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## **CULTURAL PLANNING IN TWO CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

### **Abstract:**

According to the Committee on culture of the world association of United Cities and local Governments and its document "Agenda 21 for culture" (2004), culture should be considered as one of the four pillars of sustainable development on an equal footing with the others. This paper will focus on the process of developing cultural planning process in two small and medium sized towns (Louny and Děčín) situated in the northwest part of the Czech Republic. We conceive a cultural planning as an integrated planning process based on thorough understanding of local cultural resources and effective use of the cultural potential of the area. The benefits of the culture for the individual and the community place identification are widely recognized. In two mentioned towns the authors carried out an action research characterized by a tight connection between the researchers and the local self-governement and other local participants, which strives to find a common solution how to encourage the development of culture and use its potential for strengthening of local communities and tourism. The aim of the partnership was to analyse and discuss the role of culture and mutual cooperation among actors from different sectors in two towns, identify the local cultural resources, to raise engagement and participation of residents in planning procedures, and - in consequence - to contribute to the change of perception of planning techniques.

Throughout the process we emphasize the importance of partnership with (among) local actors and community, which enables the stakeholders to understand better the needs of diverse groups and can make an effective and sustainable planning of culture in the city. The opportunity to participate directly on the planning process, increase responsibility of local actors for the implementation of the plan, as well as increase their identification with the town and region.

### **Keywords:**

culture, planning, sustainable development, community, partnership