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**ISTRIA**

# REGION OF CULTURE

## INTRODUCTION

The Istrian cultural scene has always been dynamic, vibrant and rich in tangible and intangible assets which left their mark on the cultural heritage beyond the borders of the little peninsula. It is therefore a very difficult and unrewarding task to focus solely on the last twenty years framed within a regional political context without making it look like a promotional brochure. Hence, this text is aimed at recording events and efforts of a particular period and evaluating the relationship with the field of culture and its stakeholders.

With its approximately two hundred thousand inhabitants (208,440), the size of our entire county corresponds to a medium-sized city, so that networking and knowledge of today's development of electronic media have helped build a firmer footing among cultural stakeholders, while the openness of the County and the Department of Culture has demolished the untouchability wall and opened up room for communication.

There has been a strong relationship between artists and arts and politics since Roman times. In fact, artists who were most closely attached to the political elite usually acted as their spokespersons, those who create, change and act consciously.

Well aware of this fact, the President of Istria County has actively participated in the creation of cultural environment all these years. Known by his “visions”, the President more or less successfully kept provoking and encouraging the development of the cultural scene. Establishing festivals, bringing world renowned artists, choosing not to attend some openings while undressing at others, he defied and courageously challenged the art scene, unlike any other area, to make its contribution and wake up. The Istrian artists responded.

Over the past twenty years, we rebelled, dismissed theatre managers, established institutions, museums, a plethora of festivals, held our convention, published encyclopaedias, Istrapedia, printed books, established various associations, visited fairs and created our own fair, welcomed numerous world renowned persons, or else banned the performance of others.

We wrote manifestos, declarations, strategies, and we reacted to them all. We take pride in our tangible and intangible UNESCO-listed heritage, our renovated monuments, our new university. We rejoiced in each effort to preserve our local values and in each breath of the world and contemporary events. In any case – it was dynamic.

The Department for Culture of Istria County has been relentless in contributing and actively participating in the realisation of important issues in its domain. In this respect, we intend to provide a list of important moments that marked all these years.

Although it is impossible to list all those who participated and made their contribution, all manifestations listed herein, as well as many other events were made possible thanks to people who can well be listed.

They are the ones who constitute the greatest asset of Istria County.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Istria County was constituted in accordance with the Territories of Counties, Cities and Municipalities Act of 16 April 1993. Since 24 January 1994, the county organisation has included the Department for Culture and Education. The Department was temporarily headquartered in Labin at Prilaz Kršin 2 using the kindergarten premises until 1996 when it moved to Labin, G. Martinuzzi 2. Its first head was Gracijano Kiršić, appointed as a member of the County Government on 31 January 1994 in accordance with the then organisational scheme. Department employees were only hired in April 1995, so that the first five years the head was assisted by Ester Duić, Eda Griparić and Klaudija Peršić. Department activities were much more extensive and they covered education, sports, culture and technical culture.

As early as 1995, Istria County established the International Cultural Centre in collaboration with the Municipality of Grožnjan in order to carry out, uphold and encourage cultural and artistic activities and programmes in the Grožnjan area and throughout the region.

After the death of its head Gracijano Kiršić in April 1998, the office of head remained vacant, and the new head Mladen Dušman was appointed in August the same year. Due to a wide range of activities in the cultural sector, the post of assistant head of Department for Culture was introduced and the duty was assumed in October 1998 by Vladimir Torbica.

To enhance its transparency and interaction, the Department was the first in Croatia to establish the Cultural Council and committees which proposed the allocation of funds back in 1998.

In December 2002, following the proposal of the Department, the Assembly of Istria County passed the decision on establishing the Istrian Cultural Agency (IKA – Istarska kulturna agencija). The same assembly saw the adoption of the agreement establishing the Foundation for the Preservation and Renovation of Sacral Monuments of Istria *Histria Sacra*.

Catering to demanding and active cultural life in Istria, numerous actions and processes have been initiated encompassing a large number of participants. Consequently, practical reasons and the ensuing necessity led to the division of the Department at the beginning of 2009 and to the establishment of an independent Administrative Department for Culture within the structural frame of Istria County with Vladimir Torbica as its head.

Activities of the Department for Culture have been set forth and described in its founding act stating: "...it performs works in the self government domain of cultural activities, manages institutions founded by Istria County, monitors the realisation of public needs in the cultural sector, supports amateur institutions and associations, theatres, open universities, associations, national cultural institutions, galleries and subjects, monitors and ensures uniform cultural development of all areas, supports protection and preservation of monuments, building and construction and intangible cultural heritage of Istria, assists in the organisation of cultural events, supports the publishing industry and artistic creation."

The Department for Culture passes budget-related decisions and decisions related to organisational change at sessions of the

Assembly of Istria County in accordance with the law and the County Statute. All this time, the Social Activities Committee has been an integral part of Istria County. The Committee comprises the President and five assembly councillors who analyse and express their opinions and deliver remarks about all acts coming from the Department for Culture discussed at sessions of the County Assembly.

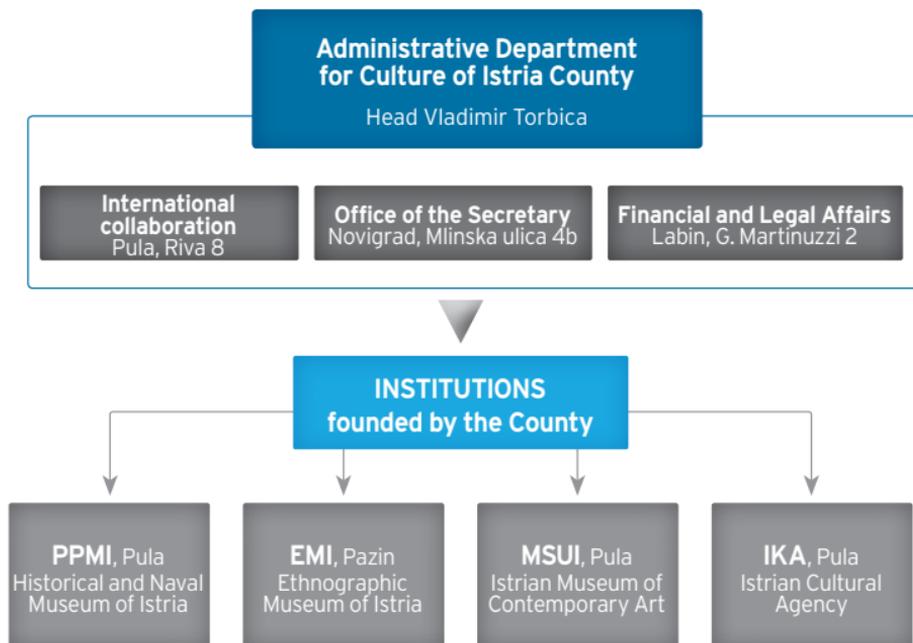
Considering that Deputy County Presidents are usually in charge of social activities, we have to remember the initial support for culture given by Deputy County President Loredana Bogliun Debeljuh, also engaged in the field as a cultural worker. The cultural sector was later also selflessly supported by Lucija Debeljuh as a member of County Government and numerous other entities she chaired.

The Department thus assumed responsibility for the care of the following cultural institutions founded by the County: Ethnographic Museum of Istria (EMI – Etnografski muzej Istre – Museo etnografico dell'Istria) in Pazin with 13 employees, Historical and Naval Museum of Istria (PPMI – Povijesni i pomorski muzej Istre – Museo storico e navale dell'Istria) in Pula with 11 employees and Istrian Museum of Contemporary Art (MSUI-Muzej suvremene umjetnosti Istre – Museo d'arte contemporanea dell'Istria) with two employees. Since 2006, the Department has increasingly been fostering international collaboration and it hired an employee, while EU funding made it possible to employ two more persons. Their hard work and great effort yielded significant results in this particular area. The year 2010 saw the opening of the office in Novigrad, while activities of the Istrian Cultural Agency were launched in 2012 with the appointment of its head.

The Department currently has three locations, namely in Labin, G. Martinuzzi 2 – financial and legal affairs (Eda Griparić and

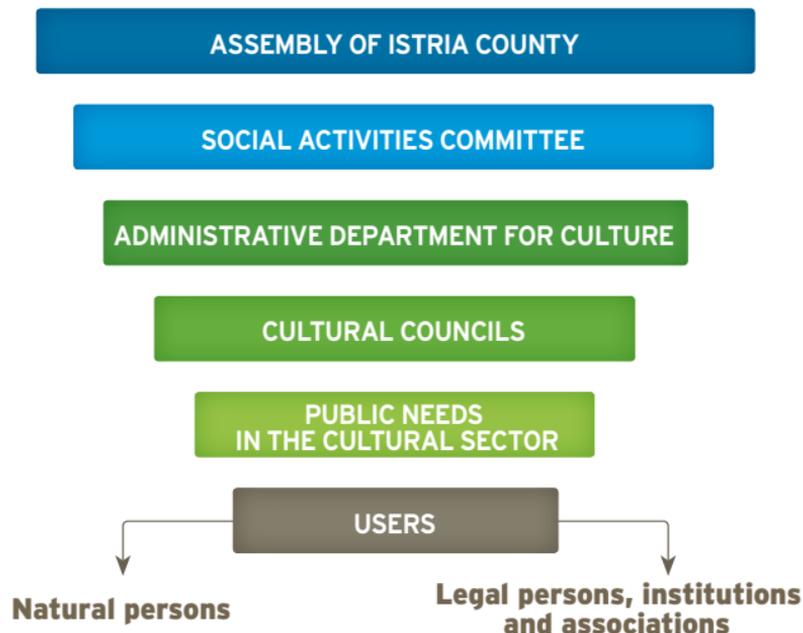
Ester Duić), in Pula, Riva 8 – international collaboration activities (Sandra Ilić and Iva Šegota), and the Novigrad office at Mlinska ulica – Via del Mulino 4b with the office of the secretary and the writing office (Department head Vladimir Torbica and secretary Rosemary Radešić Fachin).

The schematic diagram of the Administrative Department for Culture of Istria County currently looks as follows:



## COLLABORATION AND WORK

Relationship, collaboration and decision-making process are best shown schematically.



Basic legal acts regulating the work of the Administrative Department for Culture are: Institutions Act, Management of Public Institutions in Culture Act, Financing Public Needs in the Cultural Sector Act, Cultural Councils Act, Archival Holdings and Archives Act, Libraries Act, Museums Act, Theatres Act, Audiovisual Activities Act, Rights of Independent Artists and Encouraging Cultural and Artistic Creation Act, Protection and Preservation of Cultural Assets Act, Media Act, Electronic Media Act, Copyright and Similar Rights Act, Foundations Act, Public Procurement

Act, Statute of Istria County and numerous rulebooks and other sub-Acts.

The Department activities have been very dynamic from the very beginning. They have been following cultural trends and economic opportunities so that in 2010 the County transferred its founder's rights from the International Cultural Centre to the Municipality of Grožnjan. The Istrian Cultural Agency launched its activities as an institution aimed at promoting the Istrian cultural products, finding new financing possibilities and increasing culture funds.

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## **CULTURAL POLICY**

Let us return to the past again and state that the Istrian cultural scene has always been very active and vibrant and that it immediately reacted to the first allocations of funds and to the funding of big festival projects. In fact, the Cultural Advisory Board in Istria County and its committee were established back in 1998 and the rulebook regulating their work was adopted soon after, in 1999. The work of the Literature and Publishing Committee, the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and Museology of Istria, the Visual Arts Committee and the Music Culture Committee focused on the cultural sector. Each committee had five members, and a representative of each committee constituted the Advisory Board. Presidents and committee members were elected by renowned cultural workers in the County Government, noting that each committee had one member of the Italian national community appointed on the proposal of the Italian Union. Members were elected to a two-year term.

These bodies had the task of giving their expert opinion about elaboration of proposal of the annual programme of public

needs in the cultural sector for Istria County. They had to propose, initiate and recommend programmes for particular fields of cultural production, monitor and evaluate particular areas and offer their opinion about defining long-term cultural policy for Istria County.

We have to remember that the above process was preceded by transitional changes related to Croatia becoming an independent country and to the ensuing war when the issue of culture in Croatia was marginalised and reduced to encompassing and systematising the existing state. This notwithstanding, it was a very dynamic period in terms of works and activities of cultural workers. Among numerous other activities, they created the document "Strategy of cultural development. Croatia in the 21st century", there was the well-known "Notebook" of Vjeran Zuppa and the propaganda action entitled "White square of culture", all of which raise questions on the role of culture, the manner of financing and freedoms. It was a time when cultural workers stood up against the authors of the strategy in public discussions. Their opinions on the matter differed considerably. It might have been the first time we saw independence and individuality of cultural opinion and thinking that was independent from political power.

We must not forget that during this period (1993–1998) Istria underwent a definition of its identity marked by the awakening dialectal Chakavian speech. In this regard, let us remember Alen Vitasović, Livio Morosin, Edi Maružin and Gustafi, Dario Marušić and Tamara Obrovac, whose art and media presence out of Istria promoted the Istrian cultural scene, spurred numerous cultural events and inspired other artists. Rooted in the rich cultural and music scene of Istria in the 1980s, they generated the ensuing changes.

Moreover, there were new festivals, financial indicators became available, and cultural workers were insufficiently involved. It caused general discontent, voiced by Istrian cultural workers in a public protest in Pula in 2000. Protesting against funds allocated to culture, they invited representatives of all cultural institutions to display black flags on their buildings and participate in the cultural and artistic (re)action entitled "Black flag for Istrian culture". They used the occasion to promote their manifesto.

This is the way things were back in the year 2000.

## **FOR NEW, BETTER AND DIFFERENT CULTURAL POLICY IN ISTRIA!**

A lack of planned, systematic and responsible cultural policy in Istria County is best seen in the ignorant relationship of its political bodies to contemporary culture in Istria, which results in a completely inadequate allocation of budget funds for the needs of cultural production.

Istrian artists, cultural workers and associations maintain that it is their right and obligation to actively participate in the creation and positioning of regional cultural policy in conformity with European principles and standards of contemporary civilised society. Therefore, they have established Citizens' Initiative X (informal group of four cultural associations, namely Croatian Association of Artists of Istria, Labin Art Express, Istrian branch of Croatian Writers' Association, Istrian Architects' Association DAI – SAI).

Citizens' Initiative X is aimed at planning cultural activities and artistic creation in Istria, because culture is a trademark of both our county and Croatia. For this reason, we clearly and reasonably express our opinions in Manifesto 2000.

# MANIFESTO 2000

## **General objectives of cultural policy:**

- 1.** creating basic material and social conditions for cultural and artistic production
- 2.** creating a recognisable identity of Istria as a Croatian "region of culture" of the European cultural system
- 3.** primarily encouraging artists and cultural workers living and working in Istria, for they are creators and makers of autochthonous contemporary heritage values
- 4.** demarginalization of culture in relation to other social activities: economy, sports, science, education, tourism...
- 5.** encouraging and improving interregional, cross-border and international cultural collaboration
- 6.** parallel and interactive development of culture and tourism, which contributes to development and profiling of cultural tourism through creating and integrating contemporary and attractive cultural programmes into tourism marketing
- 7.** liberating cultural and artistic creation from all political influences and interests for the purpose of quality artistic creation, without giving in to non-quality populist or entertainment (showbiz) programmes

## **Specific objectives of cultural policy:**

- 1.** reestablishment of the Cultural Advisory Board as the most competent body that analyses the existing situation and possibilities of cultural development of the region, plans and proposes long-term and short-term programmes and resource allocation

The Cultural Advisory Board consists of representatives of professional associations and institutions which appoint one member of each of the following:

- » County cultural institution
- » independent association and cultural institution
- » Croatian Association of Artists of Istria – artistic and gallery activity
- » the Istrian branch of the Croatian Writers' Association – publishing
- » Istrian Architects' Association – construction
- » video and film, performing arts (music, theatre, performances...)
- » monuments and protection of cultural heritage
- » international cultural collaboration and exchange
- » representative of the Istria Tourist Board

- 2.** The Administrative Department for Culture of Istria County works in compliance with decisions of advisors, monitors the implementation of programmes, looks for additional sources of funding. It is in charge of public relations and media relations, cultural promotion and marketing
- 3.** decisions are made democratically and jointly by the Cultural Advisory Board and the Administrative Department for Culture of Istria County
- 4.** publishing annual and monthly calendars of events to avoid amassing and overlapping of events

**5. principles of legal regulations are:**

- » equality for all users of budget funds
- » minimum budget funds per programme item is HRK 15,000
- » for each budget item, the user of funds and the Administrative Department stipulate the Terms of Use Agreement, with the user's obligation to submit a written report and documentation about the realised project once the project has been completed
- » securing development of culture in the County is possible with a 10% increase of the annual rate of allocations
- » discretion of the County does not exceed 10% of total budget funds allocated to cultural programmes and projects as a short-term and temporary solution, until the end of the year 2000.

The Manifesto shall be sent to the entire cultural public through media and as a print edition. We shall propose to the Istria County Assembly to adopt the Manifesto as a key document for future systematic, serious and responsible cultural policy benefitting all concerned.

**Citizens' Initiative X:**

Croatian Association of Artists of Istria, Pula  
the Istrian branch of the Croatian Writers' Association, Pula  
Istrian Architects' Association, Pula  
Labin Art Express

Pula – Labin, 10 May 2000

Become a participant of the cultural and artistic (re)action to the adopted Programme of public needs in the cultural sector of the Administrative Department for Education and Culture of Istria County (20 March 2000) like the initiators of the protest *Labin Art Express*, *Croatian Association of Artists of Istria*, *the Istrian branch of the Croatian Writers' Association* and *the Istrian Architects' Association*.

The protest, at the same time an act of artistic creation, is extremely simple. On 3 April 2000 (Monday), exactly at noon, you need to display a black flag on a visible spot of the building of your institution. If you choose to do so, you shall also become a participant of the protest against shameful cultural policies of Istria County.

Silence is immoral and undemocratic.

The years that followed were marked by improved collaboration and inclusion of cultural workers, great efforts of the Department for Culture and hard work of its head and his collaborators.

Although Istria already had its Cultural Advisory Board and committees since 1998, Cultural Councils for Istria County were introduced in 2005 in compliance with the decision of the Ministry of Culture. Five councils covered the following areas: music and performances, literature and publishing, protection of cultural heritage and museology, visual arts and new media culture. The councils still have five members, but they are now chosen through a public contest, to a four-year term, and the Board is chaired by the head.

Assessment of work of the above bodies and site activities indicated the need of defining the cultural strategy of Istria. Consequently, the First Convention on Culture was held on Brijuni in 2007 gathering over 170 cultural workers and around thirty representatives of the media. The work of Cultural Councils was presented in the plenary session by each of their presidents. The significance of the First Convention on Culture lies in creating and adopting the Declaration on Culture.

# The Declaration of Istrian Artists

Istrian artists, cultural workers and representatives of regional and local government gathered at the First Istrian Convention on Culture organised on Brijuni from 23-24 March 2007, aware of present-day challenges in Istria; aspiring for Istria to become a European cultural region and assuming that Istrian culture is still searching for its more complete definition, hereby make the following

## **DECLARATION**

whereby they express their joint readiness to work, based on mutual respect, on setting priorities, recognising and evaluating assets created through synergy between the traditional and the contemporary, intangible and tangible heritage, human and natural resources, all of which will make Istrian culture the main engine of development of Istria.

## **DECLARATION**

whereby they recognise multiculturalism as the autochthonous value decisive for definition of Istrian identity which they wish to preserve, foster and develop through creation and education.

## **DECLARATION**

whereby they point out that the Istrian identity is created by artists and cultural workers alike, respecting traditional and urban parts of the Istrian cultural entity.

## **DECLARATION**

firmly stating that the culture of Istria should be founded primarily on excellence and its own value, which will contribute to strengthening and recognition of the Istrian cultural product.

Wishing for Istria to become a European Region of Culture, Istrian artists, cultural workers and representatives of regional and local government claim that it is necessary that Istria County should propose the Istrian Cultural Strategy by the Second Convention of Culture in 2009 in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and Istrian cities and municipalities.

The Declaration served as the foundation for the draft of the Istrian Cultural Strategy. The Second Convention on Culture in Istria was held in Poreč in March of 2009. After months-long work of 18 work teams under the leadership of project coordinator Davor Mišković, the Istrian Cultural Strategy was presented to the public.

Work teams proposed changes and amendments to the draft of the Istrian Cultural Strategy posted on the Istria County official website, which made it possible for all interested parties to make their suggestions, contribute and participate in its creation. They expressed their support for institutional and extra-institutional artistic production, performed the valorisation of culture, networking and institutionalisation. Proposals and amendments made at the end of the Second Convention of Culture in Poreč led to the adoption of the Istrian Cultural Strategy also referred to as ICS.

A bilingual brochure was published whose text contained a synthesised and graphical representation of the Istrian Cultural Strategy and its draft along with a list of all members of work teams and persons who participated in the creation of materials. Design, logotype and form of the booklet whose 500 copies were distributed to all participants secured its recognisability and became the foundation for all later questions and guidelines for the Istrian cultural soil.

The text of the Istrian Cultural Strategy as a binding document was adopted in the session of the Assembly of Istria County. Its unabridged three-language version (Croatian, Italian and English) was posted on the Istria Country website.

Two years later, the Third Convention on Culture of Istria County was held in Pula in April 2011. The Convention focused on medium-term evaluation of the Istrian Cultural Strategy. The discussion centred around reports of work teams participants in the creation of the Istrian Cultural Strategy and members of cultural councils of Istria County. Presidents of work teams discussed the implementation of the Istrian Cultural Strategy over the previous two years. Active thematic discussions led to conclusions aimed at best possible Strategy implementation. The convention lasted one day. It gathered around

200 cultural workers and produced printed materials and important observations.

## **CULTURAL PRODUCT**

Over the past two decades, drawing on its rich cultural heritage, Istria has simply kept confirming its cultural product to be rich in permeating expressions of multiculturalism and reactions as a dynamic scene with numerous events.

Istria County currently has 11 museums, 6 open universities, 9 libraries, over 15 galleries and numerous active and continuously working cultural associations.

It is almost impossible to list a myriad of lectures, conventions, festivals, exhibitions, theatre performances, concerts, guest performances, colonies, literary events, printed books, proceedings and collections of poems or other artistic works and performances that marked the past twenty years. Regardless of whether initiated by private actions of individuals and institutions or supported by funds of local government, economy, the Ministry or the County, these events have been exceptionally important for the cultural life of Istria.

While taking into account and emphasising more important events, we should not forget the already existing traditional events and institutions in the region which have been going on much longer (some of them for over 50 years) whose role has been invaluable. To name a few, Pula Film Festival, the Poreč Annals, concerts at the Euphrasian Basilica, the Mediterranean Sculpture Symposium in Labin, the "Naš kanat je lip" (Our Chant is Beautiful) Festival, in addition to institutions like the Chakavian Parliament, the Federation of Cultural and Artistic Association of Pula (SAKUD), the Croatian Artists' Association (HDLU), the Writers' Association and many other important institutions that nevertheless have not been listed among new events over the past twenty years. However, the said events and institutions have undoubtedly generated changes, events and more recent events listed herein.

## OVERVIEW OF MAJOR EVENTS

illustrating the cultural life of Istria

over the past two decades **1993 – 2013**

<b>1993</b>	<b>Radio L.A.E., Labin</b>	Labin Art Express started Radio L.A.E., the first independent radio station in Croatia
	<b>Gallery Alvona, Labin</b>	Private contemporary art gallery
<b>1994</b>	<b>Reconstruction of the Bishop's Palace, Poreč</b>	Renovation of the oldest Bishop's Palace in the world belonging to the complex of the Euphrasian Basilica, a unique early Christian monument from the sixth century
	<b>"Verses on the Well", Vižinada</b>	Festival of Chakavian poets, poetry reading and printing a collection of poems
	<b>Sa(n)jam knjige, Pula</b>	Book fair with accompanying cultural events
	<b>PUF, Pula</b>	International festival of alternative theatre
	<b>Ex Tempore, Grožnjan</b>	International fine arts colony
	<b>MIC, Brijuni – Medulin</b>	Centre for Archaeological Research – International Research Centre for Archaeology, Brijuni – Medulin
<b>1995</b>	<b>Gallery Rigo, Novigrad</b>	Contemporary art gallery working as part of a museum, located in a separate space
	<b>Jazz in Lapidarium, Poreč</b>	Summer jazz nights with Croatian and foreign performers
	<b>MKFM, Pula</b>	International Youth Theatre Festival
	<b>Music Nights, Novigrad</b>	Blues festival
	<b>International Cultural Centre, Grožnjan</b>	Public institution founded with the objective of performing, promoting and encouraging cultural and artistic activities and programmes in the Grožnjan area and Istria County
<b>1996</b>	<b>Journal Nova Istra, Pula</b>	Journal for literature, culturology and social themes, Croatian Writers' Association-Istrian branch Pula
<b>1997</b>	<b>Euphrasian Basilica UNESCO, Poreč</b>	The complex of the Euphrasian Basilica, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, due to its specific quality
	<b>Journey to the Centre of Europe, Pazin</b>	International Publishers Meeting

1998	Lamparna, Labin	Labin Art Express (L.A.E.), independent underground cultural and artistic organisation from Labin established its multimedia cultural centre Lamparna in one of abandoned buildings of the former coal mine
	Rojc, Pula	City associations (62) got the area of around 6,800 square metres, invested their own efforts and funds to arrange their premises and endowed the former military barracks with a completely new quality laying foundations for the establishment of the multimedia centre of the civil sector in Pula
	Conservation Department, Poreč-Pula	Began as an office of the Rijeka Conservation Department, in 2000 founded as an independent Conservation Department of Istria County headquartered in Pula
	Organum Histriae, Umag	International organ music festival
1999	City Gallery, Labin	Located in the main vertical street in the historic core, opposite the National Museum, nearby the parish church, founded in 1999. It annually organises around ten exhibitions and projects featuring both local Labin and Istrian artists, in addition to international production
	Motovun Film Festival, Motovun	Film festival dedicated to films made in small and independent productions worldwide
	Jazz is Back, Grožnjan	International jazz festival
2000	MMC Luka, Pula	Croatian Association of Artists of Istria, Istrian Architects' Association, Croatian Musicians Union and the Polite Society are associations constituting MMC Luka, which in addition to its autonomous activities connects and co-organises programmes of its members
	Golden Lion, Umag	International festival of chamber theatre
	Dance and Non-Verbal Theatre Festival, Svetvinčenat	Festival of dance and non-verbal theatre
	Street Art Festival, Poreč	Festival of artists whose performances are intended for public spaces

	Šikuti Machine, Svetvinčenat	Art group whose creation is rooted in the landscape and culture of the Istrian village, emphasising artistic and civilisational values of rural culture
	Tomizza and Us – Encounters at the Border, Umag	International literary symposium dedicated to works of Fulvio Tomizza
	Istra Ethno Jazz, Pula	International world music and jazz festival; concerts of renowned musicians in special architecture – the castle in Pula, Pazin and Svetvinčenat and the Small Roman Theatre in Pula
2001	Adris Gallery, Rovinj	Art gallery
	Istrian Parliament Building, Poreč	Arranging and extension of multifunctional historic premises
	Ulysses Theatre, Mali Brijun	Theatre of creative energy and collaboration
	Leron, Vodnjan	International folklore festival
2002	Sepomaia Viva, Umag	International festival of Antiquity
	Subotina in an Old Fashioned Way, Buzet	Programme of cultural and tourist revitalisation of the historic core
2003	Public library, Umag	Moved to modern space (502.5 square metres) with adequate technical equipment
	Public library, Poreč	Moved to newly renovated space in the historic core, located at the former Roman forum
	International Festival of Early Music, Dvigrad	Festival of early music
	LAR, Labin	Labin Art Republic, project of revitalisation of historic and cultural heritage of Labin
	Pula Essay Days, Pula	Essay days organised by the Istrian branch of the Croatian Writers' Association
	Istrian History Biennale, Poreč	International scholarly conference

<b>2004</b>	<b>The House of Batana, Rovinj</b>	Eco-museum House of Batana
	<b>Zuccato Palace, Poreč</b>	Reconstructed medieval place in the historic core used as a gallery
	<b>Public library and reading room, Pula</b>	The library moved to modern and well-equipped premises of 1,876 square metres
	<b>Seven Days of Creation, Pazin</b>	Festival with rich cultural production, offer and promotion gathering numerous authors and positive and engaged enthusiasm of artistically-minded people
<b>2005</b>	<b>Istrian encyclopedia</b>	Published by the Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography
	<b>Rojc, Pula</b>	17 associations got spaces in the west wing, with the obligation to arrange the spaces using their own resources, giving part of outdoor area for sport and recreation, and planned arranging of club premises to be used by all associations
	<b>Ex Tempore, Novigrad</b>	International photography competition
	<b>BaRoMus, Rovinj</b>	Baroque music festival
	<b>Children's library, Poreč</b>	Change of purpose and transforming a building in the historic core into children's library and playroom
<b>2006</b>	<b>Lapidarium Museum, Novigrad</b>	The museum was constructed as an interpolation of a new building into the historic core of the city
	<b>MMC, Rovinj</b>	Multimedia centre as contemporary building for various cultural, educational and entertainment programmes
	<b>Reconstruction and extension of theatre building, Poreč</b>	Reconstruction of theatre building and construction of an entire wing created a modern cinema auditorium and premises for high school of music
	<b>Juraj Dobriša University, Pula</b>	Established on 29 September 2006, it comprised most higher education institutions in Pula
	<b>Last Minute Open Jazz, Bale</b>	Festival of Croatian and renowned international jazz musicians
	<b>Legendfest, Pićan</b>	Festival of folk tales, legends and myths of Istria
<b>2007</b>	<b>Giostra, Poreč</b>	Heritage festival
	<b>Adris Foundation, Rovinj</b>	Foundation that promotes innovation and quality in science and arts

<b>2008</b>	<b>Kino Valli, Pula</b>	After the reconstruction of the facility, the cinema was renamed Cinema Valli, in honour of internationally renowned Pula-born actress Alida Valli
	<b>Gold Tooth, Poreč</b>	Laughter and comedy festival
	<b>Photodays, Rovinj</b>	The biggest photography festival in Croatia
	<b>Booktiga, Poreč</b>	International second hand book festival
	<b>Artexchange, Rovinj</b>	Istrian art fair
	<b>Monte Librić, Pula</b>	Children's book fair
<b>2009</b>	<b>Writers' House, Pazin</b>	Also known as "Hiža od besid", it hosts persons engaged in literary creation
	<b>Istrian scale on UNESCO's List</b>	Two-part singing and playing of the Istrian scale on UNESCO's World Heritage List of Intangible Heritage
	<b>Istria in Time, Rovinj</b>	A review of Istrian history, Centre for Historical Research, Rovinj
	<b>Ethnographic Film Festival, Rovinj</b>	International ethnographic film festival
<b>2010</b>	<b>Arterija, Novigrad</b>	Festival of visual arts
	<b>Istrian Historical Society</b>	Society of Istrian historians and history enthusiasts
	<b>Week of Istrian Museums</b>	A week marked by all Istrian museums with special programmes
<b>2011</b>	<b>Istrian Museum of Contemporary Art, Pula</b>	The museum currently does not have its own building, it uses gallery premises of the renovated old print works in Pula, Sv. Ivana 1
	<b>Sacred Hearts, Pula</b>	Museum and gallery space managed by the Archaeological Museum of Istria
	<b>Town Gallery "Antun Motika", Pula</b>	Art gallery on the second floor of the Istrian National Theatre
	<b>Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage of Istria, Pićan</b>	Part of the Ethnographic Museum in Pazin focused on documenting, researching, presenting and fostering intangible forms of culture and live tradition
	<b>Avantgarde Jazz Festival, Rovinj</b>	Music festival with a unique concept
	<b>150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Establishment of the Istrian Provincial Parliament, Poreč</b>	International conference on the occasion of the 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Istrian Provincial Parliament in Poreč

2012	Festival of Istro-Venetian Speech, Buje	Festival of Istro-Venetian speech
	Conference about Bishop Dr. Juraj Dobrila	Conference dedicated to the 200 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of birth of bishop and national reformer Dr. Juraj Dobrila and the 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of composing the Istrian anthem "Krasna zemljo, Istro mila"

It was not easy to list all events of the past twenty years. We would like to apologise to all those we have left out. In fact, we wanted to list events that had a wider cultural impact throughout Istria, not only local character. Unfortunately, we are aware that we have left out numerous panels, discussions, exhibitions, actions and encounters, but they are surely mentioned in other materials.

Without the intention to patronise or claim its sole merit for their creation, Istria County is proud of all cultural events organised on the peninsula. The Department for Culture gladly promotes them looking forward to new ones.

Istria County fosters exchange with other countries, provinces and regions. It is signatory to international collaboration agreements and it organises group presentations or else provides assistance to artists in their individual presentation in the country and abroad.

Over the recent period, the Department for Culture has frequently collaborated with the Department for Tourism of Istria County, especially on the Parenzana project. The year 2012 witnessed the launch of the Istra Inspirit programme which enriched the tourist offer of Istria. The two departments have also intensely collaborated on European Revitas and AdriaMuse projects and opened new avenues of collaboration in numerous other upcoming actions.

## **MANNER OF FINANCING**

There has been budget transparency since the establishment of the Department. By the same token, the decision-making process involves as many as possible participants to support quality and valuable projects, so that the first call for tender related to financing public needs in the cultural sector was published as early as 1995.

Culture funds in Istria County are part of the County budget, but they are certainly not a sole source of financial resources allocated in the cultural life in Istria. There are also budgets of the Republic of Croatia, cities and municipalities and Tourist Boards, in addition to finances of sponsors and private investments – initiatives that greatly increase levels of culture and help realise the above events.

In 1994, the budget of Istria County was HRK 24,479,000, while HRK 1,370,000 or 6 per cent was allocated to public needs in the cultural sector and technical culture.

Back in 1995, applications received in the first public tender competition were reviewed and evaluated by both committees and cultural councils. To attain the greatest possible transparency, the Rulebook on the Manner of Evaluating Received Tender Documents that was later amended was immediately adopted. Programme realisation reports were also reviewed. All materials issued by the Department could be amended before the passing of the final decision at the County Assembly.

#### FUNDS FOR CULTURE AS PART OF THE BUDGET

No.	Year	County budget	Funds for culture without funds for public administration and administrative service	%
1	2009	298,000,000.00	13,722,671.01	5
2	2010	234,500,000.00	11,451,501.00	5
3	2011	283,000,000.00	13,900,063.61	5
4	2012	309,700,000.00	13,203,632.80	4
5	2013	435,000,000.00	15,242,953.46	4

Since 2009, following the separation of the Department for Culture, its work has become more organised and improved, so that all data, now expressed individually and in a different manner, have become more accessible and more relevant as indicators for particular conclusions.

### SHARE OF FUNDS FOR CULTURE IN THE COUNTY BUDGET

No.	Year	County budget unallocated funds	Funds for culture unallocated funds	%
1	2009	157,038,557.00	13,922,671.00	9
2	2010	121,676,419.20	11,546,466.00	9
3	2011	139,938,000.00	14,292,248.61	10
4	2012	141,650,992.29	13,788,952.80	10
5	2013	171,131,607.00	15,830,004.95	9

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### FUNDS FOR CULTURE IN INSTITUTIONS OF ISTRIA COUNTY FOUNDER-COUNTY

institution	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Historical and Naval Museum of Istria	1,812,880.61	2,012,880.00	2,081,880.61	2,040,592.99	1,869,384.00
Ethnographic Museum of Istria	2,055,606.00	2,055,606.00	2,019,407.00	2,297,860.98	2,164,098.00
International Cultural Centre Grožnjan	212,543.00	224,035.00	-	-	-
Museum of Contemporary Art of Istria	640,000.00	640,000.00	822,230.00	720,646.69	670,646.69
Istrian Cultural Agency	-	-	-	115,108.94	339,230.16
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>4,721,029.61</b>	<b>4,932,521.00</b>	<b>4,923,517.61</b>	<b>5,174,209.60</b>	<b>5,043,358.85</b>

Distribution of funds in culture per public needs is as follows:

<b>FUNDS FOR CULTURE-PUBLIC NEEDS</b>		
<b>No.</b>		<b>2009</b>
1	<b>Intangible cultural heritage</b>	300,000.00
2	<b>International cultural collaboration</b>	200,000.00
3	<b>Music and performing arts</b>	600,000.00
4	<b>Literature and publishing</b>	600,000.00
5	<b>Protection of cultural heritage and museology</b>	1,030,000.00
6	<b>Media culture</b>	200,000.00
7	<b>Visual arts</b>	500,000.00
8	<b>Culture programmes – other</b>	2,970,000.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>6,400,000.00</b>

The Department for Culture works on finding new programme funding and increasing its own budget funds. It would readily help its users with even greater amounts, but a rational consideration of the situation indicates a need to look into new resources outside the budget.

Consequently, in line with new economic considerations and manners of finding additional funds for programmes and activities in the cultural sector, the Department participates in projects financed through EU funds and works on including other users

	2010	2011	2012	2013
	350,000.00	300,000.00	305,000.00	300,000.00
	200,000.00	150,000.00	200,000.00	150,000.00
	300,000.00	300,000.00	310,000.00	300,000.00
	300,000.00	220,000.00	235,000.00	220,000.00
	600,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00
	200,000.00	200,000.00	180,000.00	180,000.00
	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
	2,120,000.00	2,000,000.00	2,370,000.00	2,500,000.00
	<b>4,270,000.00</b>	<b>4,170,000.00</b>	<b>4,600,000.00</b>	<b>4,650,000.00</b>

through providing its assistance and using itself as an example. The Department wants to show that hard work and a responsible approach may lead to getting and spending large funds on cultural projects and educating employees of cultural institutions to be ready to join the EU and look for additional funds. The Administrative Department participated in several large projects and realised important and notable actions. A total value of projects realised so far is EUR 7,416,864.12, of which Istria County carried out activities totalling EUR 901,342.19 or HRK 6,714,999.30.

## HEART OF ISTRIA: HERITAGE AND ARTS

INTERREG III A Neighbourhood Programme  
Slovenia – Hungary – Croatia 2004 - 2006

**PROJECT PARTNERS:** Slovenia, Hungary and Croatia

**TOTAL PROJECT VALUE:** EUR 489,130.00

### PRINTED IN FOUR LANGUAGES:

- The Path of Castles and Cultural Landscapes  
(*The Castles of Istria*)
- The Path of Sacral Art (*The Frescoes of Istria*)
- Development of Istrian Towns  
(*Venetian Architectural Heritage in Istria*)
- Archaeological Parks of Istria  
(*Istrian Archaeological Parks – The Path of Gods*)

### The following was also realised:

leaflets in five languages, promotional film, scholarly research which resulted in scholarly articles published in *Annales*, excavations on the archaeological site San Simon, publications of statues of medieval towns of Izola and Piran, published book on Pietrapelosa, and Dance Macabre in Istrian frescoes. During the project, a research focused on the role of cultural heritage in cultural tourism in Istria was conducted. Four workshops were organised, as well as the Days of Architecture in Piran and excursions through cultural heritage sites. Geodetic and architectural probing of Kožljak castle was implemented, and two research articles (cultural heritage and tourist promotion of cultural heritage) were prepared.

## **REVITAS** – REVITALISATION OF THE ISTRIAN HINTERLAND AND TOURISM IN THE ISTRIAN HINTERLAND

Cross-Border Collaboration Programme Slovenia – Croatia  
2007 - 2013 (IPA – Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance)

**PROJECT PARTNERS:** Slovenia and Croatia

10 subjects have been included: Municipality of Koper, Istria County, Municipality of Izola, Municipality of Piran, Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia – OE Piran, Town of Buzet, Town of Poreč, Istria Tourist Board, Municipality of Svetvinčenat and Town of Vodnjan

**TOTAL PROJECT VALUE:** EUR 1,840,362.92

**PROJECT INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:**

- Creating a joint cross-border study on the model of revitalisation of the interior of Istria comprising:
  - (a) methods for reconstruction, offer and promotion of cultural heritage structures and
  - (b) methods for revitalisation of historic cores
- 7-day workshops in Vodnjan and Topolovac
- Revitalisation of theme trails, belvederes, rest areas and their incorporation into an integrated tourist offer. In the area of Slovenian Istria, arranging three types of trails and 10 rest areas. In Croatian Istria, clearing 20 kilometres of bike and hiking trails in the ethno-archaeological park of the Vodnjan area, signposting and arranging five rest areas
- Revitalisation of historic cores: reconstruction of the square in Topolovac and the square tower of the Morosini-Grimani castle in Svetvinčenat

- Organising 16 days of cross-border workshops for heads of info centres
- Organising 2 three-day seminars for tourist guides, tourist agency workers, entrepreneurs, local administration and the general public, altogether 120 participants
- Setting up 6 info-centres in Croatian and Slovenian Istria: Koper – Sv. Anton, Piran, Izola, Poreč (Istrian Parliament Building), Buzet (historic core), Svetvinčenat (Grimani-Morosini castle) and 20 info-points with info-kiosks
- Organising 23 events aimed at promoting Istria as a unique tourist destination
- Creating integrated cross-border tourist products: photo monograph on frescoes with accompanying DVD, 2 multi-lingual (6 languages) guides on historic cores and cultural and natural sights in the interior of Istria, project DVD, leaflets, postcards, posters, bookmarks, reprint of the Heart of Istria project brochure
- Creating a project website
- Organising 12 joint press conferences
- Filming and broadcasting two promotional clips

## ADRIAMUSE

Cross-Border Cooperation Programme  
IPA Adriatic 2007 - 2013

### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Province of Rimini, Institute for Artistic, Cultural and Natural Heritage (IBC) of Emilia-Romagna Region, Veneto Region, IUAV University of Venice, Province of Pesaro and Urbino, Province of Campobasso, Skupa (Italy), National Museum of Montenegro (Montenegro), Municipality of Shkodër (Albania), Zenica-Doboj Canton (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Istria County (Croatia)

**TOTAL PROJECT VALUE:** EUR 1,762,670.80

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- strengthening the relationships among the partner organisations
- supporting the sustainable development of the Adriatic area through the harmonisation of partner activities in the field of cultural tourism
- increasing awareness about museums in the region
- increasing museum accessibility by being part of the Euromuse.net, international showcase which organises a series of events that can connect Adriatic museums
- contribution to the extension of the tourist season on the Adriatic Coast
- transforming museums into vibrant cultural centres
- encouraging cross-border cultural exchange and events to raise awareness of the local population on cultural and development potentials in the Adriatic area

Existing information networks will be strengthened and integrated by the project through the development of innovative informational and communicational tools. Istria County is responsible for the realisation of project brochure, website, games for children, documentary and project film, communication strategy of the project with logo and accompanying graphic book of standards, as well as for pilot action of one Istrian museum – production of communication strategy and logo for Historical and Naval Museum of Istria. Financial support will be provided to Arterija and Sepomaia Viva – museums beyond museums walls.

## **EX.PO AUS**

### **(EXTENSION OF POTENTIALITY OF ADRIATIC UNESCO SITES)**

#### **IPA Adriatic CBC Program 2007 - 2013**

Includes institutions and regions in the area comprising three EU member countries, namely Italy, Slovenia and Greece, and four eastern Adriatic countries (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania)

#### **PROJECT PARTNERS:**

City of Dubrovnik, Istria County, City of Split (Croatia), Province of Ferrara, Municipality of Ravenna – City Museum, Municipality of Alberobello, Foundation Aquileia (Italy), University of Primorska-Science and Research Centre of Koper (Slovenia), Centre for Conservation and Archaeology of Montenegro (Montenegro), Commission to Preserve National Monuments (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Office for Administration and Coordination of Butrint (Albania) and Municipality of Corfu (Greece).

**TOTAL PROJECT VALUE:** EUR 3,324,700.40

### **SPECIFIC PROJECT OBJECTIVES ARE:**

- cross-border development of concepts and tools for sustainable management of UNESCO sites
- improving know-how, techniques and technological support through exchange of information about best practice and techniques related to digital cataloguisation and innovative restoration techniques, dry-wall construction, introduction of renewable sources of energy
- joint valorisation of UNESCO sites in the whole Adriatic area, and their specific thematic parts, aimed at attracting the fast growing segment of tourists interested in culture and nature
- realisation of pilot-actions in individual UNESCO sites

Within the project, Istria County coordinates communication and promotional activities through communication strategy for all project partners, project logo and books of standards, in addition to project brochure and the project website.

Istria County and its experts for management plans, restoration, dry-walls and mosaics will participate in all project activities of partners.

As part of the pilot-action, various promotional materials shall be developed, especially the creation of photo monograph on the Euphrasian Basilica Complex in Poreč with the accompanying multi-lingual project DVD with an audio guide.

## PRINCIPLE OF PUBLICITY

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From its very beginning, the Department for Culture of Istria County decided to provide free access for all its users. Besides the personal presence of its head who participates in almost all events, public access to information has also been carefully planned. Various publications, press conferences and calls for tenders are regularly published in Glas Istre, the largest circulation daily newspaper in the region. Since 2010, the newspaper has carried a regular section "ArtIstra" published each third Thursday. The section provides an outline of the most important cultural events in the County.

Radio stations regularly inform about cultural events and they are frequent media sponsors in promotion of cultural events. Local TV stations were established back in 1995, namely Independent Istrian Television (Nezavisna istarska televizija-NIT) as a regional station and TV Nova Pula as a town TV station, both of which cover and present cultural events. The weekly show "Kultivator" broadcast on TV Istra was launched in 2009 focusing on cultural events, hosting artists and announcing new events.

The official website of Istria County carries information about the work of the Department, so that all citizens may access all calls for tenders, budgets and announcements at [www.istra-istria.hr](http://www.istra-istria.hr). The Kulturistra project was launched in 2010 as a regional portal aimed at developing cultural informational service.

The [www.kulturistra.hr](http://www.kulturistra.hr) website was developed by the Metamedij association and Istria County. The project objective is to offer information about current events and provide an opportunity to access various databases carrying information about all stakeholders in culture, cultural events, international competitions and potential partners. It was launched to contribute

to better communication at the vertical and the horizontal level among Istrian cultural institutions and artists and to improve their communication with the public. The project is financed by Istria County and most texts are translated to Italian and English.

The Department for Culture works in three locations (Novigrad, Pula and Labin), with a circle of collaborators in these towns. The Department comprises seven Cultural Councils and the Culture Board. Institutions founded by Istria County have administrative bodies coordinated by the Department for purposes of best possible quality of implementation of regional plans.

There are around 20 annual meetings. Special projects and activities often include external collaborators, around 100 each year.

The Department is open, which means that it receives online applications and various citizens' remarks and proposals. It printed and delivered 500 copies of the Istrian Cultural Strategy and published it on its website.

The Department is responsible for its work to the Istria County Assembly which receives reports and passes important decisions, so that collaboration with the Board and the bodies of the Assembly is very important. All decisions and discussions of the County Assembly are filmed live and broadcast on local TV Istria and thus accessible to the public.

## CONCLUSION

This short overview of events has listed numerous items and left out people and their names, although these names simply emerge from each mentioned event. It would be a big and long journey with lots of interesting persons deeply woven into the cultural life of Istria County. We did not leave them out intentionally. Yet, mere listing seemed inadequate for this text. In its encyclopaedias, books and collaborations, Istria County proudly states its cultural workers, artists and authors. As a matter of fact, without them, without their enthusiasm and creativity, their peculiar characters and boundless qualities, the Department would make no sense at all.

Nevertheless, we will mention those who left us over this period of time, persons whose life and work have left an indelible mark on our region:

Slavko Zlatić (1993), Marino Cettina (1998), Krešimir Farkaš (1999), Renato Pernić (2002), Edo Murtić (2005), Ante Dabo (2009), Dušan Džamonja (2009), Predrag Spasojević (2010), Boško Petrović (2011), Emil Benčić (2011), Nello Milotti (2011), Vesna Girardi Jurkić (2012).

Finally, looking forward to a new tomorrow, we wish to continue supporting the cultural scene, the young and the talented. In the spirit of modern aspirations, we want to take decisive steps and make culture an opportunity of employment and work on the peninsula. Twenty years later, culture is again the engine of change. Therefore, we want to talk, learn from and listen to our users. Together, we will make Istria a true region of culture.

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