



## Çanakkale, Turkey: One City's Efforts to Build Capacities for Local Cultural Policy Transformation<sup>1</sup>

**Name of the policy:** Çanakkale 2010

**Start date:** 1 January 2010

**Completion date:** 31 December 2010 (project completion). Ongoing: documentation and book preparation, and actions to implement a cultural policy strategy.

### CONTEXT

#### GOVERNMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

##### City context

The Çanakkale province is a middle-sized East Anatolian city situated at the connection of the Aegean and Marmara Seas, and the European and Asian sides of the Dardanelles. The Çanakkale city centre is situated on the southern coast of the Dardanelles. The population of the city centre is 90,653 (46,730 men and 43,923 women) (The Çanakkale Strategic Plan 2010-2014). Two wars (the Trojan War and World War I) have marked the region's history, and the

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<sup>1</sup> The **Inclusive Cities Observatory** is a space for analysis and reflection on local social inclusion policies. It contains over sixty case studies on innovative policies for community development, access to basic services, gender equality, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty, among others. The initiative has been developed with the scientific support of Prof. Yves Cabannes from the University College of London (15 case studies) and a team of researchers from the Centre for Social Studies (CES) at the University of Coimbra, which has worked under the supervision of Prof. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (50 study cases). This Observatory aims to identify and investigate successful experiences that might inspire other cities to design and implement their own social inclusion policies.

The **Inclusive Cities Observatory** has been created by the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of UCLG. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is the global platform that represents and defends the interests of local governments before the international community and works to give cities more political influence on global governance. The **Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights** aims to contribute to building a common voice for the cities of UCLG in the areas of social inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights. It also aims to guide local governments in designing these policies and to that end, fosters political debates, the exchange of experiences and peer learning among cities around the world.

For more information: [www.uclg.org/cisdp/observatory](http://www.uclg.org/cisdp/observatory)





richness of historic heritage and museums make Çanakkale city centre an interesting place. In terms of cultural tourism, the city is a main transportation and service point, although visitors often only stay one night or just pass through the city. In winter, Çanakkale becomes a city of retired people and university students.

Çanakkale has been a university city since 1994 when 18 Mart University was founded. With nine Faculties (including fine arts, medicine, and engineering) and two Institutes, the university has over 200,000 students. Besides the university students, who contribute to Çanakkale's economic and cultural life in terms of consumption and entertainment, retired families are the new dwellers of Çanakkale. They refer to Çanakkale as 'the small Istanbul' in terms of both its physical location and the spirit of its lively cultural life.<sup>2</sup>

Çanakkale has a very strong civil society that is active through the auspices of its many associations and organized initiatives. Çanakkale, which ranks 42 among 81 provinces by population (Turkish Statistic Institute 2009), ranks 27<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of societies in the province, with 807 active associations registered with the Ministry of Interior (2011). However, associations and foundations are not the only way of participating in civil life: city council, the city action plan, Local Agenda 21, or developing various topic-specific initiatives are other platforms through which one can be present and active. In the cultural field, building initiatives for prioritized subjects or issues is the most common form of civic involvement, with organizations established such as the Historic Çanakkale Houses Sustenance Commission, Friends of Troy Archaeology Meetings, Çanakkale Oral History Group, and initiatives to build a City Museum and the Troy House/Kaufmann House Archaeology Library in the city (Çanakkale Biennial 2010).

The Municipality of Çanakkale was accepted as a member of UCLG in 2007<sup>3</sup> and the current mayor, Ülgür Gökhan, became a member of the UCLG World Council from the MEWA region in November 2010 (UCLG MEWA). The municipality has been ruled by the Republican People's Party since 1989 and the current mayor has been elected three times. The Municipality supports participatory policy development and supports/applies a democratic local governance approach including participatory budgeting, city councils, and democracy ateliers. Local Agenda 21 (in 1997) and City Councils (in 2004) have been active since they were established. There is a strong cooperation with civil initiatives/actors and the university. As in many cities, however, 'although the NGOs are well organized and sufficiently active to influence decision-making processes, participants of the meetings and activities in the city are mainly the same group of people' – although there have been initiatives to broaden the participation of local youth and the Roma population (Kutlu 2010, p. 129).

<sup>2</sup> The researcher has been visiting Çanakkale since 2007, first for a comparative research on local administrations then through the 'Invisible Cities: Building Capacities for Local Cultural Policy Transformation in Turkey' project (see footnote 7). Some remarks in this report are as a result of participatory observation.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.la21turkey.net/dl/yq21/yerelyonetimler.htm>.





### Governmental decentralization context<sup>4</sup>

Recent changes concerning local governments have been realised through a series of legislative changes under 'public administration reform'.<sup>5</sup> This reform includes 'transformation packages that will ensure the essential basis to form a new understanding of management for public administrations' (Law Draft No. 5227, 17 July 2007). The reform pack was stated to be designed as a solution to a highly centralized and bulky administrative structure, suggesting a public administration plan embracing transformation through 'privatization, empowerment of civil society and localization', which will further the principle of decentralization regarding local administrations with necessary enforcements to be put into practice.

The Law 5227 Concerning the Basic Principles and Reconstitution of Public Administration outlines the scope of the reform and sets its basic standards.<sup>6</sup> Designed as a legislative framework, Law 5227 takes municipality, metropolitan, and special provincial administration laws as a single whole. While the pack increasing the responsibilities and competencies of local administrations listed has come into force, there has not been complete enforcement of the Laws as a whole since other precautions at the implementation level have not been developed and exercised properly.

There are two contextual frameworks behind the public administration reform pack:

#### *1. European Union and the subsidiarity principle*

The process of Turkey's economic, political, and cultural integration into the EU, which started on 17 December 2004 when Turkey was accepted as a candidate country, has been underpinning the reform pack. In this process, Turkey is expected to put the subsidiarity principle into practice. Many writers (Eliçin-Arıkan 2004; Es 2006; Şan 2007; Şentürk 2006) point out that in the light of this principle, Turkey's EU negotiation process has moved to a new stage in the area of local administration. It should also be borne in mind that Turkey has signed the Council of Europe Charter of Local Self-Government and the European Urban Charter regarding the autonomy of local administrations and local/urban rights.<sup>7</sup> This paves the way for the use and control of internal and foreign resources provided for public administrations. With the help of European Union desks active in many local administrations, projects in various fields are currently being supported by EU funds.

<sup>4</sup> This section is based on Ince (2009).

<sup>5</sup> This reform is a pack of legislative changes including: Financial Administration and Control Law 50185; Metropolitan Municipality Law 52165; Special Provincial Administrations Law 53025; and Municipality Law 53935, which were developed and put into practice by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) 58th and 59th Governments between 2004 and 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Law Draft No. 5227 was passed by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey on 17 July 2004. On 7 August 2004, President Necdet Sezer sent it back to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey chairmanship for further discussion; however, the Law was accepted by the Assembly without any change.

<sup>7</sup> The Council of Europe Charter of Local Self-Government of 1985 and the European Urban Charter of 18 March 1992. The first of these treaties stresses 'all citizens' rights to participate in the process of local public servicing, consolidating and extending the idea of autonomous local administration' whereas the European Urban Charter aims at 'increasing the quality and efficiency of local services, creating economic, social and cultural opportunities in local communities (towns), enhancing the local community and the community ethos and to ensuring active public participation in local administrations' (Yıldırım 1994).





## 2. Decentralization along the axis of globalization and localization

The Law 5227 refers to globalization as a multi-dimensional transformation in economic, political, and cultural life. However, it also draws attention to localization as an aspect, which has come into prominence in two ways: the administrative structure and administrative principles.

*Administrative structure:* In a global arena where nation-state boundaries are blurred, the autonomy of local administrations comes up for discussion, receiving support from universal values concerning local administrations that are expressed through international initiatives. Likewise, it is asserted that 'investments by international capital or multinational corporations, and investments born out of the increasing number and widening scope of international joint projects and cooperative ventures create new resources, employment opportunities, and new servicing techniques' (Köseçik-Özgür 2005: 4).

Discussions usually involve the concept of *decentralization*. Keleş (1992) states that this concept exists in two different forms. *Deconcentration or delegation* is the situation whereby the central body delegates its authority to an organization outside the centre, which exercises it on its behalf to fulfil certain functions. The second form, *devolution*, occurs when 'managing bodies created by laws are equipped with judicial, political and financial authority in order to function in certain areas other than those incumbent on the centre' (p. 15). However, both the content (Güler 2003) and the Turkish equivalents of the concept of decentralization are quite controversial. According to one of the institutions involved in the reform package, the State Planning Organization (DPT), what is meant by *decentralization* is 'delegating central executive authority in areas such as planning, decision-making and sourcing, to provincial institutions, local administrations, semi-autonomous establishments, vocational institutions, volunteer organizations (foundations, associations) and corporations' (2001: 10). Notions such as increased authority, privatization, and de-etatization are different applications of the modern concept of *localization*. Local administrations are empowered by localization politics, but the main goal is to delegate authority in financial matters. In the modern sense, this objective differentiates it radically from the classical idea of *localization* (DPT 2001: 10).

*Administrative principles:* Apart from ethnic and cultural considerations, the values that come to the fore with the idea of localization are self-expression and the principle of self-governance. If we define urban identity as complete integration (belonging and participation), the community should be able to govern itself on issues that concern it through independent and democratic means and methods. In the framework of the relationship between local administrations and democracy, the *self-governance principle* has kindled serious discussions on 'the restriction and limitation of representation, and the use of democratic rights and liberties directly by the community' (p. 4). Participatory democracy, localization, decentralization, and governance are key concepts in these discussions (Okur & Çakıcı 2006).

These two frameworks affect the role of local cultural policies and public administrations at a local level. The existing representative democracy and the desire for a more democratic and participative public administration to replace a periodic and restricted participation have resulted in the emergence of the 'mediation' of the city council. By virtue of transnational networks that can be developed in a global arena, as in the example of Local Agenda 21 activities, many





municipalities in Turkey have been establishing city councils and implementing Local Agenda 21 from their beginnings.

**Institutional level of policy development:** Municipal

## **COMPREHENSIVE NARRATIVE**

### **Description of the policy**

Çanakkale 2010 was a year-long arts, culture, and community dialogue project of the Çanakkale 2010 Initiative, a civil gathering that worked in partnership with the local government. A result of the three-year project, 'Invisible Cities: Building Capacities for Local Cultural Policy Transformation in Turkey'<sup>8</sup>, Çanakkale 2010 aimed to increase visibility for all civil art and culture production; strengthen cooperation among active civil society agents in coordinating and programming activities; increase participation of residents and related organisations in activities and civil society actions; and, above all, further local cultural policy development through shared support and ownership of the initiative by the Municipality and civil initiatives of Çanakkale.

### **Background / Origins**

The idea for Çanakkale 2010 developed over two workshops<sup>9</sup> held within the framework of the Invisible Cities Project in 2009. The workshops aimed to develop concrete steps to meet already identified needs of the city and gathered around 30 local civil-activists to be mentored and supported by experts from the Invisible Cities project. The participants agreed on a year-long cultural programme called Çanakkale 2010 and designed an organizational structure made up of an executive, advisory, and coordination committees. The Çanakkale 2010 Initiative Group identified possible themes and events for the Çanakkale 2010 programme, then developed a more precise programme and structure.

### **Policy objectives**

Çanakkale 2010 aimed to bring together planned activities and new projects in a platform, announce these activities much more effectively, and publicly discuss the cultural dynamism of the city in order to catalyze and bring these ideas momentum. The vision for the initiative was that its project would:

1. Respect the foundation of city culture and be interlinked with universal values;
2. Care about the centre and the periphery and integrate the whole city;
3. Be gender, youth, children, and elder or disabled people friendly;
4. Be circulated all around the city, and could be repeatable; and
5. Have a cooperative structure where at least two different NGOs or institutions can

<sup>8</sup> 'Invisible Cities' was a three-year project (2008-2010) run by four project partners: Anadolu Kültür and Istanbul Bilgi University (in Istanbul) and the European Cultural Foundation and Boekman Foundation (in Amsterdam), and funded by the Matra Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. Anadolu Kültür is responsible for the project, which facilitated the development of cultural policy through a range of activities (including research, focus groups, preparation of reports and SWOTs, meetings and workshops for sharing results and practices, workshops for project development, and small-scaled project implementation) in three cities: Çanakkale, Antaka, and Kars.

<sup>9</sup> The workshops occurred 7-8 February 2009 and 25-26 April 2009.



collaborate (Çanakkale April 2009 Workshop Report).

Eligibility criteria for projects for Çanakkale 2010 were:

1. The project should contribute to the artistic and cultural life of Çanakkale.
2. The project should be based in public participation and include methods of participation for Çanakkale residents.
3. The project should give priority to the participation of women, children, disabled persons, and youth.
4. The form providing information about the project should be fully completed.

In this context, both existing and planned activities in the city were brought together within the Çanakkale 2010 platform, and an opportunity was created for the cultural actors of the city to cooperate and participate in stimulating cultural production (Çanakkale 2010 leaflet).

### **Chronological development and implementation of the practice**

To achieve the initiative's objectives, three action axes were formed:

1. Forums, panels, and several commissions within 12 Themes (one each month) to talk and discuss the local cultural values, each resulting in a participatively developed manifesto.
2. Artistic activities in correlation with the 12 Themes, linking the existing and new artistic activities to each other.
3. Two signature festivals: Spring Festival and Peace Festival, emphasising the wholeness of the overall agenda and activities.

Within the initial objectives and implementation scheme, an executive committee developed the programme, diversified its scope, and included different stakeholders. The overall programme was based on a selection of 12 out of 40 themes/issues suggested by city residents during previous workshops and meetings<sup>10</sup> that were particularly related to Çanakkale and cultural policy (see Table 1). Working groups for each theme compiled existing knowledge on that issue and analysed it with guests and discussion groups, later feeding it all in a report (manifesto) to be distributed widely at the end of the project.

<sup>10</sup> For the previous phases of the Invisible Cities Project, please see Çanakkale Invisible Cities project reports (2008-09).



**Table 1. The 12 Themes of Çanakkale 2010**

Month	Theme of Çanakkale 2010
January	Motion/Movement
February	Communication
March	Identity of the City
April	Tourism
May	Ceramic and Art in the City
June	Rural City and Agricultural Economy
July	Water
August	Participation
September	War and Peace
October	Historical and Cultural Heritage
November	Public Places
December	Pluralism

A Çanakkale 2010 logo was designed, and an open call for projects and project application format were developed. The Çanakkale 2010 logo on a project certified that it is participatory, collective, respects universal values, is sustainable, and is open to cooperation (see Figure 1). The Call was open throughout the year, and many proposals applied and received the logo.

**Figure 1. Çanakkale 2010 Logo**



A typical Çanakkale 2010 month included panel sessions, a public dialogue session on a specific topic (e.g., in January, on Roma people in the city), concerts, an exhibition, film screenings and, in the last week, a panel discussion and forum on the month's theme. At the end of each month, a manifesto was written as a synthesis of month-long learning and discussion. In June 2010, the Spring Festival was programmed to occur in parallel to a Local Cultural Policies Symposium. It featured a series of open-air/artistic events with youth and the city's Roma population, and received national and international visibility. The Peace Festival, proposed for September 2010, could not be organised. The concept of peace is an important and complex issue for Çanakkale, which has to be handled carefully on many levels. Further, the energy and focus of the executive team and supporters had been reduced during the summer months, the tourism 'high season' in Çanakkale.

The initial project is now completed, and a book is under development that will present the Çanakkale 2010 programme and its activities through archived materials and the 12 manifestos.





### Agents involved

The national organization Anadolu Kültür facilitated. Experts from various institutions based in Istanbul and Amsterdam formed a support team. The Municipality of Çanakkale was the most important local partner: the municipal cultural section supported the announcement of Çanakkale 2010 and its overall organisation and logistics, and the Mayor personally advocated and supported the initiative.<sup>11</sup> The City Museum of Çanakkale, an independent entity that works from a municipality-owned building, served as the information/meeting point for Çanakkale 2010, the archive, and one of the main venues of the Programme. The Çanakkale 18 Mart University supported the initiative in a few projects and in terms of its premises (performance/exhibition venues). Most NGOs in the city were involved from the beginning as a natural part of the Çanakkale 2010 Initiative, and contributed to the programme's development either as volunteers or with project proposals.

### Beneficiaries

The target audience was all city residents. The inclusion of vulnerable groups – children, women, Roma people – was an underlining principle. These groups were recognised throughout Çanakkale 2010, and special occasions were created to facilitate their participation. Special attention was paid to the inclusion of youth, and their participation improved after young but experienced directors joined the executive committee.<sup>12</sup> Civil activists and NGOs also benefited from much-needed experiences of cooperation and gained visibility within the city.

### Participation processes implemented

The executive team and Anadolu Kültür were highly sensitive to the need to build wide and inclusive participatory practices throughout the entire process and design of the programme. The initiative privileged public access to activities, diverse communication outlets, and expanded public participation through decentralized public venues. The management of the initiative featured a high level of participation in decision-making and organizing processes (especially once the process of shared experience built trust among the various organizer-participants) and encouraged organizations to collaborate with one another to co-develop activities.

Access to the activities was a priority: all activities were free, and most of them were screened on local television. The Çanakkale 2010 logo<sup>13</sup> and motto – ‘This is our Culture, Gents!’<sup>13</sup> – were especially chosen to transmit the ideals and the mission of Çanakkale 2010 to a wide population.<sup>14</sup> The easy-to-remember motto and logo became the identifier of Çanakkale 2010 on all written and broadcasting material. Different mediums were used, including local radio,

<sup>11</sup> The Mayor is a powerful advocate for the city's intentional development of cultural policy, and puts special emphasis on the role of arts and culture in the city's development. He describes the City's collaboration with all civil initiatives in the city – especially in cultural matters – as a *partner*, not as an owner or leader (interview).

<sup>12</sup> At the beginning, youth participated in the implementation stages (e.g., during the Çanakkale Biennial); later on they brought their own proposals and organised their own activities using the university premises.

<sup>13</sup> It is a line from poet Ece Ayhan, whose family was from Çanakkale.

<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the motto, with its connotations of slang and gender, was criticized as being gender discriminative or vulgar by various groups and also by City Council. After long discussions, the motto remained as the proof of the will to make Çanakkale 2010 for all residents.







television, websites, open-air announcements, on-the-bus posters, and the municipality's announcement walls. On all materials, the names of the executive team, mobile phones of the coordinators, and the contact information of the Çanakkale 2010 office were provided so the organizing structure and team was transparent and accessible for anyone to contact them.

Art activities were strategically organized to open up these shared public experiences to greater public participation. For example, the second Çanakkale Biennial (organized within Çanakkale 2010) used venues all around the city and brought ateliers to neighbourhoods where Roma people live. A new film festival, *Şeffaf Beygir*, developed in parallel to Çanakkale 2010, built a screen in the square of each neighbourhood where films were shown, with Çanakkale's favourite of selected through audience voting. A Children's Biennial, formed out of the children's programme of the Çanakkale Biennial, was called 'My Friend Biennial'. Its activities and new programmes introduced new (young!) actors to the city.

The members of the executive team created new ground and possibilities of participation in decision-making and organizing processes. The committee was always open and created occasions for discussion and critique, such as forums or informal gatherings after each event. Without quarrelling, they noted, it is not possible to proceed in Çanakkale; and we always continue working with the ones with whom we quarrel because all of us look better as a result.<sup>15</sup> This trait underlines the importance of process and the power of shared experience to build trust. During the first months, the committee chose to organise every detail itself together with several NGOs or invited volunteers: after trust was established, they started to delegate. Throughout the 'learning by doing' process, common experience and trust developed and the group was extended. Later on, it turned into a 'learning by becoming' process, especially for the youth who expanded their skills. Although there was a fixed thematic structure with 12 issues, the programme was flexible and the executive committee was responsive to any suggestion or contribution, and monthly programmes could easily be revised. The role of the Municipality, as a day-to-day facilitator in terms of logistics and organisation details, enabled the executive team to concentrate on content and this inclusive and participatory approach.

The executive team also identified gaps and linked existing events and NGOs, sometimes under a roof of a new event such as *IFKare*.<sup>16</sup> Under the Çanakkale 2010 umbrella, they identified possible NGOs and invited them to participate in the organization of *IFKare*, so that they could learn to cooperate and also attract larger audiences. This event will continue in upcoming years, and already there are three additional NGOs that want to participate in the event.

The Çanakkale 2010 Initiative's relentless efforts to find ways to encourage the contribution and participation of more and more people in the activities and discussions throughout its implementation, must now be followed up with complementary strategies. As Kutlu (2010) writes,

... opening a door for a particular group and attracting their attention does not guarantee a long-lasting or regular involvement. For the moment, the attention of both

<sup>15</sup> Çanakkale people have already had the habit of talking, discussing, and using the public sphere.





the Roma population and youth has been secured and the situation provides fertile ground for furthering the participatory local cultural policy development and implementation. Now the issue is to develop and implement a sustainable strategy for the future. (p. 133)

### **Institutionalization processes**

Çanakkale 2010 triggered existing civil activists and projects to unite and to organize a new structure to direct, design, and implement the cooperative initiative. It helped build and promote a year-long offer of cultural activities (most already planned) and highlighted the cultural demand in the city. In part as a result of this project, the Municipality of Çanakkale and (some) Çanakkale citizens have more fully acknowledged the importance of culture to city development. The Municipality created a stand-alone culture division, which worked in close collaboration with the Çanakkale 2010 executive team. Previously, the cultural activities of the Municipality were administered within the Public Relations and Social Services division. This structural change reflects the municipality's shift in mindset and appraisal of culture.

Following the nation's Public Administration Reform, the strategic plan has become one of the most important policy documents for municipalities and other public administrations with a stakeholder-based participatory approach. The City of Çanakkale completed its first strategic plan (2006-2010) and a City Action Plan, and is aiming for a wider participation via these processes. Within the area of social and cultural life, the strategies of the first strategic plan were:

1. Creating a synergy of public and private non-governmental organisations to develop cooperative mechanisms; raising the awareness of the public to urban life, establishing an urban culture; ensuring the active practice of a co-administration approach in city administration;
2. Conducting social protection activities to help disadvantaged groups integrate with urban life; and
3. Ensuring participation of the community in cultural and artistic activities.

Parallel to this strategic plan, the target policies of the City Action Plan under Culture were:

- Supporting cultural production, enabling national and universal cultural cooperation;
- Affiliating cultural components with each other, establishing an objective ground where they can communicate and interact;
- Documenting the historical and cultural heritage of the city, making use of it and protecting it all the same; and
- Developing the infrastructure required for cultural activities and ensuring an easier use of existing ones; making sure that everyone can benefit from cultural productions equally.

Çanakkale 2010 served as an effective vehicle to advance these goals as a collaborative project catalyzed by civil society actors and supported by the municipality. A new strategic plan for 2010-2014 has now been issued, building on the previous efforts. It has one overarching





strategic goal – 'To increase the life-quality of the city and its dwellers, to secure the awareness for knowing, owning and perpetuating universal and cultural values' – and 13 supporting strategies.

In a post-completion meeting, an opportunity to brainstorm on future steps for local cultural policy development strategies, Çanakkale 2010 was described as research, continuous in nature, as is the ongoing nature of the city's search for its identity<sup>17</sup>, participation, increased use of public spaces, and use of art in the city's culture-related programmes. The mayor and staff of different municipal divisions (culture, city council) were present at the meeting and guaranteed support for future activities. By the end of the meeting, there was consensus on two action items:

- There is still need to develop infrastructure for culture for a broad audience (i.e., all city dwellers) for them to acknowledge culture and its role on city development. Thus, the culture-related parts of texts such as the City Action Plan, Strategic Plan of Çanakkale Municipality, Manifests of Çanakkale 2010, etc. will be collected and edited to encourage open public discussion. The Municipality's culture division will do this preparation, and organise the meeting.
- Future discussions on culture at the City will aim to form a policy-oriented/driven model. This could be structured as a sub-section of City Council within the Municipality, such as the divisions of youth, women, or disabled, and be allocated a special budget. However, this has to be decided collectively. The Municipality's culture division offered to write the call for participation for discussions to build such a model.

### **Financing**

Çanakkale 2010 received support from the Matra fund of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the European Cultural Foundation, and Çanakkale Municipality. A contribution (10,000 euro) from the budget of the Invisible Cities project covered the costs of transporting guests, catering, publishing promotional materials, and the wage of one secretary. Team members worked on a volunteer basis. The Çanakkale Governorship and Çanakkale 18 March University provided in-kind contributions such as the free provision of exhibition and meeting places.

### **Key results and achievements**

Çanakkale 2010 is a successful policy initiative that reached all its goals. It served as a communication and meeting platform for civil activists and citizens, where past prejudices against 'usual suspects' were dissolved through a collective, participatory, and creative process. A younger generation was introduced to all levels of programme design and given opportunities to contribute. Art-related and practice-based activities leveraged one's own and in-between trust building which paved the way to unforgettable and sustained bonding among different participants.

Using everyday language, visuals, and all possible communication mediums helped widen the audience; however, a more detailed plan was needed to reach the vulnerable groups. As the coordinator has stated, there was no need for perfectionism, especially in terms of venues –

<sup>17</sup> Çanakkale has many faces, such as city of culture, city of peace, city of ceramics – so it has multiple identities.





bringing art to the streets is more effective than yearning for the perfect exhibition space and meanwhile doing nothing. Determining several target groups, making visits and sending invitations to community centres, primary schools, and NGOs working with women and children, succeeded in securing participation and creating relationships for possible future collaborations.

Çanakkale 2010 succeeded in bringing local cultural values to the agenda of Çanakkale citizens via its 12 themes and 12 sets of activities and reached its goal to increase the number of informed citizens. It also encouraged people to participate in the causes they care about. These actions contributed to a more recognized need for developing a local cultural policy, which was highlighted at the cultural policy symposium. Although Çanakkale 2010 has completed, its contributions will expand through publishing archived material from the initiative, including evaluations and results. Moreover, it seems to be continuing in a more diverse and dispersed format. While there have been many other cultural and art-related programmes produced by different initiatives, but never has one been so plural and continuous.

Çanakkale 2010 also broke the 'norm' that all successful civil initiations should establish a civil entity. Çanakkale 2010 initiators founded a structure that was flexible and not bounded to representational/institutional tags, instead focusing on producing and organizing the division of labour effectively, and proving that 'the work speaks for itself'. All its members were volunteers, assigned tasks but also independent within that structure, which helped to maximize resources. The organizers are now considering becoming more institutionalised, in a more diffused way, under a few associations.

### **Main obstacles**

From an organizational perspective, two challenges were: (1) the size of the core group (executive team) was so small (7 people) and were responsible for overall activities as well as their specific roles; (2) the lack of budget for new productions. These factors affected the quality of Çanakkale 2010: the executive committee was too busy with the overall programme and keeping up with the goals, and could not contribute to the content, especially throughout all 12 themes. Under the pressure of summer and voluntary working conditions, the second six months could not be as ambitious or professional as the former. Due to the lack of budget, the mobility of the activities within the city and creativity was reduced to existing material during this time. Nonetheless, various NGOs, civil initiatives, and the university contributed to the initiative with their projects.

Further, a lack of accumulated knowledge, especially on issues of culture, made it difficult to establish conceptual and insightful public debates. Discussions and guest speaker presentations played important roles in contributing to more informed, contributive future debates.<sup>18</sup>

### **Replicability or adaptation of policy elsewhere**

#### *Pre-requisites:*

- A strong civil society, ready to volunteer
- A supportive body (e.g., municipality, state, university) to ease the process

<sup>18</sup> Interview with İsmail Erten, 12 November 2010.





- Support of mentoring, qualified expertise
- Funding (at least a kick-start amount)

*Recommendations:*

- Ensure a civil body as organizer, although it is not necessary to found an association or a foundation.
- Attend to the representation of different/various groups and professions, but not the institutions.
- Look to volunteers and young people for implementation and practicality-needed assistance as well as skills.
- Conduct a detailed needs assessment (each city will have their own priorities, themes, goals to achieve).
- Create a detailed events calendar including the actors, venues, etc.
- Make your communication language simple and visible.
- Do not hesitate to introduce yourself and policy each time.
- Invite and visit people at their own locales – bring your activities to them.
- Relate to people, to link them to the project, and give them a role, cause, or a duty.
- Be visible as a collaborator but do not allow your personal identity to stand out.
- Trust and learn to delegate.
- Start with short periods, the quality is more important than duration especially in terms of sustainability.

## **SUMMARY**

Çanakkale 2010 was a year-long arts, culture, and community dialogue project organized by a civil society collective working in partnership with local government. Originating out of a three-year project, 'Invisible Cities: Building Capacities for Local Cultural Policy Transformation in Turkey', Çanakkale 2010 aimed to increase visibility for all civil art and culture production; strengthen cooperation among active civil society agents in coordinating and programming activities; increase participation of residents and organisations in activities; and, above all, further local cultural policy development through shared support and ownership of the initiative by the Municipality and civil initiatives of Çanakkale.

The programme was based on 12 themes/issues suggested by city residents during workshops and meetings that were related to Çanakkale and cultural policy. An open call for projects was developed. Eligible projects would contribute to the artistic and cultural life of Çanakkale, prioritize public participation and include methods of participation for Çanakkale residents, and give priority to the participation of women, children, disabled persons, and youth. The Çanakkale 2010 logo on a project certified that it was participatory, collective, respects universal values, was sustainable, and was open to cooperation.

The organizing team was highly sensitive to the need to build wide and inclusive participatory practices throughout the entire process and design of the programme. The initiative privileged public access to activities, diverse communication outlets, and expanded public participation through decentralized public venues. The management of the initiative featured a high level of





participation in decision-making and organizing processes, and encouraged organizations to collaborate with one another to co-develop activities.

Beneficiaries: The target audience was all city residents. The inclusion of vulnerable groups – children, women, Roma people – was an underlining principle. These groups were recognised throughout Çanakkale 2010, and special occasions were created to facilitate their participation. Special attention was paid to the inclusion of youth.

Key organizations involved were: Anadolu Kültür, the Municipality of Çanakkale, the City Museum of Çanakkale, the Çanakkale 18 Mart University. Most NGOs in the city contributed to the programme's development either as volunteers or with project proposals. Çanakkale 2010 received support from the Matra fund of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the European Cultural Foundation, and Çanakkale Municipality. Team members worked on a volunteer basis. The Çanakkale Governorship and Çanakkale 18 March University provided in-kind contributions such as the provision of exhibition and meeting places.

From an organizational perspective, challenges included the small size of the core group (7 people), who were responsible for overall activities as well as their specific roles; and the lack of a budget for new productions, which limited what activities could be developed. Further, a lack of accumulated knowledge, especially on issues of culture, made it difficult to establish conceptual and insightful public debates.

Çanakkale 2010 triggered existing civil activists and projects to unite and to organize a new structure to direct, design, and implement the cooperative initiative. It helped build and promote a year-long offer of cultural activities and highlight the cultural demand in the city. In part as a result of this project, the Municipality of Çanakkale and (some) Çanakkale citizens have more fully acknowledged the importance of culture to city development. The Municipality created a stand-alone Culture division (previously, municipal cultural activities were administered within the Public Relations and Social Services division). The initiative furthered the City's strategic goals in the area of culture, and became a platform for future actions related to institutionalizing culture within the City structure, building a policy-oriented/driven model for City actions in the cultural field, and advancing public understanding of culture's role in city development.

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