

Barcelona Treball

Summary of sector trends: Performing Arts

November 2012

Towards a network of local scenic spaces

The network organization of scenic equipment in Catalonia will avoid duplication in public programming of performing and musical arts, and will better use technical and financial resources, both public and private.

Culture, in a country without a state like Catalonia, is a decisive factor to strengthen its cohesion and sense of community. In this regard, national and local governments have to ensure, with the participation of civil society, access to and use of culture by the citizenry.

While being true that Catalonia has cultural facilities to develop activities linked to performing arts, they often need a renewal and adaptation to increasingly demanding regulations on safety and accessibility. This is a complex task for small municipalities, either because of the available budget, or the space management, or its maintenance. Sometimes spaces belong to an entity, association or organization, and, hence, are not part of public facilities.

The social, economic and cultural context changes constantly and, nowadays, **new technologies favour a massive and individualized consumption of culture, mostly in urban areas away from towns or inaccessible**. This observation is due to the fact that new technologies allow for consuming music, audiovisual products (films, interviews, TV...), among others, at a low cost, from anywhere, in a personalized way and without time restrictions. In fact, territorial structure, population distribution and fragmentation of municipal map have contributed to an uneven location of facilities. Some areas are insufficiently endowed. The main cultural center of Catalonia is in Barcelona, followed by the provincial capitals.

However, there have been initiatives in the recent years that have boosted culture in medium-sized towns, thus bringing arts closer to citizenry. For instance, the organization of

festivals such as the High Season in Girona and Salt, the Igualada's Sample, Tàrraga Theatre Fair, music festivals such as PopArb and Farady in Arbúcies and Vilanova i al Geltrú, Vic's Live Music Market, etc.

On the other hand, the Public System of Scenic and Music Facilities (PSSMF), created in 2009, is a network of theatres and auditoriums throughout the country born with the **aim of consolidating and distributing homogeneously cultural activity in Catalan locations** to guarantee citizens' right to equal access to culture, as established by Article 22 of the Statute of Autonomy.

The PSSMF is conceived to **boost performing arts and music situation in Catalonia, in cooperation with local and supralocal stakeholders** (city, provincial and regional councils). This may provide an opportunity to develop private performing and music arts sector, and to make its business net grow.

According to the data contained in the Catalonia Cultural Facilities Plan 2010 – 2020, **municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants own scenic facilities, but smaller municipalities show a significantly lower percentage**. Specifically, only 87% of municipalities with 15,000 to 50,000 inhabitants have scenic facilities, and this share reduces to 47% in the case of municipalities with 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants and to 29% in the case of municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants. One of the Plan's objectives is to balance territorially the number of scenic facilities and endow them technologically¹

¹Directorate General for Cultural Promotion and Cooperation.

Impact on the sector

The PSSMF aims at providing stable cultural programming in municipalities. There are other initiatives, as well, sharing the same objective, such as:

- **Programa.cat:** identifies proposals of performing and musical arts promoted by the Culture Department of Catalonia Regional Government, devoted to support the programming of Catalonia's theatres, auditories and halls.
- **Cultural Ring:** Project of cultural and technological innovation aimed at ensuring cultural supply for municipalities that, because of location or dimension, face difficulties in scheduling events.
- **PCIMS (Project of Cultural Indicators for the Municipal Sphere):** system of key indicators on cultural activity in Catalonia's municipalities, that provides updated and track trend data.
- **Cultura on tour:** project focused on reinforcing cultural activity in municipalities and guaranteeing citizens' access to quality shows, concerts and expositions.
- **Circuit of the Network of Municipal Scenic Facilities:** program in support for the dissemination of professional theatre, music and dance in Barcelona. The program is managed by the Barcelona Provincial Council Office for Artistic Dissemination (OAD), which provides to adhering municipalities services to help them improve local scenic facilities management, quality and resources.

Within the Circuit of the Network of Municipal Scenic Facilities (hereinafter Circuit), in 2011 1,488 shows were scheduled (excluding Barcelona city), 50,6% of which were theatrical, 37,2% musical, 6,7% dance and 5,5% circus shows.

354,441 people attended shows offered by the Circuit: 50% of them to theatrical shows, 42% to concerts, 5,7% to dance and 2,3% to circus shows².

In 2011, EUR 7,6 Million were spent in the Circuit's facilities contracting of shows, 10% less than that in 2010 and the lowest amount of the last five years. However, this amount is linked to the 10,9% decrease registered in 2011 in the number of Circuit's shows.

In spite of these initiatives and positives figures it is necessary to review the ownership of municipal scenic facilities. It is mainly due to the fact that their renewal requires a significant investment, which does not fit within the current financial difficulties of city councils. In this regard, some options are being considered but a final decision has not been taken yet:

- **Usufruct agreement**

Agreement that defines a specific use of the facility by the city council. In return, the council supports the entity, for example, economically, to improve access or equipment (toilets, dressing rooms, etc..).

- **Agreement on the transfer of the facility**

The entity transfers the equipment to the city council for a finite time during which it undertakes to renew or preserve parts of it (solar, facade, ...) and to schedule cultural events. The municipality and the entity may agree on other conditions concerning the management of the theater, such as the right of preferential use by the latter, direct management, etc..

- **Final assignment**

The entity transfers the facility to the city council free of liabilities and tax payments. In return, the city council commits to carry out the repair, adjustment and restructuring of the building, and to use it as a cultural facility.

In 2011, the Circuit offered 699 entertainment shows: 46,6% music, 38,9% theatre, 8,9% dance and 5,6% circus.

In 2011, 583 companies have participated in the Circuit: 46,3% musical, 38,4% theatrical, 8,9% dance companies and 6,3% circus companies.

² Circuit of the Network of Municipal Scenic Facilities 2011. Barcelona Provincial Council.

Impact on professional profiles

Diversification, increase, specialization and, mostly, professionalization of cultural activity requires that professionals working in it complete their education in issues such as communication, dissemination, shows promotion, distribution, marketing or business management.

Both public administrations and sectoral associations organize training on subjects such as marketing and shows promotion, among others.

The proliferation of performing arts shows throughout Catalonia is a change for two types of professionals: **those who manage the centres where the functions are scheduled and those who perform in them.**

Proper management of municipal performing arts facilities must take into account the characteristics of the equipment. This implies that the following issues must be assessed:

- Managing the facility with own personnel or ad hoc hired staff: **managers or staff responsible for culture matters should update their management skills through appropriate training**, for example, business management applied to culture.
- Delegating the management to a company or association: it implies offering the management of the facility to a company or an association that must submit a project. This option allows for choosing the best proposal for theatre management and employing theater professionals: **arts managers, arts promoters, artists, editors, etc.**. The company or association that submits a project competes with others, so that they will have to make the best proposal to obtain the job. That's why the delegation of management favors the submission of suitable and interesting proposals and boosts the quality of the shows.

On the other hand, **artists or arts professionals** will find an increased supply of venues where they can showcase their creations. However, fierce competition will force them create quality shows with ability to attract wider audiences. Moreover, they will get economies of scale and apply them, so that the technical and economic effort required to create a show can be used to create another, or one show can play in more than one theatre.

In this regard, hiring **services of artistic representatives may prove to be very useful for the advantages stemming from the professionalization of this task**: regular contact with programmers and direct knowledge of their needs, negotiating experience and mastery of the contract management, knowledge of a particular territory, thematic or sectoral specialization (circus, entertainment and street theater, dance, international festivals, etc.).

Companies can work exclusively with a artistic representative or allow for distribution to be carried out by several representatives.

Government and sectoral industry associations organize many training activities in various subjects such as business management, marketing and communication, new technologies, or internationalization, among others, which are really helpful for the promotion and sale of shows, especially in a context where the culture is diversified and extended throughout Catalonia.

The changes following the creation of a network of local scenic facilities will impact significantly on some of the professional profiles within the field of dissemination of performing arts, such as on that of the cultural scheduler or the artistic representative. Also, profiles in the field of management services within the subfield of cultural management, such as the cultural consultant, the director of cultural events or the responsible for marketing, communication and culture.

More information about the industry is available on the [Barcelona Treball website](#)
[Market > Industries > Culture](#)
[Performing Arts](#)

This section of the website contains a report on the industry covering aspects on employment issues, where you will be able to take a look at occupational fiches for various job profiles and learn the main resources needed to find a job in the industry.

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