

Creative Cities II

Maximizing the potential of the smaller cities



Country / region or city:

**Albania, Montenegro and
Macedonia**

Name of Cooperation project:

Creative Cities II

Partner organizations:

**ANTTARC – Albanian
National Training and
Technical Assistance
Recourse Centre (Tirana)**

Coaching/monitoring partner:

Charles Landry

Duration of project:

**February 1, 2008 – January
31, 2011**

Creative Cities II is a regional cooperation project lead by ANTTARC in Tirana, Albania. The aim of this project is to provide a strategy for developing and improving cultural life of empowerment of society by strengthening peoples' confidence in their own creative abilities based on their unique local cultural context. When people and organizations are provided with the conditions and opportunities to think, plan, and act, they can solve innumerable urban problems with more imagination and grasp previously unseen possibilities.

Creative Cities II: Maximizing the potential of the smaller cities is developed based on lessons learned of the previously implemented 3-year cooperation project "Creative Cities Pogradec and Shkodra". The reason for developing the *Creative Cities II* lay in the fact that Albania, including the two neighboring countries, Macedonia and Montenegro, are still in the period of political transition, so poverty and a passive approach to improve quality of life remain endemic, especially in the smaller towns of aforementioned countries. The social, political and economic problems

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(Swiss Agency for Development
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and the constant instability and insecurity have led to permanent migration and immigration especially of the young, ambitious, and talented locals to the bigger cities of the countries, or abroad.

The project involves the following towns: Lezhe, Puka, Peshkopia, Korca, Gjirokastra, and Saranda in Albania, Ulcinj in Montenegro, and Struga in Macedonia.

The specific objectives of the *Creative Cities II* are:

- All participating cities will be acquainted with the Creative City philosophy and should locate the necessary human resources and skills to develop projects on their own which have an impact on the socio-cultural and economic development of the respective cities
- All cities will be supported to implement the Creative City projects, either through small grants, or other means such as coaching
- All cities will learn how to develop project proposals, raise funds, manage projects, as well as lobbying
- Exchange of experience between the cities involved (including Pogradec and Shkodra) and the local ownership of the Creative City Philosophy
- The process of the whole project, as well as the city-specific projects selected for support, ensure broad participation and democratic decision-making

The activities of the project include:

- All 8 cities involved in the project, through a series of workshops and additional consultation with external consultants and ANTTARC, develop their own program activities which will be implemented in the following years
- In the second and third year of the project, three training events with representatives of all the cities and the partner organizations will take place, each lasting for two days Regular exchange of experiences among the cities will be the core issue of capacity-building and idea-generating, so ANTTARC will provide an opportunity for meetings through trainings and workshops that will be done in groups of 4 cities
- Organizing two Creative Cities conferences in collaboration with the Swiss Cultural Programme in the Western Balkans and the external consultant of the project, Mr. Charles Landry

The Swiss Cultural Programme in the Western Balkans (SCP) is run by Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council, upon mandate of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The SCP encompasses Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo. It supports local partners, which emphasize the variety, independence and performance of cultural life. The SCP regional cooperation projects focus on the capacity building and institutional development processes of cultural organizations with a regional orientation. ■