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Reflections on the arts funding in Flanders

Does it contribute to the sustainable development of careers, organizations and the arts field, and how?

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Introduction

Milestones in the development of policy instruments

1976-2006

2006-1016

2016-2019

Discussion

Intentions of new policy instruments

Evaluation

Case: visual arts

Caring for the arts eco-system

Introduction

Flanders: northern part of Belgium, a federal state.

Regional autonomy in the 1970ies, with education and culture

New generation artists in the 1980ies emerged:

- international careers**
- new infrastructure for the production and presentation of arts**
- asking for change of arts funding**

Policy makers were open for dialogue.

They could start from scratch.



Rosas, Fase. Four
Movements to the Music of Steve Reich
1982

1976-2006

Policy instruments

Theatre Decree	1976-1993
Performing arts Decree	1993-2006
Music Decree	1999
visual arts regulation	1999

funds

Flanders Literature fund	2000
Flanders Audiovisual Fund	2002

Decrees and funds established in close dialogue with sector
Structure of policy instruments based on developments in field

DISCUSSION

- Equal** treatment: budget, assessment, subsidy forms
- How to deal with **multidisciplinary**, transdisciplinary
- Tailor made** for each art discipline *versus* **separations**, competition, corporatism
- Making the **arts** stronger
- Are policy instruments open for **future innovation**?
 - Do policy instruments run behind reality?
 - Are policy instruments adapted to new developments?

Minister of Culture engages advisors which were innovators in the arts during the 90ies

DISCUSSION

Theatre Decree

Performing arts Decree

Music Decree

visual arts regulation

one decree?

Funds

Flanders Literature fund

Flanders Audiovisual Fund

stay autonomous

2006: First Art decree (parliament act)

Structure

Art disciplines

- Performing arts
- Visual arts
- Music
- Architecture
- Design

multidisciplinary: forms and themes

- arts centers for production presentation
- festivals
- organizations for art education
- organizations socio-artistic work
- magazines, publications
- workspaces (R&D)

**Subsidy for organizations, projects, subsidies for artists
(scholarships, projects), international projects**

Structural funding: 2 or 4 years and project funding (one year)

Assessment

- fixed committees of assessors / art discipline and form-theme
- assessment artistic plan and business plan
- focus on quality, no quantitative criteria
- ranking
- priorities of Minister
- integrated advise towards Minister by Advisory Board of the Arts (12 members), committees work with predefined budget envelopes based on historical needs

Budget: cuts in 2010

EVALUATION

Intention: equal for all

- not equal: unable to break historical inequalities**
- committees advocate for their sector (corporatism)**
- solution for multidisciplinary versus separations between forms/themes and art disciplines**
- organizational forms are closed boxes**
- no solution for organizations working with different art disciplines**
- 2 year structural funding does not make sense**

2016: New art decree (second version)

Equal for all, open and future oriented

More for less.

Structure

Art Disciplines

Performing arts, visual arts, music, architecture, design,
transdisciplinary (detailed)

Functions (NO organizational forms, no themes)

- Development
- Production
- Presentation
- Reflection
- Participation (co-creation)

Mix is possible, make your DNA explicit

Architecture and design

- architecture
- design

(Audio)visual arts

- Audiovisual arts
- Visual arts
- Sound art
- experimental media art
- other

Transdisciplinair

Performing arts

- dance
- theatre
- musictheatre
- performance
- other

Music

- musictheatre
- classical music
- pop/rock
- jazz
- folk
- World
- other

Type of subsidy

- Structural funding (5 year for non-profit organizations)
- Project subsidy (1, 2 or 3 years, for artists, curators, organizations)
- Scholarship (1, 2 or 3 years, only for artists)

Other subsidy types, not based on functions

- loans, partnerships, co-financing international projects
- presentation abroad, focus on Flanders, artists residencies
- art acquisition

Assessment

- pool of over 200 experts, expertise in art disciplines and functions
- based on open call
- ad hoc commissions: match between dossier and experts
- presidents are only facilitators
- artistic and business criteria for each function, quality, questions and limited amount of characters (homogeneous, comparable)
- artistic and business assessment
- no predefined budget envelopes, integrated advise by Ministry
- decision by Minister

Budget: recovery



EVALUATION

- unequal**: big becomes bigger
- lack of **overview** eco-system: holes, balance
- quality of **reviewers**
- differences between committees
- power** of the admin
- inflow** versus 'less for more' (from 270 to 220)
- focus on structural funding versus **projects and artists**

Policy instruments

Theatre Decree 1976-1993

Performing arts Decree 1993-2006

Music Decree 1999

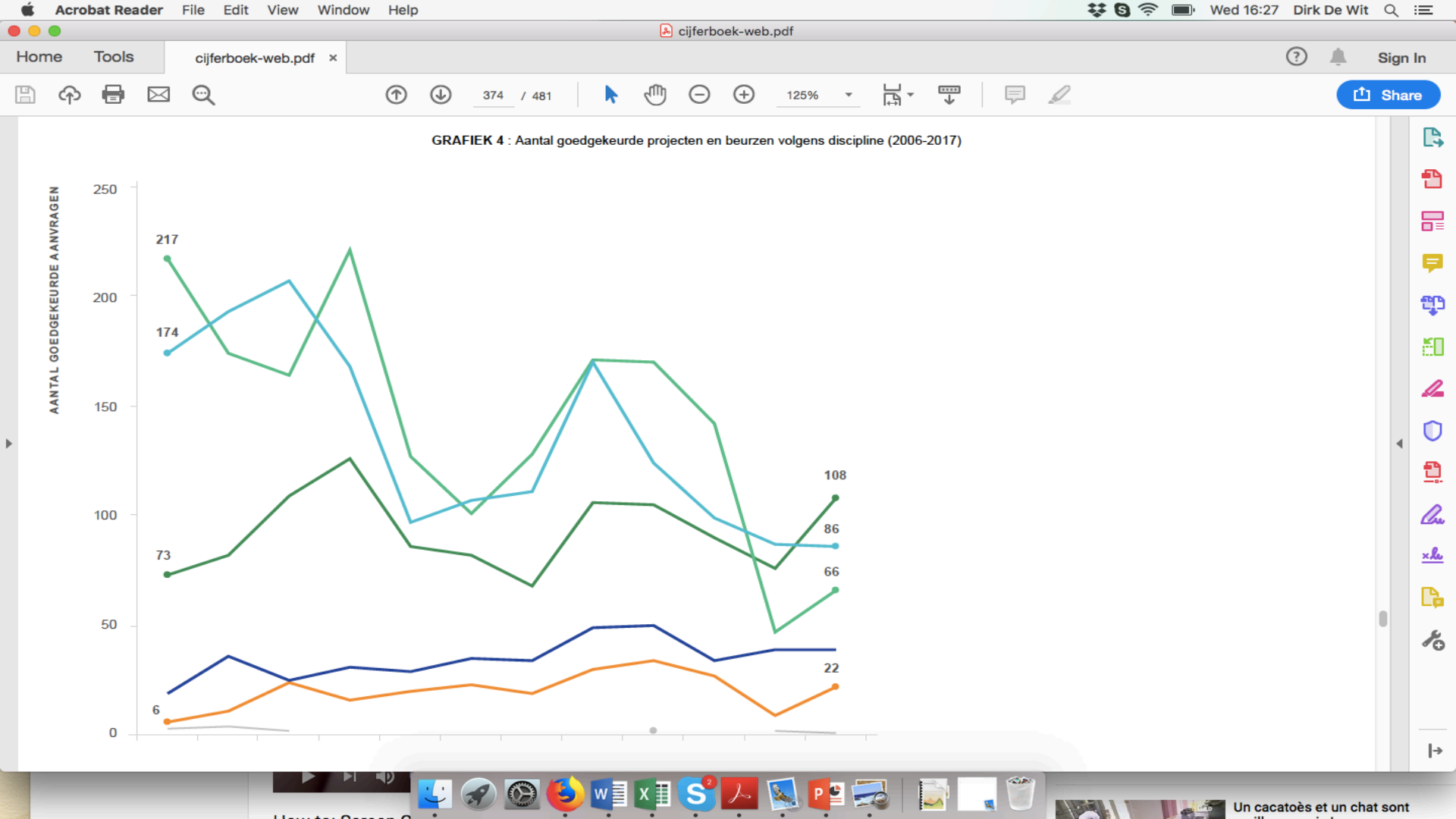
visual arts regulation 1999

Art Decree

First 2006

New (second) 2016

Visual art lagging behind in development



2019: New art decree, small changes

- mix: fix reviewers and rotating reviewers
- less application dates for projects
- smaller committees for 'scholarships' (3)
- more own revenue

CONCLUSIONS

EVALUATION

- dialogue** between politicians, ministry and sector
- mutual win win, follow the actor
- trust** in sector (based on international recognition)
- trust empowers sector
- facilitating** versus restrictions and control
- focus on **quality**
- peer** review, experts from sector
- right people on the right place

- Innovation means also **inflow** of new players
- inflow pushed into precarity
- effect of **budget cuts** in 2011 (economical crisis)

FINAL REMARKS

Power:

-government – arts sector

power:

-between art disciplines

-institutions versus artists and art workers (project spaces, inflow)

Fair practice

Care for balances in the eco-system

Open dialogue, also within the sector



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