

A Comprehensive Analysis of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme



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Cultural Programme

Scope of Study

To examine the life-cycle of the Valletta 2018 cultural programme from development to production stage.

3 main objectives:

- i. to analyse how the cultural programme is developed, devised and implemented;
- ii. to explore the factors that influence the creation of the cultural programme projects;
- iii. to track the long term development of the programme's effectiveness in terms of the **cultural offer, audience participation and European collaboration.**

Research Questions

1. What are the main aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 cultural programme?
2. How is it developed and devised and how are projects/events selected?
3. What is the range and diversity of the cultural offer and programming balance?

Research Questions (2)

4. How do the projects included in the cultural programme fulfil ECoC objectives on participation?
5. How do the project/events reflect the European Dimension?
6. What are the barriers to participation as perceived by the cultural programmers and creators?

Methodology

A mixed method approach to reflect multi-dimensional dynamics of the programme and the developments unfolding over five years.

Data is being gathered from primary and secondary sources as follows:

1. An institutional level analysis;
2. A mapping and surveying of projects to be fully produced by the Foundation;
3. In-depth interviews and focus groups.

Strengths and Weaknesses

1. The programme is continuously in development so results can easily become outdated;
2. The study is not being done in retrospect but it can track developments as they happen and does not rely on past recollections;
3. With interview data caution is needed so as not to take personal interpretations for granted and sift through industry parlance and promotion;

Analysing the Cultural Programme

1. Cultural Offer and Programming Balance
2. Audience Participation
3. European Dimension

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

1. Clear and coherent artistic vision for the cultural programme;
2. Involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme;
3. Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality;
4. Combination of local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.

Sources: ECORYS (2014); Garcia & Cox (2013), Palmer/Rae (2004)

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

Planning and development

The preliminary findings show the complexity of developing an ECoC cultural programme and the practical, day-to-day challenges encountered by those developing the programme.

The core programming is managed by the Programming Unit within Executive Team.

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

Vision and objectives

A reworking of the objectives can be observed from the first bid book's 8 objectives to the final bid book and later to the strategic plan published in 2013. There are clear connections between all objectives but throughout the planning phase, these are being further clarified and refined;

Focus on artistic quality, legacy and a contemporary approach;

Themes and Orientation

The original themes are evolving continuously and are being used for internal guidance in the structuring and formation of the programme

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

Timing

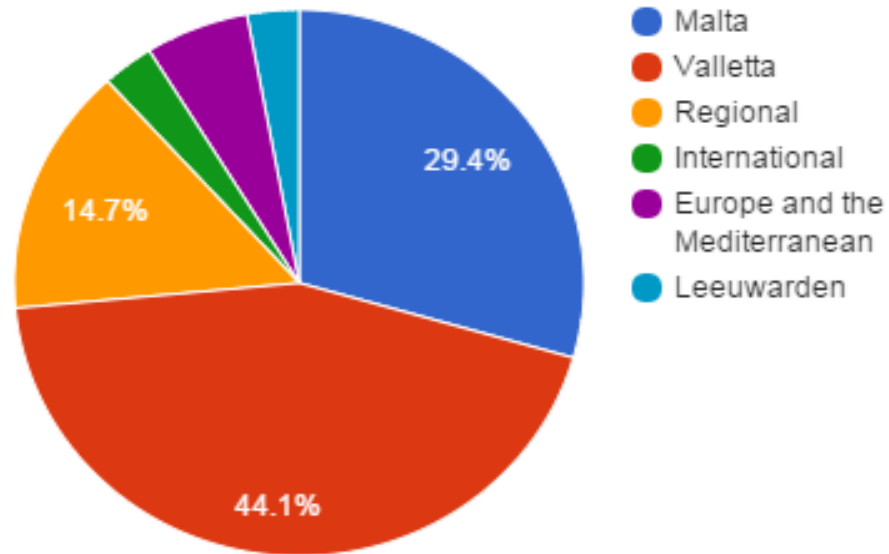
Process-led projects developed before 2018;

Planning considers the timing of other long-standing activities;

The equal distribution of projects across different months and seasons
and other practical issues.

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

Programming Locations



Represents ongoing projects in 2015

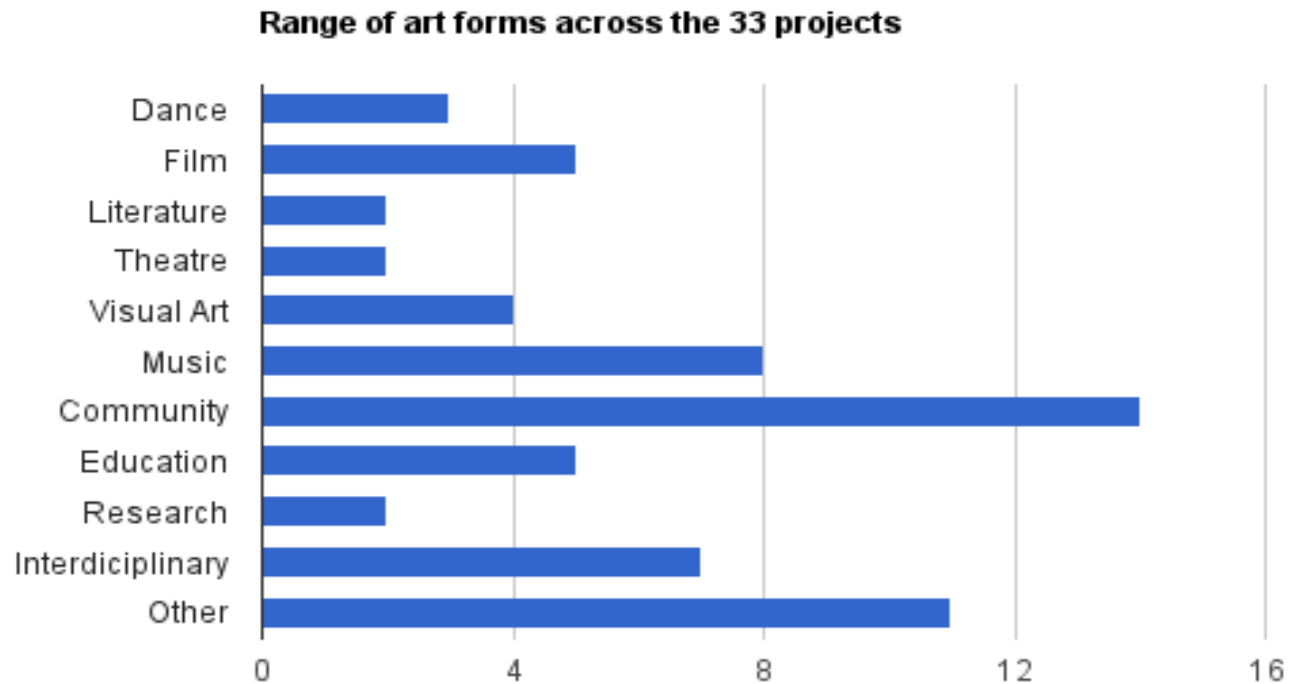
Cultural Offer and Programming Balance

Size, Scale and Range

The average number of projects included in previous ECoC cultural programmes is around 500 programmes (Palmer/Rae 2004) or 187 projects.

ECoC activities include different art forms namely dance, music, theatre, film, visual arts, literature, heritage and crafts. Some ECoCs choose to include a wider anthropological interpretation of culture and include food and sport as categories.

Cultural Offer and Programming Balance



Represents ongoing projects in 2015

Audience Participation

1. Involvement of citizens in the development implementation phase;
2. Opportunities for specific target groups to attend or participate in cultural programme events and projects;
3. Accessibility of activities to persons with disabilities and to the elderly;
4. Audience development strategies and participatory activity;
5. Volunteering programmes.

Sources: ECORYS (2014); Garcia & Cox (2013).

Audience Participation

Valletta 2018 places a strong focus on community engagement and the need to eliminate societal barriers to participation. The ultimate aim is ownership of the cultural programme by different target groups.

Attracting participation is an ongoing challenge, as this is dependent on various factors including marketing, education and awareness of the cultural programme as well as competing with other activities.

Audience Participation

1. Projects targeting Valletta residents like *MUŻA* and the *Valletta Forum*;
2. Projects that adopt a grassroots approach and target specific audiences such as *Haġa u Taħdita*, *Recycled Percussion Workshop*, *I-Ikla t-Tajba*, *Darba Waħda*, *Valletta Forum*, *Minn Fomm il-Bormliżi*, *Belti*, *Il-Warda tar-Riħ*, *Move Week*, *Community Hip Hop*, *Qatt ma Ninsa* and *Pjazza f'Pjazza*;
3. Volunteering Programme with SOS Malta;
4. Participation through capacity building includes projects like *Storyworks* and the *Curatorial School*;
5. The special events will focus on attracting large audiences and ticketing strategies are currently being devised.

European Dimension

1. Scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe and mutual understanding;
2. Scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures and European integration;
3. Scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, co-operation with operators or cities in different countries and transnational partnerships;
4. Strategy to attract the interest of European and international public.

European Dimension

The European dimension is mostly interpreted as collaboration with or participation of European artists in Valletta 2018 projects.

Specific projects like *Modern Music Days* and the *Curatorial School* are working with international collaborators. *Malta Showcase* encourages Maltese performers to raise their profile internationally. The mobility fund in collaboration with the *Roberto Cimetta Fund* encourages mobility and collaboration with artists in the Euro-Arab region.

For the special events, difficulties in attracting high profile European artists include budget constraints.

Way Forward

Individual project visits and assessment according to established elements and criteria

Focus Groups with various stakeholders including:

- Valletta 2018 Foundation Programming team;
- Creators, Co-Creators and project leaders of projects in the cultural programme ;
- Key persons from Public Cultural Organisations;
- Civil society organisations and NGOs;
- Independent artists and groups.



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