 221,567. The ethnic division of the city is rich, with the majority being Romanians (more than 70%) followed by Hungarians (about 23%) and 7% of other ethnicities: Roma, Germans, Slovaks, Jews, Italians, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Poles, Chinese, Czechs, Turks, and Russians. The city centre was built up in the beginning of the 17th century, after the Turkish invasion and six centuries after the first documented mention of the city, and has 19th century palaces in the style of the Secession/Art Nouveau Movement.

2. Oradea and culture

After a long transition period from a communist society to a modern and European city, in 2008 the city hall of Oradea started working on a strategic development plan for the city. The main objectives included consolidating the local economy by creating opportunities for new investments and jobs, updating infrastructure and restoring the cultural life and heritage. The economic data of 2008, the state of infrastructure, the grey and dusty feeling of the city and the EU financing opportunity were the main arguments for the start of one of the major revitalisation projects in Romania. The city placed pedestrian at the centre of these developments, and after 2016, when most of the works were finished, the city started developing the cultural agenda so newly built squares and pedestrian area would be enjoyed by inhabitants and tourists alike.

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

By implementing best practice measures that promote local assets, the city aims to improve the living standard of its inhabitants, improve the experience of visitors, create opportunities for business development and create a cultural local agenda that emphasises the local heritage and traditions.

The specific goals include the following:

- Preserving and developing the local heritage by restoring all of the building in the city centre and implementing urban renewal project.
- Increasing green means of transportation in the city centre by extending pedestrian areas and sidewalks, constructing new cycle paths and restoring the riverbanks within the city.
- Reducing pollution and traffic in the city centre by constructing compact parking spaces and enforcing a strict parking policy in the city centre.
- Developing the tourist appeal of the centre by creating new tourist attractions and repurposing heritage buildings.
- Supporting sustainable economic activity in the city centre by enforcing strict local regulations regarding open hours and type of activity, as well as creating local support schemes for business sectors.
- Developing the cultural life of the city by implementing a cultural agenda, with a focus on local culture, that offers at least three events per month from April to December.



3.2. Project development

Main actions developed

The overall objectives of the policy are set out in the development strategy, which consists of a coordinated set of measures, local legislation and projects that affect the activity of the city centre and the metropolitan area. The project has six major programmes that support each of the specific goals listed above. The first phase was to tackle the planning and realising the EU funding documents in order to insure financing. The second phase was the implementation period of construction, and the third was to develop the cultural agenda.

So far, the project has: developed more than 25,000 sqm. of pedestrian area and four compact parking places, rehabilitated the whole length of the riverbank, built four new museums and one tourist attraction, rehabilitated more than 250 buildings, collected more than five million euros from parking fees, organised more than 100 events for more than 2.5 million people, supported more than 20 new business in the city centre and seen more than 800,000 tourists since 2015.

THE STRATEGY CONSISTS OF A COORDINATED SET OF MEASURES, LOCAL LEGISLATION AND PROJECTS THAT AFFECT THE ACTIVITY OF THE CITY CENTRE AS WELL AS THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

4. Impact

4.1. Direct impact

Impact on local government

The local government has changed drastically, improving cost, performance and efficiency indicators. Due to new development projects, between 2010 and 2019 there have been over 5,000 new jobs created, about 500 million euros in FDI and more than 100 new companies created. Visit Oradea, the public-private partnership that coordinates the local tourism strategy, has implemented a coherent marketing strategy that has contributed to the increase in the tourist indicators of a yearly average of more than 10%.



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Impact on culture and on local cultural actors

Investment in important cultural landmarks, like the Fortress of Oradea, as well as international jazz or art festivals, such as OraJazz festival or European Music Open, have had a positive impact on the cultural sector, attracting some of the world leading artist. Not only has the policy created new opportunities for existing heritage and cultural structures, but also it has created from scratch new cultural institutions and leading events in the national agenda.

NOT ONLY HAS THE POLICY CREATED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXISTING HERITAGE AND CULTURAL STRUCTURES, BUT ALSO IT HAS CREATED FROM SCRATCH NEW CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND LEADING EVENTS IN THE NATIONAL AGENDA.

Impact on the territory and population

The broader impact was that inhabitants started being active promoters and consumers of the local cultural life and, more importantly, the diversity of the local communities has been more appreciated due to the cultural and heritage programming.

4.2. Evaluation

The evaluation mechanism of the overall policy follows those set out by EU funding frameworks, which was reviewed in detail by Romanian governmental authorities and European authorities.

4.3. Key factors

The key aspects that gave way to the creation of this strategic approach were the good practice examples around us, and the financing opportunities offered by the European Union. The initial positive results of the policies need to be followed up in the upcoming years so that the measures are materialised in the society and become irreversible.

4.4. Continuity

With a stable and reliable local authority for the last 12 years, the continuity of the policy has been insured. The most important measure that could make these policies irreversible and mandatory for the public agenda, no matter the local political context, is the creation of social, economic and cultural links with the strategy.

5. Further information

Oradea was a candidate for the third "UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award" (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in July of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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