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The values of culture in Iberian cultural policies 01/Sept/2021

BRAGANÇA CITY IN THE PORTUGUESE INLAND:

A CASE STUDY ON VALUES AND CONTROVERSIES IN THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL SPHERE

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Criteria for the Case Study

- Portuguese territory asymmetries
- Decentralisation policies



Bragança

- Inland Northeast Town
- Low density territory

Territorial co-operation

- European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation Léon-Bragança
- Twin-cities - Spain (3)
 - France (3)
 - Italy (1)
 - São Tomé e Príncipe (1)
 - Brazil (1)



Political setting in the Bragança Municipality

Social Democrat Party (PSD) has been elected and forming Executives since 1997

Socialist Party (PS) is the second political force

Current PSD Executive – Two mandates

- ✓ 2013-2017
- ✓ 2017- to date

METHODOLOGY

The discourse level - documental analysis

- electoral materials
- cultural planning
- agreements celebrated with cultural entities
- cultural information available in official statistics
- activity reports
- cultural budgets

The practices level - fieldwork (actors with political and technical roles & stakeholders)

- interviews
- focus groups

Temporal scope

- Two mandates – 8 years

CULTURAL ACTORS

PSD MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVE

- The President
- The Councilor for Culture

- The Department of Culture

- 2 PS Councilours
(with no assigned political areas)

- There is no Adviser for culture

STAKEHOLDERS

Local Cultural Associations
Local schools
Bragança Polytechnic Institute
National cultural entities:
Theatres
Museums
Foundations

Universities
Other municipalities
North Directorate for Culture
Foreign municipalities

CULTURAL FACILITIES

Main municipal cultural facilities

Centre for Contemporary Art Graça Morais (2008)

Iberian Museum for Masks and Costumes (2007 - Bragança and Zamora)

Municipal Theatre (2004 – Part of the National Theatres Network)

Municipal Library*

Centre for Photography George Dussaud (2013)

Centro for Interpretation of Sephardic Culture in Northeast (2017)

National Railway Museum (2019)

Other facilities

Cultural Centre Adriano Moreira *

Library Adriano Moreira *

Academy of Literature of Trás-os-Montes *

Conservatory of Music and Dance *

Museum Abade de Baçal

Military Museum

Science Centre (Centro Ciência Viva de Bragança)

Iberian Academy of Masks (Portugal, Spain, Brazil)

* These facilities share the same building

Valuations – Criteria and Procedures

• Cultural planning

- ✓ Foster a high-quality cultural programming in the several facilities, attracting new audiences
- ✓ Ensuring important cultural events
- ✓ Recovery, adaptation and re-functionalization of heritage buildings
- ✓ Construction of the Museum of the Portuguese Language
- ✓ Focus on network cultural programming and its decentralization in the municipal territory, through productions and co-productions developed in partnership
- ✓ Support the cultural initiatives of the associative movement
- ✓ To boost the aesthetic-artistic Educative Service of cultural facilities
- ✓ Maintain an editorial policy of local authors' work and/or topics of local interest

Criteria: Minimum investment for greater return on population satisfaction and growth of the local economy

Process: Analysis and discussion within the Department, among the technicians, setting of a budget to the Executive's approval

(Source: Interview to Department of Culture)

Valuations – Criteria and Procedures

• Support to Local Cultural Associations

Cultural protocols celebrated between Bragança Municipality and Cultural Associations 2017-2020

Cultural area	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total	%
Traditional Music		8	9	5	22	31,5
Masks	1	6	6	4	17	24
Universities' Music and Theater groups		5	3	4	12	17
Theater / Performative arts		2	3	4	9	13
North East Territory Promotion		-	1	1	2	3
Rock Music		1	1	-	2	3
Intellectual Development		-	-	1	1	1,5
Multi sectorial		2	1	2	5	7
Total	1	24	24	21	70	100

Source: Uncharted, analysis of Bragança Municipal Archive of Protocols 2013-2020

Criteria: Audiences; Formative & artistic scope and area; Number of partners; Accountability of the Association;
Previous work in community

Process: Evaluation of applications, analysis with President and Councilor, deliberation in general meeting

(Source: Interview to Department of Culture)

Valuations – Criteria and Procedures

- **Programmatic contracts with cultural entities**

e.g. Protocols of collaboration and co-production of cultural programmes with museums, cultural foundations, universities...

“It was an assumption that each institution plays a particular role in the cultural domain. Municipality stimulates the performance of each institution according to its own criteria, aiming, together, the achievement of the political priorities”.

(Source: Interview to Department of Culture).

Strategy for tourism

Implement the Integrated Program of Cultural Tourism and Urban Development of the Municipality of Bragança, based on 5 strategic axes:

Axis 1: Cultural programming and community participation (Celebrate and participate);

Axis 2: Gastronomy (Taste and surprise);

Axis 3: Tourist mediation and quality of urban space (Receive and discover);

Axis 4: Innovation and entrepreneurship (Innovate and generate value);

Axis 5: Branding and communication (Belonging, attracting and revealing)

(Source: Previsional Document, GOP, 2015:19).

Main regular cultural events:

- Carnival of Caretos
- Meetings of Jewish-Sephardic Cultures (Terras de Sefard)
- The Feast of History
- The Mask Biennial – MASCARARTE
- Lombada - Festival of Music and Tradition.
- Sm'arte - Street Art festival of Bragança



Bragança Municipal Expenses in Culture, Leisure and Religion 2014-2019 (Budget execution of the General Plan Options)

Table 1 - Bragança Municipal Expenses in Culture, Leisure and Religion 2014-2019
(Budget execution of the General Plan Options)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Municipal expenses	4 594 710€	7 678 792€	9 557 677€	10 743 522€	8 422 301€	10 341 117€
Social Area	49,75%	41,11%	52,95%	47,08%	55,29%	67,37%
Culture, Leisure, Religion	473 815€ 10,31%	650 900€ 8,48%	806 560€ 8,44%	688 546€ 6,41%	1 148 347€ 13,63%	1 982 791€ 19,17%
Culture	160 039€ 3,48%	268 886€ 3,50%	363 469€ 3,80%	259 987€ 2,42%	502 657€ 5,97%	884 065€ 8,55%
Sport & Leisure	313 776€ 6,83%	382 015€ 4,97%	443 091€ 4,64%	428 559€ 3,99%	645 690€ 7,67%	1 098 726€ 10,62%

Source: Analysis of Activity Reports 2014-2019 (2014:127; 2015:123; 2016:128; 2017:126; 2018:125; 2019:131).

Total expenses of municipalities in cultural activities

	Bragança	Portugal
Total expenditure of municipal councils on cultural and creative activities per inhabitant	€139,2	€50,5
Total expenditure of municipal councils on sports activities and facilities per inhabitant	€ 50,7	€31,1
Expenditure of municipal councils on culture and sport in total expenditure	18,8 %	9,6%

Source: National Statistics Institute, *Regional Statistical Yearbooks – 2019*

Main values identified in the cultural policies



Values	Main measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heritage: material & intangible• Cultural participation/ cultural literacy• Support to the arts• Networking• Economic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support to traditional music, masks tradition, history• Creation of new museums• Support to local Associations; programming with schools• Contemporary art, theatre, literature• Cultural programming nets in the municipality, and at inter-municipal, regional, <u>national</u> and abroad levels• Municipal events gathering heritage and traditional crafts and gastronomy; Territory branding and tourism



Tensions - Agency of the second Party PS

- “The PS Councilors do not hold any specific municipal assignment, namely in the cultural field; however, the participation of the PS Councilors, as a rule, is restricted to the presence (sometimes eclipsed) in the events held, and in the formation of a final collegiate decision in the Municipal sessions; nevertheless, participation in the decision-making process does not exist”.
(Source: Testimony of PS Councilors).
- “Moreover, the position and political-party functioning of the PS, for a specific order of reasons, and the majority of the PSD Municipal Executive (centralizing and excluding in character), does not allow us to have an apprehension, understanding and participation in the definition, planning and implementation of municipal cultural policies”.
(Source: Testimony of PS Councilors).

YET

The last electoral process in 2017 was referred to as not relevant in cultural policy debate issues:

- “I am not aware that, in the last election campaign, there were significantly opposing lines of cultural policy that have provoked relevant discussion/debate”.
(Source: Interview to Department of Culture).

Tensions – Cultural Associations

- **Channel of communication**

- “Why not establish *open calls* for projects, with adequate financial allocation, as a way to hold the associative movement accountable and valued? Policies to support associative movement must value and demand accountability in equal parts”.

(Source: Association A, Focus Group)

- **Valorization of local Associations**

- “Artists from outside the Municipality are paid, locals are always treated as volunteers”.

(Source: Associations B and C, Focus Group)

- “Volunteering has its contours defined, but it cannot be synonymous with exploration”

(Source: Association C, Focus Group)

- **Role of cultural enterprises in the organisation of municipal events**

- The shared opinion that big amount of expense paid to enterprise do not mean real investment in culture;

- The organisation of those events could be participated by Associations, who always work *pro bono*.

Concluding Remarks

- There is an identified continuity in political lines for culture across the two mandates: coherence of the electoral programme analysed, the planning activities for each year, and the correspondent accountability reports;
- Some global agreement with the Municipality's availability for supporting Associations' activities;
- Some gap between cultural work from associations, Municipality and local artistic teaching;
- The need of more professional and artistic valorisation of the work developed by the local associations;
- The balance between the valorisation of cultural traditions and heritage and the investment in some local artistic projects (music, theater, arts);
- The relationship between local development and cultural and touristic investment;
- COVID-19 situation - the support to the recovery of most affected sectors in the pandemic context, namely, contemporary live music and the need of mobilizing again the audiences.

Thank you for your attention!



**Understanding, Capturing and
Fostering the Societal Value of
Culture**

