

STADTKULTUR, an Association for Joint Cultural Activities of Bavarian Cities, is a network of 50 municipalities in Bavaria. Common goal of the member cities and towns is promoting art and culture. They initiate large-scale projects together, exchange experiences, share expertise and set new trends in the cultural sector. Bavarian-wide festivals are the core part of the joint activities. The festivals focus on cultural and educational issues and integrate cultural policy and cultural management. Furthermore the association organises seminars and conferences and hosts an online platform for event and artist promotion.

History: STADTKULTUR was founded in Nuremberg in 1976 at the suggestion of the Bavarian Cities Association's cultural committee. As a pilot project it has helped to develop sustainable structures for cooperative cultural activities. Since 2001 the association has been based in Ingolstadt. It has increased the number of its members and developed its project activities.

Members: The network extends over the whole area of the Free State of Bavaria and over a distance of 300 km from the north to the south. The biggest member city is Nuremberg with 500,000 inhabitants, the smallest town Scheyern with 4,500 inhabitants. The municipalities have diverse profiles; there are spa towns, festival towns, historic towns and industrial cities as well as new conurbations and small towns in rural areas.

Member cities and towns: Aichach, Altdorf bei Nürnberg, Ansbach, Aschaffenburg, Bad Kissingen, Bobingen, Burghausen, Coburg, Dasing, Eggenfelden, Eichstätt, Erlangen, Forchheim, Friedberg, Gerolzhofen, Herzogenaurach, Ingolstadt, Kitzingen, Landshut, Lohr am Main, Mainburg, Markttheidenfeld, Miesbach, Neuburg a.d. Donau, Neumarkt i.d. OPf., Neuötting, Neustadt a.d. Donau, Nürnberg, Penzberg, Pfaffenhofen a.d. Ilm, Roth, Rothenburg o.d. Tauber, Scheyern, Schwabach, Schweinfurt, Starnberg, Sulzbach-Rosenberg, Traunstein, Unterschleißheim, Vilsbiburg, Vohburg, Volkach, Weiden i.d. OPf., Wemding, Wunsiedel, Würzburg.

Board and staff: General assembly; Executive Board; coordination office with a full-time executive and project manager, one regular employee and several freelancers.

Working methods: The association adjusts its activities in line with the priorities of the members. For that purpose, it carries out surveys at regular intervals, sometimes in cooperation with the Bavarian Cities Association. Based on the surveys' results, the coordination office develops project proposals, which are decided on in the board meeting. In the case of large-scale projects and festivals, the office is charged with the overall management, whereas each participating city or town independently arranges a local event programme that fits into the conceptual framework. The coordination office assists the local authorities in planning and coordinating these local programmes and organises meetings on different topics, to which they invite subject specialists too. In addition, the office is responsible for public relations and the provision of advertising material.

Financing: The coordinating office is financed by membership fees. Large-scale projects and festivals are subsidised and self-financed by the municipalities.

Cultural benefits

Exchange of ideas: People working in the cultural sector are always looking for inspiration in order to develop their programmes. In this regard, planning and coordinating projects as a network of cities and towns is a good opportunity to exchange ideas with people from other municipalities, to share experiences and to give and take inspiration. Trends and new developments in the cultural sector, which may be interesting for running or future projects, can be communicated very effectively over the network.

Professionalism: The network helps the local authorities to put their cultural activities on a professional footing. Small towns, which don't have a department for cultural affairs, benefit from the

knowledge and the management know-how of the network. Bigger cities too can take advantage of the expertise of the other municipalities.

Competition: Being involved in a supraregional project is an opportunity for the local authorities to showcase their cultural activities and to compare them with programmes of other cities and towns. In terms of quality, the municipalities enter into competition with each other for the most interesting programme and the most innovative contribution to the project. This is not only a motivating factor for them but also an incentive to improve and develop their local cultural activities.

Creativity and sustainability: A supraregional project provides the framework for individual local programmes. The local authorities develop their contributions to the over-all project independently and with regard to local priorities. This approach enhances the creativity of the municipalities and their commitment to the project. Regional and cultural identities can be taken into account, which guarantees sustainability of the local programmes.

Publicity: Events within a supraregional project gain more public attention than ordinary local events and receive considerable media coverage. This increases the significance of the cultural activities within a municipality as a whole.

Benefits in terms of cultural policy

Networking: Connecting municipalities for the purpose of joint cultural activities encourages cooperation between cultural policy, cultural management and artists. Cooperation of this kind facilitates the implementation of decisions made at the political level.

Arts education: STADTKULTUR also supports cooperation between municipalities, cultural and educational institutions. It promotes schools to get involved in the supraregional festivals and it works closely with educational authorities as well as with public and private educational institutions.

Urban culture: The network assists the municipalities in fulfilling their public task of promoting local cultural activities. Thus, the role of culture in the cities and towns will be strengthened.

Economic benefits

Reducing expenditure: Supraregional festivals involving several municipalities attract a great deal of publicity. Running an overall campaign for such a project is much more efficient and cost-saving than promoting the events at local level only. Since the association's office manages the media relations and the Bavarian-wide promotion of the festivals, the municipalities can minimise their local advertising expenses for services like website design, design of advertising material etc.

Fundraising: Being involved in a supraregional project opens up new fundraising opportunities for local authorities and organisers. It provides an argument for increasing the municipal budget for cultural activities and it facilitates recruiting private sponsors. This also improves career prospects for artists.

Homepage: www.stadtkultur-bayern.de

Projects

➤ **Bavarian-wide festivals**

- 2012 Stadt.Geschichte.Zukunft www.stadt-geschichte-zukunft.de
- 2010 LITERATURupdate www.literaturupdate.de (Literature festival with focus on young Bavarian writers and new media)
- 2008 KUNSTRÄUME BAYERN www.kunstraume-bayern.de (Public art festival)
- 2006 Die Literaturlandschaften Bayerns „Wo befreundete Wege zusammenlaufen“ (Sequel of the first literature festival with special focus on literary friendships)
- 2004 Die Literaturlandschaften Bayerns „Worte mit und ohne Anker“ (Literature festival focusing on the connection between literature and so-called "literary landscapes" in Bavaria) www.dieliteraturlandschaftenbayerns.de

➤ **Online projects**

- Angebotsbörse www.angebotsboerse.com (Online platform for event and artist promotion. Facilitates the coordination of joint projects, the adoption of event formats and the recruitment of artists)
- **Literature Foundation Bavaria** www.literaturstiftung.de (The foundation is supposed to assure the financing of the Bavarian-wide literature projects in the long term)