

WROCLAW SOCIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAMME



Figure 1 - Exhibition in the City Arsenal

AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

- 6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
- 9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

**SUSTAINABLE, INSTITUTIONAL, LEADERSHIP,
RESILIENCE, GOVERNANCE, ARTS, NETWORK,
EMPLOYMENT, CRISIS, COVID**



Figure 1 Vinicius Libardoni, Overdue Past of Wrocław

1. Wrocław and culture

Wrocław, located in western Poland, is an academic and a dynamic business center with an economy increasingly based on new technologies and innovation. Wrocław was included into the group of Smart City leaders and was the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in 2016.

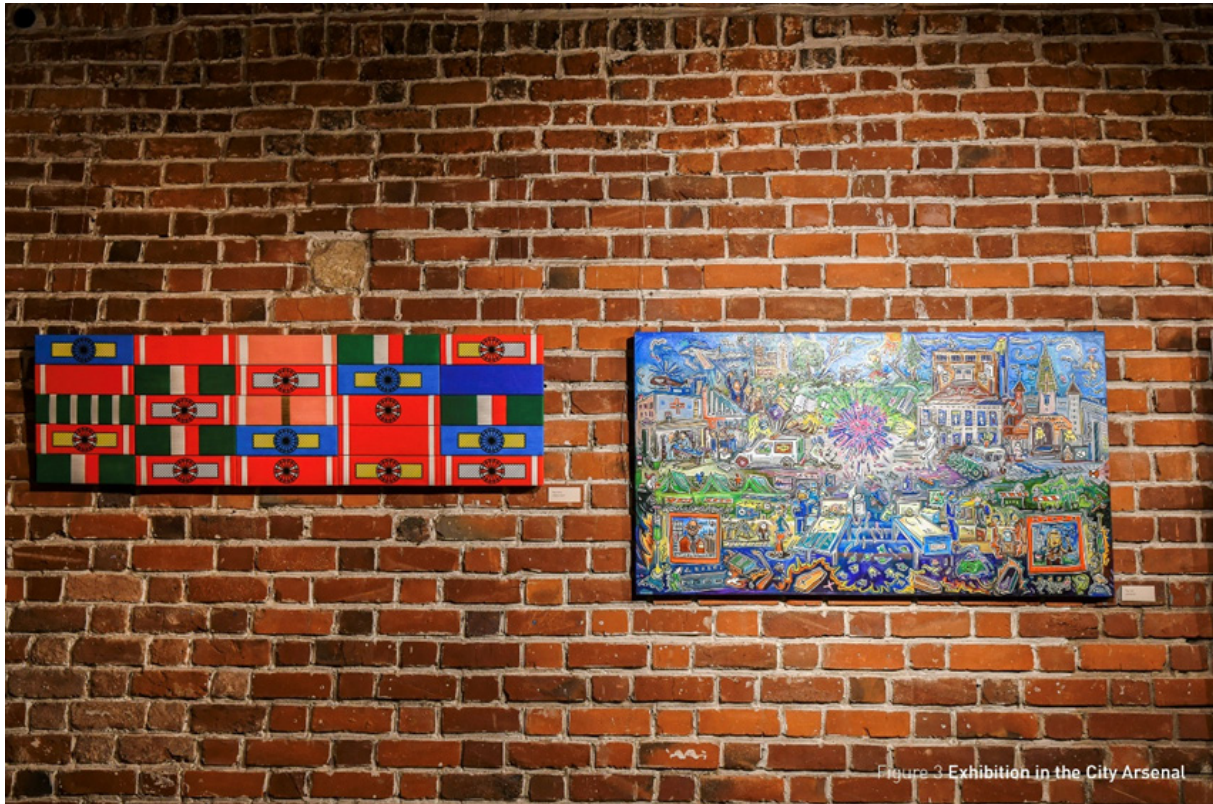
In Wrocław, culture is one of the best investments for sustainable development with an open city model that involves residents in decision-making. Such a premise results from the documents "Strategy of Wrocław 2030", "Culture – I'm Present!" and "The assumptions of Wrocław's socio-economic policy", which highlight the need to develop space and cultural resources outside the center, creating and supporting new forms of participation in culture and spending free time, including citizens in the process of co-deciding on cultural programs and activities, ensuring social inclusion and relations through culture.

THE AIM OF THE PROGRAMME WAS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE MOST VULNERABLE CULTURAL CREATORS, WHO WERE SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, ESPECIALLY FREELANCE ARTISTS.

2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The aim of "Wrocław Social Intervention Programme" was to provide assistance to the most vulnerable cultural creators, who were significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, especially freelance artists.



2.2. Project development

As a response to the pandemic, the City of Wrocław developed a catalogue of most important aid activities. An over EUR 3 million “Wrocław Social Intervention Programme”, introduced in April 2020 prevented by the pandemic. The programme was conceived as unclosed and it was modified along with the changing situation.

The Cultural Division of the Municipality monitored the situation of cultural entities, NGOs and Cultural institutions, which by Municipal agreed regulations have sustained payments of salaries for their employees. Other special programmes were introduced, such as “Aid Purchasing of Art Pieces” from local visual artists, “Wrocław Scholarship programme” supporting individual artists over 18 years old (additional Covid-related edition) or “1% renting fee” (99% discount) for artistic studios rented from the municipality.

Another example is “Centers of Local Initiatives”. Characterized by its decentralized model, it is one of the ECoC Wrocław 2016 legacy key projects. Its main features are related to geographical proximity, participatory programming, accessibility, social experimentation and intergenerational dialogue. Those centers became an active support for civil society during Covid-19. Also, during the pandemic, a new Art Gallery was established called “Sztuka na Miejscu” (Art in Place Gallery).

The City of Wrocław is following strategically the values of accessibility, participation and decentralization. In 2015, a Social Participation Bureau (now the Division for Social Participation) was created. One of its most important projects is the “Wrocław Civic Budget”. Also, the city lays emphasis on the development of Wrocław neighborhoods and close cooperation with neighborhood councils, which are self-government auxiliary units of the Municipality that consult with residents on their initiatives.

“Wrocław Social Intervention Programme” had the overall budget of the aid schemes. Many cultural organizations or institutions were given additional funds for their online presence, i.e. the legendary “Dziady – part 4” theatrical performance, the “Vertigo Summer Jazz Festival”, together with “Summer Vibes Festival” and “Vertigo Blues Festival”, which fully supported local artists.

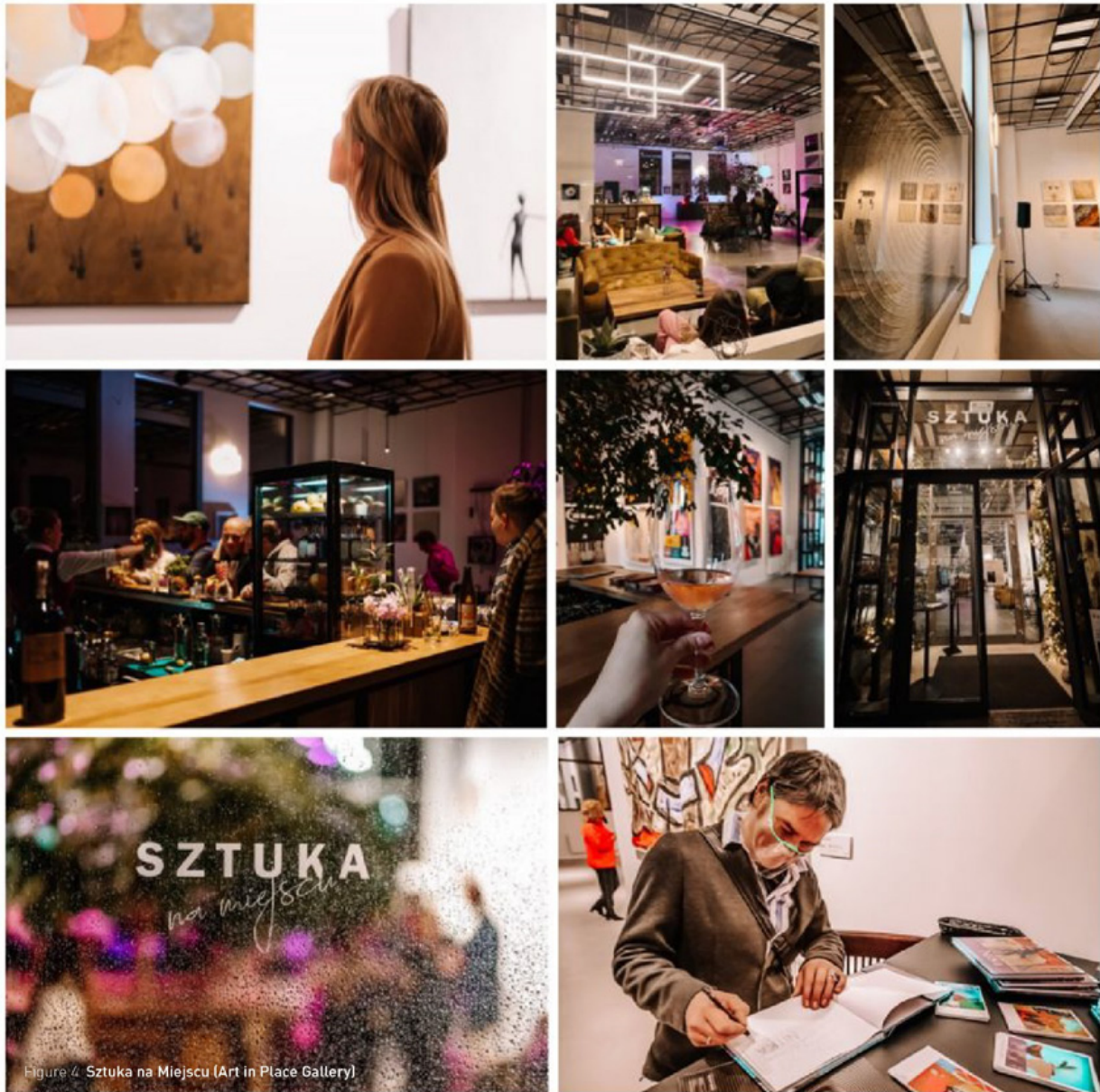


Figure 4. Sztuka na Miejscu (Art in Place Gallery)

“AID PURCHASE OF ART PIECES” SUPPORTED ARTISTS AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC WITH THE PURCHASE OF WORKS, WHICH ARE ALSO PERIODICALLY EXHIBITED IN THE WROCLAW CITY HALL.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

The pandemic provided the opportunity to reflect, and make changes in terms of sustainability, on local cultural policies of Wrocław. For instance, the city adopted the programme “Aid Purchase of Art Pieces”, which supported artists who found themselves in a difficult situation due to the coronavirus pandemic. The works purchased are periodically exhibited in the Wrocław City Hall and they will ultimately be donated to the collections of Wrocław exhibition institutions or used for representational purposes by the Mayor.



Also, the gallery "Sztuka na Miejscu" was established during the pandemic thanks to the cooperation of the Academy of Fine Arts, E. Geppert, the City of Wrocław and Save the World Foundation from Wrocław. It organizes new exhibitions every 3 weeks, supporting the sustainable effect of Aid programs for culture

THE CITY OF WROCLAW IS FOLLOWING STRATEGICALLY THE VALUES OF ACCESSIBILITY, PARTICIPATION AND DECENTRALIZATION.

3.2. Assessment

After the first year of implementation, the programme was evaluated. Beneficiaries and representatives of Art Schools and Associations of Artists provided crucial recommendations on how the programme, its regulations and criteria should be improved, and which actions should be definitely continued.

Another aspect was related to the consultations with the Civic Advisory Board for Culture, established in December 2020. The local government, based on summary reports and budget reports of 2020, finally decided to allocate a similar overall amount for the direct support to cultural sector for 2021.

3.3. Key factors

The key factors of the programme are: taking into account the local needs; tailoring the programme to local circumstances; and involving cultural institutions and centers of local activities into the strategy and support for the cultural sector.

All the activities were consulted and evaluated by the "Wrocław's Civic Advisory Council for Culture", which is implementing its goals by preparing opinions, recommendations and advising the Mayor in the field of culture. It also advises on concepts, principles, regulations and implementation of grant programs, as well as recommends representatives to: competition committees appointed to determine the procedure for granting subsidies from the

City budget, and to propose members to assess the management work of Municipal culture institutions, following also higher and state level legal regulations.

Support given to artists was the main postulate of the Advisory Council. Fortunately, the Interventional Programmes were able to be implemented in Wrocław..

3.4. Continuity

After the successful implementation of the Aid schemes for culture in 2020, the main pillars of the programme continued in 2021. The "Aid purchase of art pieces" from visual artists, for example, also led to a new format organized in the City, including an exhibition of the purchased paintings and graphics.

This programme became so popular and needed that the Municipality decided to organize another edition in 2022, increasing its budget. It constitutes a local best practice to support the artists and to enlarge the collection of masterpieces owned by the city.

4. Further information

Wrocław was a candidate for the fifth "UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21" International Award (February – June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September 2022, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Bartłomiej Świerczewski, Director of the Department for Social Affairs, Municipality of Wrocław, Wrocław, Lower Silesia province, Poland.

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