



SENSES, PLACES AND DESTINATIONS *OR* *ARTS FESTIVALS, CITIES, COMMUNITIES AND CULTURAL TOURISM*

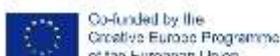
Arts festivals are strong moments in a city's life. They bring communities together that otherwise would not meet in a convivial, festive atmosphere. They contribute to the general atmosphere of a city, to the temperament, to the soul. Arts festivals create the conditions for audiences to discover different Art forms and artists. Creators translate the place, the world, into an artistic expression and offer a mirror of the paths to audiences we may not have realised we were travelling into.

Statistics show that arts festivals are artistic platforms strongly embedded in their local communities. Audiences participating in arts festivals (not considering audiences that visit festivals with a professional interest) come often from the same place, same city or from the surrounding region. Festivals in the community of a city are contributing to the feeling of belonging and creating a certain pride and affiliation to a city. In most cases, the name of a festival carries the name of the city.

One of the questions in this 'public' relation between a festival and its place is: What role, if any, for an arts festival to develop the content, vision, mission, the community and actions of its 'home'/hosting city? What role for city managers to include the arts festivals' proposals and reflections? At a larger scale, extending the notion of a shared space and a community to Europe: How does a festival fill in its European vocation?

In terms of a city's territory and its capacity to 'share' its treasures with visitors, we notice that it's mainly the larger festivals that have the capacity to draw a large part of their audiences from abroad, travelling for the specific purpose of experiencing that festival's programme. That does not take away that a festival, any arts festival with a high level or artistic offer independently of its size, contributes immensely to the attractiveness of a place: once a visitor is in a city, he or she will also look for a city's cultural offer. Tourists immerse themselves in the destination's cultural offer: tours, festivals, events, museums, theatre, sights and sounds. With over a billion tourists annually worldwide, tourism has become a significant economic, social and cultural force. Do cities longing for more tourists have the same agenda as festivals longing for more audiences? Which are the shared strategies?

THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF OUR PARTNERS



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The MeetUp is part of the preparatory action 'EFFE – Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe' co-financed by the European Union.



Under the main questions:

- How do we want to live together in our cities and territories today?
- What role for artists, festivals, urban developers and tourism colleagues in a joint vision for our cities, and what dialogue formats?

the Arts Festivals Summit Lisbon 2019 will shed light on this discussion from various perspectives with various examples.

By sharing practices, wisdoms and lessons learned, we hope to come to a joint vision and agenda on our respective possibilities to contribute to the developments of our cities. In this light, [the EFA – Eurocities Ljubljana declaration](#) will be followed up in conversation between various involved stakeholders:

- festival makers
- artists embedding their work strongly on the community/place development
- mayors
- marketing people in the city
- European platforms of cooperation such as Eurocities, ASfE or EFA
- Tourism agencies

For reference, please find below the [Ljubljana Declaration 2018](#)

The European Festivals Association, speaking on behalf of a constituency of 2650 arts festivals in more than 40 countries, together with EUROCITIES, bringing together the local governments of over 140 of Europe's largest cities and over 45 partner cities across 39 countries, have joined forces to issue this declaration, which highlights the importance of arts and culture in the development of our societies.

Arts are a necessity for every human being. Festivals' core mission is to bring the arts to audiences. They are among the most effective platforms for encouraging a participatory process between citizens and the arts in a climate of openness and dialogue.

Almost every community celebrates a festival of some kind. As important players in Europe's Cultural Heritage, today and for the future, arts festivals are deeply rooted in their villages, towns, cities and regions. They belong to the local community but attract visitors from near and far to enjoy a festive moment together.

In times when cities are becoming increasingly important in Europe, not only politically, but as hosts of our diverse communities, we believe that the contribution of the arts and arts festivals to open and harmonious living-together is immense.

Festivals and cities need to embark on a journey to develop and profile their neighbourhoods as innovative, striving and forward-looking places of discovery, as well as being the storehouses of cultural memory.

- *Therefore, festival representatives and mayors of cities across Europe, call for:*
- *continued dialogue, a common strategy and cross-border exchanges to fulfil our potential,*
- *engagement in defining and promoting new joint endeavours to bring out the best in our peaceful and prosperous communities,*
- *support for the upcoming Urban Agenda of the European Commission - looking forward to placing arts and culture as a necessity for every human being high in its list of priorities.*
- *The members of the festivals community embrace the Cities4Europe, Europe for Citizens campaign by dedicating an event in their season to the initiative, while mayors commit to brand and highlight European festivals and their calendar (presented on www.effe.eu), helping them to contribute to the vibrancy of their city and region.*

We call on all cities, city networks, regions, and festivals to participate in this commitment.