



CoP Public Infrastructure and Social Services

Example of Good Practice

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Cultural infrastructures and services in Valencia province

Living Lab Valencia, Spain

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1. Introduction

Cultural infrastructure and networking can be used to create and strengthen rural-urban synergies. Culture represents a social service able to guarantee social interactions between neighbours and friends and even as support to advertise and disseminate sides, business hours (such as toilets and transport), sports, and cultural events programmes, etc. (Escribano et al., 2015).

The SARC is the Assistance and Cultural Resources Service of the provincial Council of Valencia (Provincial Government or *Diputación*, NUTS 3). The main task is to consolidate projects, festival and competitions to the municipalities of the province of Valencia in cultural matters, having a more active impact on villages with fewer inhabitants or less economic resources, acting as a model of intervention and territorial redistribution of culture.

This cultural service gains relevance as a new way of organising municipal and cultural life as well as accessing public services. Moreover, the service means a new form of organization, collaboration and management of the territory since different administrative structures are involved. Therefore, it can provide new ideas for other living labs.

2. Project Intention / Background information

The region of Valencia (and its three provinces, Valencia, Castellón and Alicante) has a cultural tradition from the smallest rural areas to the most populated ones. The different administrative units involved in the Cultural area's grants of the provincial government of Valencia (*Diputación*) to the local councils are:

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- Cultural Promotion Administrative Services;
- The Assistance and Cultural Resources Service (SARC);
- Valencian Ethnology Museum (MuVAET);
- The Museum of Prehistory;
- The Language Normalisation Unit.

SARC is an initiative of the Department of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Resources in the Provincial Government of Valencia (*Diputaci3n*) launched in May of 1989. Since then, this project is very consolidated in the municipalities becoming fundamental to the local culture. It arises as a strategic move to the decentralization and the balanced access of population to the cultural services. Year after year, the administration awards grants that allow to enhance the cultural heritage and provide the cultural resources to the municipalities of the province.

3. Main Description

The annual subsidy goes to seven specific sub-sectors aimed at the municipalities in accordance to the population data.

- P1 – SARC to the villages
- P2 – Audiovisual
- P3 – Festivals / Classical music programs
- P4 – Literary awards and competitions
- P5 – Inter-municipal projects
- P6 – “Find our music”
- P7 – Language normalisation plan

Mostly of them are aimed at the most populated municipalities. However, there are four programs with special focus on the most depopulated areas promoting, in many cases, cooperation with urban ones.

- SARC “to the villages” is the main referral program offered by the SARC to all councils, mainly oriented for stable municipal cultural programming. It incorporates the aid to the popular celebrations for the municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants. It is structured into several sections, depending on the population of each municipality. In 2019, it resulted to be effective on 263 municipalities (see figure 1).
- The Audiovisual program consists of a selection of Valencian audiovisual productions, published in the SARC Catalog 2019, that are available to the people who want to project them. The screenings are accompanied by a post-broadcast talk show, with representatives or members of each audiovisual production team. Apart from documentaries, animation productions are also included. It is intended for municipalities with less than 100,000 inhabitants. In the last year, it was assigned to 85 municipalities with a total number of 129 audiovisual’s projections.

- Inter-municipal cultural projects is a cooperative system of cultural management between the municipalities with less than 100,000 inhabitants. This has achieved in a short time a great efficiency and a territorial projection as well as resource streamlining. Nowadays, there are more than 15 joint projects and more than 150 municipalities working together.
- The language normalisation plan is dedicated to the implementation of a set of training and technical actions aimed at improving the knowledge and use of Valencian language in the municipality, which is aimed at the public staff of the city council and its social groups. It is aimed at the municipalities with a population between 4,000 and 10,000 inhabitants. It was only destined for 5 municipalities in the last year.

The general objectives of these grants are:

- To satisfy the cultural needs and social welfare of the municipalities of the province of Valencia.
- To expand the supply of services to respond to the demand of these municipalities.
- To promote Valencian creativity and culture, as well as its consumption.
- To territorially redistribute cultural activity supporting consumption in those municipalities with less budget and management capacity.
- To advice and train in cultural matters.
- To promote the creation and cultural artistic production.
- To optimize economic resources that allow multiplying cultural initiatives.
- To support the strengthening of cultural industries in the province of Valencia.

This could not be possible without the cross-sectoral relation at provincial level between the Cultural Promotion Administrative Services, the Assistance and Cultural Resources Service (SARC), Valencian Ethnology Museum (MuVAET), the Museum of Prehistory as well as the Language Normalisation Unit. It is involving to a wide range of stakeholders such as the mayor, social groups and civil society in order to manage the territory in cultural matters.

The cultural programmes mentioned above are promoting the effective cooperation between rural and urban areas. Mainly the inter-municipal cultural projects stand out the capacity of local municipalities to enhance mutually beneficial relations. It seeks to optimize efforts in cultural management, allowing and facilitating collaboration between municipalities and taking advantage of the synergies that are generated.

Figure 1 is showing the distribution of subsidies to the different municipalities within the programme dedicated to the villages. These subsidies are subject to the number of inhabitants of the municipalities which could imply a disadvantage between the rural and urban areas. The trend indicates a greater budgetary weight in the most populated ones. Despite this, for the most vulnerable municipalities (e.g. Puebla de San Miguel with 62 inhabitants) it could mean the revitalisation of local culture through a grant of 2,044.50 € in 2019 for local celebrations and cultural programmes (see figure 2).

Further information to the project can be found on the website: <https://www.sarc.es/es>

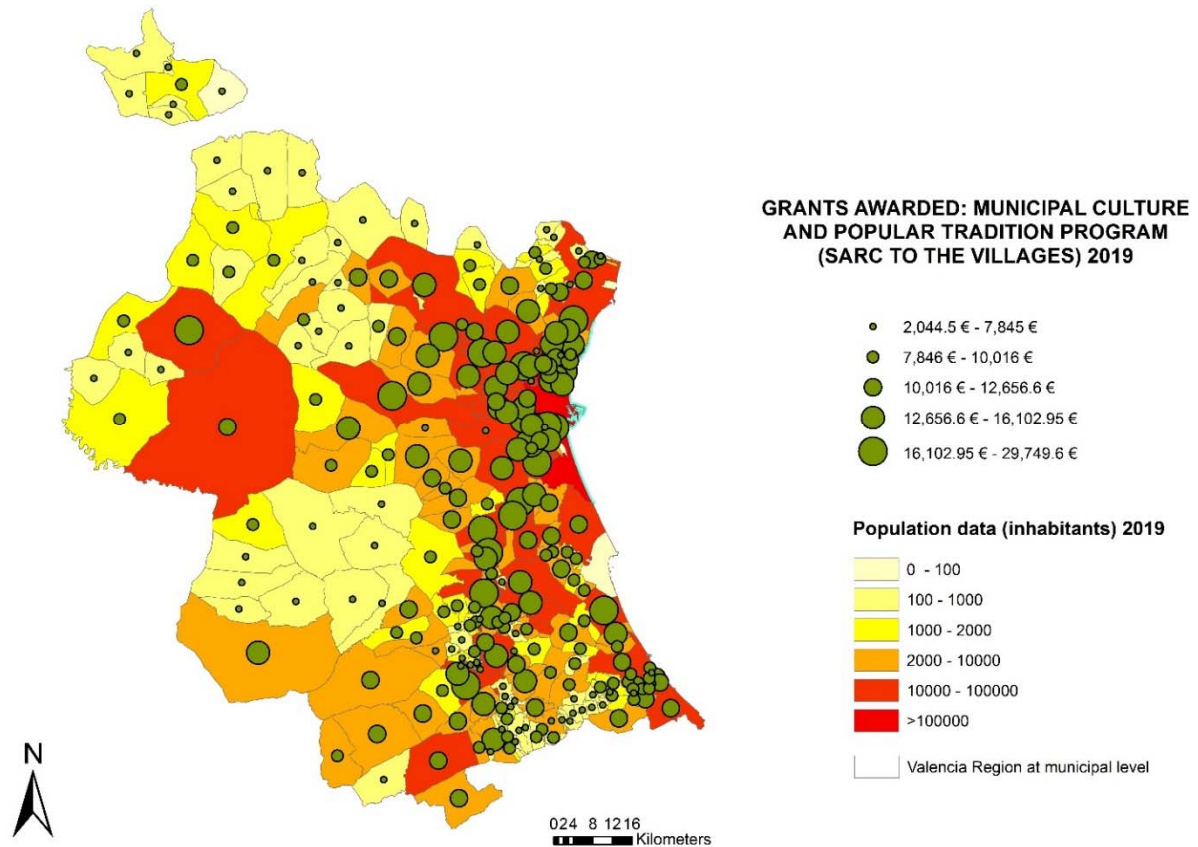


Figure 1. The data of the awarded grants in accordance to the number of inhabitants in 2019 at municipality level (Valencia Province, NUTS 3).



Figure 2. Pictures taken from the promotional video SARC (2019) on the villages.

4. References

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