




port of  
inspiration

бряг на  
вдъхновението





On five continents worldwide, there are fourteen settlements and geographical locations bearing the name of Varna. The original Varna however is in Bulgaria, on the western Black Sea coast.

*Varna was the first Bulgarian city to declare its intention to make a bid to be European Capital of Culture in 2019. This decision was made in June 2006. The opportunity for a permanent change in the city's image provided by this event is motivating us to channel our efforts and focus our actions on the event's planning and implementation. Varna is an ancient and fascinating city which we will be honoured to introduce to Europe and the world in 2019. We believe that the title European Capital of Culture will help us promote our city as a desirable destination for artists and citizens of the world, a space for innovation and a good example in the building of new organisational models.*

*Varna enjoys its fame as the summer capital city of Bulgaria thanks to a spectrum of diverse and high-quality cultural events and its well developed tourism infrastructure. Being a mayor with long-term experience as a general manager in the tourism industry, I accept this recognition as an honour, but also as a great responsibility. I perceive the European Capital of Culture project as seriously challenging Varna to prove its qualities of being a cultural centre by unfolding the city's potential for the duration of a whole year.*

*At the preliminary stage of preparing the candidature, time was dedicated to the building of a partnership network with the cities and towns in the region. In 2011, Varna saw the signing of a memorandum for cooperation, the first of its kind in this country, with twelve partner cities and towns. This important step will contribute to the dialogue with the region and will ensure the greater visibility and sustainability of the programme events.*

*I believe that investments made in the cultural sector today are investments in a more stable economic future for tomorrow. The project European Capital of Culture comes at the right time by focusing our attention on the transforming power of cultural processes, on the opportunity to build trust in our citizens through cultural events. One of our hopes is that a legacy of 2019 will be that the annual visitors' season to Varna as a cultural destination will be extended to cover the spring and the autumn.*

*Varna is a city of young people. Evidence of their energy is the fact that our city is now a finalist in the bid to be the European Youth Capital 2016.*

*We know what we have and we know what we want to reach. The competitive spirit is here, and the dream to turn Varna into a welcoming and inspiring space is our vision.*

*Ivan Portnih  
Mayor of Varna*

*The development of the City and District of Varna has been significantly influenced by the economic crisis which started in 2008. This reality has been given due consideration and the problematic areas in the District Strategy for Development for our programme for 2014 – 2020 have been clearly identified.*

*In the face of this situation, the recognition of the potential provided by this major European Union prize makes clearer and more definitive our desire to realise our dream for Varna to be named European Capital of Culture in 2019. Without doubt, the winning of the title will heighten the visibility of Varna as a city blessed with a rich history, enjoying proven tourism potential and offering multi-cultural diversity in a European context.*

*The title will encourage us to rethink our perceptions of the place where we live. A win will challenge us to seek new horizons, will encourage social synergies and social “updating.” The European Capital of Culture initiative will develop our city and region both economically and socially, positively influence its infrastructure, provide a huge stimulus to our burgeoning tourism sector, and will form a fertile ground for business growth.*

*I do believe that there is no other city or region more enthusiastic about winning this prestigious competition. Indeed, another twelve municipalities have put their faith in our cause and shared in this belief. These are municipalities vitally connected to our city in historical, social and cultural aspects, namely Dobrich, Balchik, Kavarna, Byala, Provadiya, Devnya, Aksakovo, Shabla, Suvorovo, Dalgopol, Durankulak and General Toshevo.*

*Finally, this candidature belongs not only to the city of Varna and its supporting region, but to Bulgaria as well, because a win will mark our country and our city as a worthy focal point on the European cultural map!*

*Ivan Velikov  
Governor of Varna District*

## Memorandum for Regional Partnership and Adhesion to Varna’s Candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019

We, the Mayors of municipalities in Varna’s North-Eastern region, being led by the idea to:

- Encourage the development, revitalisation and enrichment of the cultural life of our region through the organisation and promotion of cultural events as a main factor for the building of identity and uniqueness of the towns and villages in the region
- Design and develop new and unconventional formats of cultural expression based on innovative ideas and practices for presentation of cultural events in peripheral urban areas
- Create conditions for equal access to culture for the citizens from different social and ethnic groups, aimed at contributing to the citizens’ inclusion in the cultural processes and for the development of the towns and villages.

*Declare our support and adhesion to Varna’s candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019, and in expression of this support, We declare our readiness:*

- to host events included in the cultural programme of the project Varna – Candidate for European Capital of Culture 2019
- to promote culture as a priority in the municipal policy for the following 2013 – 2020 period and to channel resources and investments in the direction of its sustainable development
- to build a cultural network and to work jointly within its framework for the creation of quality cultural products that will contribute to the decentralisation of integrated cultural development
- to attract our sister cities from Europe and worldwide to support our cause and to widen and deepen our mutual connections, cooperation and cultural exchange.

September 2011

Municipality of Varna, Municipality of Shabla, Municipality of Dobrich, Municipality of Aksakovo, Municipality of Kavarna, Municipality of Devnya, Municipality of Balchik, Municipality of Madara, Municipality of Byala, Municipality of Pliska, Municipality of Provadiya, Municipality of Veliki Preslav

Hidden Narratives of Europe:

# Introducing Varna

## A MYSTERIOUS CULTURE

*This is about an area of the world that remains, for those of us oriented primarily toward North America and Europe, a historically complicated and geographically confusing melange of ancient empires (...) that are little understood and imperfectly located...<sup>1</sup>*

Together with Romanian Cucuteni, Gumelnita and Hamangia, and Ukrainian Tripolye, Varna and its surrounding areas outline the territory of very old Neolithic micro-cultures, impressive for their “enigmatic remains” and high “technological, aesthetic and social achievements”<sup>2</sup>, traces from civilisation levels, unique in the world’s history.

Among the finds from the so-called Neolithic Varna Culture are jewellery and objects of the highest craftsmanship, which give grounds for announcing the presence of one of the richest Old European archeological heritages and the “oldest handcrafted gold in the world.”<sup>3</sup> In 2012, at the Provadia-Solnitsata, archeologists discovered “the oldest prehistoric town ever found in Europe”<sup>4</sup> dating back to the fifth millennium BC.

<sup>1</sup> Ron Pavellas, *The Black Sea*, book overview, pavellas.com, 2009

<sup>2</sup> *The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley, 5000–3500 BC*, Introduction, New York University (ISAW), exhibition catalogue, 2010

<sup>3</sup> *The first Civilisation in Europe and the Oldest Gold in the World – Varna – Bulgaria*, exhibition catalogue, Isetan Museum of Art, Nippon Television Network Print, Tokyo, 1982

<sup>4</sup> Europe’s oldest prehistoric town found in Bulgaria, article, france42.com, 2012



The World's Oldest Gold. The unique collection from Varna Chalcolithic necropolis dated 6000 years back contains the oldest handcrafted gold in the world.



## SEA OF HOSPITALITY

*Images and associations come less readily for the Black Sea. It is a body of water familiar to few people outside of the region itself. For entire stretches of the Black Sea's history (...) there are no more than a few specialist monographs to tell its story. Major powers – from Byzantium to the Ottomans and Russia – at various times had the sea at the center of their strategic aims, but there has been little research on the sea in the history of these empires.*<sup>5</sup>

The sea has been the link between Varna and the world. Owing to a direct connection with the Mediterranean basin – via the Bosphorus strait – the city of Varna has a number of features specific to Mediterranean cultures. At the same time it has its own dynamic and aspect owing to a unique position of an inland sea lying between south-eastern Europe and Asia Minor. Varna has always possessed a high degree of openness and a multitude of identities, functioning as a meeting ground and melting pot of cultures, histories and practices.

Bulgaria's eastern coast – called *The East Gate of Europe* by some – is a territory of continuous redefining and self-determination – perceived at one and the same time as external and internal to the European continent. The ancient Greeks called it at one time *Pontos Axeinos* (the Hostile Sea), because of its storminess and lack of islands. After colonizing its coast, the Greeks renamed it *Pontos Euxeinos* (the Welcoming Sea). For many centuries the Mediterranean peoples—Greeks, Byzantines, Italians—strove to occupy its coasts.

<sup>5</sup> Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History*, Oxford University Press, 2004

## AMBASSADOR TO EUROPE

*Apart from the relatively short time in the twentieth century, Eastern Europe – at least the kind with two capital E's – was not the way most people thought about the eastern extremity of the continent. (...) The history of Europe's east in other words, is not the story of a place called Eastern Europe.*<sup>6</sup>

For many centuries Varna has been a major port, a trading and cultural centre on the western Black Sea coast. In Antiquity – when the city bore the name Odessos – a string of Greek cities and trading emporia connected all the corners of the sea into a single commercial network. The influence of the advanced Greek culture penetrated through these Greek cities to the interior of the East European land mass.

In the Middle Ages, the Black Sea world, then known as *Mare Maggior*, (The Large Sea) was revived by the entrepreneurial spirit of the Genoese and Venetians. Both Italian cities – Venice and Genoa – had embassies in Varna. The city was in direct communication with the whole Mediterranean. Not only West European goods, but also cultural influences, entered the South-East Balkan territories through these outposts.

Later, in the 19th century, the diplomatic residences based in the city numbered not less than ten: Austria, Greece, Turkey, Belgium, France, England, Russia and others. Even through the Cold War period, the port city of Varna remained one of the country's major export and import points.



<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



The oldest settlements in Europe dating from 5000 BC discovered in Provadiya, Suvorovo and Durankulak

## LESSONS IN DIVERSITY

*Religious practices, linguistic forms, musical and literary styles, folklore and foodways, among many other areas of social life, are joined together in a web of mutual influence that is readily apparent to even most casual visitor...<sup>7</sup>*

In a unique way, Varna reconciles the rigorous temperament of the Balkans and the Caucasus with the southern spirit of the Mediterranean, transforming itself into a unique amalgam of ethnicities, cultural traditions and organisational patterns.

The cosmopolitan spirit of the city is reflected in the preserved names of its oldest residential quarters. At the end of the 19th century, there were eight *mahalle* (neighbourhoods) ranked by the number of their residents: Turkish, Greek, Gagaouz, Armenian, Jewish, Bulgarian, Tatar, and Gypsy. The proclamation of Bulgaria's independence found Varna with not more than 3500 Bulgarian residents out of a total population of 21 000.

Varna has a long-standing tradition of intercultural and interethnic tolerance and understanding. Its community of Bulgarians, Turks, Armenians, Roma, Russians, Ukrainians, Jews and other nationalities is a local model in direct exemplification of the main European values.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE

*With the development of industrial production, Europe took a decisive step in reversing the global current of technological innovation. (...) [They] gave the continent an edge as a geopolitical centre of the globe and for a time its very centre. The dynamics behind the industrial revolution (...) include cultural, religious, economic, demographic, technological and of course political factors.<sup>8</sup>*

The enthusiasm and initiative of the local population, men of enterprise and innovation, propelled the industrial growth of the city and its environs at the beginning of the 20th century. Within the time span of a century the unremarkable semi-oriental place of Varna was transformed into a sophisticated city of central-European architecture, developed infrastructure and convenient communications and transport. The city's population doubled in number.

The dynamic development of Varna assigned to the city a long lasting pioneering role in the introduction of new technologies and practices. Varna was the place where a myriad of novelties made their first entry into Bulgaria: the first railway in the country, the first merchant shipping company, the first football game, the groundbreaking first royal park. The strong independent spirit of Varna's residents helped initiate the first divine service conducted in the Bulgarian language, the first official homage to the "fathers" of the Slavonic alphabet – the Cyrillic – Saints Cyril and Methodius.



<sup>8</sup> Carsten Paludan-MueLLer, Europe — A constrained and fragmented space on the edge of the continental landmasses. Crossroad, battlefield and melting pot, in: Heritage and Beyond, Council of Europe Publishing, 2009

# Basic principles

1. Why does the city which you represent wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

## CONTEXT

As a result of the financial crisis, recent years have faced the European Union with a number of challenges that have triggered social tension and unrest in a large number of EU member states.

Bulgaria was not left outside this process and, like many nations on the global and European map, it has to find its own effective and specific solutions to a number of issues – political, economic, social and cultural.

Although it has been over twenty years since the Berlin Wall fell, we are still faced with overcoming these problems – the legacy from a model of centralised and monocratic government.

But not all is gloom and despondency. Varna has huge advantages and potential, which make us believe that there is yet a lot to come.

## OUR POTENTIAL

— FESTIVAL CITY

*Finding Varna is easier than finding Bulgaria –  
Unknown visitor, the 1960's.*

Varna is vibrant and exciting all the year round. And summer is the time when the cultural and tourist life in the city reaches its peak. You can go to the beach, taste fresh seafood, take a stroll in the lovely *Sea Garden* or attend the events from a festival programme, whether for classical music, jazz or drama. Varna is the place for outdoor sports, for dancing with friends till dawn. And in the colder seasons you can find warmth and hospitality in one of the numerous cosy hostelrys serving delicious food and good local wine.

Varna is the host of the most prestigious festival for classical music in this country – the *Varna Summer International Music Festival* founded in 1926 as *Summer Musical Celebrations*. The name *Varna Summer* bears the *International Theatre Festival*, too. In a succession of twenty-one hostings, it has offered to its devoted audience some of the best performances played on the Bulgarian and European stage. The jazz festival, another well-established highlight (twenty-two hostings), is a much-anticipated event, fusing audience and quality music in an ultimate summer experience. Summer is the period when the event of the highest international recognition – the *International Ballet Competition* (the first professional international ballet competition in the world<sup>9,10</sup>) takes place, as well as the *International Folklore Festival*.

The *European Music Festival* held in the spring months is a new development in the area of musical art in the city. Key events for Varna are the *International Biennale of Graphics*, the *Golden Dolphin International Puppet Theatre Festival*, and the film festivals *The Golden Rose* and *Love is Folly*.

<sup>9</sup> International Ballet Competition – Varna, [varna-ibc.org](http://varna-ibc.org)

<sup>10</sup> USA International Ballet Competition, History, [usaibc.com](http://usaibc.com)



## — A CREATIVE LAB

*[The] phenomenon called “art” today is nothing else but a process, just like a laboratory...<sup>11</sup>*

Throughout the years, Varna has been continuously releasing new names and labels in the areas of entrepreneurship and creative industries – numerous studios for architecture and graphic design, informal groups engaged in creative initiatives, individual artists. The results of this independent initiative are the festivals *Contempo* (for contemporary art) and *Videoholica* (for video art). Over the years, Varna has grown into a natural centre for alternative urban culture, a host for events showing a wide spectrum of youth subcultures and alternative modes of living and creativity.

The concentration of five Universities, including Technology, Economics, Medicine, Humanities and Naval Academy, provides the city with a unique opportunity to design and implement its own sustainable model of development and exchange with the European Community and the world. The vitality of the city and our constructive young energy are among the greatest assets of Varna as a regional centre and modern European city standing on the western coast of the Black Sea.

## — YOUTH IN ACTION

*Our task is to always inspire the next generation of Europeans.<sup>12</sup>*

In the recent decade, the city has developed sustainable policies in the designing and implementation of youth and social policies.

Owing to the proactivity and initiative of a group of non-governmental organisations working in the area of youth development, Varna is the only Bulgarian city which has applied twice for the prestigious nomination European Youth Capital, and the only Bulgarian applicant approved at the first round to contend for the title in 2016.

These youth initiatives, our entrepreneurship and the unique city culture make part and parcel of Varna’s potential to develop into a modern centre of urban life, a place open to and communicating with the other cities and regions from the European family.

<sup>11</sup> Johannes Cladders, Laboratorium Lascaux, article, in: Laboratorium, DuMont, 2011

<sup>12</sup> General report on the activities of the European Union, 2012, p.11



Bonjour mes amis! In 1909, the Port of Varna welcomed the first cruise ship of 400 French tourists who visited local sights.



## OUR VISION

We have the self-confidence of a city with an ancient past. We are proud of our rich festival culture. We can definitely state that Varna is the Bulgarian city with the most active youth policies. But we also have a desire to change and we believe that many things can be improved and developed. We feel that the time has come for us to act decisively and to try new ideas. Today we wish, more than ever, to be explorers and experimenters in our city. And the title European Capital of Culture is our opportunity to do so. We wish to be a good example in the application of new organisational models in the areas of culture, education, social activities and entrepreneurship. This way we will build trust through culture.

Varna and its regional network are in the process of building their identity and integrity, placing them in a position of communication and exchange with other cities and regions from the European family. Culture will be at the heart of this process.

We are aware of the cultural diversity and geopolitical specifics of our city and we wish to make its contribution to understanding and expanding the notion of European culture which is more visible and more sustainable. Varna is a fertile and hospitable territory for the development of creativity and creative industries.

Varna's openness to, and interest in, novelty are solid prerequisites for the bringing of the city's artistic and cultural life to a new level – linking it directly to the dynamic processes and existing standards in contemporary art, to the modern patterns of organisation and cultural production of Europe and the world at large.

## WHAT WOULD BE THE MAIN CHALLENGE OF THIS NOMINATION?

Interaction today between civil society and the governmental sector is a continuing issue. The recognition of grass-roots development as a driving force for social and creative innovation are still too sporadic and stall long-term planning and assurance of forward development for the individual sectors. In the build up to 2019, Varna will actively address these issues and hopefully create new and more effective partnerships.

Although in 2012 the ebbing away of citizens' confidence in Europe's capacity to fix long-standing economic and social challenges was confronted in the European Union at large, Bulgaria – and Varna in particular – still face the need to win back the trust of its citizens and to attract them to the cause of improving the living conditions and overall feeling of life in the city.

The team of Varna 2019 is working on designing the programme as a long-term city-regeneration project aimed first at sustainably connecting the local context with the larger cultural space of the Community and secondly at introducing a climate of participation, interaction and cooperation grounded in basic European values.



## WHAT ARE THE CITY'S OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR IN QUESTION?

Following a series of short-term interventions and cultural reforms at national level in recent years, currently a National Strategy for Culture is in the process of being designed. Varna's objectives will be additionally reviewed and synchronised with the Strategy's priorities and programmes.

Alongside the application for the title European Capital of Culture 2019, in process now is the designing and public discussion of Varna's Cultural Strategy for the period 2014 – 2024. The programme developed by the team is in compliance with the direction set in the preliminary draft of the city's Strategy.

We believe that Varna's potential will turn the city into a destination of choice for both artists and people from the creative professions, as well as for visitors from all over Europe who will be able to combine the experience of diverse forms of contemporary and traditional art with the beauty of the Black Sea coast. The rich cultural programme of the city – from classical opera and ballet through cinema, music and theatre, to video art and street art – Varna has offers in store for everyone.

## OUR AIMS, CORRIDORS FOR ACTION AND OBJECTIVES

We have divided our aims and objectives under three headings:

1. *Strategic Aims*      2. *Corridors for action*      3. *Objectives*

### Strategic Aims

### Corridors for Action

### Objectives

**Local Growth, in Cultural production & participation**

**Cultural Identity & Local Integrity**

**1. Visibility**

Achieving visibility through the promotion of European values and improving Varna's international profile.

**2. Accessibility**

Improving access to Varna in both senses of better transport and modern communication systems.

**3. Infrastructure**

Developing the existing cultural and creative infrastructure and building new facilities.

**Creating conditions for international collaboration, cooperation & exchange**

**Networking & Connectivity**

**4. Social Inclusion**

Encouraging better social inclusion for local communities, highlighting cultural diversity, openness and tolerance.

**5. Partnerships**

Initiating new partnerships with other cities of the Black Sea basin.

**6. Networking**

Activating new networks to enhance European cooperation.

**Investment in human resources, knowledge production, research & experimentation**

**Sustainability & Innovation**

**7. Dialogue**

Encouraging dialogue between institutions and cultural operators in the spirit of pluralism and inclusiveness.

**8. New Approaches**

Implementation of long-term training programmes and platforms for informal education targeted at achieving sustainable development for the cultural sector.

**9. Creativity**

Strengthening the cultural and creative sectors in the development of contemporary European culture and building up entrepreneurial skills in local, regional and international context.

**2. Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city was nominated European Capital of Culture?**

The concept of the programme Varna 2019 seeks a model of balance between what already exists and what we would like to achieve. Quite deliberately, what we offer are not highly ambitious projects which might disturb the balance of resources, as earlier European Capital of Culture examples have shown. Excessive ambition can have a long-term destabilising effect on the local scene. Instead, we choose initiatives which can support the sustainable development of the artistic and cultural life of the city. We regard culture as a complex and dynamic system, which functions in direct interrelation with other spheres of social life.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our desire is for Varna to become a hospitable venue for artistic expression and creativity in 2019. We should aim to offer a welcoming "harbour" to leading names from the artistic and creative sectors from this country and abroad, and also to enterprising young people and young artists who have focused their efforts and skills on building new models of organisation, cooperation and cultural production. Above all, we wish to engage our own citizens in meaningful participation in cultural activity.

Varna 2019 foresees the long-term endorsement of art and culture as a key and integral part in the life of the local community through the community's improved awareness, involvement and social inclusion. Another aspect will be the building of a number of interaction networks intended to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of this endeavour after 2019.

We are undoubtedly living through a time of heated debate on the role of culture in the development of the Community at European level - we are also experiencing in Bulgaria a critical period when the National Strategy for Culture is being designed.

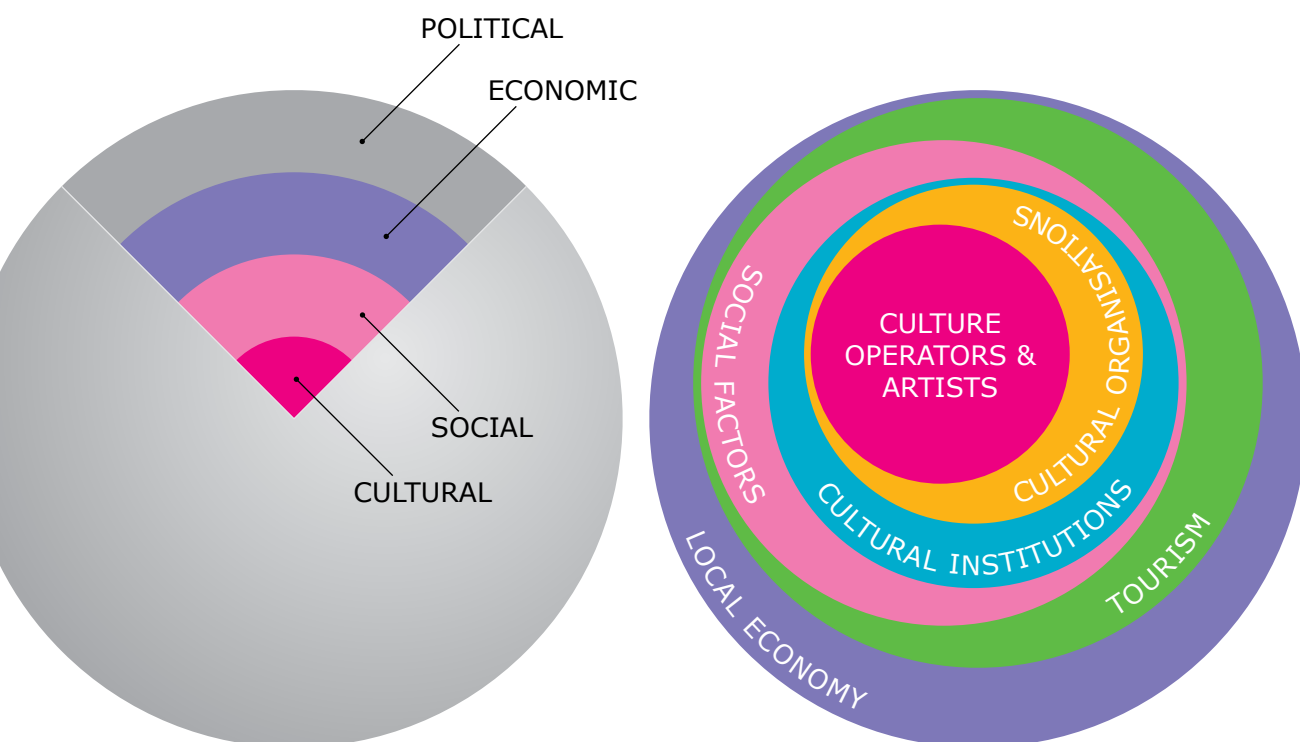
One of the most urgent questions in the recent years of financial stagnation and insecurity experienced on both a global and local scale, is the question of "What is public?". We believe that the rethinking of this question will open new spaces for action and future development, both for the city, and the initiative European Capital of Culture, and for the European family at large.

Having perceived cultural processes as not exclusively belonging to the language of the market, we build our initiative on the concept of culture as a common ground, which provides for human communication, exchange and peaceful cohabitation. We believe in a broad notion of culture, not as an excessive luxury in times of hardship, but as a necessary foundation, which helps people uphold and preserve their positive attitude and initiative in periods of social upheaval.

Set against a backdrop of mass “opting out” by the public, and a general loss of confidence in the institutions, our first step is to develop an environment of trust and confidence. Only the existence of such an environment can provide a sustainable basis for the development of inspiration, creativity and initiative – the main pillars of Varna’s cultural development in the 21st century.

## CULTURAL ECOLOGY

As opposed to the “hierarchy of needs” model which easily excludes culture, we propose a “planetary” model where culture forms the essential centre, which provides a secure place for development and renovation in other strata of social life.



### 3. Could this programme be summed up by a slogan?

The task of selecting an adequate and working slogan for the programme has proved challenging. The result is that we have come up with a slogan and a subtitle.

The main theme of the application is PORT OF INSPIRATION, which leads us into our action, BUILDING TRUST THROUGH CULTURE.

— PORT: *Welcoming harbour*

People, goods and ideas flow in and out of Varna port. It is an exciting place of encounter, but at the same time a place of welcome to foreigners and to returning citizens.

— INSPIRATION: *Lighting up*

Inspiration is directly related to creativity and innovation. It is associated with originality and aspiration. At the heart of inspiration is encouraging others to act. The engendering of a new idea – something original, new and significant – is often visualised as streaming light.

— TRUST: *Building confidence*

Building trust not only in Varna, but throughout Eastern Europe, is of crucial importance in the present period of disturbance and anxiety. Culture is fundamental to the process of repairing confidence.

#### 4. Which geographical area does the city intend to involve in the “European Capital of Culture” event?

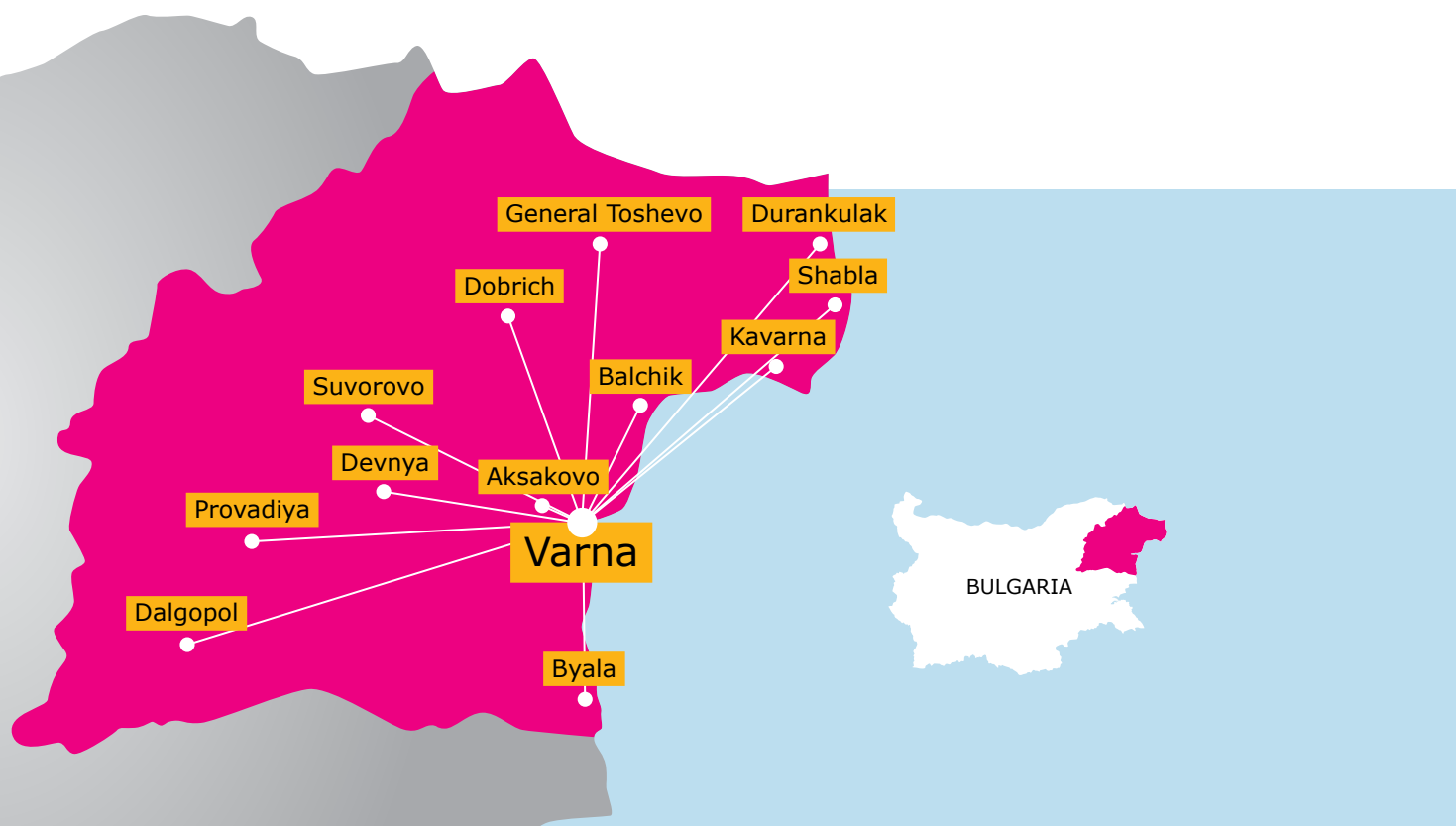
## TWELVE VARNA 2019 SATELLITES

Varna’s candidature for European Capital of Culture recognises the significance of this prestigious title for the future development and prosperity of the city itself and of the region overall. Founded on this understanding, the good synergy and active communication with the cities from the region are further sought-after results from the work done for the initiative.

In this highly urbanised region we consider that the improvement of communication and interaction with smaller places is of significance; the same refers to the encouragement of a more efficient and fruitful cooperation between the individual city centres.

The District of Varna has a population of 475,074 and is the only district in this country, apart from the capital Sofia, of positive population growth. This fact provides a favourable demographic climate, rare for this country, for future development and growth.

Varna’s candidature for European Capital of Culture will have a direct focus on the residents of the whole region, which has a total population of almost 700,000.



#### 5. Please confirm that you have the support of the local and/or regional political authorities.

*The main strategic goal of Varna Municipality is the candidature of Varna for European Capital of Culture 2019<sup>13</sup>*

## CITY COMMITMENT

The preparatory process of applying for and the subsequent implementation of a large-scale and comprehensive event such as the European Capital of Culture requires all sectors in the city of Varna to be mobilised, and demands the strong support of the citizenry.

In a session held in 2006, the Municipal Council of Varna adopted a decision by virtue of which Varna officially aligned itself with its prospective candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019. From that moment on, there has been strong continuity between the political leaders in the city with each consecutive leader recognising the candidature as a priority in the local government’s work.

In 2011, the Mayor of Varna approved a working plan for the candidature and headed an Organisational committee for the project, composed of the leading figures of all cultural, educational and tourism institutions in the city. The project received the support of the relevant commission at Varna Municipal Council, which has been giving priority consideration to each matter related to Varna’s candidature for ECoC 2019.

Since the middle of July 2013, Varna has a new Mayor who has recognised that Varna’s bid is a high priority on his working agenda.

## REGIONAL NETWORK SUPPORT

In 2011, a Memorandum for Regional Partnership and Adhesion to Varna’s Candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019 was signed by twelve cities and towns from the surrounding region, which are vitally connected with Varna in historical, social and cultural aspects.

<sup>13</sup> District strategy for the development of Varna District for the period 2014–2020, p.60, [www.vn.government.bg](http://www.vn.government.bg)

These are: Dobrich, Balchik, Kavarna, Byala, Provadiya, Devnya, Aksakovo, Shabla, Madara, Veliki Preslav, Pliska. At a later date, Suvorovo, Dalgopol, Durankulak and General Toshevo also expressed their support for the initiative.

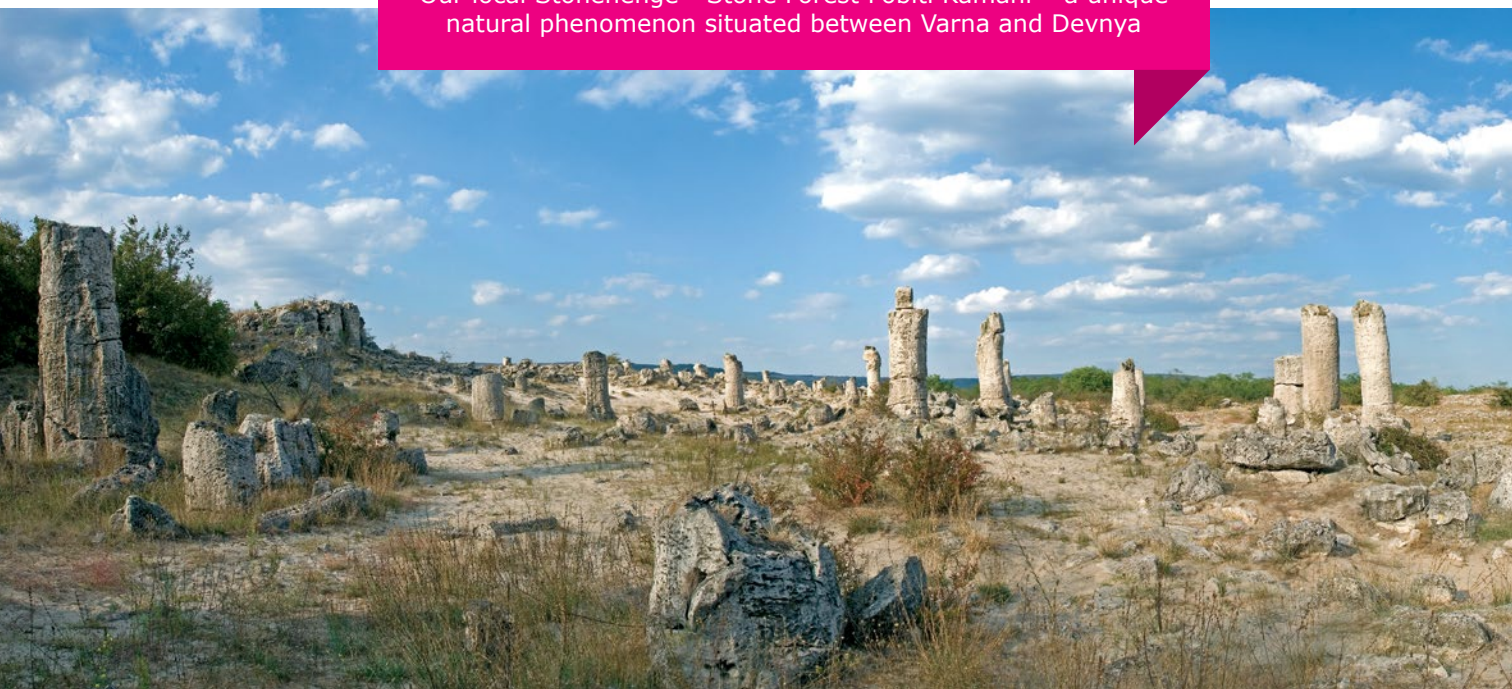
**6. How does the event fit into the long-term cultural development of the city and, where appropriate, of the region?**

Varna's application for European Capital of Culture is part of the process of designing a valid long-term cultural strategy for the development of the city and the region.

The local authorities expressed their willingness to make the candidature a basic programme document which recognises the work of culture operators and creative industries as a driving engine for the cultural and socio-economic development of the city and the region of Varna, and as a tool for comprehensive change and improvement of the social climate in the city.

The intention is to design and implement a programme in which young people take a central part. Furthermore, their building up as strong, educated and inspired European citizens is a priority for the future development of the city and the region. An important accompanying aspect in the programme is the introduction of innovations and the encouragement of entrepreneurship and personal initiative.

Our local Stonehenge - Stone Forest Pobiti Kamani – a unique natural phenomenon situated between Varna and Devnya

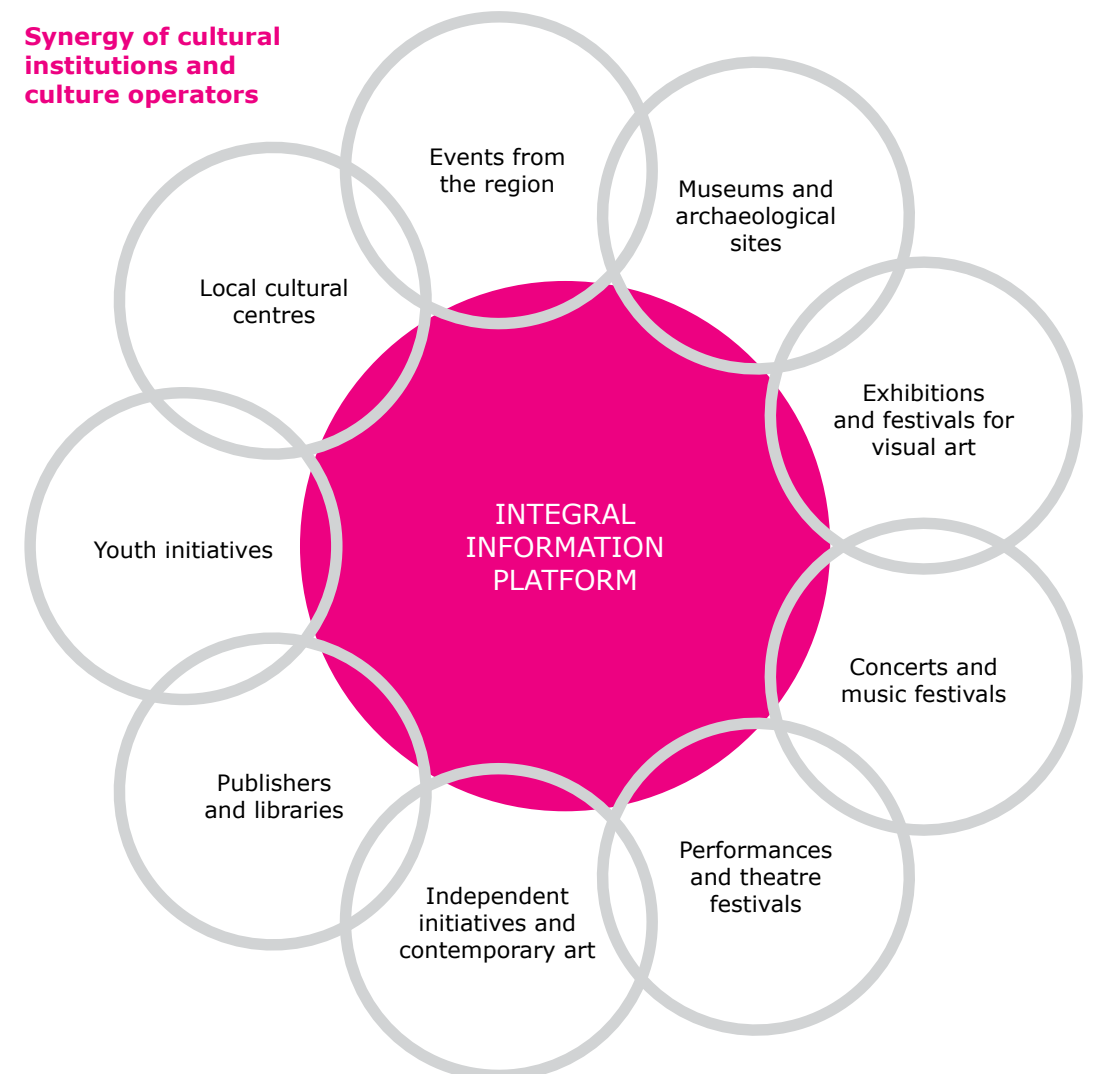


## LONG-TERM INITIATIVES

The document is in line with the Municipal and Integrated Plan for Development of Varna and with the strategy for development of the District. In the long-term plan, the application of Varna has the following objectives:

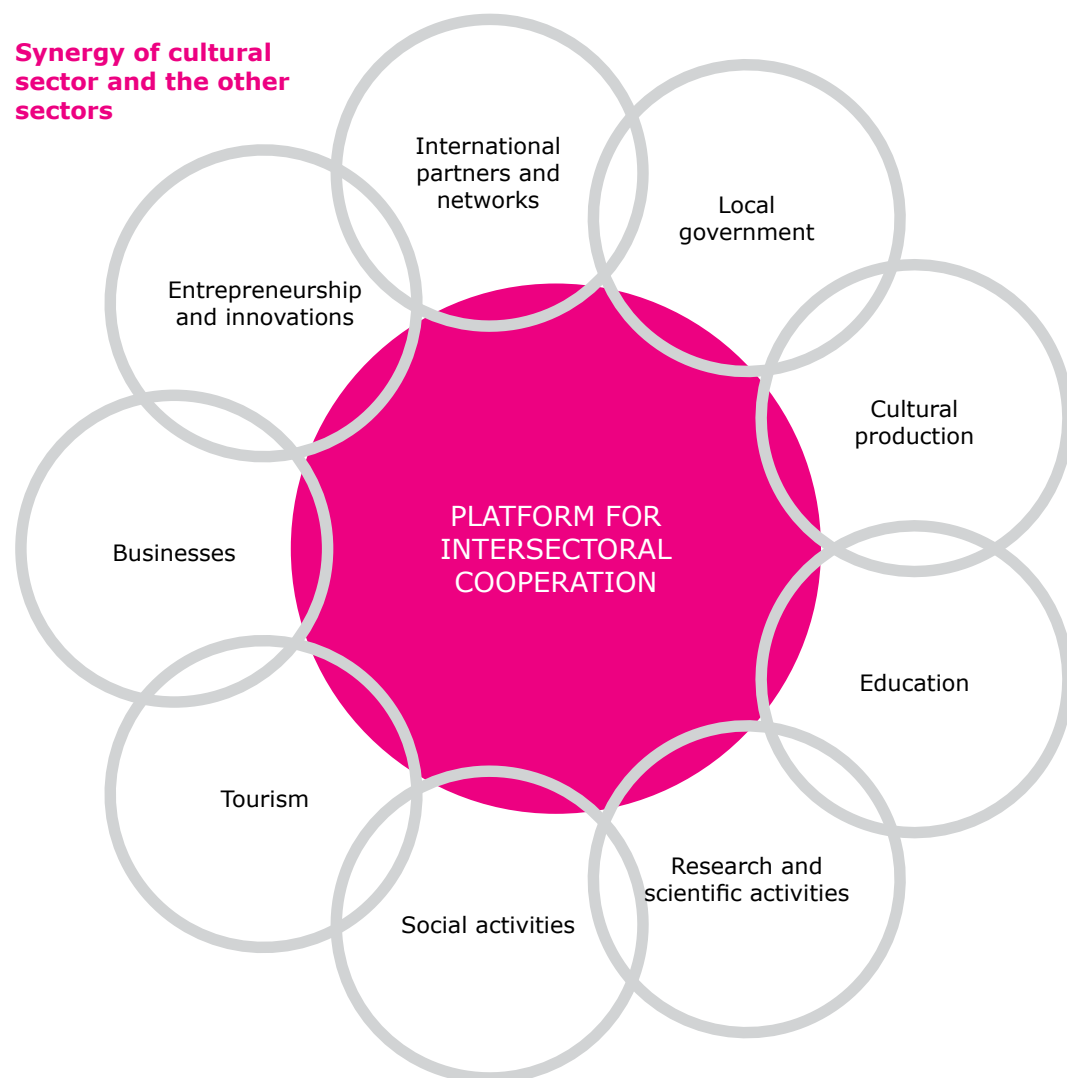
- efficient coordination of cultural events in the city and the region in a common calendar
- assurance of improved communication and efficiency in the use of existing and new infrastructure in the process of construction
- development of new financial tools for the support of local and international artists.

**Synergy of cultural institutions and culture operators**



- Improvement of the connection between culture and education
- Building of a lasting interrelation between tourism and culture
- Activating the public sector and businesses towards improved quality and access to services and for infrastructure modernisation.

### Synergy of cultural sector and the other sectors



## FURTHER ACTIONS IN THE REGION

The District of Varna includes twelve municipalities, most of which participated actively in the discussions on the future actions to be taken with regard to Varna's candidature and the building of a common framework for subsequent action. Following discussions and coordination between culture operators and experts from the areas of culture and education working in the region, a number of main directions has been outlined to supplement and enrich some of the programme's initiatives under the candidature:

- Development of a unified map for regional tourism.
- Affirmation and development of proven and effective events and festivals such as *Kavarna Rock Fest*, *Seafood and Fish Fest in Kavarna*, *International Festival Balchik Classic Days*, *International Youth Festival Folklore without Boundaries – Dobrich* and others.
- Development of a system for cultural management and redistribution of the annual cultural calendars and programme events from the viewpoint of each city, town and village included in the cultural network.
- Stimulation of innovative events and initiatives which develop human potential.
- Presentation and making of contemporary art.
- Building of eco-trails and eco-routes and promotion of sustainable green policies.

### 7. To what extent do you plan to forge links with the other city to be nominated European Capital of Culture?

In case your city gets the title, do you plan to cooperate with the other bidding cities in your country which have been pre-selected?

## ITALIAN MIRRORS

Bulgaria's partner-country for the programme event European Capital of Culture is Italy. It is our wish to organize and host a *Month of the Italian City* to be nominated European Capital of Culture.

In recent months, the team of Varna 2019 has been invited to work on common ideas with some of the Italian candidate cities: Lecce, Matera, Perugia, Siena and Ravenna. Our priority will be project proposals, which correlate to the concepts of our programme and our main theme *Port of Inspiration*.

The budget of Varna 2019 allows for joint activities with our Italian partner European Capital of Culture and has been set from 2017 onward. Talks, discussions of project proposals and communication with Italians, potential parties in the implementation of the initiatives, are already in progress. Certain individual initiatives will be launched before 2017.

## LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Varna has long-standing partnerships with most other candidate cities from the country. Our city actively supports and assists events initiated by other cities and is also a partner in festivals of national cultural importance that have demonstrated their professionalism and the high quality of their content over the years.

Some initiatives, held in the main cities of Bulgaria - Sofia, Plovdiv, Burgas, Veliko Turnovo and Ruse, provide a good example of such cooperation: *Sofia Film Fest in Varna, World Theatre in Sofia, European Musical Festival, Fortissimo Fest, International Folklore Festival*.

Our city is open to joining other projects and to starting new ones with the other pre-selected Bulgarian cities.

### 8. Explain how the event could fulfil the criteria listed below. Please substantiate your answer for each of the criteria.

As regards "the European Dimension", how does the city intend to contribute to the following objectives:

- To strengthen cooperation between the cultural operators, artists and cities of your country and other member states, in all cultural sectors
- To highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe
- To bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore? Can you specify how this event could help to strengthen the city's links with Europe?

Can you specify how this event could help to strengthen the city's links with Europe?

*When we call for more Europe, we call for more European Capitals of Culture: each city that carries the title has the unique chance to demonstrate what it is capable of, what it means for Europe, to exploit its potential, including big players and smaller initiatives, to attract young people.<sup>14</sup>*

Varna feels and looks like a Western European city. Standing at "Europe's East end"<sup>15</sup>, the culture of Varna is a unique fusion of three cultural layers: the sensual spirit of the Mediterranean, the colouring of Slavic cultures surrounding the Black Sea, and the influence of the Orient. Truly, Varna stands out as a different and compelling destination.

There are four criteria to this Question. We deliberately do not answer them individually because our proposed projects frequently cover several of the criteria. Nevertheless, we are confident that we answer all four several times and in several ways.

We have distinct areas of European-ness: Creative Hub, Managing Culture, and Young Europeans.

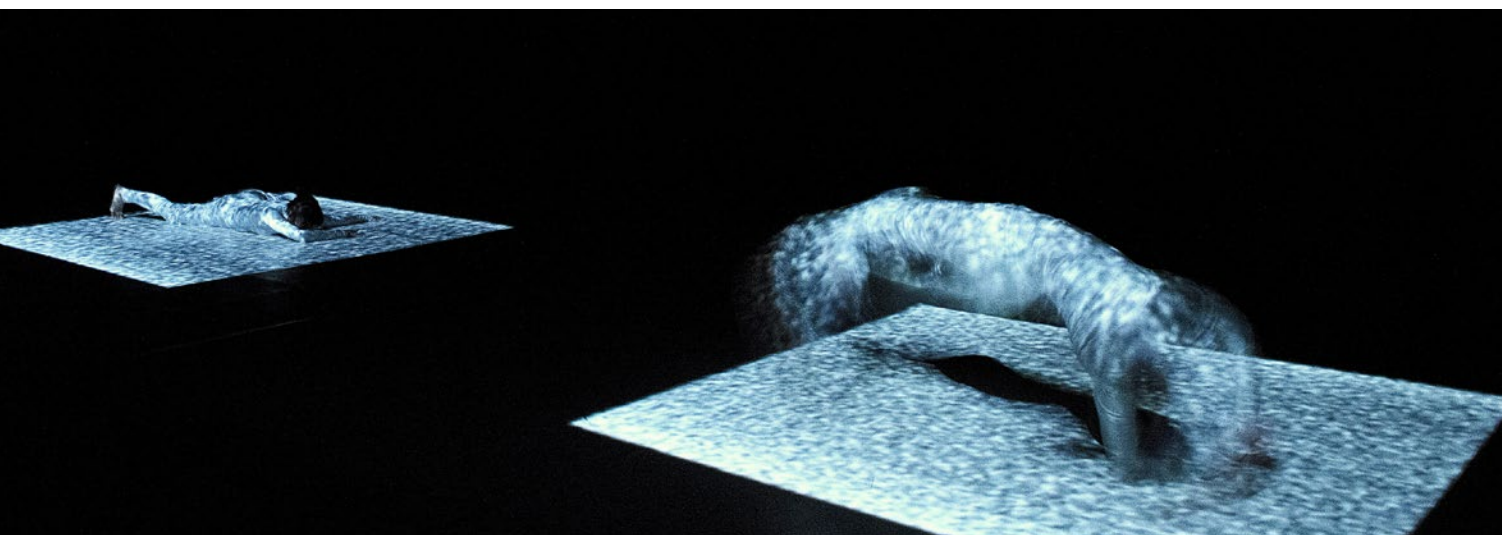
The Roman Baths in Varna, dating from the 2nd century AD, are the fourth largest in Europe.

<sup>14</sup> Kathrin Deventer, EFA Secretary General, Speech, Forum Wrocław, 2011

<sup>15</sup> Allen Upward, "The East end of Europe", London, 1908

## CREATIVE HUB

The “core” of our artistic inspiration is our desire to bring visiting artists from Europe and the world to Varna for the exchange of ideas, working methods and works of art. Our wish is for these artists and their creative forms of expression to “drop anchor” in our city and the region. In this way, they will make the cultural production richer and more dynamic, and then, having assumed a new role of cultural ambassadors, they will promote Varna as a welcoming harbour for all kinds of contemporary art and cultural entrepreneurship.



### — INTRODUCING LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART

With its tradition in festival culture for nearly 90 years, for a long time Varna has been one of the crossing points in this country where “European” and “Bulgarian” art meet (and also American, Russian and Asian). Since 1926, the city has been host to the *Varna Summer International Music Festival* (together with festivals *Summer Musical Celebrations* and *International May Choir Competition*) – one of the most prestigious forums for classical music in this country. Over its 21 years of history, the *Varna Summer International Theatre Festival* has offered to its audience a selection of the best performances from around Europe, played on the Bulgarian stage, plus an international programme and a *Bulgarian showcase* intended to promote contemporary Bulgarian theatre before European critics.

The annual *Varna Summer International Jazz Festival* has been hosted twenty-two times to date ; another event held in the same period of the year is the internationally renowned and highly rated *International Ballet Competition*. Added to these are the *International Folklore Festival*, the *European Musical Festival*, the *International Biennale of Graphics*, the *Golden Dolphin International Puppet Theatre Festival*, the film festivals *Golden Rose* and *Love is Folly*. Finally, the public can enjoy the *In the Palace International Short-film Festival*, the *International Photographic Salon* and the young independent festivals for contemporary art and video art *Contempo* and *Videoholica*. All these festivals attract European performers and visitors every year.

Contemporary art has been increasingly popular in Varna in recent years, although much more can be done to make it better understood by the general public and to attract the audiences’ more enduring and deeper interest. *Varna 2019* aims – in the years preceding the event and in the culminating year of the event itself – to offer a wider range of contemporary European art in the city and the region, at the same time promoting them and building an environment for their understanding and recognition. New works of art from European collaborators will be commissioned.

### — ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE RESIDENCIES

The creative residencies and opportunities for creating new works of art in the city play an important and integral part in the overall process of Varna’s cultural regeneration. Improved links to international networks will be opened up, thus providing for the valuable participation of Varna artists, associations and groups in EU cultural projects. We will work towards the implementation of the steps of the *Creative Europe* programme, striving to achieve a better cultural offering. When searching for effective solutions for cultural production (e.g. IT solutions, inter-sectoral partnerships) we will aim to contribute to the economic prosperity of the city and the region as well.

Along this axis of action, we foresee visits by both young and established artists from all over Europe and further. Thus, Varna will start a residency programme intended to facilitate encounters between international artists and the local context and to stimulate and refresh the diversity and visibility of art and culture in city life. This residency programme will be directed at artists creative in the areas of visual and performing arts, to musicians and writers.



The experience accumulated from international projects in the sister cities' network (Lille, Hamburg, Barcelona, Dordrecht, Genoa, Turku, Moscow, Odessa, etc.) inspires us to amplify these partnerships. The programme of *Varna 2019* has a special focus on cultural exchange with the Black Sea region countries and with third countries outside the EU.

#### — REVISITED TRADITIONS

Folklore and non-material cultural heritage have their long-term established tradition in Varna's cultural life. Unique features of our city are the festivals dedicated to the preservation of traditions and their passing on to the next generations. Such are the *Folklore Festival*, the *Festival of Ethnics*, and the *International Arts and Crafts Fair – Varna*. All of these events are sources of national pride and identification. They enhance citizens' feeling of togetherness and belonging.

One challenge is how to connect our own young generation and the citizens of the other EU member states with the unfamiliar details of Bulgarian national traditions. The programme of *Varna 2019* will offer city visitors an opportunity to join in workshops for traditional Bulgarian music, songs and dances, and to get acquainted with the specifics of national and seafood cuisine.

Special importance will be given to the stronghold of the Bulgarian language – the Cyrillic alphabet – which, upon Bulgaria's accession to the European family, became the third writing system in the European Union (alongside the Roman and Greek letters). Through the announcement of an *International typography and graphic design contest* this alphabet, unique among the European family of languages, will be promoted and transformed into a source of inspiration and creative challenge for artists and creative groups from all over Europe.



The Cyrillic alphabet has made major contribution to the development of a very individual Slavonic Eastern-Orthodox form of Christianity, whose unique artefacts – places of worship, rock monasteries, icons and divine objects – will be made accessible to the visitors of the city and the region.

## MANAGING CULTURE

A competent and educated management in charge of cultural organisations and events are central to the future and continuing success of this project. At this time, there is insufficient connection between the management of local cultural processes and common European practices. The centralised and strongly hierarchical pattern – a legacy from the pre-democratic era – is still dominant in the field of cultural production. Thus, the preparations for the candidature and possible realisation of the event provide a unique opportunity to rethink and update the operating mechanisms and practices of cultural management.

This means that local cultural operators should have enhanced managerial capabilities. This will be achieved through on-going training and exchange programmes and collaboration between local cultural operators and managers of creative industries and active European networks. The group working on the application is tasked with the establishment of direct partnerships with institutions and programmes from other European countries with key roles in contemporary science, art and education.

## YOUNG EUROPEANS

We have been working on the European dimension of *Varna 2019* in the certainty that the event will be beneficial for the positive and successful inclusion of young Bulgarian people in the issues concerning culture and civil society. The *Erasmus for Everyone* programme provides youth exchanges, research, workshops, discussions and educational modules by which the young people's horizons will be expanded and their skills in diverse fields will be enriched and further developed.

Through a series of open events – conferences, debates, discussions and workshops – topics such as youth migration, youth unemployment, the regional development crisis, intercultural dialogue, preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage will have an important place in our programme.

The ambition and effort of Varna to become *European Youth Capital* in 2016 are proof of our path towards affirmation of the European values in the next generations. The role of volunteering and direct involvement has already been embedded in a organisation of a number of events in the city, will be furthered and will stay as a key concept for the young people's involvement in various civic and cultural initiatives.

9. Explain how the event could meet the criteria listed below. Please substantiate your answer for each of the criteria.

As regards “City and Citizens”, how does the city intend to ensure that the programme for the event:

- Attracts the interest of the population at European level
- Encourages the participation of artists, stakeholders in the socio-cultural scene and the inhabitants of the city, its surroundings and the area involved in the programme
- Is sustainable and an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city?

*This means that today’s task is to build city communities – formations that never existed before. As different from historical tradition, our communities will be built on free will and voluntary participation. At the same time, they should offer the citizens an opportunity to develop, to contribute, to be significant.<sup>16</sup>*

## THE CITY AS A LIVING BEING

Varna is the only district centre of positive natural population growth in 2011, except for the capital city of Sofia.<sup>17</sup> The dynamic economic and social environment in the city leads naturally to a continuous succession of grass-root initiatives and bottom-up developments.

We envisage Varna’s potential to be unfolded in a series of initiatives focused on the citizens. These are intended to act as a catalyst for the socio-economic climate in the city and, they are expected to ensure the community’s long-term prosperity. For us, a wise and successful city is one where unique experience is being shared and applied. That is why our cultural calendar presents Varna as a dynamic territory where people get together for joint creative action and exchange of new ideas and good practices.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Drucker, *Managing in the next society*, Truman Talley Books, New York, 2002

<sup>17</sup> National Statistical Institute, Census 2011 (final data), nsi.bg

The citizens are the living body of a city. Atmosphere and lifestyle are strongly defined by established habits, levels of understanding and openness, and the citizens’ ability to co-exist and feel bound to one another. As already stated in the application sub-topic, the theme of trust is the most important for us at this stage. We must create a fertile soil where a culture of initiative and cooperation can grow. That is why personal initiative, participation, social inclusion and civil activity are the basic principles on which our proposal is built.

The main objective of our cultural programme concerning our citizens is to create an environment in which the broadest circle of genders, generations, social groups, ethnic groups and nationalities will be able to express themselves through the mastering of new skills or by passing their knowledge and experience to other groups of people. Our project for European Capital of Culture 2019 perceives the city as a dynamic space, free and filled with new ideas, exciting projects and programmes. This is a space where citizens are being offered options for beautiful joint experiences and where they can feel themselves, above all, as a united whole.

In order to build the bridge between Varna’s current and future reality, we are committed to a comprehensive programme for cultural development of the city and the region.

There are three criteria to this Question and you will find that all the questions have been addressed and answered in the following section.

We have three distinct areas of Citizenship: Creativity and Participation, Informal Education, and Social Inclusion.

## CREATIVITY AND PARTICIPATION

The approach of *Varna 2019* is an approach of inclusion and active participation. Varna is a hospitable city and through our cultural calendar we wish to endorse this image of openness, knowledge and tolerance.

### — VISIBILITY

The promotion of *Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration* throughout the city and the region of Varna and especially beyond the national borders will be implemented through a diverse, large-scale mass media and promotional campaign. Internationally, the candidature will be strongly promoted via existing cultural and tourist publicity channels and through social networks.

Communication with the city will be brought into the 21st century by the construction of an integrated online platform for booking accommodation and reserving tickets for the programme events. The introduction of the Internet-based platform will be in line with updating and enhancing Varna's Tourism and Information Centre. The Centre will be tasked with promoting and providing up to date information about the cultural programme and event bookings.

#### — LOCAL NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

*Chitalishte*, which roughly translates as “reading room”, and more specifically, the *Chitalishte* community centres operating in the city and the region of Varna, will play a vital role in the years leading up to the event. This existing unique national network of local community centres can serve to attract a wider circle of citizens and to fulfil their need for a place to express themselves and their creativity and to connect with the larger picture.

These local community centres host and maintain a diversity of clubs by interest (music, dancing, literature, theatre, foreign languages, sports, etc.), a library, and sometimes even a cinema. These are the places where celebrations of significance for the local community take place. Typically, larger community centres have their own mixed choir and folklore group, and make their own monthly calendar of cultural events.

Better communication and cooperation between the teams of the individual local community centres and NGOs operating in the field of art, culture, and civil community, could inspire fresh thinking about the future of these traditional institutions. While preserving the traditional forms of culture, ensuring their passing to the next generation, at the same time, they offer exciting possibilities for ground-breaking initiatives in contemporary and independent art.

#### — PARTICIPATION

Varna's candidature will develop major European practices such as enhanced access to culture, more elaborate and diversified cultural offering and opportunities for active inclusion.

For the years before and after the ECoC event, the programme of Varna 2019 foresees a series of educational events and initiatives designed to stimulate citizens' participation in cultural production and intended to provide for their encounters with works of contemporary art and culture.

The Youth Festival *FUNCITY*, unique in Bulgaria has been hosted by the city for a second year in a row. The programme includes over two hundred events covering music, visual and performance arts, entrepreneurship and sports. Our mission is to provide an environment for the young people's maximum participation in the process of organising and holding the events included in the cultural calendar. It is our responsibility to provide them with opportunities to obtain new experiences, knowledge, skills and ambition. Through this and similar events, Varna can listen to the voice of young people and encourage their rightful place in shaping and sustaining the future.

## INFORMAL EDUCATION

Apart from direct inclusion in the organisation of city festivals, *Varna 2019* envisages a further involvement of the young through their participation in initiatives designed as supplementary to the festivals' official programme. These will include workshops, master classes, open meetings, presentations and discussions, as well as programmes for educational exchange developed under the universities and the cultural institutions in the city.

Making Varna a space for experimentation is expected to generate initiatives for the designing of innovative organisational models and creative strategies. This objective will be achieved through a joint initiative of *Varna 2019* and the *University of Economics - Varna* (the oldest higher institute of economics in this country). It is planned to hold a *Cultural Management Summer School* open to young researchers, entrepreneurs and artists. This will be a platform for intensive exchange where culture, businesses and the non-governmental sector will meet to share their experiences. This will be a territory for experimentation, innovation and entrepreneurship in the field of cultural and creative industries.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION

Through concrete projects under the European Capital of Culture initiative, we shall work for higher awareness and care for disadvantaged groups on the part of local government, cultural institutions and the citizens. Policies for accessible environment and social inclusion will be needed in order to achieve citizens' integration and to assure equal access to cultural benefits for all inhabitants.

The programme of *Varna 2019* will present a series of *Workshops* for creating

unique works of art jointly with members from marginalised groups, leading local and international artists and pupils from the art schools. The project intends to initiate a series of meetings between artists, people with difficulties in social interaction and young people. Creativity and imagination will be the focal point of these meetings.

For five years now, *Daedalus school* has been functioning in Varna, organising art training for institutionalised children, for children from low-income families, for children from large families and children of divorced parents, children with health or family problems. In 2013, this school's programme includes classes in fine arts, digital arts (photography, video films and film processing, graphic design and technologies, animation), jazz school, cinematography and acting, currently attended by a total of over 120 children and young people. The title European Capital of Culture will help us enhance the visibility of good practices for social inclusion and will allow us to adequately integrate these groups in the cultural life of the city.

**10. How does the city plan to get involved in or create synergies with the cultural activities supported by the European Institutions?**

## AN EXPANDING NETWORK

The use of funds under the European Operational Programmes is a practice in which Bulgaria does not at present have sufficient experience and this is especially true concerning delivery of cultural programmes. In order to address this issue, building strong, synergetic connections with the European institutions working in the field of culture is a priority for Varna 2019.

At the same time, it is important to note that as early as 2010, Varna was the sole Bulgarian city participating in the *Euromedinculture* project under the *Citizens* programme of the European Commission: this was pronounced good EU practice in the field of culture for 2011. Within the framework of that project, consultations on the future place of culture in Europe were held with citizens, politicians and cultural operators from Varna. The results of this research were then coordinated with another 12 partner organisations from 11 countries.

The selection of Varna as a finalist for the title *European Youth Capital* in 2016 awarded by the *European Youth Forum* has come as high recognition for our city. Varna's participation in this initiative provides our city with an opportunity to share good practices from its youth policy with regard to cultural, social, political and economic life.

Varna has scheduled the implementation of cultural projects supported by EU funds and has allotted a total of five million Euro to the projects' operational budget. The development of these projects is in line with the strategies of *Europe 2020* for intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth, and those of *Creative Europe 2014 – 2020*. Varna's Team for 2019 is organising its cultural policy in accordance with the cultural policy of the Executive Directorate of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and further with the practices of the *European Cultural Foundation*, *A Soul for Europe* initiative, *EUROCITIES* International Network and others.

## VARNA IN BRUSSELS

The presence of the Varna Municipality Office in Brussels plays a key role with regard to our participation in the European Regional Development Programmes, *Culture, Media, Youth in Action, Citizens, Horizons 2020, Lifelong Learning programmes*, and for Varna's regular inclusion in the Open Days events and the discussions under the *Culture Forum* organized by the European Commission. With regard to Varna 2019's priorities, our intentions are to also raise funds from the *Eastern Partnership* (EaP) initiative and the *European Volunteer Service*. Varna is one of the most significant beneficiaries under the *Black Sea Joint Operational Programme*.

During Varna's preparation for the European Capital of Culture bid, the city has become more active in the culture work groups under European networks *EUROCITIES, Les Rencontres, UNEECC*, etc. They serve as platforms for dialogue and exchange of good practices in the areas of European cultural and educational policies. Having successfully hosted an *EFA General Assembly* in 2011 and a large-scale *Folklore Festival* in 2013 held under the aegis of the *European Broadcasting Union* (EBU), Varna is looking forward to 2014-2015 and the hosting of a forum on festival activities within the framework of *EUROCITIES* annual meetings.



11. Are some parts of the programme designed for particular target groups (young people, minorities, etc.)? Specify the relevant parts of the programme planned for the event.

## INSPIRED PARTICIPATION

Essentially, there are two target groups for Varna 2019 – first, the audience and the second, the participants and artists.

Varna's 2019 programme follows a path of inclusion and involvement in cultural processes of all citizens regardless of their social standing, faith, ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or professional profile. The individual programmes during the year will be designed to communicate with diverse target groups and hence address to the maximum possible degree, the wide range of city residents and visitors, cultures and fields of interest.

Two of the programmes are specifically focused on people from various age groups and diverse local and marginalised communities living within the city limits and in the region. The actual events scheduled for these groups will be developed after the pre-selection stage.



Goal! The first football matches in this country were played in Varna's Boys' School in 1894, organised by Swiss teacher Georges de Regibus who imported the first soccer ball, too.

12. What contacts has the city or the body responsible for preparing the event established, or what contacts does it intend to establish, with:

- Cultural operators in the city?
- Cultural operators based outside the city?
- Cultural operators based outside the country?

Name some operators with whom cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question.

## LOCAL DYNAMICS

In the course of preparing Varna's candidature for the European Capital of Culture event, all cultural operators in the city have been invited to share their expert opinion and viewpoint. The decision to enter the contest has stimulated the regeneration of contacts between cultural institutions and professional networks, non-governmental organisations working in the field of arts and culture, and established artists from Varna, currently working in this country or abroad.

In recognition of the key role which cultural processes play for the social and economic wellbeing of the city, a goal of our programme is to boost existing partnerships between individual cultural agents. Along with this, we are working to build new cultural partnerships at a regional, national, European and international level.

All cultural and educational institutions playing key roles in the development of the city have declared their support for Varna's application and some of them, such as the *Boris Georgiev City Art Gallery*, *Theatre and Music Production Centre - Varna*, *Bulgarian National Radio - Varna* and the *University of Economics* have hosted major events in support of the application and preparations for 2019.

In reality, the successful refinement and implementation of the initiative is unthinkable without the energy, support and professional expertise of cultural operators based in the city, in the country and their international partners.

Some of the initiative's major local partners are:

## Cultural Institutions

Theatre and Music Production Centre  
State Puppet Theatre Varna  
Varna Open-Air Theatre

Palace of Culture and Sports – Varna  
Festival and Congress Centre Varna

Pencho Slaveykov Public Library Varna  
Boris Georgiev City Art Gallery  
Graffiti Gallery  
Contemporary Space

Alliance Française – Varna

Georgi Velchev Art Museum  
Varna Archaeological Museum  
Ethnographic Museum  
Museum Old Varna  
Museum of the Bulgarian Revival – Varna  
Modern Varna History Museum  
Varna Museum of Natural History  
Vladislav Varnenchik Park – Museum  
Naval Museum – Varna  
Puppetry Museum

University of Economics  
Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy  
Varna Free University Chernorizets Hrabar  
College of Tourism

Institute of Oceanology Fritjof Nansen

Hristo Botev Community Centre  
Prosveta Community Centre  
Vasil Levski Community Centre

Bulgarian National Radio – Varna

## NGOs and Entrepreneurs

Videoholica Association  
Association of Scientists, Artists & Sportsmen  
Power Jump Association  
Gavroche Association

Raya Georgieva Foundation  
Gallery 10 – Arts Centre Foundation  
Cultural Development Foundation SIDEA  
Discovery Foundation

Aleksandar Nikolov, Artin Ltd.  
Stalker Holding  
NIRA Communications  
Ignatov Architects  
E-Arch Studio  
Slavena Publishing House  
Elite Music  
Affect Media  
CH Ltd.  
STENO Publishing House  
Music Company Sunrise Marinov

Photographic Society Varna  
Varna Literary School  
Amorpha Youth Group  
La Migra Band

Varna Chamber of Tourism  
Chamber of Architects – Varna Regional College  
Varna Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Union of Scientists – Varna  
Union of Bulgarian Tourist Guides – Varna  
Union of Seafarers

Varna Association of Tourism Agencies  
Varna Hotel and Restaurant Association  
Culture and Tourism Association of  
Bulgarian Northeast

Black Sea NGO Network  
Navigation Maritime Bulgare

## NATIONAL NETWORK

Varna enjoys good relations with organisations and individual cultural operators from all over the country. A large number of city festivals are being organised or held in partnership with various cultural organisations especially from Sofia, but also from other parts of the country. There is existing good practice in the exchange of events between the larger cities in this country – exhibitions, concerts and stage performances. For some of the international events included in its programme, Varna has been in regular partnership with the local offices of the cultural institutions of other European countries, which are represented in this country – *British Council, Goethe Institute - Bulgarien, Instituto Cervantes, Alliance Française, Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Sofia, Czech Cultural Institute.*

## INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

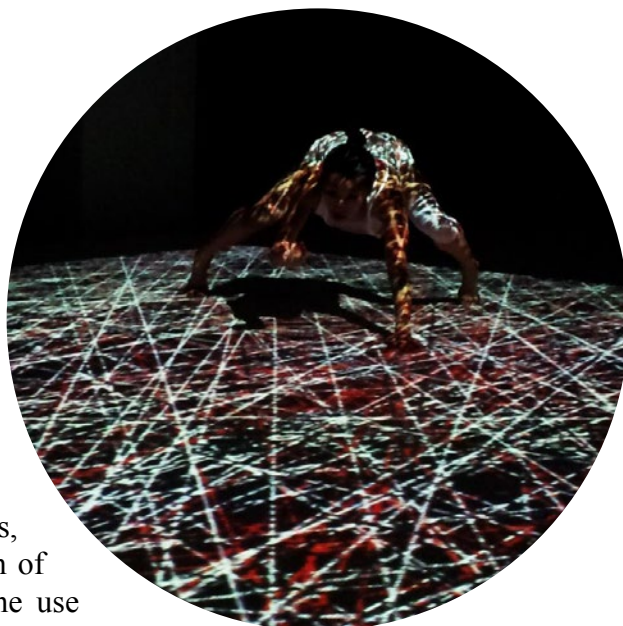
Today, our city has partnership experience in diverse aspects of social life with twenty two cities on three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa). Varna is a partner in Balkan networks *IBSC International Black Sea Club, Black Sea Euroregion (BSER)* and *BALCINET Balkan Cities Network* and is a member of one of Europe's oldest cultural associations – *The European Festivals Association*. In the course of candidature-related activities, what emerged quite naturally was a need for the city to be recognised in forums focused on cultural processes and sustainable development. In 2011 Varna became a member of two large European platforms: *Les Rencontres - Association of European cities and regions for culture and EUROCITIES*. At this stage our perspectives and efforts are focused on activating existing contacts through organising open work groups on current topics, hosting discussions, seminars and round tables and joining new international networks and initiatives focused on the challenges which cultural policies face (e.g. *EUniverCities - Network of European Cities and Universities, European Cities against Drugs (ECAD), Culture Action Europe, CultureFighter, Eastern Partnership Culture Congress* and others).

During Varna's extensive festival season every year, literally hundreds of international artists and organisations visit the city. To quote one example, the following international theatre companies are just some of those who appeared at the *Varna Summer Theatre Festival* editions during the last three years - *Peter Brook Company* (France), *Odin Teatret* (Denmark), *Romeo Castellucci Company* (Italy), *Forced Entertainment* (United Kingdom), *Deutsches Theatre* (Germany), *Ljubljana City Theatre* (Slovenia).

### 13. In what way is the proposed project innovative?

## WHAT IS AN INNOVATIVE CULTURAL PROJECT

We are fully aware that the concept of an innovative cultural project in Bulgaria is different from that in the established EU member states. Exhibitions organised in unconventional urban spaces, performances involving the audience as an active participant, interdisciplinary projects seeking the intersection between art, science, new technology and ecology are innovative initiatives to the city of Varna, but are an existing reality in Paris, Berlin, Rome and London. Therefore, the ambition of our application is to support the local scene in the use of innovative and creative approaches and to increase the exchange of new artistic works in the city and region.



Varna plans to adopt the latest methods for measuring the sustainability of cultural productions. Introduced just a year ago, and tested at the Olympic Games in London, the certification code - *ISO 20121:2012 Event Sustainability Management Systems* will allow us to calculate the real benefits and negatives of the implementation of various festivals, concerts, exhibitions and conferences in the city from an economic, social and environmental point of view and thus to take action for further improvement.

## WHERE IS THE BLACK SEA

For the first time in the history of European Capital of Culture, the Black Sea region is represented - a little known area on the eastern border of the European Union. The *Port of Inspiration* programme aims to promote the culture of the Black Sea to other European citizens. This is an outstanding opportunity for the city of Varna to improve existing relations and to forge new partnerships with cultural operators in the Black Sea region.

## WHY NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODELS

Europe and Bulgaria are in crisis. We are all living in a time of instability and a growing sense of insecurity: intuitively we sense an urgent need for change. The *Building Trust through Culture* message of our application focuses on the mission of new management techniques and leadership; now more than ever, the artists and cultural operators are taking on this challenge.

We sincerely believe that construction of alternative models of organisation, management and cultural cooperation is one of the keys to a better future for Varna. Our aim is to share the experience gained in introducing these new models of organisation, management and cultural cooperation at a regional, national and European level.

14. If the city in question is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what would be the medium and long-term effects of the event from a social, cultural and urban point of view?

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The title European Capital of Culture can guide us in finding solutions to serious problems such as the exodus of young people from the city, our over-centralised cultural life, and the need to modernise our infrastructure. The European Capital of Culture project is a unique opportunity to build a long-term future for Varna, richer in cultural activities, more attractive and welcoming for its citizens, more accessible for the members of marginalised groups, and a more popular and sought-after tourist destination for the citizens of Europe and the world at large.

Our vision foresees a huge range of cultural projects to attract thousands of participants and spectators. We anticipate real growth in tourist inflow and a much-needed extension of the visitor season into the spring and autumn each year. The new projects in the fields of culture and infrastructure, will generate new employment opportunities, stimulate the local manufacturing economy and drive innovation and investment to our city.

A particular priority is our young people: the city wants and needs them to be active participants in the cultural and social life of the city. So, we aim to build a more constructive environment for their development, based on main European

values. After all, children in 2013 will form the future active participants in the ECoC events in 2019. Already they are being involved in projects around the city to develop their interest and enjoyment of culture. Some of the other scheduled activities will be launched in 2015 and 2016, thus ensuring the sustainability of initiatives.

**Do the municipal authorities intend to make a public declaration of intent concerning the period following the year of the event?**

## POLITICAL SUPPORT

Politicians from all parties have confirmed their commitment to the initiative. Firm evidence of this fact is the continuity in working on the project between the local government in power in 2006 and the current local government.

The long-term Strategy for Cultural Development of Varna for the period 2014 – 2020 is the most reliable declaration regarding the local government's intentions about the period beyond 2019. The draft version of this document recognises the key role of cultural operators and the position of cultural and creative industries as driving engines for the socio-economic development of the city and the region.<sup>18</sup>

We foresee that after 2020, the Municipal budget allocated to culture will be lower than the budget foreseen for the year of the European Capital of Culture, but considerably higher than the budget allotted for the current year of application.

**15. How was this application designed and prepared?**

## AN INTEGRATED AND MOTIVATED TEAM

Varna was the first Bulgarian city to announce as early as 2006 its wish to apply for European Capital of Culture in 2019. In 2011, the Mayor of Varna affirmed a plan for working on the application. Work on the initiative was started by the Municipal administration who organized a Secretariat and a Organisational Committee under the leadership of the Mayor of Varna and the Director of Culture Department.

<sup>18</sup> Strategy for Cultural Development of Varna 2014 – 2024 (draft)

Varna has progressed a long way towards developing self-education and exchange of experience and good practices with other cities – past, current and future European Capitals of Culture – towards the building of a motivated and interdisciplinary team who know the contents of the ECoC programme event, its goals and history of development.

Dialogue with stakeholders and citizen involvement was activated at the beginning of 2011 with the organisation of open information events and discussions on the subject. This stage of the event's preparatory process is being accompanied by the construction of a special webpage dedicated to Varna 2019 initiative – [www.varna2019.bg](http://www.varna2019.bg) (with an online form for comments and proposals by the citizens), a Facebook profile and range of printed promotional materials and related gifts.

In its aim to prepare an application which reflects the potential of the city and acts as an inspiration for its citizens, the team of Varna 2019 has held a series of working meetings with the stakeholders – artists, NGOs, primary and secondary schools, universities, community centres, local governments, representatives from the region, scientific organisations, young people, festival managers, cultural institutes, museums, libraries, galleries, businesses, tour operators and citizens. The main motivation and wish of the team was to take a realistic account of the challenges faced by the city and its supporting region, so that these could be adequately addressed in the cultural programme for the initiative.

The slogan of Varna 2019 and its subtitle – *Port of Inspiration: Building Trust through Culture* – has been defined by the team as the outcome of a series of discussions and consultations. The main objective of the platform was to directly address the spirit of unrest in the city and citizens' dissatisfaction over recent years and, thus to define a clear direction for future development corresponding to Varna's geographic, economic and socio-cultural characteristics. *Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration* has launched a process of city regeneration through culture, relying on close partnerships, integral and long-term thinking.





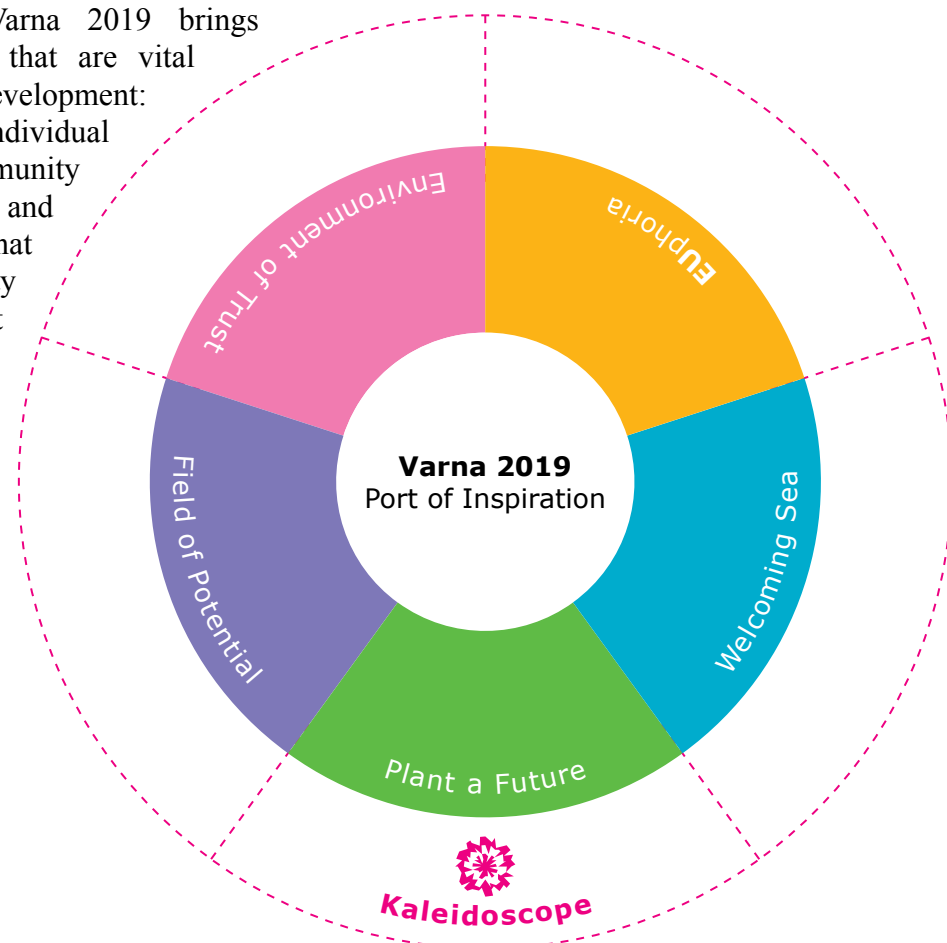
# Structure of the programme for the event

1. What structure does the city intend to give to the year's programme if it is designated "European Capital of Culture" (guidelines, general theme of the event)? How long does the programme last?

## TRUST AND INSPIRATION

The programme of Varna 2019 brings together two elements that are vital for our city's future development: *building trust* – among individual members of the community and in the institutions, and *generating inspiration* that will transform our city where culture stands at the heart of our life, where all citizens are free to create their own dreams.

*General theme of the event:*  
**Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration**  
*Focus:*  
**Building Trust Through Culture**



## PROGRAMME STRANDS

To achieve our goals of Trust and Inspiration, the concept of the year foresees five programme strands designed as five parallel lines of action:

Programme strands	Aims	Main focus	Activities
<b>Euphoria</b>	EUphoria aims to set up a common platform for presentation of special highlights of Varna's rich annual festival programme.	Festival culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding the existing festivals and creating major events</li> <li>Presentation of selected productions from Europe and the world</li> <li>Creating events that include and envisage participation of the citizens</li> </ul>
<b>Welcoming Sea</b>	The main focus of the Welcoming Sea programme is the creation of new works by Bulgarian and foreign artists.	Artistic production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the conditions for development and expression on the local scene</li> <li>Attracting proven young artists from Europe and the world to work in the city, either independently or in cooperation with local artists</li> <li>Presentation of artistic productions and works which are emblematic for the national and European context</li> </ul>
<b>Plant a Future</b>	The programme is one of the long-term initiatives related to Varna's candidacy. It will start years ahead of the initiative itself, with its main emphasis on generations that will be of age in the year of celebration.	Informal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and enrichment of the existing practices of informal education</li> <li>Initiating events and forms of international participation</li> <li>Attracting organisations and cultural workers from this country and abroad who apply alternative and interactive models of education</li> </ul>
<b>Field of Potential</b>	Field of Potential aims to support and present initiatives promoting competitiveness, entrepreneurship and problem-solving skills.	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation of interdisciplinary groups from the existing research centres and institutes</li> <li>Holding work meetings, conferences and seminars</li> <li>Initiation of forums and research projects with international participation</li> </ul>
<b>Environment of Trust</b>	The programme Environment of Trust addresses the need for new models of cooperation among the representatives of different professional groups.	Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the coordination between the individual events included in the city's calendar</li> <li>Initiation of interactive projects based on the principles of participation, inclusion and decentralisation of cultural production</li> <li>International projects foreseeing and encouraging the participation of the citizens</li> </ul>

## THE REGIONAL ASPECT: KALEIDOSCOPE PROGRAMME

On a smaller scale, the five programmes will further find their expression in the context of the North-eastern region of which Varna is the administrative and cultural centre.

Thanks to a regional network for cooperation and exchange of cultural production that has been built and developed in the years preceding the event, the Kaleidoscope programme will provide for the inclusion of the cities from the region in the total programme of the event, and for their access to some of the events included in the other separate programmes.

The programme will cover all twelve months of 2019. The exact dates of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies are yet to be determined.

For an overview of examples of projects which will make up the programmes, please refer to *Appendix 1*.

### 2. What main events will mark the year?

Varna 2019 plans to include six major events which will play the role of highlights of interest for both the guests from the country and the visitors from abroad.

*Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration* envisages:

#### — CULTURE OF OLD EUROPE

Archaeological Exhibition. The Exhibition will be accompanied by the publication of a bilingual catalogue and by a conference at which the unique qualities of Varna's ancient troves will be discussed.

#### — MAJOR EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Thematically linked with the candidacy's key words: Inspiration and Trust. The selection of artists and works will be made by the Artistic Director and the expert group in charge of the programme Welcoming Sea.

#### — MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Musicians of international renown in the field of classical music and contemporary jazz will be invited as special guests at the city's music festivals.

#### — SPECIAL EDITION OF THE FOLKLORE FESTIVAL

Extended the existing programme by visits of professional groups from all European Union member states.

#### — CREATING A FUTURE TOGETHER

A month of inter-sector dialogue and cooperation through a variety of events: high-level conferences, discussion groups, seminars, workshops, bringing together representatives, experts, entrepreneurs and citizens from all over Europe.

#### — CELEBRATE SUMMER

A series of concerts in Varna by international pop musicians.

### 3. How does the city plan to choose the projects/events which will constitute the programme for the year?

The further development of the conceptual framework and the contents of each of the programmes and the specification of the form of the stated events that have already been planned will be entrusted to five working groups of experts of international experience – one for each of the five programmes. They will work in direct connection with the event's Artistic Director whose role will be to direct and synchronise their work in the general spirit of *Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration*.

# Organisation & financing of the event

## 1. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

### 1.1 What kind of structure is envisaged for the organisation responsible for implementing the project? What type of relationship will it have with the city authorities?

The Mayor and the City Council of Varna will be ultimately responsible for Varna 2019. However, the City Authorities have studied other European Capitals of Culture and have decided that the best way to bring together all the sections of society which will play a part in 2019 will be to establish a Management Company, with an independent Chairman, to run the project.

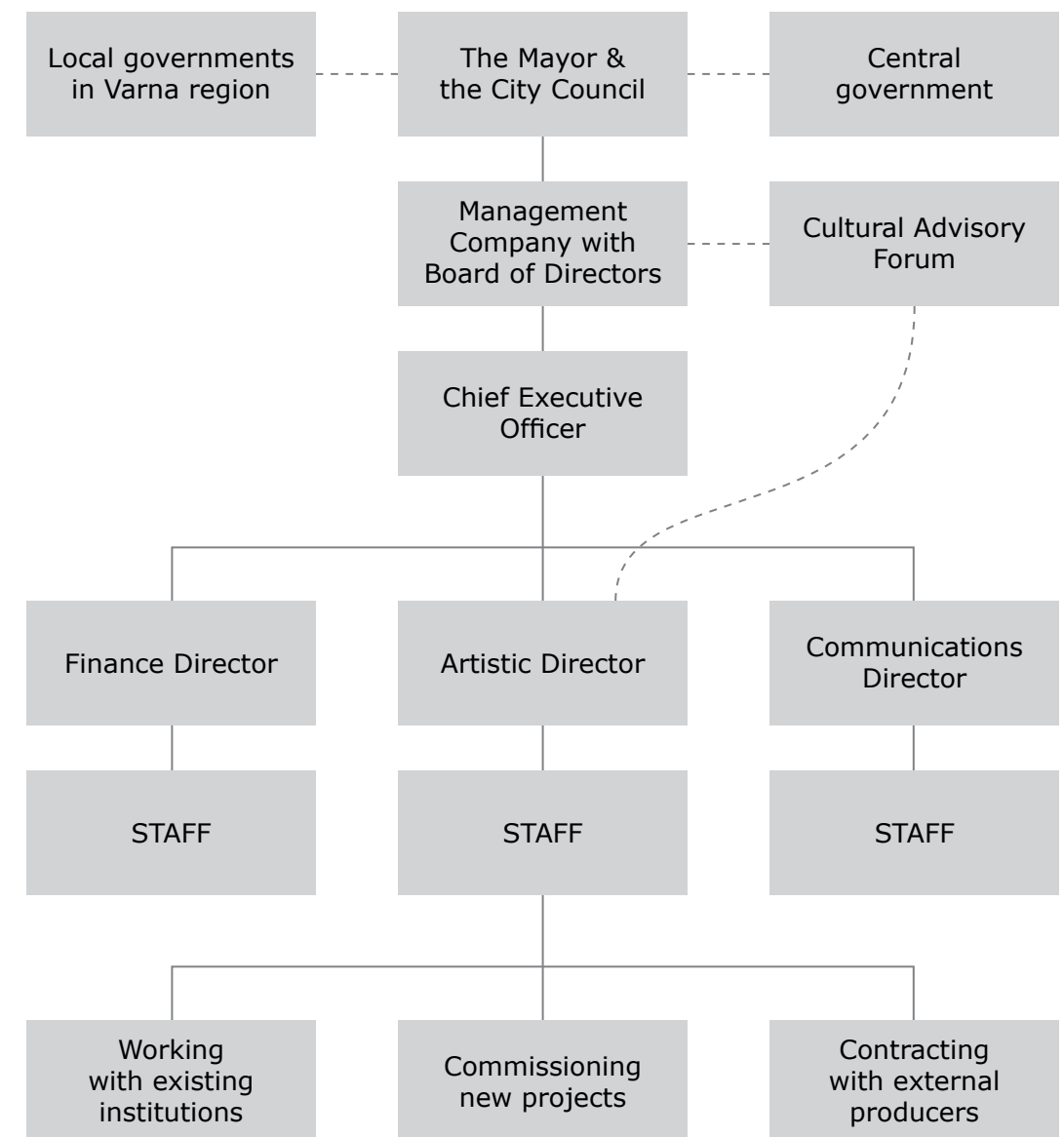
Once the Company is established, the first and key appointment will be the Chief Executive Officer. Working with this person will be 3 senior Executive Directors – the Artistic Director, the Finance Director and the Communications Director. Again, after investigating other ECoCs, Varna has decided that the top position should be occupied by a Manager and not the Artistic Director. Ultimately, the Programme will be put together by the Artistic Director, but that person must be supported by a sympathetic CEO. The Artistic Director will have to understand finance and the CEO will have to understand culture.

Alongside the Board and the Executive Directors, a Cultural Advisory Board will be set up. It will not have executive power, but it will be an important forum for discussion and ideas.

It will be vital that this structure has the involvement of the City authorities. In theory and in outline, it has been endorsed by them so far. It is believed that the proposed structure will help Varna face the future with confidence. It would be desirable for both the Mayor and the Chairman of the City Council to sit on the Board of the new Company. Bulgaria is only now emerging from its socialist past and this kind of management structure is fairly new. Because of its strong private sector, Varna is better placed than most Bulgarian cities to make it work.

## Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration

### PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



— NOTES TO PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

- *A new management company will be formed as a legal entity to oversee the build-up and the operation of Varna 2019 if Varna is short-listed for the final competition at the end of 2013.*
- *The Directors of the new Company, with an independent chairman, will be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. There will be 8-10 Directors, representing the private and academic sectors, the cultural operators and local government, including the City Council itself. No sector represented will have a majority on the Board.*
- *The Cultural Advisory Forum will be appointed by the new Company. Local and national cultural figures will be invited to join.*
- *The senior positions of Chief Executive Officer, Artistic Director, Finance Director and Communications Director will be appointed once Varna is declared the winner in September 2014 and after an open and competitive process.*
- *The Artistic Director will be responsible for devising the programme in consultation with the Board of Directors, the Advisory Forum and the other senior officers.*
- *The Finance Director will be responsible through the Chief Executive Officer for the Budget.*
- *The Communications Director will be responsible through the CEO for the information and communications strategy.*

**1.2 If an area around the city is involved in the event, how will the coordination between the authorities of the relevant local and regional authorities be organised?**

Varna is capital of a region which boasts more than 150 festivals, competitions and traditional fairs of which some 30 are international. There are over 200 historical sites in the region, including probably Europe's oldest human settlement at Provadia. Some 12 of the main towns in the region have pledged their support to Varna's candidature and indicated their desire to be involved in the Year. A Memorandum of Partnership was signed in 2011 between Varna and these smaller surrounding towns. The formal coordination of these partners, satellite

towns with Varna, has not yet been defined, but certainly there will be at least one place on the Board of Directors for a representative of the region. Varna will expect participating municipalities to make a contribution to the costs of the project. Discussions are on-going.

**1.3. According to which criteria and under which arrangements has or will the artistic director of the event been chosen? What is or will be his/her profile? When will he/she take up the appointment? What will be his/her field of action?**

The Artistic Director will not be chosen until Varna is chosen. Currently an artistic adviser is working with the Bid team. This person may or may not be a candidate to be the Artistic Director of Varna 2019. It is clear that being the Artistic Director of an ECoC is different from being the Artistic Director of a 3 week festival. A successful ECoC has a long build-up over several years and the full effects of the Year should be felt for several years afterwards. The Artistic Director will be required to devise a year-long programme for the year itself: it will also be part of his/her role to push cultural investment up the political agenda of the City. The role requires all sorts of skills beyond the programme itself. If Varna is short-listed, the job description for the Artistic Director will be included in the second submission.



## 2. FINANCING OF THE EVENT

### 2.1 What has been the usual annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present ECoC application)?

Table 1: ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE 2009 – 2013

Usual annual budget for culture in the city (in Euros) <sup>19</sup>							
Year	Types of expenditure		Sources of the budget		Total annual budget for culture in the city	Total annual budget for the city	Annual budget for culture in the city (in % of the total annual budget for the city)
	Operating budget	Capital budget	Municipal budget	Central Government budget			
2009	2,623,781	92,538	1,536,452	1,179,867	2,716,319	104,106,942	2.6 %
2010	2,673,997	76,969	1,743,466	1,007,500	2,750,966	102,239,449	2.7 %
2011	2,946,514	170,172	2,103,590	1,013,096	3,116,686	106,701,655	2.9 %
2012	2,721,908	14,991	1,694,094	1,042,806	2,736,899	94,012,191	2.9 %
2013	2,893,965	204,825	2,066,543	1,032,247	3,098,790	107,845,263	2.9 %

The annual budget for cultural events and support for the culture sector in Varna originates from two major funding sources: the Municipal budget and the Central government budget. The budget for culture maintains two major types of culture-related expenditure: operational (for local and international cultural events, communication costs and staff and administration maintenance) and capital (for refurbishment and renovation of culture-related infrastructure and purchasing of long-term tangible assets). Table 1 shows the annual budget for culture in the city of Varna over the last five years. The total budget is the sum of the Municipal and the Central government funding and is intended to cover the whole of operational and capital costs.

<sup>19</sup> The above budget includes funding for: Culture Department of Varna Municipality and local and international events under its organisation; Opera and Philharmonic Society; Orchestras and Ensembles; Community centres (Chitalishte); Museums; Galleries; Libraries.

The annual budget for culture in the city of Varna has remained stable over the last five years, and its amount follows the curve of the overall municipal budget, while its share of 2.9% thereof has remained stable during the last three years of most active preparations for Varna's 2019 ECoC application. Varna's budget for culture will gradually grow within the period 2014 – 2019, reaching its peak in 2019.

Varna's application for European Capital of Culture 2019 has been a priority for the city over the last 7 years. The main objectives of the ECoC Bid have been gradually integrated into the cultural policy of the city. In 2013, for a third successive year, the Culture Department of Varna Municipality implemented *Varna - a Territory of Creativity* - a special new programme to provide financial support for creative projects. The programme applies the competitive principle and financially supports the creativity of artists, cultural institutions, NGOs and artistic associations and their activities in the Varna Municipality area. Every year it supports between 20 and 30 projects which are judged to make a significant contribution to the development of the cultural industries in the city and region of Varna. The programme's priorities change every year, depending on the strategic vision for the development of the cultural sector in the city. In 2013, these priorities were developed taking into consideration the goals of the European Capital of Culture Bid.

### 2.2 Please explain the overall budget for the European Capital of Culture project (I.E. Funds that are specifically set aside for the project).

The overall budget for Varna 2019 project is presented in the following two statements, covering the period 2014 – 2019.

We believe that is imperative to separate completely operational budgets from capital expenditures budgets. We also believe that it is crucial to present budgets which cover the whole period from 2014 to 2019.

In 2.1. we have identified the existing annual budget for Varna in Table 1. In 2.3. we have identified the operating budget for the ECoC project in two tables under the headings Income and Expenditures.

In Appendix 2 we have identified various capital budgets for infrastructure.

We believe these tables give a complete financial overview of our candidature.

### 2.3 Please explain the operating budget for the ECoC project.

The tables below show the different sources of income for the operational budget of Varna 2019 for the period 2014 – 2019, presented year by year over the whole period. In this section the operational expenditure items are also presented and explained.

#### A) OVERALL OPERATING EXPENDITURE:

(in millions of Euros)

INCOME	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	2019	TOTAL	TOTAL in%
City of Varna	1.0	3.0	10.0	17.5	31.5	46.3 %
Other local authorities			1.0	1.0	2.0	2.9 %
Central government			5.0	17.5	22.5	33.1 %
EU Programmes			2.0	3.0	5.0	7.4 %
Melina Mercouri Prize			0.5	1.0	1.5	2.2 %
Private sector income			1.5	4.0	5.5	8.1 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>68.0</b>	

#### — NOTES TO OPERATIONAL BUDGET – 2014 – 2019

- In Bulgaria, budgets are set late, usually only one year in advance. This budget, therefore, has been drawn up with no certainty. However, we are confident that each budget line can be explained and defended.
- This is an operational budget only, with no capital expenditure included.
- This budget refers to new money and does not include present grants paid to cultural institutions on an annual basis from the existing City Council cultural budget and Central government budget of approximately three million Euros. This budget assumes these grants will continue through the period 2014 – 19.
- There is little new cultural expenditure envisaged before 2017. The new expenditure, therefore, is concentrated into the last 3 years 2017, 2018 and the Year itself 2019.

- Varna is confident that Central government will support the Bulgarian European Capital of Culture. We feel that a total of 22.5 million Euros over the whole period is reasonable.

#### B) PLANNED TIMETABLE FOR SPENDING OPERATING EXPENDITURE:

(in millions of Euros)

EXPENDITURE	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	2019	TOTAL	TOTAL in%
Staff and Administration	0.5	2.0	3.0	7.0	12.5	18.4 %
Communications	0.5	1.0	4.0	6.0	11.5	16.9 %
<b>Programme:</b>						
a) Existing institutions			3.0	8.0	11.0	16.2 %
b) New work			5.0	10.0	15.0	22.1 %
c) Imported work			2.0	8.0	10.0	14.7 %
Work with Italian ECoC			0.2	0.8	1.0	1.5 %
Evaluation			0.2	0.8	1.0	1.5 %
Contingency/ Reserve					6.0	8.8 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>68.0</b>	

- Varna is confident that the city will have access over the next few years to various EU Programmes.
- Varna is confident that the private sector will support the Year through sponsorship, advertising and donations from foundations. Varna is a comparatively rich city in Bulgarian terms, with a strong hospitality sector and the presence of multi-national companies in the area is growing. By 2019, the sponsorship potential will be stronger than it is now.
- We believe a 9% contingency reserve is reasonable.
- After 2019, it is expected that the city's operating budget for culture will be less than it was in the ECoC year; but it will be maintained at a much higher level than in 2013, when the Bid was made. Politicians of all parties have agreed to this commitment. However, at this stage, seven years ahead, exact figures cannot be produced. If Varna is short-listed, we will give a more complete answer to this question in the second stage.

## 2.4 Overall capital expenditure:

Capital expenditures (in euros)	Funding of new cultural infrastructure or upgrading existing facilities (including museums, galleries, theatres, concert halls, arts centres etc) (in euros)	Urban revitalisation (renovation of squares, gardens, streets, public space development etc) (in euros)	Infrastructures (investment in the underground, rail stations, dockyards, roads etc) (in euros)
<b>Confirmed</b>	5,112,919	63,380,085	38,346,891
<b>Planned</b>	30,958,666	59,495,208	6,734,328
<b>Concept Only</b>	33,461,512	212,408,756	<i>Not Available</i>

### — NOTES TO CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGET 2014 – 2020

- *The city of Varna has produced a major infrastructure survey for 2014 to 2020. This plan was approved by the Municipality in July 2013 and has been endorsed by the newly appointed Mayor. In this plan, several major cultural projects have been identified. Some have been costed in detail, some have been costed in outline. In the event that Varna is appointed ECoC for 2019, it is hoped that all the capital infrastructure projects in this plan will be completed in time for the Year 2019.*
- *The capital budget is, therefore, presented in three sections.*
  - 1) *projects which are confirmed*
  - 2) *projects which are planned and costed*
  - 3) *projects which are still at the concept stage.*
- *The funding of this capital infrastructure work will come from several sources, principally:*
  - 1) *city finances*
  - 2) *central government finances*
  - 3) *European funds*
  - 4) *private sector investment.*

To give more details on the short table and notes above, the city infrastructure plan (incl. Cultural infrastructure) and relevant financial data on the capital expenditure programme is available in *Appendix 2*.

## 2.5 Have the public finance authorities (city, region, state) already voted on or made financial commitments? If not, when will they do so?

The newly appointed Mayor of Varna and the Chairman of the Cultural Committee at the City Council have agreed to the financial commitment in this application form. The operational budget of Varna 2019 is included in the Municipal Development Plan 2014 – 2020 of the city. This budget will be officially voted if Varna is pre-selected, which will be officially declared in the second Bid Book.

Bulgarian Central Government, through the Ministry of Culture, made an unofficial commitment to support financially the Bulgarian city awarded the title European Capital of Culture 2019, according to the budgetary framework expressed in the application form. We believe that this financial commitment will be officially voted after the Pre-selection stage. This financially unspecific commitment to support the successful candidate was made at a meeting at the Ministry of Culture in January 2013 to which all the applicant cities were invited.

## 2.6 What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

Sponsorship is quite new in Bulgaria, especially outside the capital city. However, in terms of private investments, the city of Varna is very well positioned and sophisticated. Varna is already an international city. The service sector, including the strong tourism sector, accounts for 62%<sup>20</sup> of Varna's economic activity. Varna has strong accommodation, restaurant, banking and entertainment businesses. Many of the world's biggest international companies have established subsidiaries in Bulgaria and some of these have a local presence in Varna. Over the next six years we believe commercial sponsorship will develop. The service industry peaks in the summer months because of the large number of tourists visiting the city and its surroundings. European Capital of Culture events will extend the commercial year and the tourist sector with new offers of wide artistic and cultural programming, which will bring fundamental economic benefits for local businesses.

This will provide a major stimulus for local companies to invest in the project and to support the activities in the programme. By building a strong branding of Varna 2019 and the development of a strategic plan for sponsorship, we are confident that the private sector will support and invest in the event.

<sup>20</sup> District Strategy for the Development of the Region of Varna for the period 2014 – 2020, Branch structure of district economy for 2011, Territorial Statistical Bureau, Varna.

Sponsorship is viewed as an integral and valuable part of the Varna 2019 Bid from the outset. Sponsorship fundraising will start as soon as the city is nominated European Capital of Culture 2019. The team of Varna 2019 has already had conversations with some of the biggest companies and investors. This approach toward developing partnership with the private sector is aimed at ensuring the financial security of the event and decreasing the risk of possible Government reduction in income.

**2.7 According to what timetable should the income be received by the city and/or the body responsible for preparing and implementing the ECoC project if the city receives the title of European Capital of Culture?**

- A) Income to be used to cover operating expenses
- B) Income to be used to cover capital expenditure

In the tables, which we have supplied in 2.1., 2.3., 2.4. and Appendix 2, we have answered to the best of our ability the timetable questions. If Varna is short-listed we will go into this matter in greater detail.

**2.8 Which amount of the usual overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the ECoC year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?**

A main goal of the new *Varna 2019* strategy for the period after 2019 will be to work for an increase in local and national Government spending and investment in the cultural sector (both in cultural infrastructure and cultural activities). After 2019 it is expected that the city's operating budget for culture will be less than it was in the ECoC year, but it will be maintained at a much higher level than in 2013 when the Bid was made. Politicians of all parties have agreed to this commitment. However, at this stage, seven years ahead, exact figures cannot be produced.

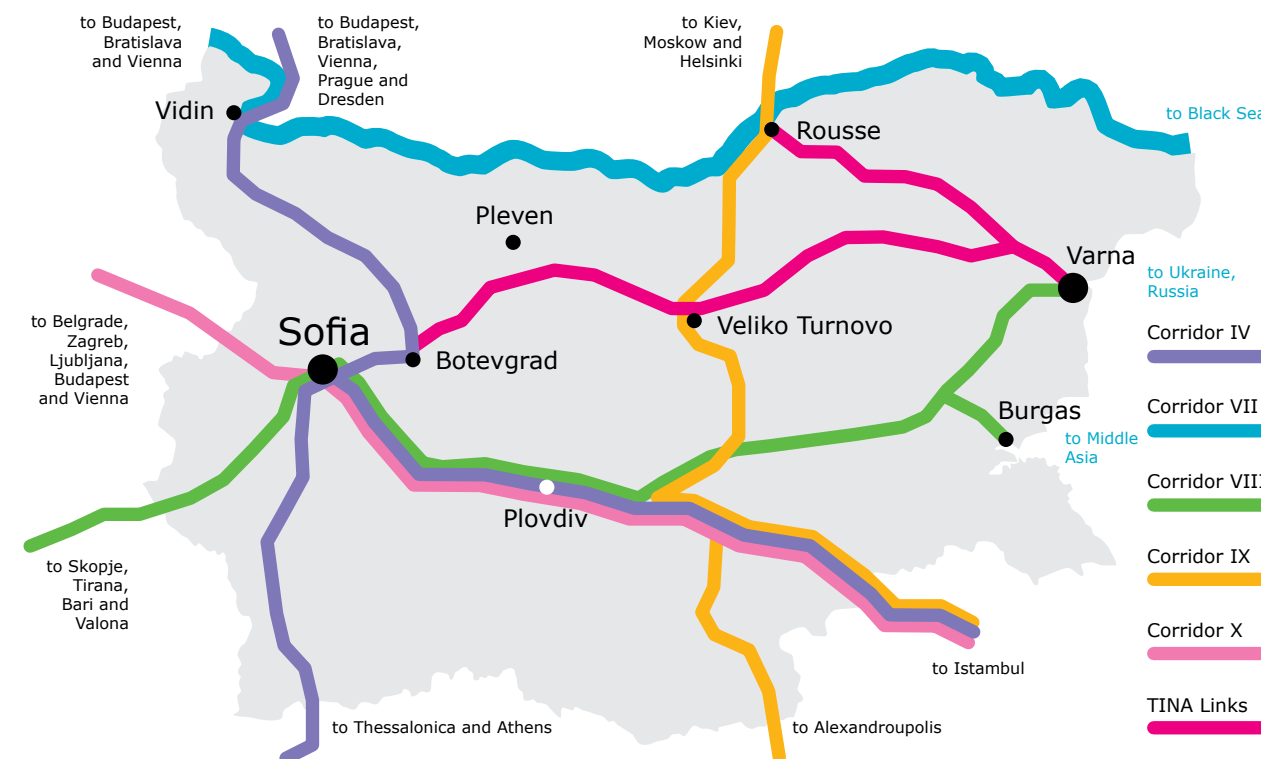
This new budget will also have the task of maintaining the infrastructure which was developed and built during the whole process between 2015 and 2019. The successor body to Varna 2019 will continue its work on different projects in the field of culture, supported by EU funding, which will contribute to the overall budget for culture in the city and the region. This new organisation will follow the European cultural policy targets and will serve as a catalyst for attracting private business investments. The city of Varna is currently a beneficiary of EU structural funds that are being used to fund an extensive range of projects, including cultural activities and infrastructure. These sources of income are very important for the sustainability of the project.

# Strain City Infrastructure

**1. What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?**

## ACCESSIBILITY

Varna is accessible by air, land and water. Standing on the western Black Sea coast, the city is part of the European network of city centres of transnational significance. The territory of Varna municipality lies at the crossroads between Europe and Asia and is in the proximity of three Pan-European transport corridors – *Corridor No. 7* (the Danube waterway), *Corridor No. 8* (Durrës – Skopje – Sofia – Burgas – Varna) and *Corridor No. 9* (Helsinki – Kiev – Ruse – Alexandroupolis); the latter has a diversion to Varna and, through the Port of Varna, connects this country to Central Asia and the Black Sea region.





### — BY AIR

*Varna International Airport* is one of the three major Bulgarian airports, accounting for a significant number of all the international flight destinations serviced by this country. Varna airport operates throughout the year. In 2012, the Airport received 1,221,468 incoming passengers<sup>21</sup> and it serviced 100 destinations in 57 countries.

This year Varna Airport opened a new passenger Terminal 2, which is three times larger than the older terminal and has a capacity of 1,040 passengers per hour, or about 1.8 million passengers per year. This is a modern, up-to-date facility, designed and constructed according to traffic demands and the specific needs of today's passenger.

### — BY WATER

Varna Port – East stands in the centre of the city and handles mostly general cargo and a smaller volume of passenger traffic.

The passenger terminal building was renovated in 2009. In 2012, seventeen ships with 10,641 passengers on board called in at Varna Port.

In 2008, the Council of Ministers and Varna Municipality signed a Memorandum for converting the land of Varna Port into an urban area intended for general public use. The objective of this project is the relocation of the port loading facilities outside Varna central areas - this is intended to be effected through the construction of a new container terminal stationed in Varna Lake. A new marina and passenger terminal will then be constructed in their place, plus an Aquarium, entertainment facilities, shopping centres and office buildings.<sup>22</sup>

### — BY ROAD

The existing road network in the District of Varna and the North-eastern region is well developed, but lags behind Southern Bulgaria. The construction of the Hemus Highway, which is to connect Varna to Sofia, is a priority project intended to bridge the differences between the regions. The Hemus Highway is a major road connection, which provides links to the Central and West European countries via Corridor No. 4 (Germany - Austria – Hungary – Bulgaria – Greece) and Corridor No. 10 (Serbia – Slovenia – Bulgaria – Turkey).

The building of the Ruse – Shumen road as a major road and its scheduled link to the Hemus Highway will improve the transport connection between the Danube

<sup>21</sup> Data uploaded on the official webpage of Varna Airport – [www.varna-airport.bg](http://www.varna-airport.bg)

<sup>22</sup> Programme for sustainable development of tourism in Varna Municipality – 2007-2013.

River and the Black Sea and will significantly reduce the travelling time between Bucharest and Varna. This year the road is planned to be expanded into a three-lane highway. The highway, Varna – Balchik – Durankulak, will facilitate tourist traffic between the Southern Romanian Black Sea coast and Varna.

Varna—Sofia	Varna—Bucharest	Varna—Istanbul
440 km	271 km	468 km

### — BY RAIL

Railway infrastructure in the territory of Varna Municipality includes the following railroads:

- Sofia – Mezdra – Gorna Oryahovitsa – Kaspichan – Varna services the whole territory of North-eastern Bulgaria. This railroad has been classified as part of the European and international railway transportation network.
- Ruse – Kaspichan – Varna provides connections between the ports of Ruse and Varna (connection between the Danube River and the Black Sea).
- Karnobat – Sindel provides connections between Varna District and Bulgaria's North-eastern regions with the regions in Southern Bulgaria.

### — BY BUS

Varna is connected to the capital and the larger cities in the country – Plovdiv, Veliko Tarnovo, Burgas, Ruse via forty two regular bus lines. The majority of transport companies operate up-to-date coaches offering free wi-fi connection, which makes travelling comfortable and enjoyable. Among international destinations for road passengers are Istanbul, Dortmund, Athens, Barcelona, Constanta, Odessa, Prague and Belgrade.

These transport connections confirm Varna as a relatively accessible destination. We consider that this positioning of the city will facilitate visitors' access to the events included in the cultural programme for 2019.

Connections. The first railway in Bulgaria connecting Varna and Ruse was inaugurated in 1863. William Gladstone, a Prime Minister of Great Britain in the Victorian era, was behind the project.

## 2. What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourist accommodation?

### FACILITIES

Tourism is a leading economic sector in Varna and the region. The city started to develop as an international tourist destination after World War II.

In view of the fact that this Bid Book for ECoC 2019 encompasses the territories of two districts, those of Varna and Dobrich, and three resorts of national significance, namely *Albena*, *Zlatni Piasaci (Golden Sands)* and *Saints Constantine and Helena*<sup>23</sup>, the data quoted in the Table has been summarized to account for this.

Data about accommodation facilities and accommodation activities in Varna resorts in 2012.<sup>24</sup>

Accommodation facilities	Number of beds	Total nights booked	Total Number of guests
<b>Total number</b>	86,986	6,517,543	1,258,267
<b>Out of which, by categories</b>			
<b>1-2 star – 238</b>	19,317	879,843	174,225
<b>3-star – 152</b>	33,880	2,395,051	448,157
<b>4-5 star – 78</b>	33,789	3,242,649	635,885

Based on research into the current situation and according to the statistical data, the tourist sector has a solid basis for growth as the average annual occupancy rate is 46.15 %. We could reasonably expect this to increase if there is an enrichment of the Events Culture Calendar for the months on either side of the high season (May/June and September/October). This, combined with events in the low season, will encourage more visitors, generate additional income and will improve the local and international profile of the city.

<sup>23</sup> Resorts of national significance appointed by Decree No. 45 of the Council of Ministers dated 25.01.2005.

<sup>24</sup> Accommodation facilities and accommodation activities by statistical zones, statistical regions and districts in 2012, National Statistical Institute, 2012.

## 3. What projects are to be carried out between now and the year for which the city is applying for the title of European Capital of Culture in terms of urban and tourism infrastructure, including renovation? What is the planned timetable for this work?

### INFRASTRUCTURAL UNDERTAKINGS

We believe that some of the scheduled infrastructure projects of the city will be given priority consideration if Varna wins the ECoC 2019 title.

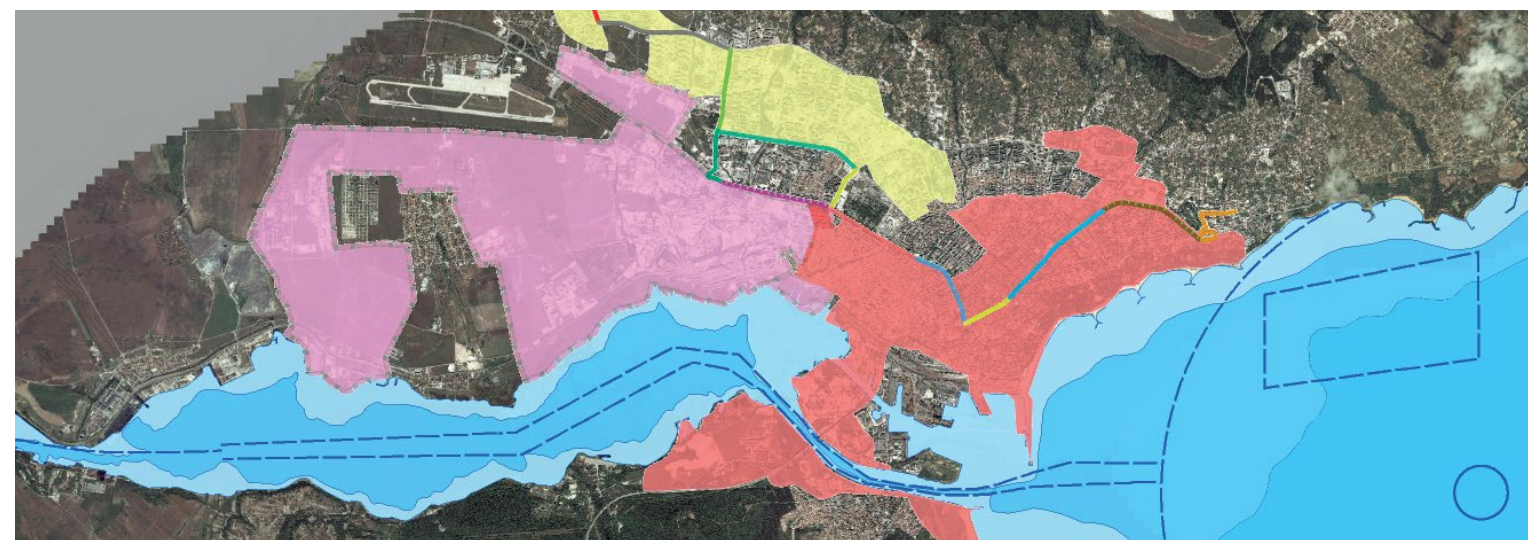
#### — INTEGRATED PLAN FOR CITY REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2014 – 2020

The Plan will provide an opportunity for solving some urgent issues related to city development, as well as providing conditions for a more efficient use of the city's potential, plus its establishment as a major backbone centre at a national and regional level. The integrated plan for city regeneration and development is an innovative tool for planning and management of developing city formations.

The integrated plan is founded upon three major strategic goals:

1. *Varna is an attractive place for living, education and tourism.*
2. *Varna is a city of sustainable growth where science, business and local government meet.*
3. *Varna is a city, which cares for each and every one of its citizens.*

- Zones of predominantly social character (yellow);
- Zones of potential for economic development (purple);
- Zones of public functions, of high public significance (red).



The main list of the Integrated Plan for city regeneration and development 2014 – 2020 includes 165 scheduled projects of total value of EUR 350,980,967 and the reserve list includes 40 projects of total value of EUR 226,342,161.

The infrastructure projects which are at the heart of this application can be divided into three groups: projects related to cultural infrastructure, projects with an impact on the urban environment, projects related to transport and supporting infrastructure.

#### — PROJECTS RELATED TO CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The major issues facing the majority of culture institutions in Varna are obsolete facilities, low energy efficiency, lack of funds for refurbishing and modernising, ineffective policy for investment and development.

Two projects were already implemented in 2012 under the *Operational Programme Regional Development*. They provided for overhaul of facilities and installation of energy-efficient systems in the main-stage building of Varna Drama Theatre, the Boris Georgiev City Art Gallery and the Regional Museum of History in Varna. This investment of EUR 5,112,919 was the largest one for cultural infrastructure in recent years.

Within the *Integrated Plan for City Regeneration and Development 2014 – 2020*, there are 17 cultural infrastructure projects, which are fully planned, costed and with dates of completion estimated.

There are also 9 projects which are on the reserve list of the *Integrated Plan for City Regeneration and Development*. These are at concept stage only and no dates of completion are established.

A list of these projects are in Appendix 2, table Overall Capital Expenditures.

#### — PROJECTS WITH AN IMPACT ON URBAN ENVIRONMENT

This year will see the launching of project Urban Texture: Rings and Paths for restructuring Varna's central pedestrian area. The project includes a modernisation of the zone from the Cathedral Square to the central entrance of the Sea Garden. The concept of the proposed solution consists of systematic application of three components: thematic micro-squares offering information about Varna (rings) pedestrian streets (pathways), artistic highlights (kinetic sculptures, fountains, urban landscaping and modern lighting).

Since 2012, a project for integrated city transport is in process of implementation. This project aims at sustainable and ecological development of public transport to be achieved through further development of street networks and opening of corridors for speedy bus transport within the city. The project foresees the construction of new bicycling facilities, including cycling lanes (of total length 16.3 km), bicycle parking places, development of a scheme for bicycle rental.

Both confirmed projects will be completed in 2015.

There are also three further groups of major infrastructure projects for urban environment, which are in the planning stage. Completion dates range from 2017 – 2022.

There are also three groups of projects which are on the reserve list of the *Integrated Plan for City Regeneration and Development*. These are at concept stage only and no dates of completion are established. A list of these projects are in Appendix 2, table Overall Capital Expenditures.

#### — PROJECTS RELATED TO TRANSPORT AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

The building of the Terminal 2 of Varna Airport was completed in August 2013 and now is fully operational.

A new bus station is planned and it is expected to be completed in 2020.

The other projects, including the relocation of *Varna Port* in the lake, have been agreed in principle but there are no costs, nor a completion date.

A list of these projects are in Appendix 2, table Overall Capital Expenditures.



# Communication Strategy

## 1. What is the city's intended communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture event?

### SHARING INSIGHTS

The title European Capital of Culture provides our city with an opportunity to be placed at the heart of European cultural and social networks. This level of visibility will transform all aspects of life in the city.

Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration provides the rallying point for all stakeholders who are involved with culture to get together. This means the citizens, the artists, the producers, the politicians and the media. With nearly one million European citizens, Varna and its region are capable of generating a wave of energy and ideas which can roll out across Bulgaria, Europe and beyond.

The Communication Strategy of Varna 2019 outlines the framework of the following components: Strategic goals of the communication management, Our ambassadors, Communication actions and media support, Implementation stages, Branding Varna.

### STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

The main objectives of the project's communication strategy come as a continuation to the general goals of Varna's candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019, namely:

- Better promotion and recognition of Varna as a productive environment for culture in the region, Bulgaria, Europe and worldwide.

- Enhanced interest in the city and the region from international visitors, audiences and businesses, and the endorsement of Varna as a preferred destination for cultural tourism.

#### — OUR AMBASSADORS

A flagship initiative such as European Capital of Culture addresses a multitude of audiences and participants: local, regional and international. The City Community, which includes citizens, business organisations, cultural institutions, NGOs, children and young people, will play a key role in communication. The presentation of Varna as a city will primarily be in the hands of the people who love Varna and live there.

The citizens of Varna and the region will be their city's best ambassadors, spreading the news of our strengths, cultural traditions and riches, and the prospects for its development.

This is our communication workforce.

#### — COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

The communication strategy for *Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration* includes a series of actions enhancing the city visibility:

- Partnerships with the printed and electronic media (local, regional, national and international) – following the preparation, the events and the initiatives in the cultural programme of the city in the years before 2019.
- Press-conferences and public presentations – announcing actual stages in the process of preparation.
- Promoting Varna 2019 through the events which are presented in the years of preparation.
- Open discussions and brainstorming sessions with citizens and different experts dealing with the city development issue.
- Promoting Varna to the European artistic and creative community with the support of key cultural organisations and international networks.
- Promoting Varna in partnership with the tourist and advertising agencies in the country and abroad.
- Promoting Varna with the support of the national and the European institutions involved.

- Promoting the title by means of digital technology (social networks, mobile applications, digital media).

Our major event *Creating Future Together* – a platform for meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences, will create an environment for direct involvement of the citizens. Their engagement will be fundamental to building up the new image of Varna.

#### — MEDIA SUPPORT

*Varna 2019* will work in strong collaboration with the national media such as Bulgarian National Television and Bulgarian National Radio, as well as all private media which support our candidature.

International communication will be developed through Varna's contacts established in different partnership networks, sister city relationships, participation in European and international cultural and economic networks and forums. We will arrange special programmes for international journalists to present Varna. These exchanges will contribute to the building of a positive and rich image of the city.

#### — DIGITAL SPACE

In the global reality of today, digital space has an open door into our daily lives, and the initiative's presence on the Internet will play a key role in connecting us to many users and in establishing conditions for fast and efficient dissemination of information.

The use of social networks such as *Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Foursquare* and the websites for photo and video sharing such as *Youtube, Vbox, Instagram, flickr* as communication channels, will provide tools for fast and large-scale communication with a wide public around the world. Live broadcasting of events on the Internet through live streaming will promote *Varna 2019* programme information to young and active audiences who are daily users of these services through their tablets, TV sets, mobile phones, laptops or desktops.

A series of creative video challenges for youngsters, as well as video-competitions involving some of the on-line video sharing platforms such as *Youtube* and *Vimeo*, will allow the young citizens to become authors, to be active, to make their voice heard, showing their personal perspective on and connection with the city and its features.

## IMPLEMENTATION STAGES

Taking into account the importance of long-term and sustainable development, we will plan our communication campaign through the involvement of the citizens. During the years before the event, all the preliminary activities and initiatives will work as a “warming up” platform designed to inform and attract our citizens and create a high level of interest and enthusiasm. Our communication strategy is organised in four stages:

#### — ENLIGHTENING 2012 – 2015

This is the current preparatory stage of promotion and generating public support for the initiative *Varna 2019 – candidate for European Capital of Culture*. The main objective is to raise awareness among the widest possible public, and to engage public interest and support. The dialogue and discussions in all main sectors – culture, tourism, education, NGOs – will continue over the following years. The objective will be to present the opportunities for participation in the process and to announce the project's goals and strategy.

#### — SPOTLIGHT 2016 – 2018

By now, Varna will be able to step up to a new and more specific stage of its preparation. At this point, the communication strategy will be working within an efficient organisation.

Programme plans will be in the process of being finalised, projects will be being refined, established networks and partnerships will start to function, and partnerships with business will be established. Promotional advertising of the programme in city and the region will begin. Multi-lingual messages and information will be mandatory – each message in this important year is international and significant in the European context. No one visiting Varna in 2016 or 2017 will be able to leave the city without a clear knowledge of the upcoming 2019.

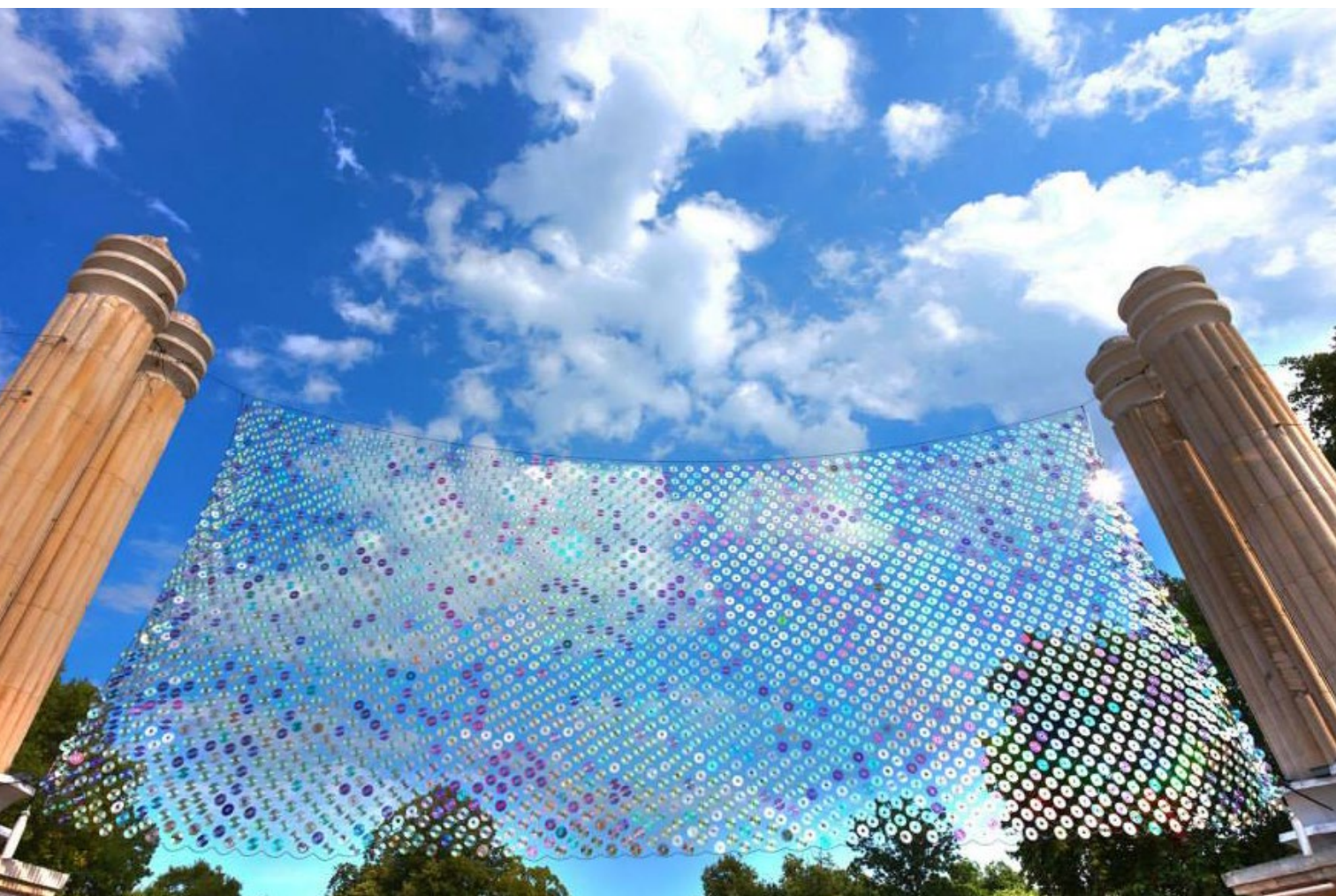
The new updated version of the logo will be presented together with the news on the marketing and implementation of the programme's events – highlights in cultural calendar, booking options and ticket selling. The programme will be marketed to the tourism world by the year of 2017.

### — ILLUMINATION 2019

The year of European Capital of Culture is the special year; hence it demands additional precision in the communication strategy. Activities at this stage focus on the activation of all parties potentially interested in the events of Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration. The channelling of local, national and international public attention to the programme events will go hand in hand with continuous fine-tuning of the cultural perspective of the city and the region.

### — AFTERGLOW 2020 – 2024

The legacy of 2019 will be a new Varna. We will have lived through a five-year communication programme, resulting in a new reputation for the city, the business community and the cultural organisations. The ability to maintain the gloss of having being a European Capital of Culture beyond 2019 will be another benefit of this flagship EU initiative. At international level it will be beneficial for the city's cultural, social and business contacts.



## BRANDING VARNA

A European Culture Capital city becomes a cultural destination for foreign visitors, enriching its socio-economic development and urban revival. City marketing constitutes a key component, when a city is designated as ECoC, because it creates city brand awareness and value. The event is a tool and powerful stimulus for the building of both Varna and Bulgaria as brands in the world of European cultural competitiveness.

For Varna, significant progress will be made in the redefining of its identity from being a seaside tourist destination to a destination offering opportunities for cultural tourism and creative industries in all seasons.

Good branding can assist in making our city desirable. Varna must develop its good qualities in order to brand itself successfully, but a myriad of factors are involved. Cooperative efforts between residents and municipal government are one of the key factors in determining the branding potential of a city. Weaknesses as well as strengths will be explored in order for a distinctive brand for Varna to be created.

In order for a brand to be established, our city needs to underline and make readable its identity. There is a need for research to determine what the city needs to focus on in order to survive in the global economy, and the effects of globalisation on cities. In defining Varna's brand, we will initiate exploration of all the city features related to branding: history, attractions, nickname, branding efforts, demographics, economics and tourism, residents, visitors, the projected city brand, problems and suggested solutions.

The functional as well as non-functional qualities of Varna need to be further researched. These include city appearance, people's experience of the city, people's belief in the city, what the city stands for, and what kind of people inhabit the city. *Varna 2019 – Port of Inspiration* is one important step towards the creation of a strong and positive message combined with a city-profile which is distinct and unique for South-Eastern Europe.

Our focus on restoring trust within the social sphere and creating an environment allowing the development of creativity and its expression at the different levels of production follows some of the existing good examples and practices. Those cities successful in branding themselves have the qualities that strong brands do, and have marketed their history, quality of place, lifestyle, culture, diversity, and have formed cooperative partnerships between city municipalities and government in order to enhance their infrastructure. In the event of being listed, this is the direction in which Varna's international public presence will be developed.

## 2. How does the city plan to ensure the visibility of the European Union, which is awarding the title?

The winning of the title will be a great honour for Varna. The title will also be a great responsibility, because the city must be a worthy representative of Bulgaria and a good steward of one of the major European flagship projects.

The communication strategy will enthusiastically convey its debt to the EU. In all publications, on the website, in all advertising, in social media, etc., we will always make clear that ECoC is an initiative of the European Union. Additionally, we will extend a proposal to the Italian ECoC to develop joint promotional activities directed to a greater recognition of the European Capital of Culture title.

# Evaluation & monitoring of the event

## Does the city intend to set up a special monitoring and evaluation system?

- For the impact of the programme and its knock-on effects?
- For financial management?

Stage-by-stage monitoring of the impact and effects of Varna 2019 is of crucial importance for effective management measured against the project's scheduled goals, as well as for introducing timely corrections in the area of activities, should any diversion from these objectives be found. The team of *Varna 2019* has conducted in-depth research into the monitoring and evaluation systems of past, current and future European Capitals of Culture and studied their published monitoring reports. Our chosen approach is based on the good examples of *Liverpool 2008*, *Guimarães 2012* and *Wrocław 2016*.

## — ORGANISATION AND FINANCING

Monitoring will be conducted in partnership with an interdisciplinary team of academics from the *University of Economics – Varna*, experts from the *Territorial Statistics Bureau – Varna*. Representatives of these stakeholders will be organised in an independent team which will monitor and evaluate the work and actual achievements of the management body of Varna 2019.

These activities will be financed from the budget of *Varna 2019*, and co-financing will be negotiated with the *University of Economics – Varna*, which in partnership with the Ministry of Education, annually announces its invitation for scientific projects of significance for the city of Varna.

## — TIME SPAN

Monitoring will cover the whole build-up period until 2019, the implementation proper throughout 2019 and subsequent impacts, while serving as a reflector of the project's added value and sustainability. The processes of monitoring and result assessment for Varna 2019 will start immediately after the city is announced European Capital of Culture at the beginning of 2015, with emphasis on the critical year 2019 and sustainability follow-up until 2024, inclusive. The whole process will be monitored through its separate phases: in the *Spotlight 2016 – 2018*, *Illuminations 2019* and *After Glow 2020 – 2024*.

## — PARAMETERS

The system for monitoring and assessment of the progress of the Varna – European Capital of Culture 2019 project will be based on the principles of transparency, accountability, openness and integration.

Monitoring of the programme is organized in two major parts:

- I. *Evaluation of the programme's impact and the programme's results (cultural, social and economic)*
- II. *Evaluation of the project's financial management (effectiveness and sustainability).*

A set of indices intended to monitor the indicated impacts has been selected.

## I. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME'S IMPACT AND THE PROGRAMME'S RESULTS (Cultural, Social and Economic)

### 1. *Inclusion and accessibility to culture*

- Number of events organized through the year, their scope and influence
- Equal access to the events organised within the project's framework: concrete values (audience number, types of audiences attracted, volunteers, participants in organised events, comparative analysis and assessment of results)
- Geographical scope.

### 2. *Social impact*

- Participation of target groups (minorities, disadvantaged people, institutionalised children and youth, elderly people)
- Measured impact on the process of inclusion of the target groups in the community's cultural and social life.

### 3. *Economy and tourism*

- Number of visitors to the city (from this country, from Europe, from third countries) and positive impact on the tourism sector
- Economic results for the city and surrounding area (economic growth, impact on employment, infrastructure development).

### 4. *Image and perceptions*

- Presence in the mass media (from negative towards positive), intensity
- Degree of reaching people and connecting
- Importance for Bulgaria's image building.

### 5. *Project management*

- Establishment of strong partnerships
- Work with the non-governmental sector, citizens and businesses
- Partnership between local governments in the region and coordination of culture-related activities, common cultural policy and platform for social and economic development
- Decentralisation of cultural policy.

## II. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (Effectiveness, Sustainability)

The expenditure of the funds allotted to the scheduled budget will form an integral part of the independent assessment and monitoring of the project. This aspect of the monitoring process is expected to be highly dynamic. The monitoring commission will be in continuous contact with the management body of Varna 2019 to discuss activities and make recommendations regarding timely reaction and more efficient financial management.

The main objective of the financial analysis will be to identify and monitor the funding sources of the project and, in particular, the growing share of participation of the private sector in the financing of cultural events.

### — STAGES

The monitoring reports on the project's progress, completed to reflect the project's viability and sustainability, will be published:

- at the end of 2018. This report will cover the project's development from 2015 until the start of 2019 (intermediate and final report). The intermediate report will be completed at the beginning of 2017 for the purpose of timely direction of recommendations to the project's management body.
- at the beginning of 2020. This report will cover the results from the year of becoming a European Capital of Culture 2019 and will include a comparative analysis (conformity between set goals and achieved results).
- at the end of 2024. To report the programme's long-term effects and added value.





# Additional information

1. What, in your opinion, are the strong points of the city's application and the parameters of its success as European Capital of Culture and what, on the other hand, are its weak points?

## Strengths

THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE BLACK SEA COAST

FIRST BULGARIAN CITY TO ANNOUNCE ITS CANDIDATURE FOR ECoC 2019

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, WORKING FOR THE ECoC BID BOOK

GREAT HISTORY - TOWN AND REGION

RICH CITY FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

CREATIVE YOUTH ACTIVITIES - BIDDING EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL 2016

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE CITY

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE TO RECEIVE FOREIGN VISITORS FOR ECoC EVENTS

## Weaknesses

LACK OF SPECIALIST STAFF IN THE FIELD OF CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

LACK OF APPROPRIATE COORDINATION BETWEEN CULTURE AND TOURISM

LACK OF PLANNING SKILLS FOR LARGE CULTURAL EVENTS

LACK OF OPENNESS TYPICAL OF POST-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES (RIGHT HAND ACTING WITHOUT LEFT HAND KNOWING)

WEAK PARTICIPATION OF VARNA CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING OF CULTURAL EVENTS

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS OVERCENTRALISED IN CITY CENTRE

### GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS:

Captain Georgi Georgiev in his yacht Cor Caroli was the first Bulgarian to sail single-handed around the Globe in 1976-1977

Pench's Club, Varna, has a Guinness record for the longest list of 1,227 cocktails commercially available, achieved on 12 August 2005

## Opportunities

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODELS FOR WORK IN THE CULTURAL FIELD

ESTABLISHMENT OF BETTER ORGANISATIONAL MODELS FOR WORKING WITH TOURISM

EXTENSION OF THE TOURISM SEASON (BUILDING NEW SPRING AND AUTUMN CULTURAL PROGRAMME)

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR COORDINATION OF THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE CITY

FINDING UNUSED SPACES FOR CULTURAL EVENTS

EXCHANGE WITH EU COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

## Threats

STRONG COMPETITION FROM OTHER BULGARIAN CANDIDATE CITIES

LACK OF APPROPRIATE COORDINATION BETWEEN CULTURE AND EDUCATION

WORRIES CONCERNING SUPPORTING EVENTS FOR THE ECoC YEAR

LACK OF SUFFICIENT FINANCING FOR THE ECoC YEAR

CONTINUING CULTURAL DRAIN TO THE CAPITAL CITY

2. Does the city intend to develop particular cultural projects in the coming years, irrespective of the outcome of its application for the title of European Capital of Culture? Please comment.

The city political leadership, its Cultural Department and its cultural operators along with the bid team are working to complete a successful bid to be European Capital of Culture 2019. Meanwhile, the city's normal cultural program continues and the success of the 2013 festivals, for instance, has been splendid. The energy which the bid preparation has generated will undoubtedly raise cultural aspiration and ambition. Indeed, this energy is palpable now.

If Varna is short-listed, new cultural projects will be developed and will be presented at the Second stage.

3. Please add below any further comments which you deem necessary on the subject of this application.

We hope the present document speaks for itself. If we are short-listed we will be able to make more specific proposals.

# Appendix 1

## Structure of the programme for the event

### EUPHORIA PROGRAMME

*EUPhoria aims to set up a common platform for presentation of special highlights of Varna's rich annual festival programme. The festivals in the city will contribute to ensuring a dynamic and diverse content and a presentation of high-grade international productions in the year of the event. The yearly rhythm of the festivals will be enriched by selected activities related to Varna 2019. Their main task will be to create a festive mood and to attract a broader audience, giving to the whole event a high level of visibility.*

#### — NEW HORIZONS

The *International Ballet Competition* in Varna, which is recognised as the world's first, presents a genuinely intriguing experience to the citizens and guests of the city. Young performers of world renown will be invited to present their contemporary interpretations and performances. In 2019 the programme of events will attract the most devoted admirers of classical ballet and contemporary dance.

#### — PERFORMING ARTS ARENA

As the host city of the most prestigious international theatre festival in the country – *Varna Summer* – Varna will provide its citizens and guests with the unique opportunity to meet some of the

leading representatives of contemporary theatre, dance and performance from all over Europe. Even 20 years after the political changes, the local context still lacks real contact with contemporary performing arts from abroad. *Performing Arts Arena* will restore that balance by presenting some of the key artists in those art fields today.

#### — SEA-NEMA

The project aims to include in the programme of the prestigious film festivals (for feature films, for short films and for animation) in Varna a special module – *Sea-nema* – presenting movies from the countries around the Black Sea. The project also plans to give an opportunity to independent film production

companies to obtain small grants for shooting documentaries or for creating animation series linked with the Black Sea region (its history, culture, current developments).

#### — GOLDEN DOLPHIN SATELLITE

Our main goal with this project is, *Golden Dolphin International Puppetry Festival* (one of the oldest festivals in the city, a triennale for puppet theatre from all around the world),

to have its own satellite event in the years to 2019 in which the festival is not taking place. The project plans to start in 2015 as a long-term initiative for artistic exchange with Italian cultural organisations dealing with the production and promotion of puppet theatre, street art, acrobatics and circus. The aim is for the classical Italian traditions in theatre and street art to be presented in Varna. Additional modules will support co-productions for children and adults, as well as workshops for amateurs in collaboration with *State Puppet Theatre – Varna*.

### Welcoming Sea PROGRAMME

*The main focus of the Welcoming Sea programme is the creation of new works by Bulgarian and foreign artists.*

#### — FUTURE COMPASS PLATFORM

Three years before the programme event *Varna 2019* (2016 – 2019), a new financial instrument will be in place to support international cooperation between Bulgarian artists and their colleagues from Europe. These productions could be staged either in Varna or could be premiered abroad before being shown in Varna. Both formats will enhance Varna's international reputation as host and innovator of new cultural events. In addition to the creation of new works, the programme has two other priorities: cooperation with managers in the field

of individual arts from abroad and presentation of contemporary Bulgarian art abroad.

#### — CREATIVE TERRITORY PLATFORM

In the build-up period, *Varna 2019* will extend its programme of support for artistic projects: *Varna – Creative Territory*. It will also be open to international artists provided that their new works' first presentation to the public is in Varna. The artists and their works will also be ambassadors of the city. The existing model can be

improved by input from international artists: this will open up fresh possibilities amongst the local artistic community.

#### — RESIDENCY FOR ARTISTS

In 2016, two residency programmes will also start. The first is for artists in the field of visual and performing arts and music. For three months the selected artists will get acquainted with the city and its artistic scene. They will talk and work with local artists and at the end of their residency will give a public presentation or an exhibition. The programme of *Varna 2019* will feature a joint exhibition of all residents, including these in the year of the event.

#### — RESIDENCY FOR WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS

The second parallel resident programme will be intended exclusively for budding writers and translators to live and work in Varna for a period of three to six months. Jointly with the publishing houses in the city, each young writer's visit will end with a bilingual publication of his/her work. The same will be applied to the translator's work – translations in foreign languages of new Bulgarian literature will be published and distributed further afield.

## Plant a Future PROGRAMME

*The programme is one of the long-term initiatives related to Varna's candidacy. It will start years ahead of the initiative itself, and is aimed squarely at those who are children now, but will grow into the audiences and participants of the future. The children's interest, enthusiasm and skills will be fostered through a series of events and workshops which will be widely covered in the media.*

#### — CULTURE IS A FRIEND

In terms of continuity and sustainable development, *Varna 2019* consciously targets its efforts toward the young generation and their understanding of culture. The project *Culture is a Friend* aims to create a new model of cooperation between the city's schools

and cultural organisations so that from an early age children can meet artists, encounter different kinds of art and visit various cultural venues. An exhibition and public presentations will illustrate the results of this important programme.

#### — CULTURAL MANAGEMENT SUMMER SCHOOL

This is an annual joint initiative between *Varna 2019* and Varna's *University of Economics*. Students in the fields of art and economics will develop and test new organisational models for the creation and promotion of art. Part of their programme is to research into getting a good return on investments made. The summer school's work sessions will end with open presentations and the announcement of its online archive.

#### — A SCHOOL FOR CAPTAINS: TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMME

Jointly with the city's higher educational institutions, cultural institutes and tourist agencies, *Varna 2019* will start a *Traineeship Programme*. It will provide young people direct access to experience and training as Marketing, PR and Project Management Interns in this field.

## Field of Potential PROGRAMME

*Field of Potential aims to support and present initiatives promoting competitiveness, entrepreneurship and problem-solving skills.*

#### — NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODELS CONFERENCE

*Varna 2019* wishes to start an annual international conference, which is both representative and emblematic of the city. Guests from this country and abroad will be invited to offer their perspectives on the different aspects of the city's development as well as sharing current thinking about urban regeneration and quality of life issues. The event will be held with the support and participation of the city's academic community.

#### — BANK OF SPACES

The initiative is based on the shortage of spaces in Varna where contemporary art can be made and exhibited. On the other hand, as a result of the financial crisis, many recently built shopping malls, hotels and shops are vacant. The team of *Bank of Spaces* will contact the owners of these buildings to seek their partnership and offering them to artists. In this way, the available infrastructure in the city will be optimised and the independent artistic community will get a "mobile" space in different neighborhoods.

## — CUL-TOUR

Through CUL-TOUR, we want to meet other European tourist cities to discuss the challenges facing cultural and tourism sectors and to agree how we can work together more effectively. Amongst these challenges are the limited season, maritime litter and anti-social behaviour by some tourists.

We will invite representatives from those cities, who are similar to Varna in terms of size and organisational specifics. Both in the years of preparation and in the year of the event, Varna will become a temporary centre for this international forum focused on promoting good European practices.

## Environment of Trust PROGRAMME

*The programme Environment of Trust addresses the need for new models of cooperation among the representatives of different professional groups.*

### — MoTo

This year saw the start of a pilot project MoTo – *Mobile Point for Cultural Contacts* aimed at decentralising cultural activities. The problem at the moment is that so many of them are arranged and initiated “downtown”. MoTo provides a temporary space intended to function as a small-scale venue, which will be deployed in each of Varna’s neighborhoods. MoTo will be linked with residency programmes giving an opportunity for artists to meet with neighborhood residents. We aim to create an inspiring temporary space where local communities can meet

with diverse forms of art - music, film making, exhibitions, performances, and interesting artists and entrepreneurs. MoTo will be a place for exchanging ideas and skills, a platform for active dialogue between individual inhabitants and visitors from the neighbourhoods.

A contest for MoTo architecture has already been held and the winner has been nominated. The mobile platform is being built and a conceptual framework for its programme of artistic events and cultural initiatives is being developed. MoTo’s first encounter with Varna’s neighbourhood residents is scheduled to take place in the spring of 2014.

## — JULY EXHIBITION

In the 1980s, in the Eastern Block era, the specific youth tradition arose called July (after the name of the British rock band Uriah Heep’s 1971 hit *July Morning* as an echo from the hippie era of the 1960-1980s and as a subtle protest against the Communist regime at that time). Even today in the last day of June, people from all over the country gather at different sites

on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast to welcome the sunrise on the morning of July 1st. A special exhibition will celebrate this event, which emerged in Varna and is unique for the Bulgarian urban and youth culture. Personal stories and photographs of participants from different generations will be collected and publicly presented in this exhibition, complemented by a bilingual catalogue.

## Kaleidoscope PROGRAMME

*On a smaller scale, the five programmes will further find their expression in the context of the North-eastern region of which Varna is the administrative and cultural centre. Thanks to a regional network for cooperation and exchange of cultural production that has been built and developed in the years preceding the event, the Kaleidoscope programme will provide for the inclusion of the cities from the region in the total programme of the event, and for their access to some of the events included in the other separate programmes.*

### — WINE ROUTES

The project aims to introduce to the citizens of the region and to the guests of Varna the specific wine culture of the North eastern area of Bulgaria. Wine routes will offer excursions in the region for tasting specific sorts of wine produced in the local wine-cellars. In the year of the event some of them will be adopted as spaces for cultural events such as chamber-music concerts and presentations.

### — RE-CONNECTION

The project aims to improve the existing communication system between the community centers (chitalishta) in the North eastern area, as well as to optimise their cultural exchange – including the exchange of expertise, services, resources and events. An integrated on-line platform will be created to share the information about their main goals and presenting projects and activities.

THE FOLLOWING LIST INCLUDES SOME OF THE EXISTING CULTURAL EVENTS IN VARNA AND WE CONSIDER THEM TO BE AN EXCELLENT FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPING OUR FULL PROGRAMME. A NUMBER OF THEM ARE MENTIONED IN THIS BID BOOK AS SPECIFIC PROJECTS OF VARNA 2019.

<i>Varna Summer</i> International Music Festival (est. 1926)	<i>Sea and Memories</i> International Music Festival (est. 1998)
<i>Golden Rose</i> Bulgarian Feature Film Festival (est. 1961)	<i>August in Art</i> Biennial of Visual Arts (est. 2000)
International Ballet Competition – Varna (est. 1964)	National Children’s and Youth Theatre Festival Fairy Tale for You (est. 2000)
International May Choir Competition (est. 1967)	Modern Ballet National Festival-Competition (est. 2001)
<i>Golden Dolphin</i> International Puppet Festival (est. 1969)	International Photo Salon (est. 2003)
National Competition for Performance of Works by Czech and Slovak Composers (est. 1979)	European Music Festival (est. 2004)
International Biennale of Graphics (est. 1981)	<i>In The Palace</i> International festival dedicated to short films under 27 minutes in length (est. 2003)
<i>Varna Summer</i> International Jazz Festival (est. 1992)	International Vocal Competition <i>Morski Zvezdichki (Sea Stars)</i> (est. 2005)
International Pop Music Festival <i>Discovery</i> (est. 1992)	Festival of Ethnics (est. 2006)
International Folklore Festival – Varna (est. 1992)	World Festival of Animated Film - Varna (est. 2006)
International Summer Scientific Meetings (est.1993)	<i>Slavic Embrace</i> International Festival of Poetry (est. 2007)
<i>Varna Summer</i> International Theatre Festival (est. 1993)	<i>VIDEOHOLICA</i> Video Art Festival (est. 2008)
<i>Love is Folly</i> International Film Fest (est. 1993)	Opera at the Varna Open-Air Theatre (est. 2009)
International Arts and Crafts Fair – Varna (est. 1996)	<i>Contempo</i> Contemporary Art Festival for Young Artists (est. 2009)
<i>Fall of Memories</i> National Festival (est. 1997)	Book Alley – Varna (est. 2010)

# Appendix 2

## Financing of the Event

### 2.4 Overall capital expenditure:

## PROJECTS RELATED TO CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Capital costs (in euros)	Financing for the building of new infrastructure and refurbishment of existing cultural infrastructure (museums, galleries, theatres, concert halls, art centres, etc.)	Year of completion
Renovation, reconstruction and modernisation of the second stage of the Theatre & Music Production Centre – Varna	3,023,576	2016
Renovation and modernisation of the Varna Open-Air Theatre	907,073	2018
Renovation and expansion of Palace of Culture and Sports - Varna, to be converted into a multi-functional sports, culture and congress complex	5,682,948	2017
Varna Archaeological Museum: Restructuring of inner yard and construction of a transparent roof	7,040,139	2015
Varna Museum of Natural History: Construction of new exhibition room, furnishing and equipment	527,634	2019
Construction of multi-functional public building, hosting drama theatre, cinema, exhibition hall, museum and library in Vladislav Varnenchik residential quarter	333,968	2020
Renovation of seven Community Centres - Chitalishta	2,539,804	2016

Capital costs (in euros)	Financing for the building of new infrastructure and refurbishment of existing cultural infrastructure (museums, galleries, theatres, concert halls, art centres, etc.)	Year of completion
Planning of a new space where port berths from 1st to 5th to be moved and possible construction of an open-air stage/cultural site as well	137,435	2016
Architectural and archaeological reserve Odessos-Varna	7,558,939	2017
Construction of a new building for the Pencho Slaveykov Public Library Varna	3,207,150	2019
<b>Planned Projects Total</b>	<b>30,958,666</b>	
Implementation of repair works on the Ethnographic Museum, Museum of the History of Medicine, Varna Archaeological Museum – inner yard, Museum of Varna's New History, Museum of the Bulgarian Revival-Varna, Museum Old Varna	6,956,470	n/a
Renovation of the Boris Georgiev City Art Gallery	479,993	n/a
Renovation of the Varna State Puppet Theatre	460,456	n/a
Construction of a new multi-functional facility for culture in the area by Varna Port (at Berth No. 5) for opera and theatre	25,564,594	n/a
<b>Concept Only Projects Total</b>	<b>33,461,512</b>	

## PROJECTS WITH AN IMPACT ON URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Capital costs (in euros)	Costs for renovation of other city infrastructure (refurbishment of squares, parks, streets, development of public spaces, etc.)	Year of completion
Reconstruction and renovation of the pedestrian area from the Cathedral square to the Sea Garden's main entrance "Urban Texture: Rings and Paths"	4,868,641	2015
Project for Integrated City Transport and Sustainable Mobility	58,511,443	2015
<b>Confirmed Projects Total</b>	<b>63,380,085</b>	
Urban Environment – Zone of social impact (Mladost, Vladislav Varnenchik Neighbourhoods)	12,028,039	2018
Urban Environment – Zone of high public significance (Asparuhovo, Primorski, Odessos Neighbourhoods)	43,593,212	2017-2020
Urban Environment – Zone of potential economic development	3,873,956	2022
<b>Planned Projects Total</b>	<b>59,495,208</b>	
Urban Environment – Zone of social impact (Mladost, Vladislav Varnenchik Neighbourhoods)	1,614,865	n/a
Urban Environment – Zone of high public significance (Asparuhovo, Primorski, Odessos Neighbourhoods)	43,593,212	n/a
Project for Integrated City Transport and Sustainable Mobility – optimisation of the street network	167,200,679	n/a
<b>Concept Only Projects Total</b>	<b>212,408,756</b>	

## PROJECTS RELATED TO TRANSPORT AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Capital costs (in euros)	Infrastructure (investments in underground lines, railroads, ports, roads, etc.)	Year of completion
Terminal 2 of Varna International Airport – 20 000 m <sup>2</sup> and capacity of 1.8 million passengers/year.	38,346,891	2013
<b>Confirmed Projects Total</b>	<b>38,346,891</b>	
Building of new Bus Station – South	6,734,328	2020
<b>Planned Projects Total</b>	<b>6,734,328</b>	
Relocation of Varna-East Cargo Port to Varna lake, construction of a marina and refurbishment of the Passenger Port Terminal	n/a	n/a
<b>Concept Only Projects Total</b>	<b>n/a</b>	

## VARNA 2019 PORT OF INSPIRATION WORKING TEAM

### TEAM LEADER

Dessyslava Georgieva (Head of Culture Department, Varna Municipality)

### RESEARCH GROUP

Petra Dimitrova (Cultural manager, Graffit Gallery)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesselina Dimitrova (Lecturer in International Business, University of Economics)

Stanislava Genkova (Expert in Cultural Programmes and Projects, Varna Municipality)

Svetlozara Hristova (Specialist in Cultural Studies, freelance)

Encho Chakarov (Journalist, freelance)

### ARTISTIC ADVISOR

Mladen Alexiev

### PUBLICATION

Text: Petra Dimitrova, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesselina Dimitrova, Stanislava Genkova,  
Dessyslava Georgieva, Svetlozara Hristova, Encho Chakarov, Mladen Alexiev

Edit: Petra Dimitrova, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesselina Dimitrova, Svetlozara Hristova, Mladen Alexiev

English translation: Anna Vladeva

Editing and proofreading of the English version: Philip Cruttwell

Layout design: CH Ltd.

Photography: Rossen Donev, Teodor Baev, Deyan Stoev, Alexander Ivanov, Emil Penchev,  
Veronika Popova, WPHOTO

We would like to thank all contributors, who inspired the city's candidature for European Capital of Culture 2019 and gave their valuable comments and suggestions!

Varna Municipality  
43, Osmi Primorski Polk str.  
9000 Varna, Bulgaria  
www.varna2019.bg

© Port of Inspiration / Varna, October 2013 / ISBN 978-954-92464-4-5

This book is printed on re-cycled paper



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capital  
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2019



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