

CULTURAL CLIMATE BAROMETER 2015

SUBSTANTIAL REPORT

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The nature of the project

The Cultural Policy Barometer seeks to judge the cultural climate in a place. Clearly, each word in this phrase requires exploration.

- 1) *Judge*: assess, but not measure; compare, but not rank. Perception of a variety of stakeholders is the basis;
- 2) *Cultural*: without entering into awkward delineation procedure a plain conventional understanding of the sector is applied, letting the answers suggest the prevailing semantic domain of culture in a given place;
- 3) *Climate*: this lies closest to the metaphor of barometer. It appears to express something similar to other prevailing metaphors like “vitality” or “vibrancy”;
- 4) *Place*: countries, to begin with, for sake of convenience. The Barometer may be applied both to larger and smaller geographic units: continents, regions or cities.

Being a pioneer exercise, the aim is also to develop and test an instrument. A need is felt for fairly standardised, usable tools for the comparative assessment and analysis of the environment for culture in and between places. The barometer may serve this purpose.

Why opinions? Why not facts, “evidence”? The increasing sophistication as well as the growing amount of data in cultural statistics has indeed allowed for comparing, even ranking the cultural performance of places from a number of aspects. The statistical reports nevertheless offer fragmented pictures and remain short of providing overall profiles about countries (cities, regions).

Confronted with the difficulties and meagre results of the search for generally accepted and practical comparative tools for culture, or for the more elusive concept of climate of culture, attention is directed to the field of perceptions – which are also a kind of evidence.

The design of the barometer

The barometer has been directly inspired by, and modelled upon a similar survey on the business climate of countries. That quiz was a minor part of the large and sophisticated machinery of the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum. Tens of thousands of businessmen are asked to choose from the same list of problematic factors to business year after year.

Following a number of trial and error stages, 27 problematic factors to culture were selected for the barometer. The starting point was to find statements that cover the field evenly and systematically. Items selected by too many or too few respondents during the pilot phases were rephrased, separated, fused or eliminated. The list of 27 therefore reflects surveying requirements more than any logic of taxonomic construction.

As a further step, the barometer deviated from the WEF model and was complemented with a set of favourable factors for culture.

The latest round of the survey took place in November-December 2015. The majority of the 170 respondents to the online questionnaire are subscribers to the monthly newsletter of the Budapest Observatory. This pool of cultural operators and stakeholders is characterised by an international orientation (they all read English) and an interest about cultural developments in Europe. Their task was to mark five out of the 27 problematic factors that they find most relevant to their environment, and optionally to mark up to five out of the 27 favourable aspects. For both lists go to [Annex 1](#).

Main findings of Barometer 2015

The 2015 edition of the Cultural Climate Barometer has confirmed the worth of such an instrument in the area of cultural policies and studies. The survey can help explore the hierarchy of factors that determine the health (vitality, competitiveness etc.) of cultural ecosystems. Furthermore, the barometer helps to communicate the complexity of the issue instead of simplified explanations or illusions. Bearing in mind that listing problems and positive features does not necessarily fully correspond to hard facts which remain to be explored via statistics, stakeholders' perception and judgment also represents a kind of objective reality.

The answers from 170 cultural stakeholders produced a relatively balanced spread in the two lists of problems and strengths, which confirms that the state of cultural life is subject to a multiplicity of internal and external factors. The scores allow nevertheless to point out characteristic differences between countries and regions, as well as between differing professional communities.

The analysis of the data convinced us that the most obvious dividing line continues to exist between countries with established democratic capitalism and the post-communist world, naming them for sake of convenience as west and east.

The position of culture among the priorities of the government appears to be the leading concern in almost every place and community. Factors in the remit of cultural policies receive greater emphasis among eastern stakeholders, while external aspects – like education, above all – are positioned higher on western lists of opinions. Strangely, resources for local culture turned out to be one of the most dividing items, emphasised strongly in the west (especially by western performing artists). The issue of the presence of politics in culture was felt as a nuisance in the east, particularly in the Visegrad countries where this item is on top of the list of problematic factors. Furthermore, western contributors to the survey showed greater affinity to social aspects like inclusion, equality, or the material condition of the public. On the other hand, the deteriorating financial position of the public was identified as a major problem by only 6% of respondents from the east.

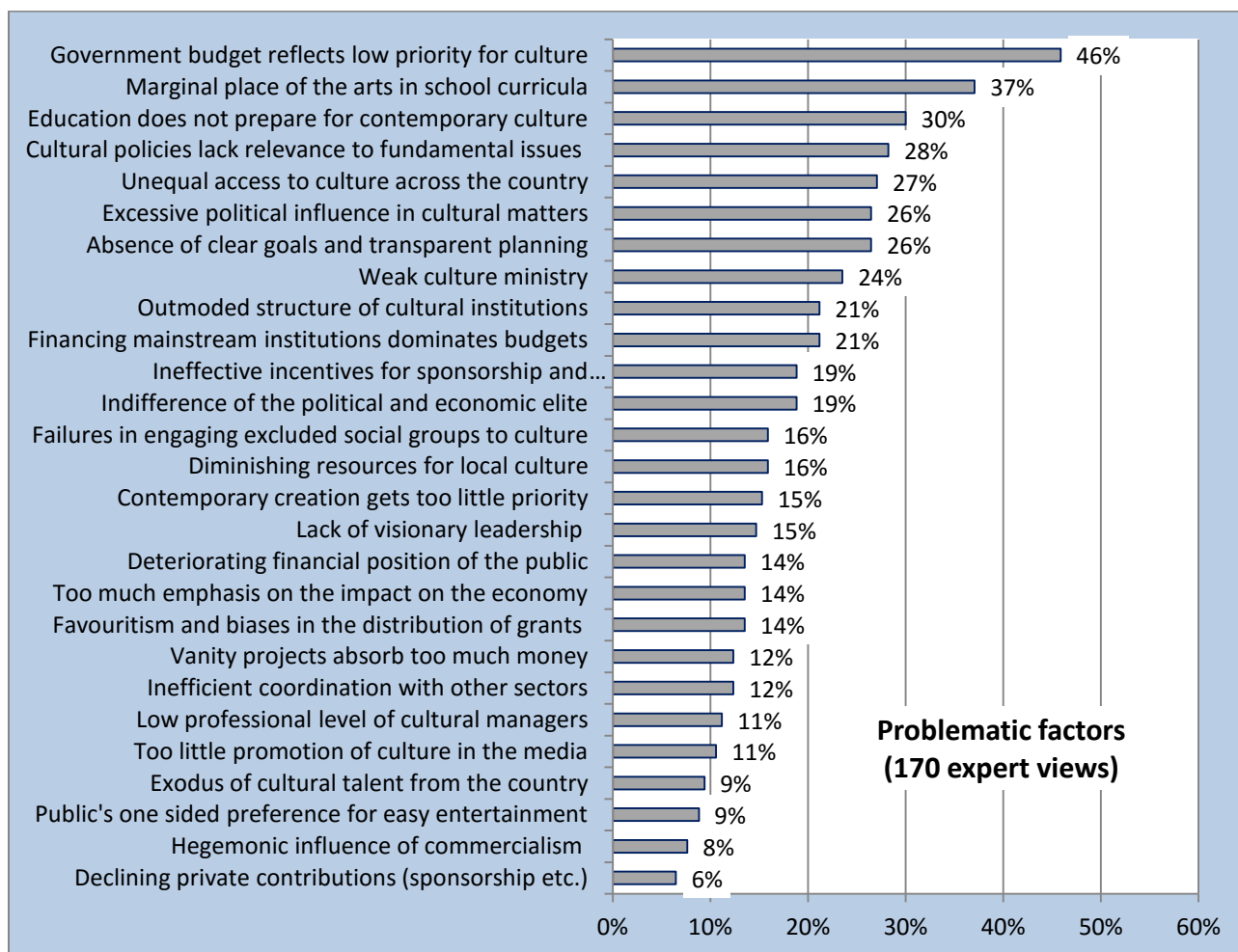
Stakeholders were asked about the 27 problematic factors also in 2014. Data from two consecutive years allow for checking the consistency of the patterns both on regional levels and in total but the samples are too small to reliably establish tendencies. Future rounds of the Barometer will increase the basis to detect trends, involving the newly introduced features of positive aspects and the professional categories of the respondents.

A high proportion of the 170 contributors added comments to the questionnaire, providing a valuable pool of thoughts about defining and exploring the climate of culture. This vitality is at odds with difficulties to recruit respondents from a number of places. The real value of the barometer is manifested at a concentration of expert opinions which happened on the fortunate opportunity of running the survey at a conference in Dnipropetrovsk. This has showed the potential in applying the instrument on the spot, offering instant feedback and input for professional deliberations.

Problematic factors to culture

The first diagram contains the cumulated score of 170 responses to the online survey about the problematic factors affecting the climate of culture across Europe (and a bit beyond) in 2015. The numbers indicate the percentage of responding experts that included the item among the five most important problematic factors to culture in their environment.

Diagram 1 Distribution of choices made by the 170 respondents about the problematic factors



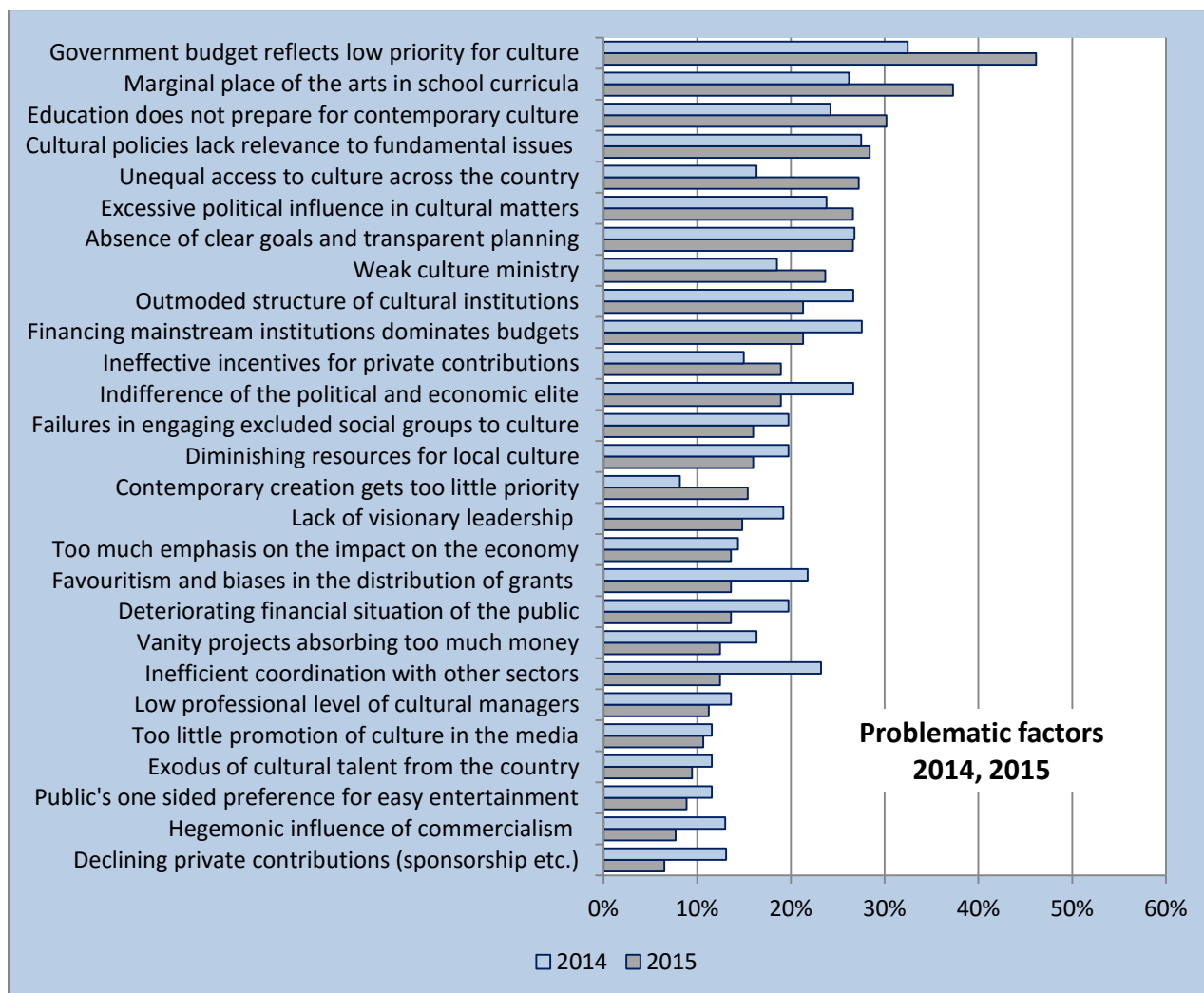
2015 and 2014

Participants in the survey conducted a year earlier made choices from practically the same set of problematic issues. Despite a number of differences in the samples, the basic pattern of the two scores is similar. As can be perceived on [Diagram 2](#), the curve of the score became sharper: in 2014 only one item was chosen by less than 10% against four in 2015; also at the other end, against one instance in 2014 a year later three statements were selected by 30% or more. This change is more likely to be due to surveying techniques rather than a shift towards the extremes in the conditions of culture.

A closer look at the scores of the two years reveals that the greater part of differences can be explained by the basic composition of the contributors. In 2014 “western” answers were in minority while in 2015 they constitute the greater part. The 2015 total score therefore corresponds more to western patterns than was the case on the former occasion. (For the explanation of “western” answers read on to the next chapter.)

Therefore, by stating that in 2015 the issue of governmental priority was identified as number one by 46% against 32% in 2015 we do not claim the attention *grew*, nevertheless acknowledge that it has been the number one concern on both occasions.

Diagram 2 Differences in the perception of problematic factors in 2014 and 2015 (147 and 170 answers)



East and west

Comparing east and west

Analysis of the data confirms that the primary dividing line can still be drawn between “east” and “west”. 91 answers came from countries with a relatively longer record of capitalism and democracy, labelled as *West*. The remaining 79 participants in the survey live in former communist countries, the

Diagram 3 Respondents from “western” countries

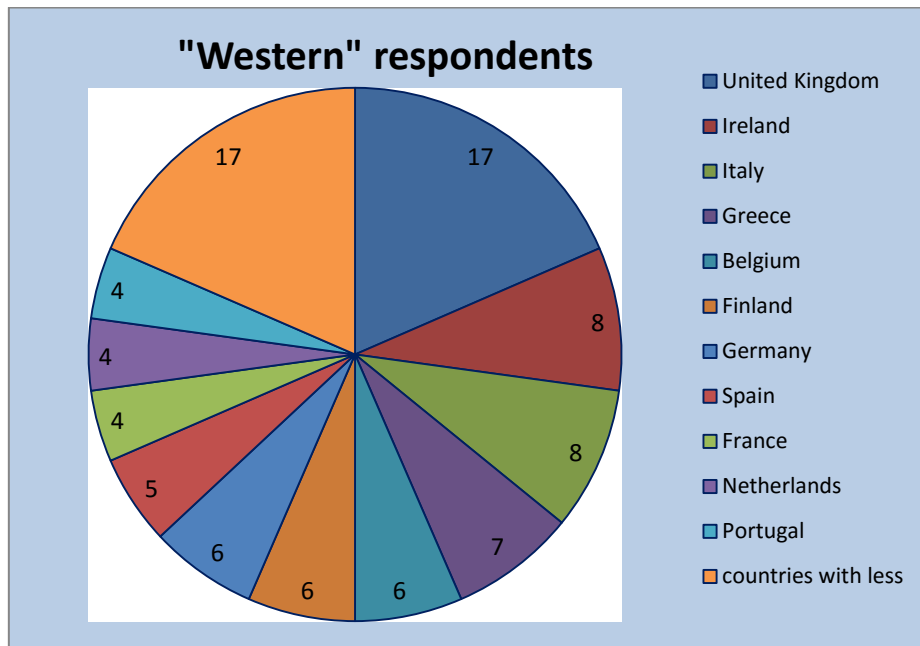


Diagram 4 Respondents from “eastern” countries

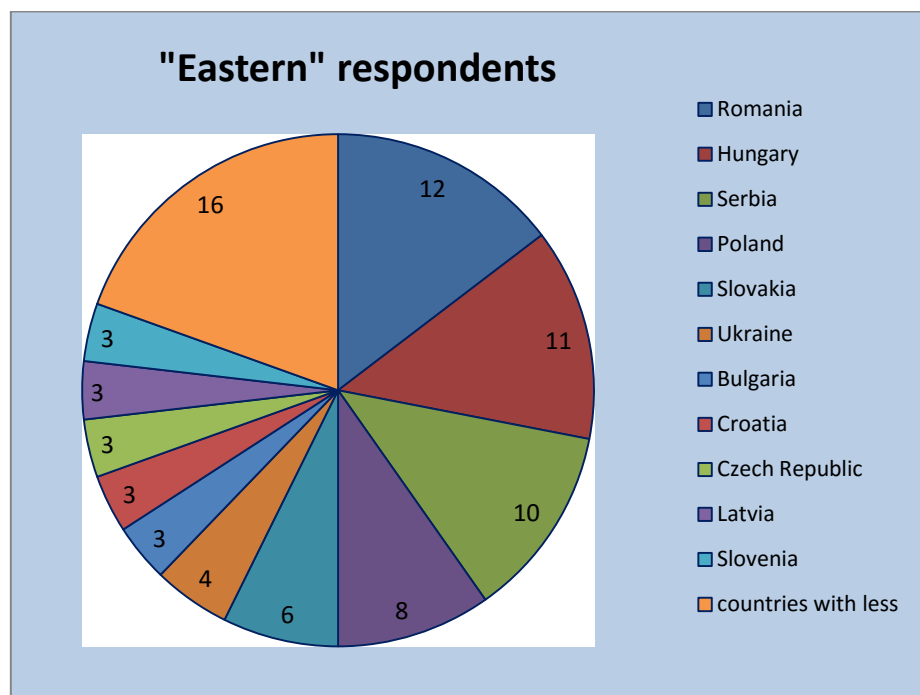
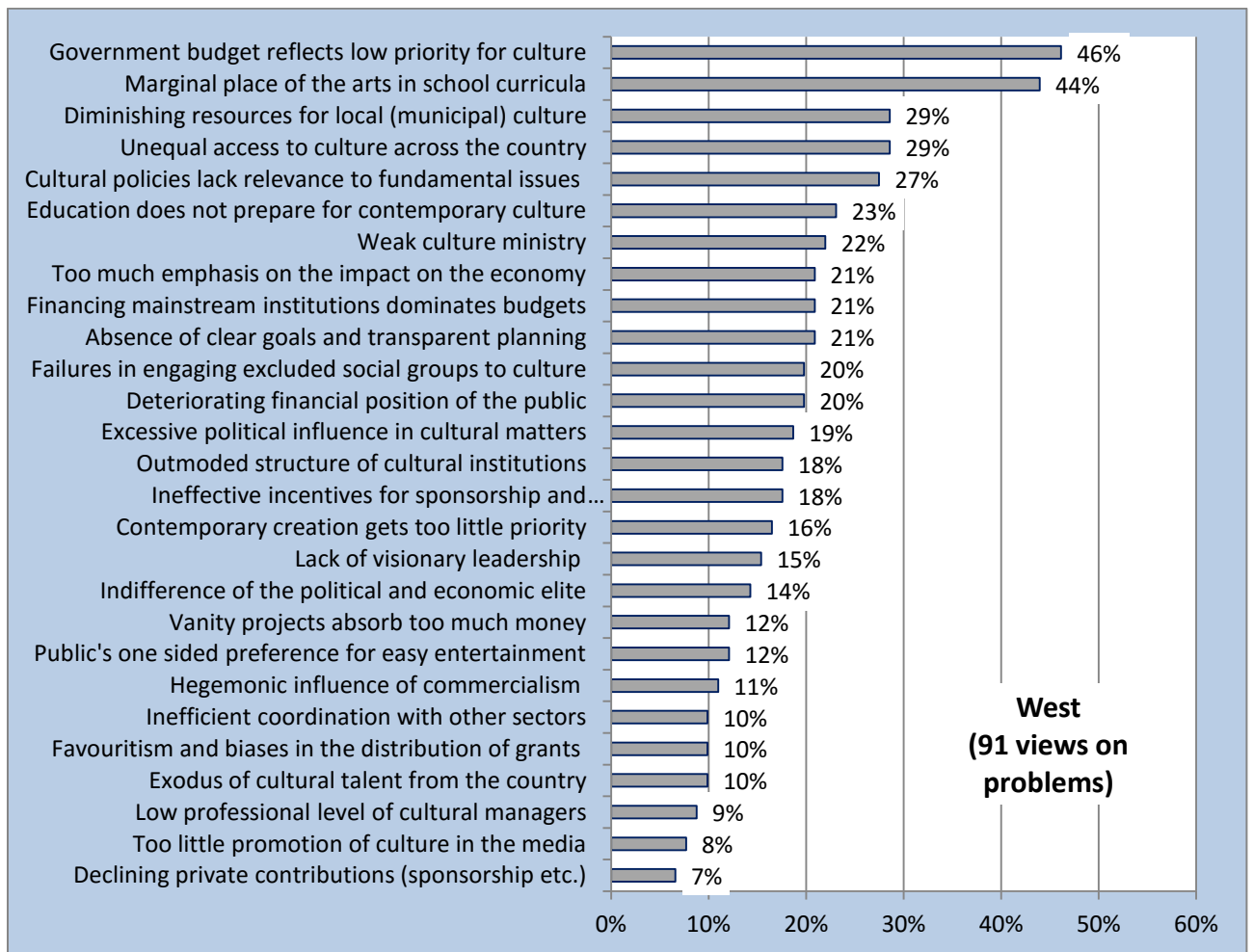


Diagram 5 Problematic factors according to “western” respondents



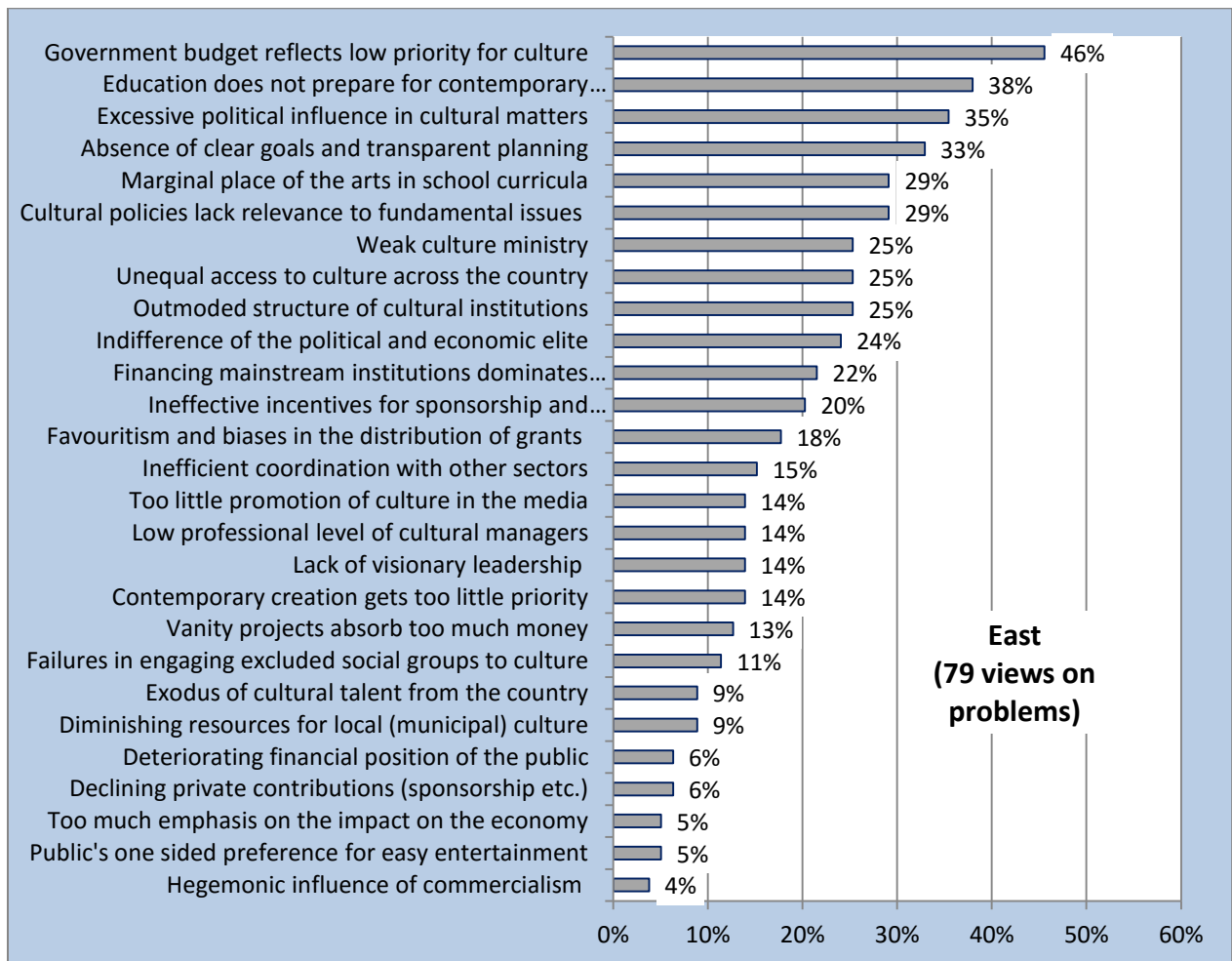
Complaint about the government is on top of [Diagram 5](#), too. But the second position is occupied by a western feature (just like at the previous 2014 survey) – almost every second respondent bemoans the state of arts education.

The next three items, mentioned by 27-29% each, witness about the engagement of most western colleagues towards the equality of chances and supply.

Contradicting clichés, western contributors to the survey complain the least about shrinking sponsorship. Maybe it does not shrink? Or whether sponsorship shrinks or not, wrestling for it appears less and less worth the trouble?

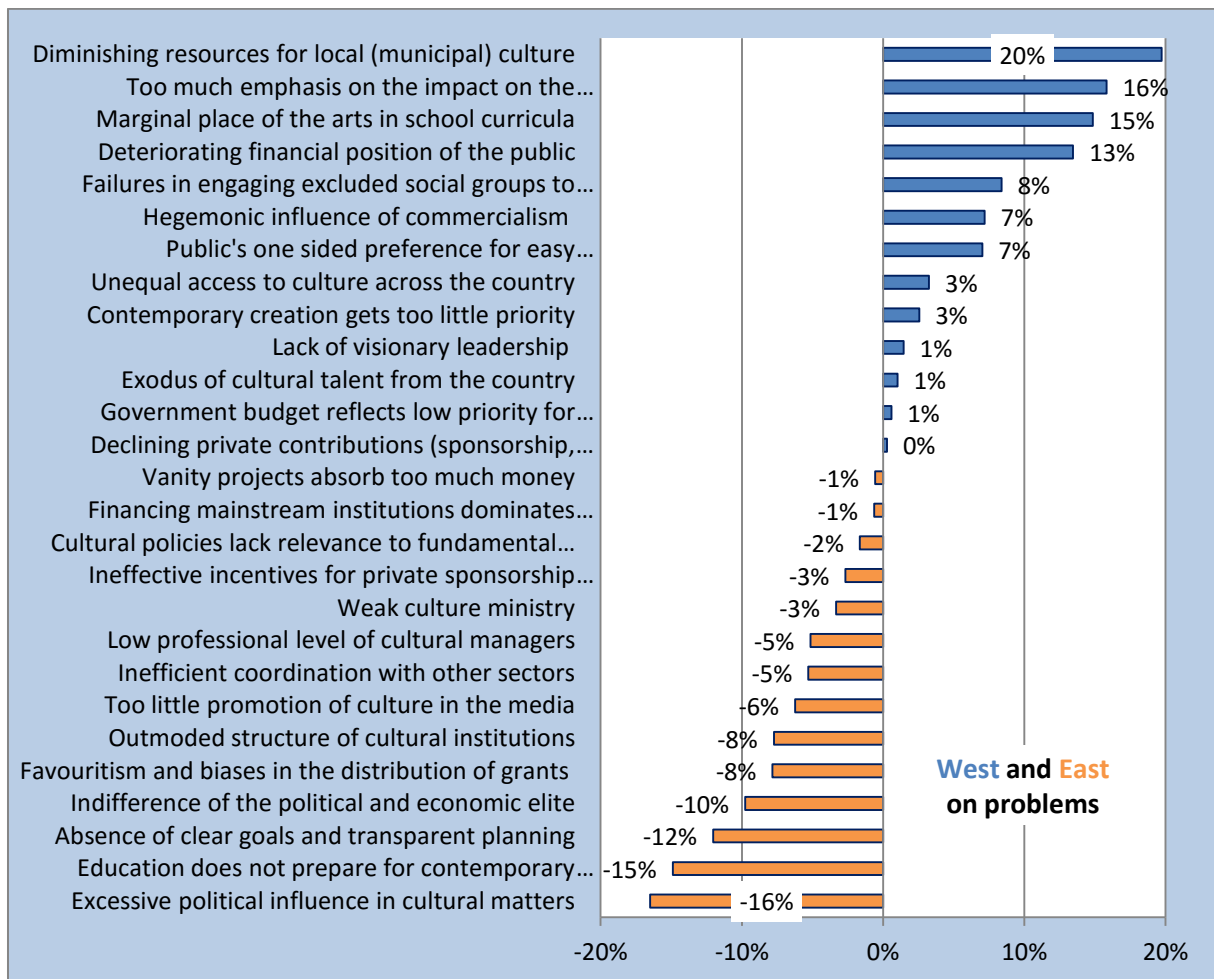
Turning to the east, [Diagram 6](#) reveals that the statement on government budgets is on top there, too. With the same (46%) proportion as in the west but without rivals do central authorities carry the greatest blame for the woes of the cultural climate also in the east.

[Diagram 6](#) Problematic factors according to “eastern” respondents



Another important difference is that every third eastern expert complains about political influences against only 19% in the west. Characteristic divisions like this are best displayed by contrasting views from the east and west – go to [Diagram 7](#).

Diagram 7 Contrasting eastern and western views about problematic factors



Contrasting was done by distracting eastern answers from western ones (because the latter were more numerous, 91 against only 79 from the post-communist “east”). Taking the first item, in the west 29% complain about the diminishing resources for local culture, which is 20% more than the 9% mentions in the east. Signalling concern about local culture appears thus to be a western feature.

At the other extreme of the scale we find a problematic factor where the west is in great minus: 16% fewer western experts suffer from political interference into culture than their eastern colleagues (19% versus 35%), proving this to be the most typical eastern woe.

Fourteen items in orange to the left of the axis bother western respondents less than eastern ones.

The apparent diversion in the perception of the two items on education is still open to exploration. *Marginal place of the arts in school curricula* and *Education does not prepare for contemporary culture* are situated at opposite ends on this chart. The former is best emphasised in the west while the latter in the east. The answer may be connected to the connotations of the words *arts* and *contemporary* in the statements. (In fact *Education does not prepare ...* was tenth with 26% on the eastern list of grievances last year against the second position with 38% this time.)

Observed with a broader focus we can establish that westerners select items that relate to the public (its purchasing power, exposure to commercialism and entertainment) in higher numbers than easterners, who are more concerned about internal and technical aspects of the sector like professionalism in management and governance, as well as the institutions, intersectoral cooperation etc.

Besides highlighting differences, the middle of the graph displays the items on which eastern and western perceptions largely or fully coincide. E.g. disagreement on sponsorship level is zero.

Such an accent on the east-west division may appear artificial, out of time or even irritating to many. Nevertheless we found this approach rather helpful in analysing the findings. Indeed, we are confident that after a while our barometer will be more sensitive about other basic dividing lines in Europe. Already today there are striking similarities (apparent also on [Diagram 7](#)). Full concord is found in much of the free comments with which participants complemented their answers. For instance, Danish and Belgian colleagues complain about financial or legal problems just as much as Bulgarians or Hungarians do.

Positive aspects with regard to cultural life

The first editions of the survey focused on the problematic aspects. In no time this met with the criticism of a one sided approach and a claim for examining factors that have a positive effect on the climate of culture.

At first, variations of a sliding scale were considered where the answerer is asked to choose a position on a scale. For this endeavour there was an indirect precedent. In *Balancing Act*¹, published by the Council of Europe in 1999, François Matarasso and Charles Landry identified twenty-one strategic dilemmas in cultural policy. Regretfully, we know about no instance where *Balancing Act* was applied as an instrument to describe or analyse cultural policies, or was followed in the design of one.

Identical is the effort of both approaches to dissect the complex concept into individually assessable components. *Balancing Act* served for inspiration also in the selection of the 27 statements although our cultural climate barometer covers external aspects as well. Furthermore, for the barometer we sought forthright problematic factors while several of the twenty-one dilemmas are indeed dilemmas, open questions. *Balancing Act* has nevertheless prompted the design of the sliding scale barometer shown in [Annex 2](#).

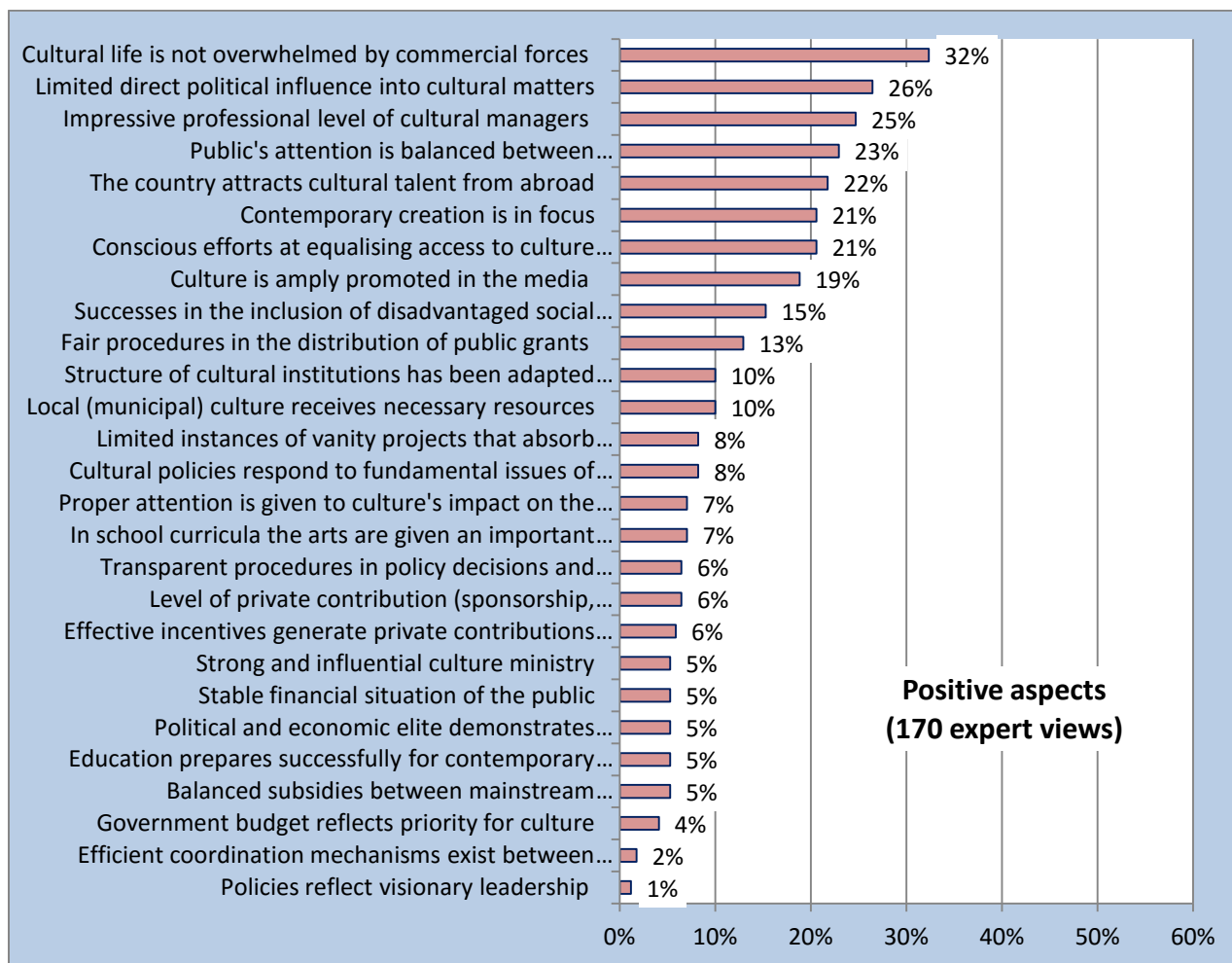
In comments made in the frame of the survey several respondents communicate the wish for a scale rather than items. Some argue that scales reflect better that in climatic conditions there are processes and not facts. Going further, some contributors would like an instrument that is able to express recent progress (E.g. "Has the cultural climate in your country improved? Rate this between 1-5") as well as expectations or forecasts for the future.

We nevertheless came to the conclusion that the re-formulation of the list of problematic factors into scales, as well as the processing and interpretation was posing challenges that seemed out of proportion with the advantages to be gained. This is why we returned to the simpler task of selecting five out of a list of 27 problematic factors, duplicated with the addition of a complementary list of 27 positive statements. [Annex 1](#) contains the two sets matched the corresponding items to one another.

Selecting factors that one is happy about proved to be a greater challenge than to share one's dissatisfaction about conditions. The survey therefore allowed the respondents to choose less than five positive statements. On the average the 170 respondents chose 3.2 positive items (instead of 5).

¹ <http://www.artsmanagement.net/downloads/cultural-strategy-dilemmas.pdf>

Diagram 8 Positive factors affecting culture according to 170 views



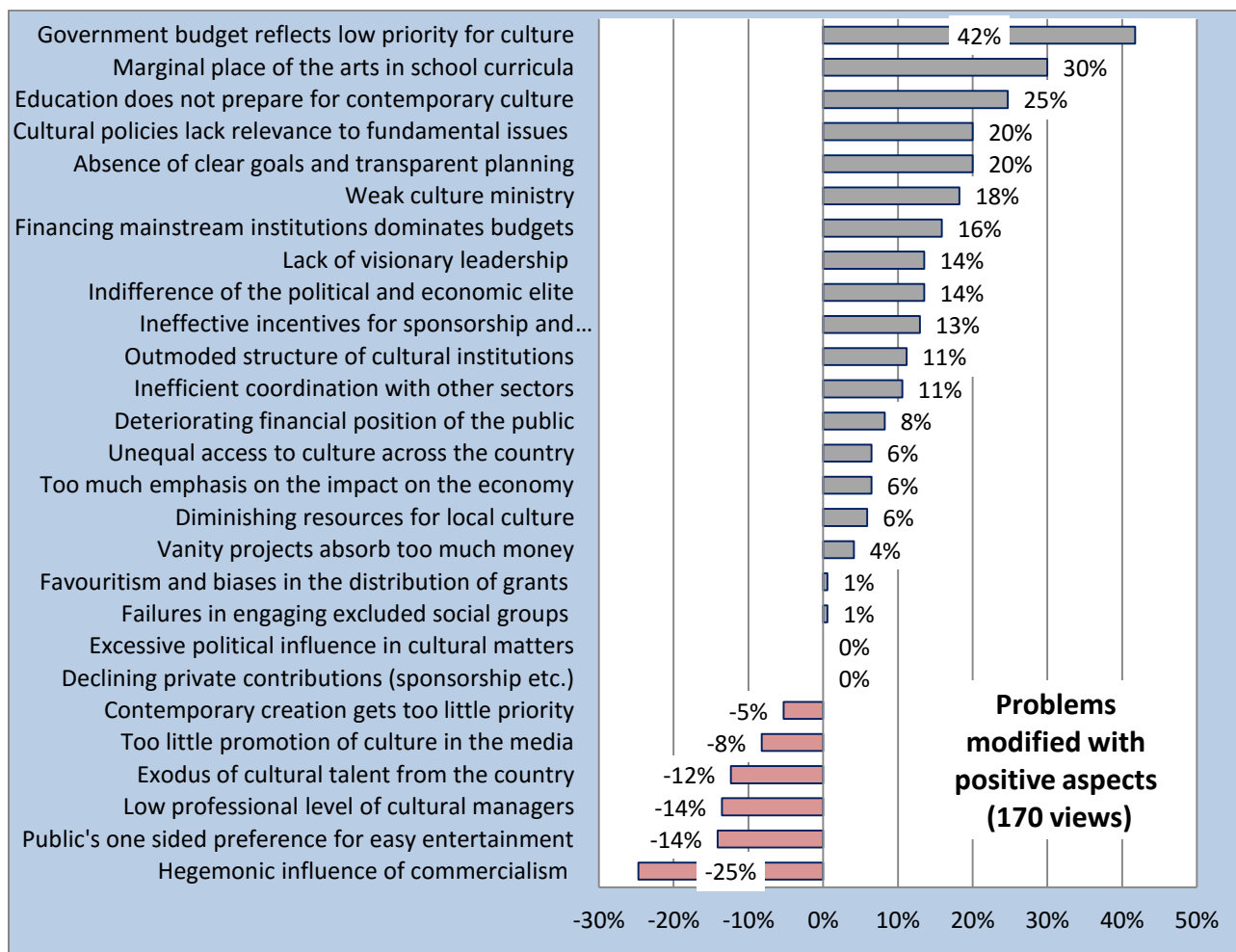
The outstanding popularity of the statement about the indemnity from commercialism is a surprise. Dominant in most eastern countries but holding strong also in the west, this might be a lukewarm default choice when respondents are at a loss for the right praise. At least business has not fully overcome... Also, politics has not run over everything, according to the second most popular item. Thus, two statements about the absence of the worst are on top of the victory list.

This is a moment to muse about the significance of the choices. Whether they report about facts (really existing positive or negative factors) or they express value preferences rather. Also, wording can play an important role. For example, in the earliest version *Lack of cultural policy vision* was a popular choice among respondents, while the current formula of *visionary leadership* resonates to the least of all.

Matching problems and successes

Besides forming and analysing rankings of the answers from two separate points of view, positive and negative choices were also matched. On the example of the top item in [Diagram 9](#): 46% of all 170 answerers selected the low priority of culture in government budget as a major problematic factor. On the other hand, 4% chose the opposite, claiming that culture does enjoy government priority, hence a combined value of 42%. The very few positive options did not jeopardise the dominant negative position of the respective issue.

Diagram 9 Problematic factors modified with positive choices



The most interesting part is the bottom of the scale, the six items where the overall consensus was in favour of positive assessment rather than complaining:

- *Cultural life is not overwhelmed by commercial forces (vs. hegemonic influence of commercialism)*
- *Public's attention is balanced between entertainment and deeper cultural challenges (vs. one sided preference for easy entertainment)*
- *Impressive professional level of cultural managers (vs. low level of the same)*
- *Culture is amply promoted in the media (vs. too little promotion)*
- *The country attracts cultural talent from abroad (vs. exodus of talent)*
- *Contemporary creation is in focus (vs. too little priority for contemporary creation)*

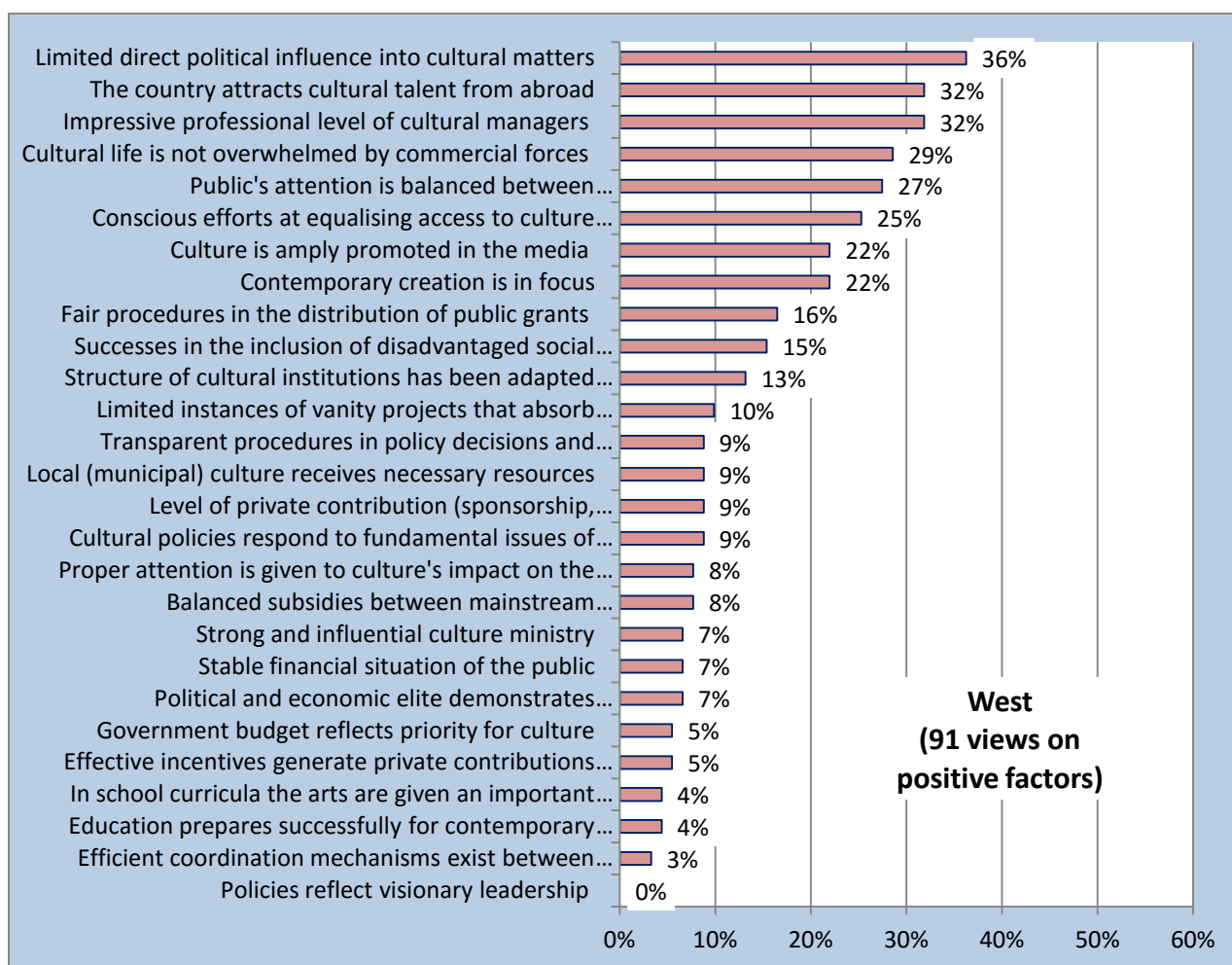
The case about commercialism was mentioned before. The -25% is the outcome of 7% of respondents complaining about hegemonic influence of business and 32% selecting the indemnity from commercialism as a positive aspect.

Although the 27 positive statements were each worded upon a negative counterpart, the 170 responses in the survey contain sporadic instances of choosing both sides. E.g. *Failures in engaging excluded social groups to culture* was listed among the five plagues but *Successes in the inclusion of disadvantaged social groups into culture* was identified by the same person as a positive aspect. Sometimes one finds a logical explanation for the oxymoron, in other cases careless responding is the answer.

Eastern and western perceptions of the positive aspects

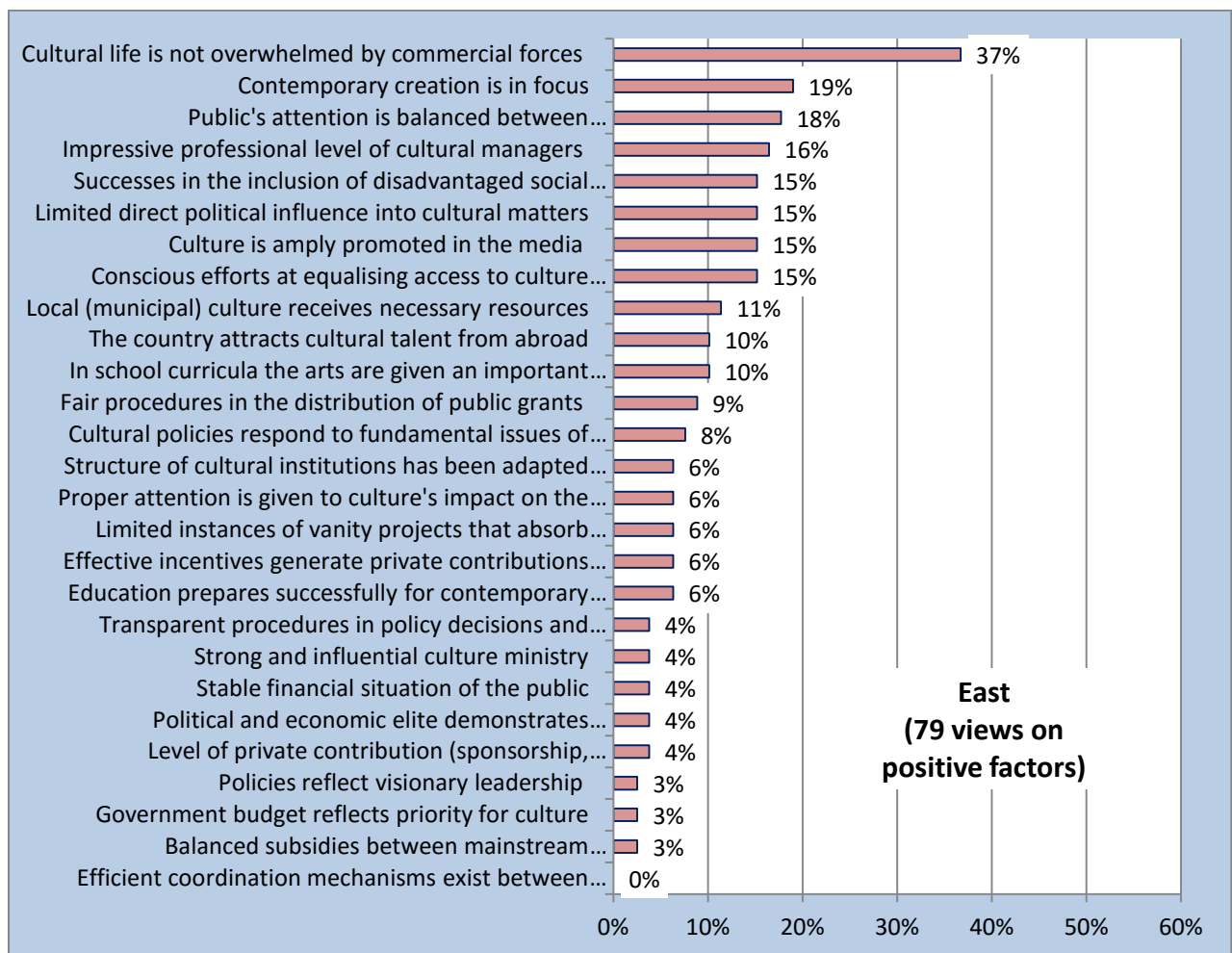
Returning to the east-west divide, accounts about the favourable aspects – strengths of the cultural ecosystems – have also produced certain characteristic differences. First of all the lines in the “western” [Diagram 10](#) tend to be longer: contributors from established capitalist democracies find eight positive aspects that are selected by more than 20% of answers. Experts and operators in post-communist countries found only one such statement (*Cultural life is not overwhelmed by commercial forces*)! The averages were 3.7 choices in the west and 2.6 in the east against the possible 5 in both cases.

Diagram 10 The frequencies of positive aspects in the western answers



The shorter lines in [Diagram 11](#) suggest the difficulties about finding or saying nice things in the new democracies. This was confirmed by comments from eastern contributors who could not help reading ironically the positive items of the questionnaire. Consider the high proportion of „forced choices” among the eastern positive answers. The phenomenon reflects high degree of disappointment in the climate, probably of the political situation in general, not just in culture. Unease at identifying positive aspects may at the same time be a symptom of lack of experiences to be involved in constructive thinking about the political and social environment.

Diagram 11 The frequencies of positive aspects in the eastern answers



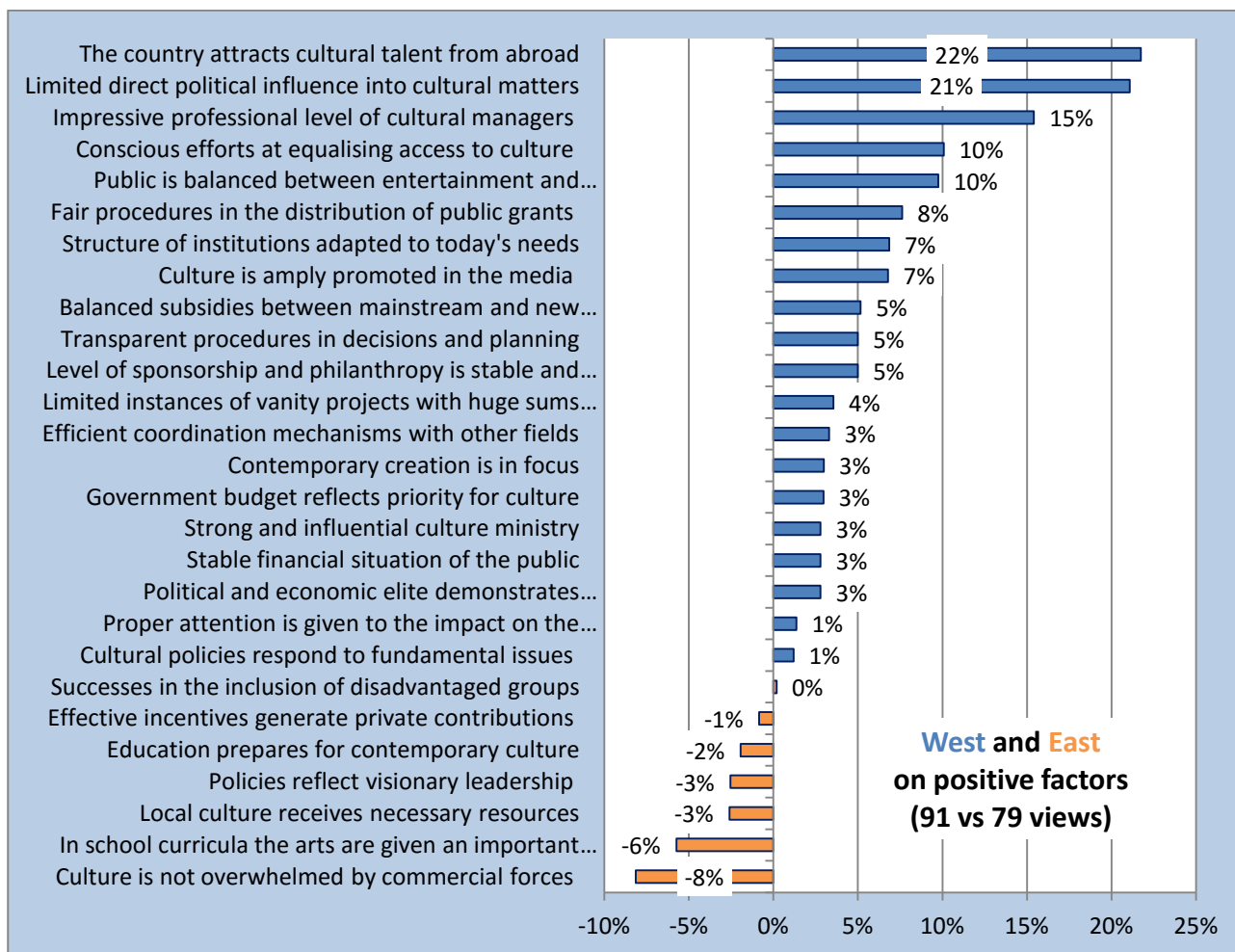
As seen, eastern contributors carry the brunt of responsibility for the high popularity of the statement about the restraint of commercial forces in the total barometer.

Further nuances of the responses are revealed by direct contrasting between east and west. [Diagram 12](#) follows the logic of [Diagram 7](#): the typically lower eastern percentages are distracted from the western figures.

Let us take a look at the two items on top. *The country attracts cultural talent from abroad* was marked by 32% in the west and 10% in the east, resulting 22%; while *Limited direct political influence into cultural matters* collected 36% in the west and 15% in the east, hence the 21%. Both items are the positive formulation of challenges that one would associate with the eastern half of Europe: brain drain and over-politicised cultural life. Without trying to interpret the four figures, the combined highs indicate that both issues are on the top of people's mind everywhere, including in the west.

The contributions to the survey suggest that art education has more stable positions in east and central Europe, corroborated by mentions of *Education prepares for contemporary culture* – two statements that very few western respondents identified as strength in their climate.

Diagram 12 Fusing eastern and western views about positive aspects (170 responses)



Distances between eastern and western views by combining problems and strengths

The most dedicated to statistical manoeuvres are invited to [Diagram 13](#). In it we went one step further than the preceding graph. First the exercise of [Diagram 9](#) was administered to the 79 eastern respondents. That is: at each problematic factor the percentage by which the 79 people marked it was reduced with the percentage that the same group of 79 marked the positive counterpart of the item. Then the same was done to the 91 western responses. Thus we arrived at two lists of problems modified with their positive complements. The smaller (the set belonging to the 79) was then deducted from the larger (the figures of the 91 western responses). The resulting graph reflects the basic division in attitude. With the average of 3.7 positive choices, westerners modified (weakened) their list of grievances while the eastern complaints were left heavy after only 2.6 strengths marked on the average. This is the reason why this graph based on problematic factors is dominated by the colour that stands for the eastern responses.

Diagram 13 The distances between eastern and western views about problematic aspects as modified by positive counterparts (170 responses)

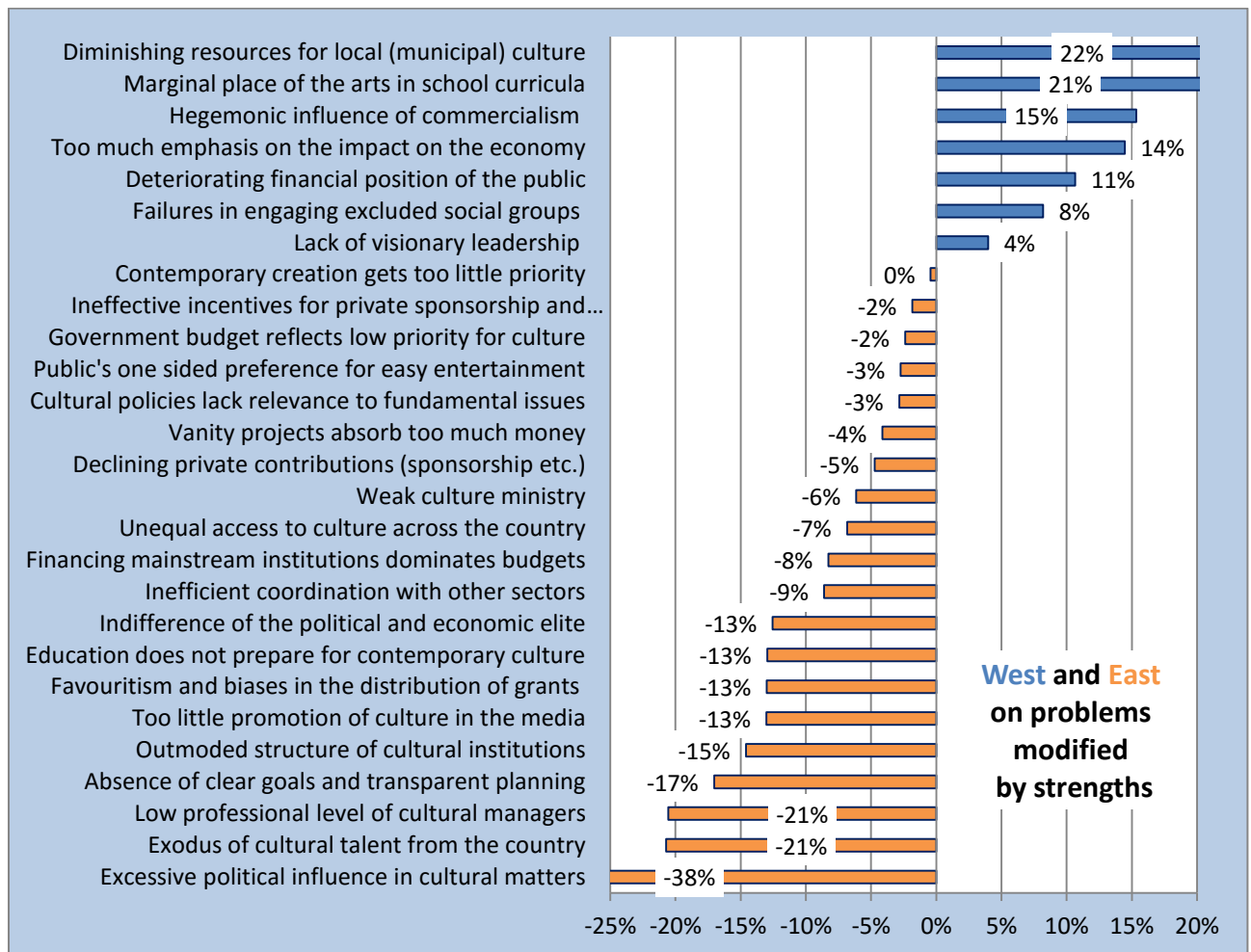


Diagram 13 measures distances between the two groups of respondents. Explanation on the example of *Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment*: In the East 79 group 5% selected this problematic factor. But on the other hand 18% marked the positive complement, *Public's attention is balanced between entertainment and deeper cultural challenges*. The modified eastern percentage of this problem is -13%, in fact considerably larger satisfaction than discontent. The respective percentages of the West 91 group are 12% and 27%, indicating consensual western satisfaction at -15%. Combining east and west puts this “problem” at the second position from the bottom at **Diagram 9**, which item is in fact the second most positive of all aspects generally perceived. **Diagram 13**, on the other hand, focuses on the differences between west and east, which is negligible at 3% in the case of this aspect. The attitude of the public towards culture attracts greater attention among cultural stakeholders in the west – its negative and positive sides alike –, although the conclusion is little different from that of their eastern colleagues.

The greatest distance is about political interference in cultural matters, a complaint brandished high by the 79 contributors from the east. This item tops the list of the most divisive issues:

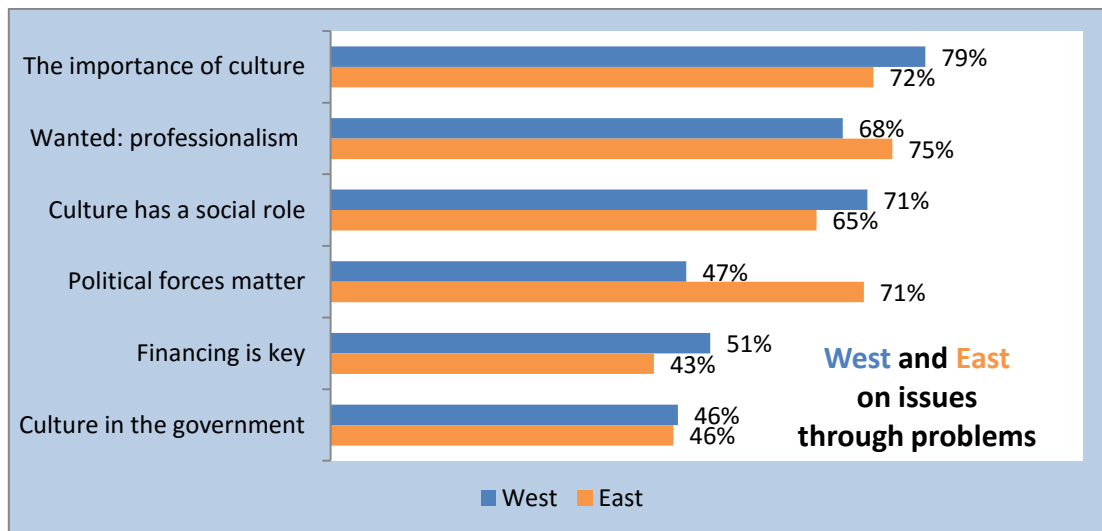
- *Excessive political influence in cultural matters*
- *Diminishing resources for local (municipal) culture*
- *Marginal place of the arts in school curricula*
- *Low professional level of cultural managers*
- *Exodus of cultural talent from the country*

Comparing perceptions by thematic clusters

The two large groups of the 170 responses were matched also by grouping the 27 issues into six thematic clusters. Although the data were submitted to various forms of cluster analysis according to standards of mathematical statistics, these clusters were formed along conventional logic². The largest cluster consists of seven statements both on the problematic and positive sides relating to the importance of culture. The smallest cluster contains one variable, the most popular statement about the position of culture in the budget of the government.

The lines in Diagram 14 and 15 show the percentages of respondents that chose at least one item of the respective cluster. The length of course depends on the number of statements in the cluster which on the other hand does not explain the division between the 79 eastern and 91 western answers.

Diagram 14 Comparing eastern and western views along thematic clusters upon problematic factors (170 responses)

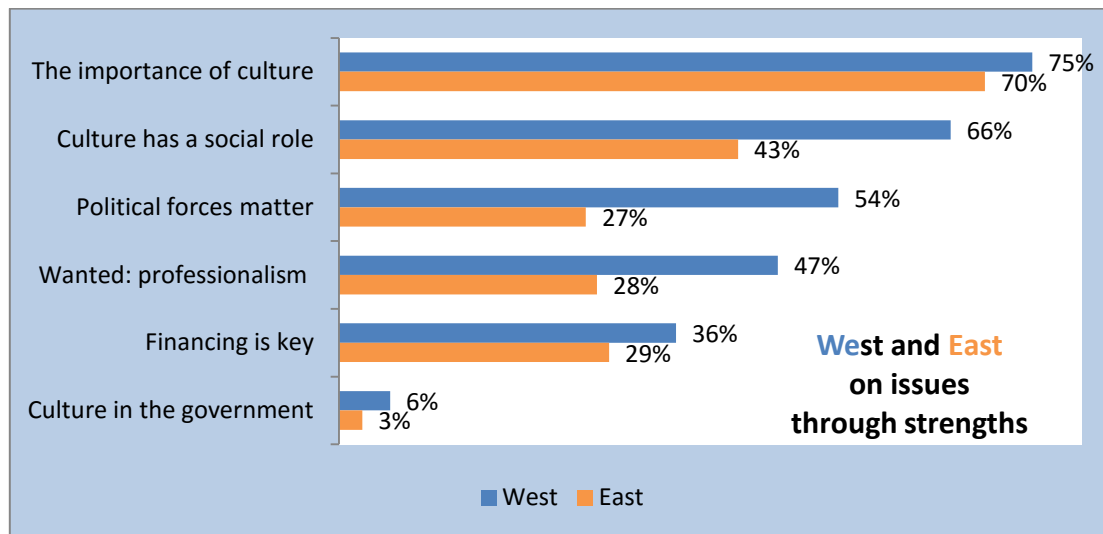


Based on the selection of problematic factors, the only major difference is in the perception of political interference.

The real distinction gets displayed on Diagram 15, showing the choices of positive aspects. In the matter of the importance of culture and about its financing the eastern opinion is on a par with the west. In the three other thematic areas eastern stakeholders have much less to say than their western colleagues.

² The sorting of 27 statements between clusters (numbers according to Annex 1): Importance of culture – 2, 7, 9, 14, 20, 23, 24; Professionalism – 1, 12, 17, 18, 19, 21; Social role – 3, 5, 10, 22, 25; Politics – 8, 15, 26, 27; Financing – 4, 6, 11, 16; Government – 13.

Diagram 15 Comparing eastern and western views along thematic clusters upon positive aspects (170 responses)



Geographic clusters

Perceptions about the climate of culture in four geographic regions

The number of responses allowed for shaping the following four geographic clusters (in order of size):

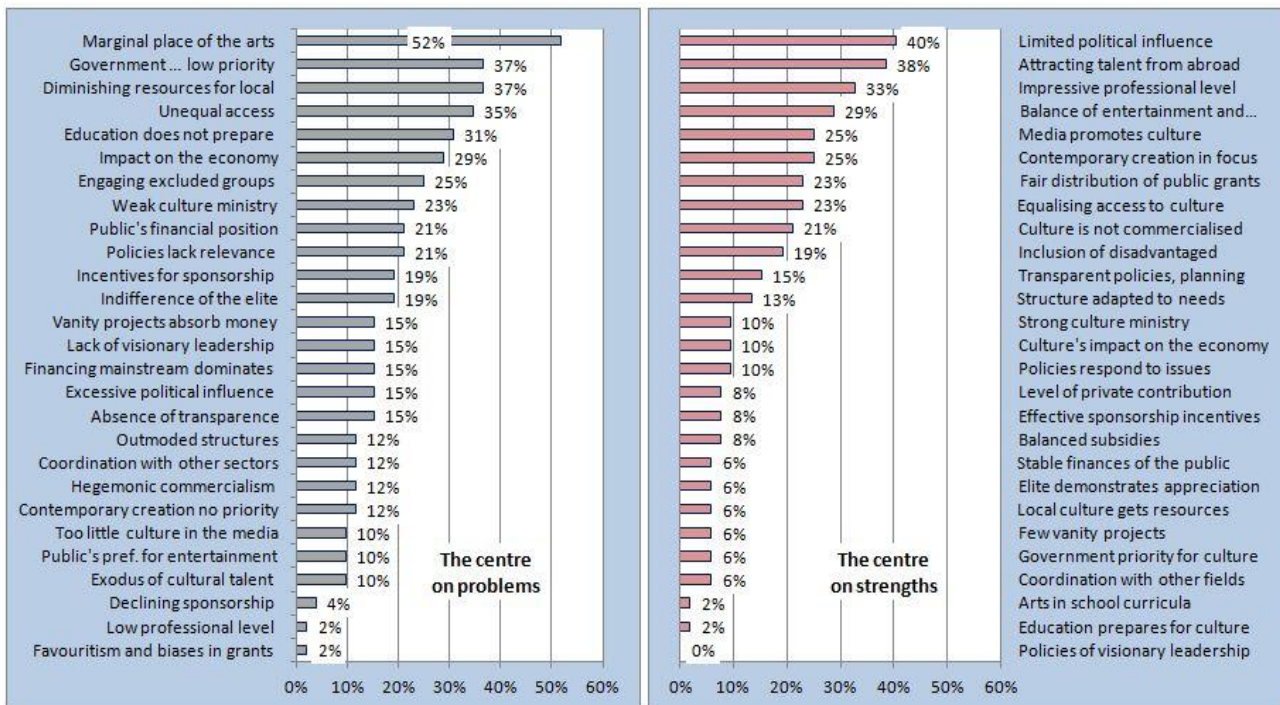
- 1) The largest group is labelled the Centre. The majority of the 52 contributors in the group are from the old member states of the EU. The sporadic answers from Switzerland, Canada and Australia were also added to the centre in a cultural sense.
- 2) Countries on the South-East of Europe, 33 answers.
- 3) The Visegrad four include the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, 28 answers.
- 4) The Mediterranean countries, including for cultural reasons Portugal, 26 answers.

The rankings of negative and positive statements of the four geographic clusters are shown on [Diagrams 17-20](#).

As seen on [Diagram 17](#), the “Centre” demonstrates the essence of the west, among others by pointing at one of the largest number of positive aspects, the average being 4.0 choices by respondent. The Centre stands apart from the rest by a number of features. The strong focus on the role of the school is corroborated by the almost total absence of the two relevant statements from the positive aspects mentioned in the Centre. Also, aspects of equality (combined with the financing of local culture) are most stressed in the Centre, matched by no other region.

In the following twin diagrams shortened versions of the statements are applied in order to fit to the narrow space.

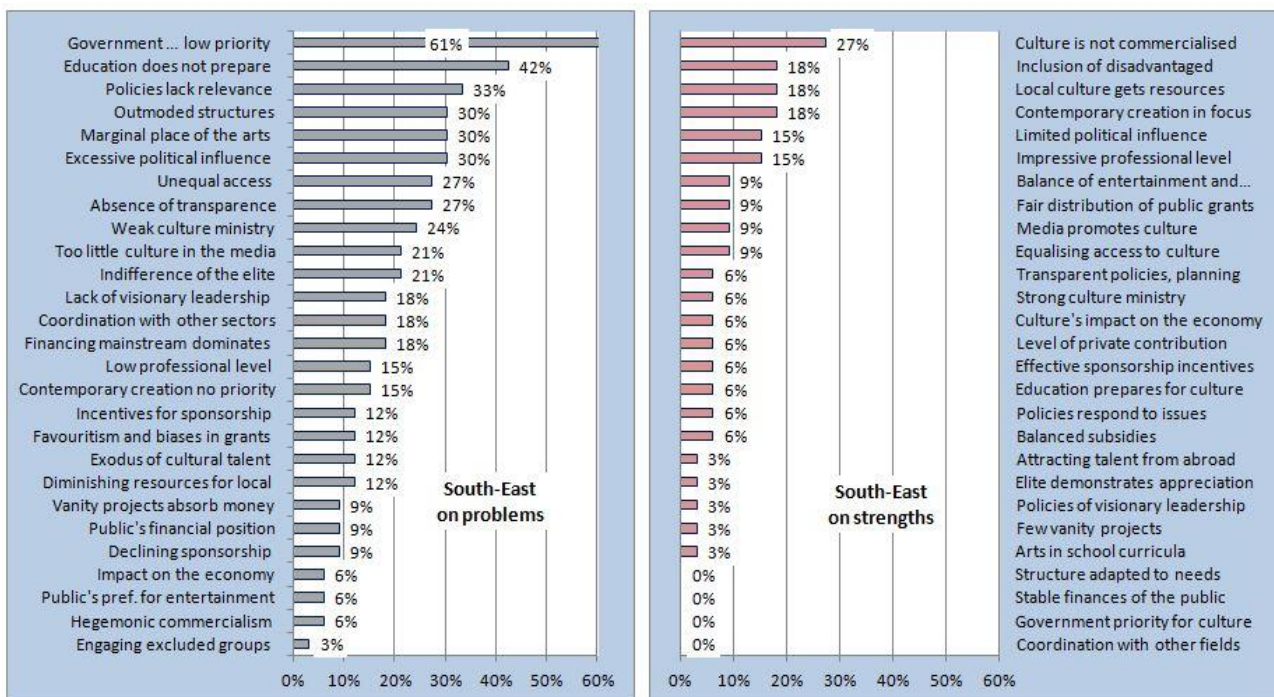
Diagram 17 Perceptions of the cultural climate in the centre (UK, Ireland, Benelux, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, 52 responses)



Answers from the group of South-East are displayed on [Diagram 18](#). In contrast to the Centre, these people find precious little to be proud of: the 33 contributions include 70 mentions of positive features, an average of 2.1. Romanians are to blame most, with an extra low average of 1.8 positive aspects in the 12 expert views from that country.

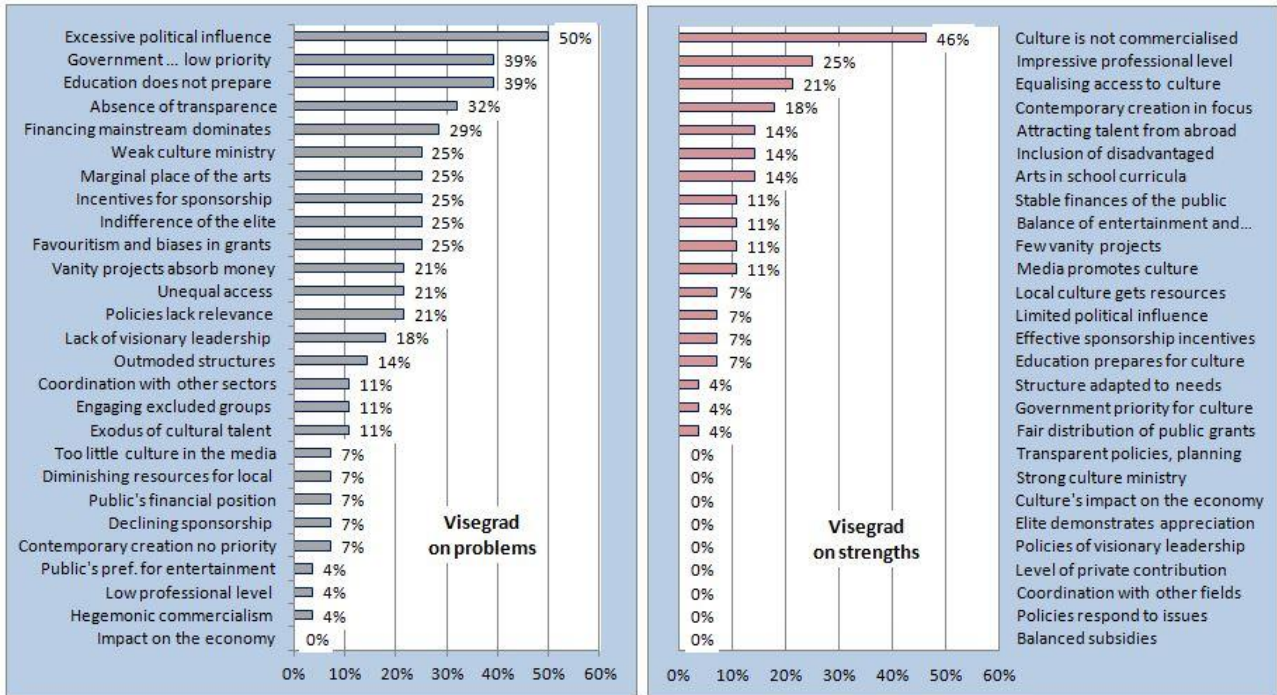
The two issues of *Local culture receives necessary resources* and *Successes in the inclusion of disadvantaged groups* were both mentioned by 18% of the south-eastern contributors, way higher than the rest, especially the Centre. The latter choice was confirmed by putting its negative counterpart *Failures in engaging excluded social groups to culture* to the bottom of the list of problems.

Diagram 18 Perceptions of the cultural climate in the south-east (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, ex-Yugoslav countries, Turkey, 33 responses)



The Visegrad countries (Diagram 19) represent an opposite to the Centre in three areas, with an eye on both negative and positive sides: the issues of political interference, of equality in supply and access, as well as of the impact of culture on the economy. This latter is fully absent from the Visegrad score: questions of spillover have hardly reached the perception threshold of cultural operators in these four countries.

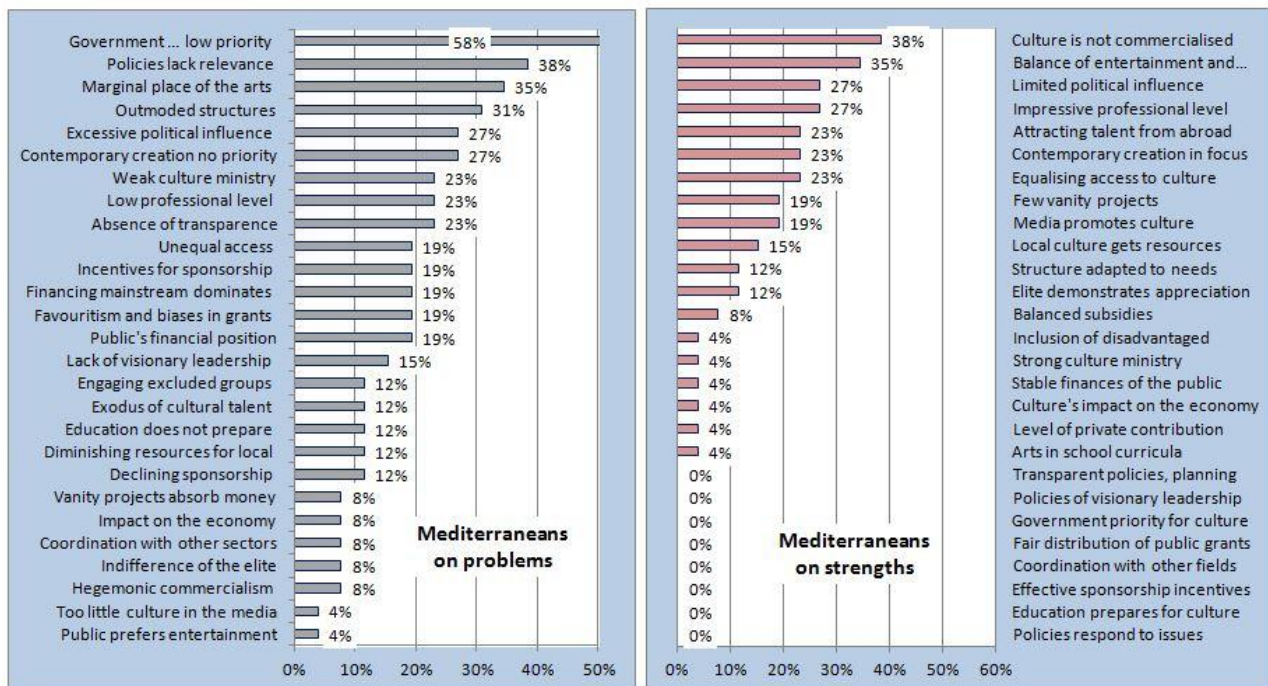
Diagram 19 Perceptions of the cultural climate in the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, 28 responses)



Peculiar is the lopsided distribution of positive aspects on [Diagram 20](#) upon the choices of the Mediterranean respondents: nearly as many items were mentioned by over 20% as in the Centre, while on the other hand eight positive factors did not deserve one mention even.

The list of complains suggests a yearning for modernity, expressed by several problems rated the highest by the Mediterranean contributors, concerning relevant policies, the structure of institutions, the place of contemporary culture and professional standards, coupled with strong stresses on the standing of the cultural budget and the culture ministry.

Diagram 20 Perceptions of the cultural climate in the Mediterranean countries (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, 26 responses)



Between the four regions the views received from correspondents in the South-East and the Mediterranean region seem to be the closest to one another. More subtle comparison is offered by the method applied for [Diagram 13](#).

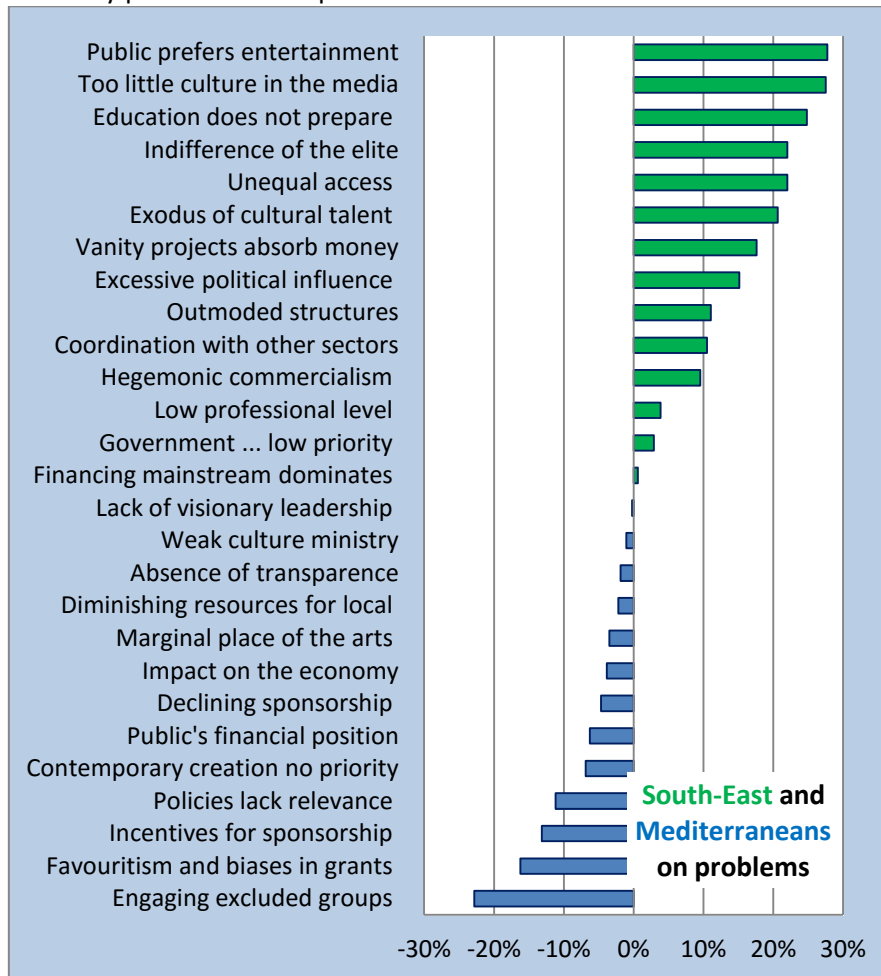
As a first step, each problematic factor was modified by its positive counterpart, as selected by the same group of respondents. In “normal” cases a higher percentage chose the problem than the strength (because the average number of the first was 5, while the positive choice was around 3), but there “negative problems”, that means items where the positive statement was mentioned more often than the problematic aspect. E.g. 12% of Mediterranean answers hold that *the elite demonstrates appreciation for culture* and only 8% complains about the opposite: the combined value is -4%.

As a second step the South-Eastern and Mediterranean values were set at one another. As e.g. among the respondents from the South-East many more were critical about the attitude of their elite than those satisfied (21% vs 3%), the combined value was 18% there. Matching the two regions we get 14. The distance between the perceptions in the two regions about the elite is 14 percentage points: south-easterners consider it that much more of a problem than Mediterraneans do.

Irrespective of the exact figures the graph gives an impression about the size and direction of differences between the perceptions of the two regions. There are problems that – compared to the Mediterranean colleagues – are emphasised more in the South-East (the attitude of the public, the

place of culture in the media), others the other way round (the issue of inclusion and fair distribution of grants), as well as there are items where views coincide (e.g. the matter of visionary leadership).

Diagram 21 The distances between south-eastern and Mediterranean views about problematic aspects as modified by positive counterparts



Regional climates, 2015 versus 2014

Comparing the 2015 results with those received a year earlier we find fundamental consistencies with regard to the regions, in spite of the fact that the low numbers of respondents on both occasions fall far from being representative of the respective countries. The most significant differences between the regional barometer scores of the two years are the following.

Problematic factors that received a considerably stronger emphasis in 2015 than a year earlier (**UP**), and those that were mentioned less often in 2015 than a year earlier (**DOWN**):

- a) In the Centre:
 - UP** - *Unequal access to culture, Weak culture ministry and Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment,*
 - DOWN** - *Financing mainstream institutions dominates budgets;*
- b) In the South-East:
 - UP** - *Marginal place of the arts in school curricula and Unequal access to culture,*
 - DOWN** - *Deteriorating financial position of the public;*

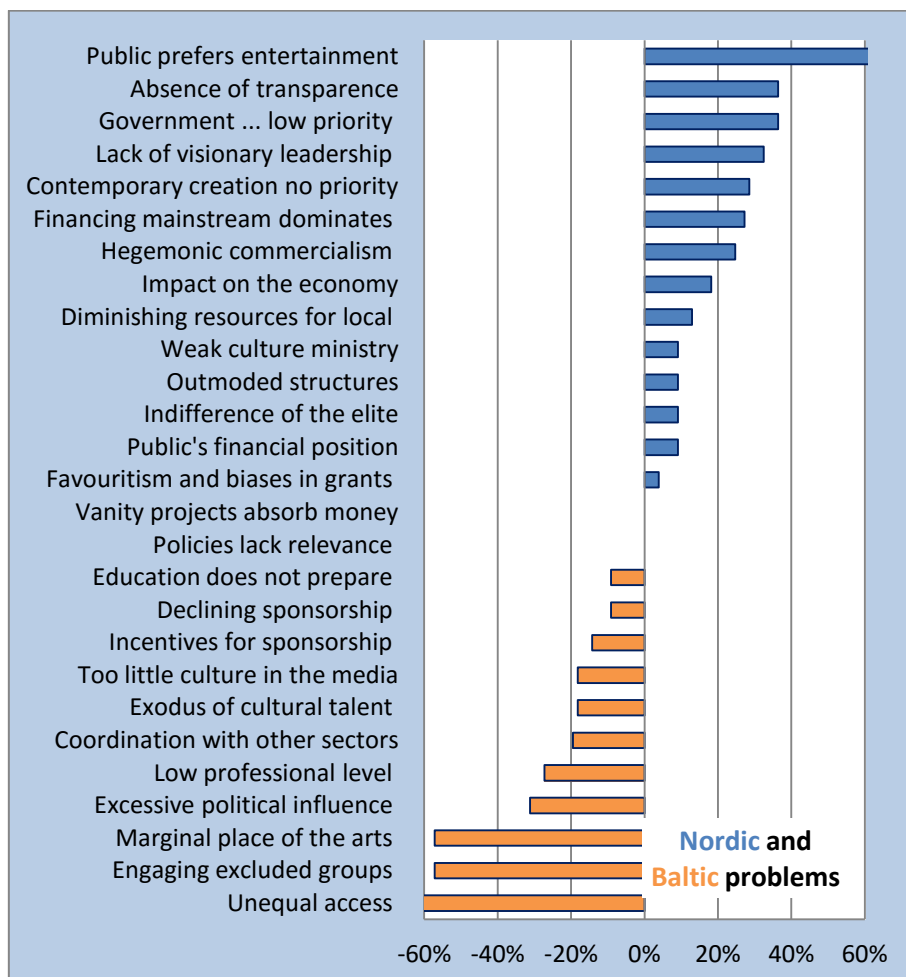
- c) In the Visegrad four:
UP - *Ineffective incentives for private sponsorship and philanthropy,*
DOWN - *Declining private contributions (sponsorship, philanthropy) and Deteriorating financial position of the public;*
- a) In the Mediterranean region:
UP - *Excessive political influence in cultural matters and Low professional level of cultural managers,*
DOWN - *Too little promotion of culture in the media.*

While some of these changes appear to reflect shifts in the general attention (e.g. smaller accent on financial aspects), others may be due to the difference in the composition of the respondents.

Seeking specificities of the cultural climate at lower geographic levels

The four geographic groups discussed in the preceding chapters comprise a little more than 80% of the responses to the online survey. The rest belong to smaller areas. An attempt was made to combine the 11 Nordic and 7 Baltic responses in an acknowledgement of the tendencies of political, social and cultural conversion between the two groups of countries. Nevertheless in this respect our barometer performed much against expectations or hopes. Diagram 22 reveals the size and nature of distances between the – true, very few – views that arrived on the climate of culture.

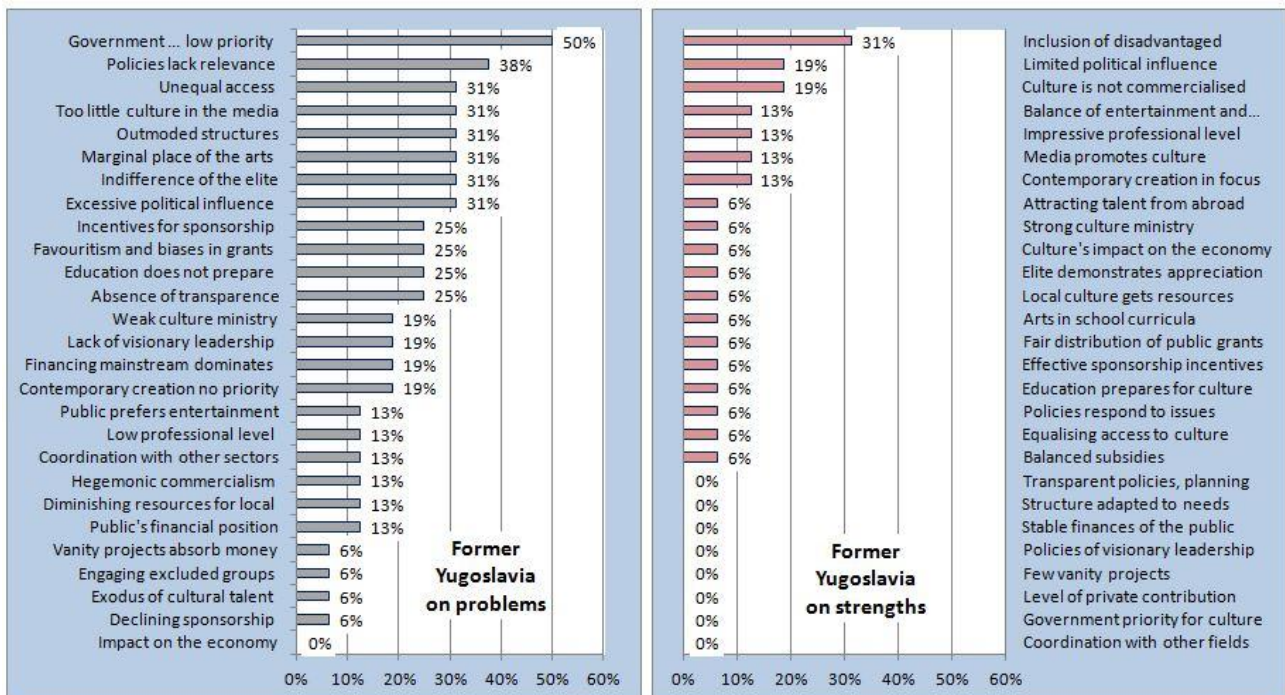
Diagram 22 The distances between Nordic and Baltic views about problematic aspects as modified by positive counterparts (18responses)



The division contradicts expectations because the Baltic views appear more “western” than the other set of perceptions: look at the three problem areas – equality and arts education – that concern the contributors from the three postsoviet republics much more than their colleagues to the north. Furthermore, the Baltic pride over the balanced cultural preferences of their public is in contrast with the Nordic chagrin about the same. The customary East-West pattern emerges at a few items like the Baltic grievance over political interference and the exodus of talent. Summing up: we need more time for substantial homogenisation in the area and we received too few responses to arrive at reliable conclusions.

In another part of Europe 16 answers came from what used to be the federation of Yugoslavia. Notwithstanding the obvious differences in – among others – the climate of culture, they were collected into [Diagram 23](#). Relative homogeneity of the answers is an excuse for this exercise. The 1.9 positive mark per contributor is one of the lowest. The graph helps find two remarkable deviations from the larger set of South East: *Successes in the inclusion of disadvantaged social groups into culture* was marked as a leading strength and not one of the 16 respondents lamented about *Too much emphasis on culture’s impact on the economy*.

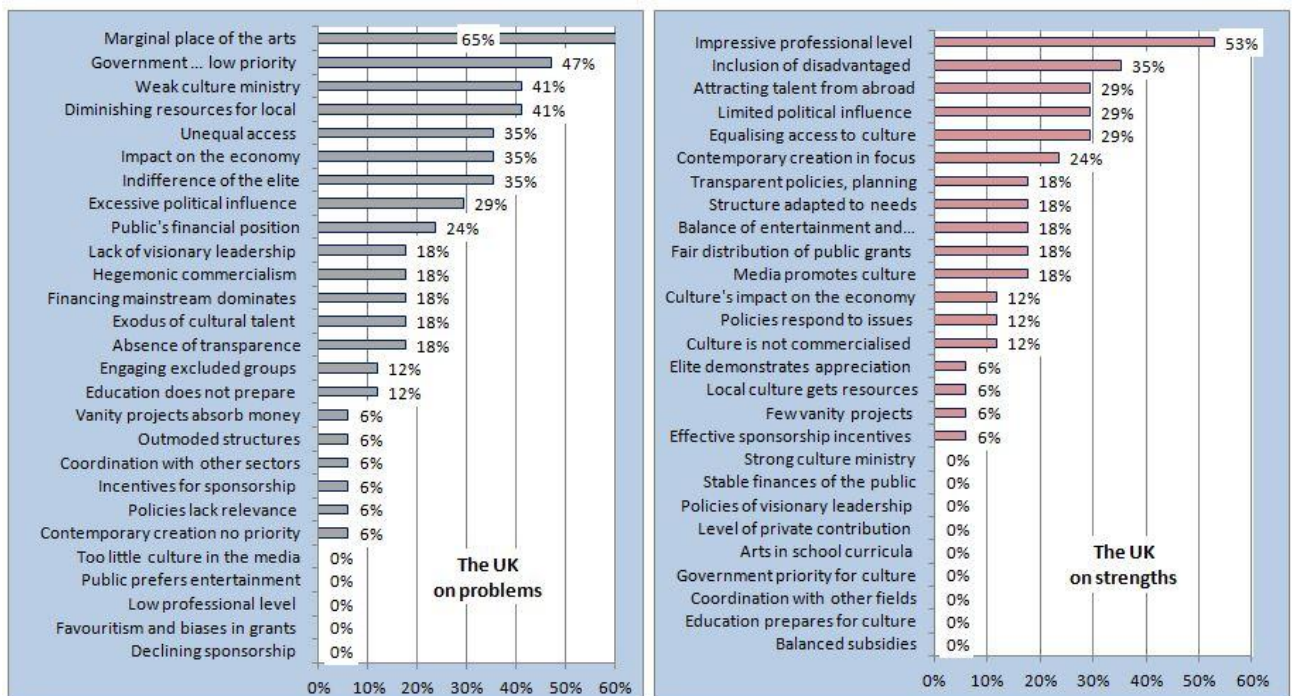
Diagram 23 Perceptions on the cultural climate in the former Yugoslav republics (Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, 16 responses)



A federation that is withstanding the centrifugal forces of our age: the United Kingdom is represented in the survey with 17 answers, including those that focus on Scotland or Northern Ireland. The UK is thus the only country with sufficient input to the barometer for a (federated) national profile. Despite constituting a large part of the 52 strong Centre, there are important differences. Still high, 3.5 per answer is the rate of positive choices, yet lagging behind the 4.0 average in the Centre. The score is uneven, with 53% British satisfaction with the professional level in the sector is the highest of all, just like the 35% claiming *Successes in the inclusion of disadvantaged social groups* and the 65% grumble over the position of the arts in school curricula.

This last issue recalls the dilemma about the content of the respondents' choices. Arts education in the school system of the United Kingdom has a fairly high reputation in the world. Whether the rampant dissatisfaction among the British respondents to the barometer is a proof that the international perception is wrong, based on a mirage, or indeed, it is a testimony about the outstanding importance Britons attach to the arts in education, nothing is good enough... The question is open.

Diagram 24 Perceptions of the climate of culture in the United Kingdom (17 responses)



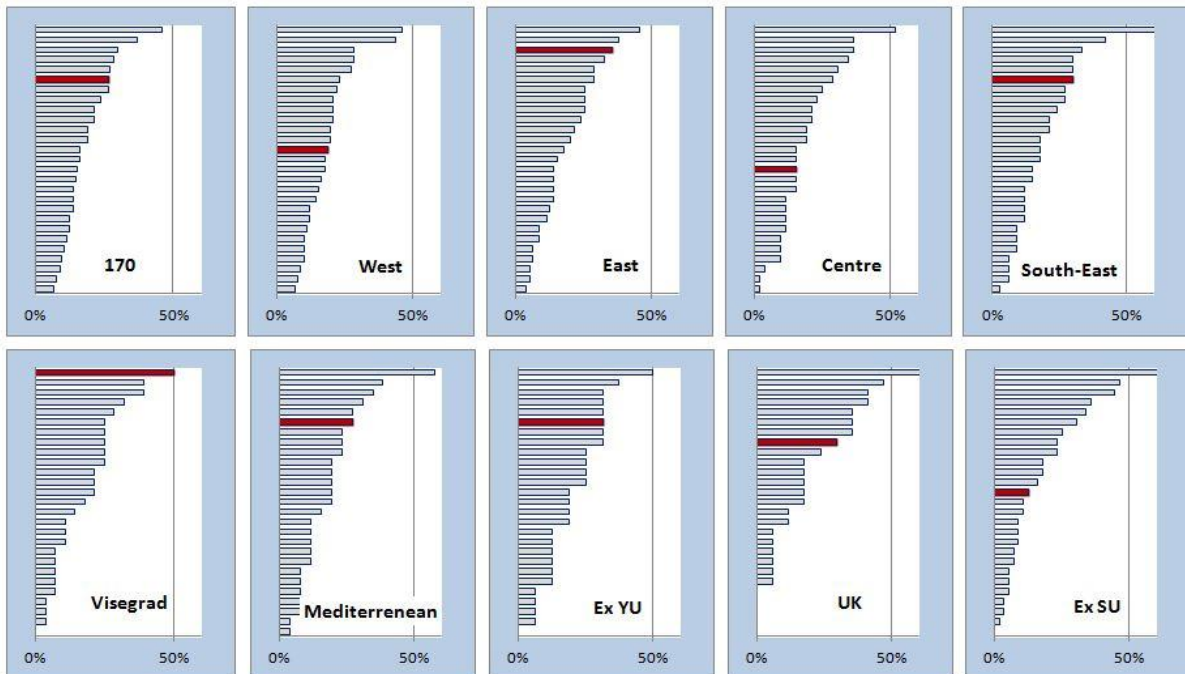
Transversal comparison of selected themes

The answers to the cultural climate barometer allow for comparing various thematic dimension of the across several geographic groups of respondents. This chapter is about such endeavours.

The composite diagrams offer visual clues for the comparison of perceptions about selected aspects. The first one, [Diagram 25](#) is about the statement that proved to be the most divisive issue between east and west: *Excessive political influence in cultural matters*, as a problematic factor to culture. On an aggregate level, among the 170 responses, this statement occupies a position in the middle. Yet it is the number one concern in the Visegrad countries and is a major concern in the South-East too.

The diagram contains a new rank list, labelled as post-soviet (Ex SU). The great majority of responses displayed in this rank list is from Ukraine – [Annex 3](#) provides the explanation. As to why political interference is mentioned in such a low number in those post-soviet countries is open to considerations.

[Diagram 25](#) The position of *Excessive political influence in cultural matters* on rank lists in various places (170 responses³)



One of the surprises that surfaced in the 2014 cultural climate barometer was the fundamental difference in the approach to the resources of local culture between east and west. This phenomenon was clearly confirmed in 2015. This issue enjoyed a much higher priority in western (or richer) countries than elsewhere. This we explained by the precedence of fundamentals (in poorer environments) to the redressing of imbalances between the urban centres and the countryside. As it was demonstrated in [Diagram 13](#), the relevant variable turned out to be the second most divisive issue in 2015, which can be examined at greater detail [Diagram 26](#).

³ 212 responses in the „Ex SU” box in this and the following graphs, with 46 additional answers collected in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, as explained in [Annex 3](#).

Diagram 26 The position of *Diminishing resources for local (municipal) culture* on rank lists in various places (170 responses)

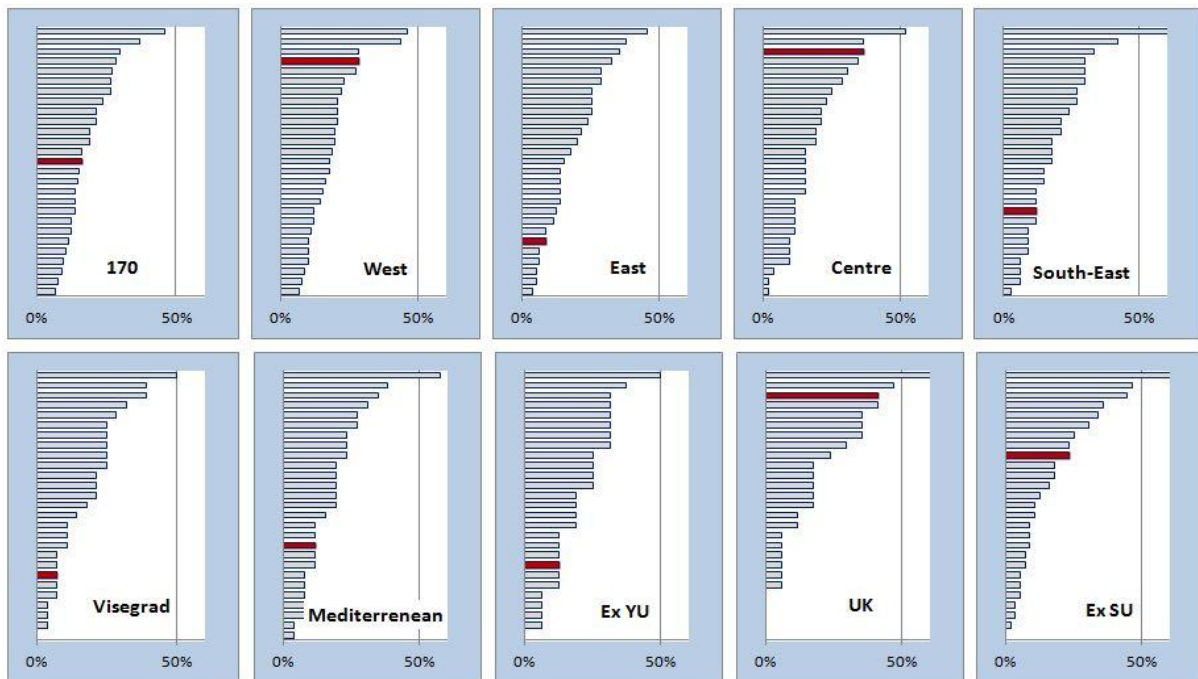
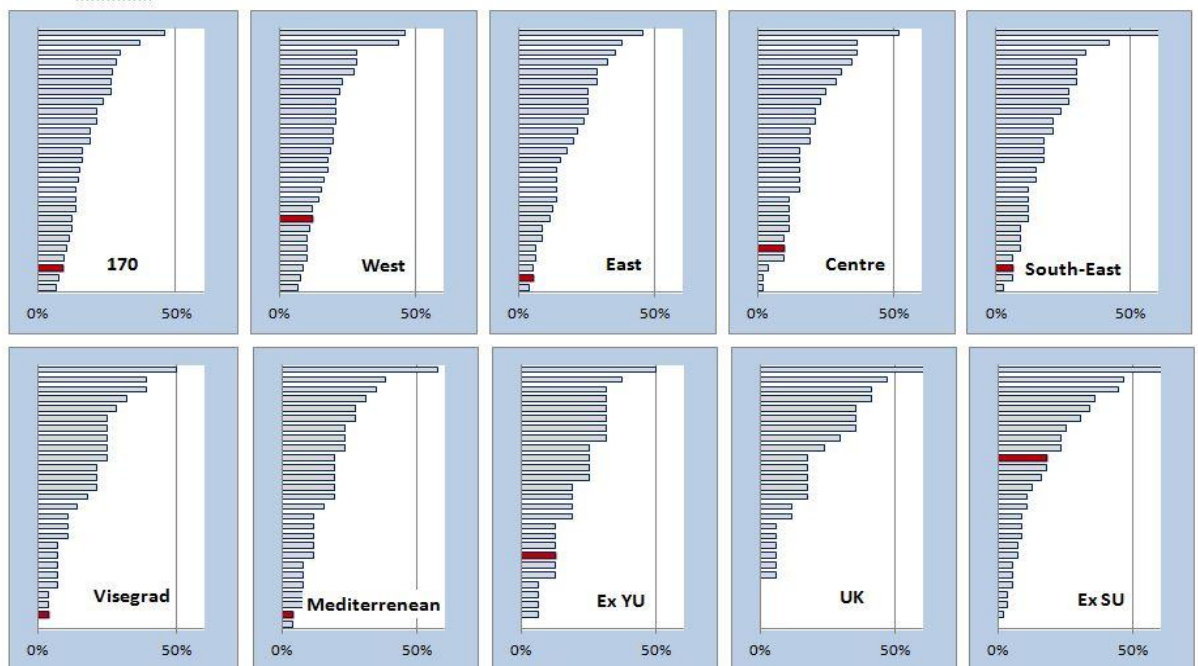


Diagram 27 presents *Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment*. It is interesting to see the prominence of this matter in some of the geographic environments although it weighs rather little in the total sum – and was not raised by anyone from the United Kingdom.

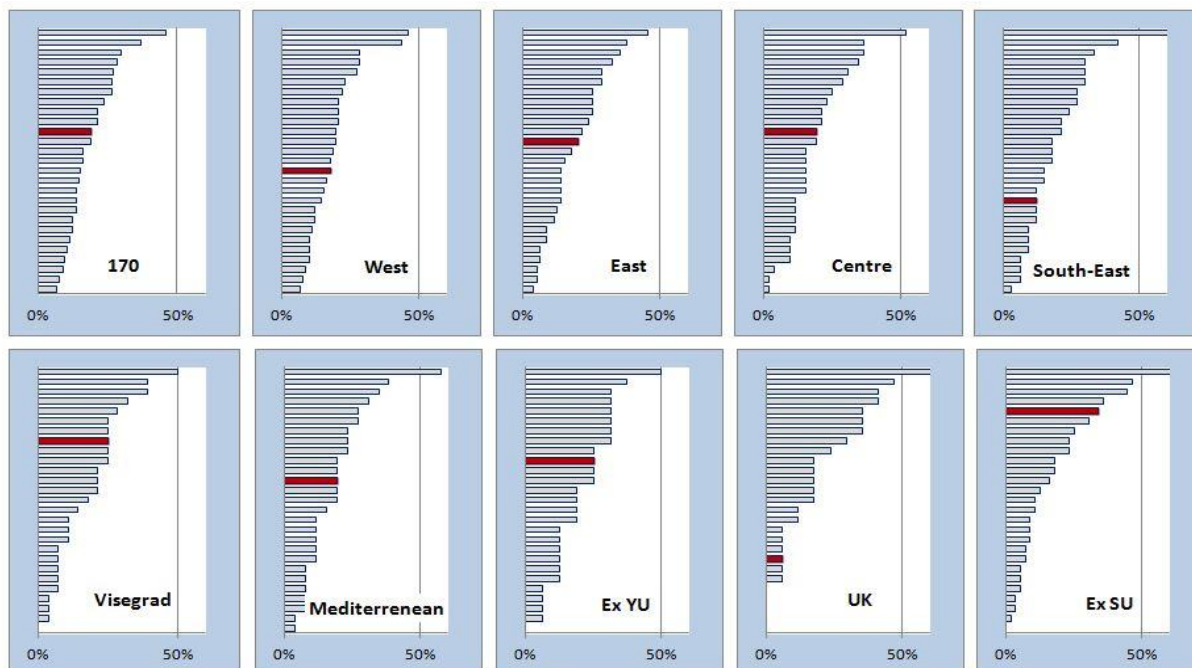
Diagram 27 Public: *Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment* (170 responses)



Another single item on comparative display is *Ineffective incentives for private sponsorship and philanthropy* on **Diagram 28**. Relatively important in the eyes of the majority (19% of the total chose this item), it is very low on the agenda in the UK. Recalling the same dilemma at **Diagram 5**, one

wonders whether because the existing incentives function well in the UK or because the high illusions attached to sponsorship are past. Not so elsewhere, particularly in the former Soviet lands.

Diagram 28 Sponsorship: *Ineffective incentives for private sponsorship and philanthropy*



Indeed, displaying the remaining the relative position of the remaining 23 problematic factors (as well as the positive choices) could convey interesting insights into the nature of the cultural climate, yet we stop here in this report.

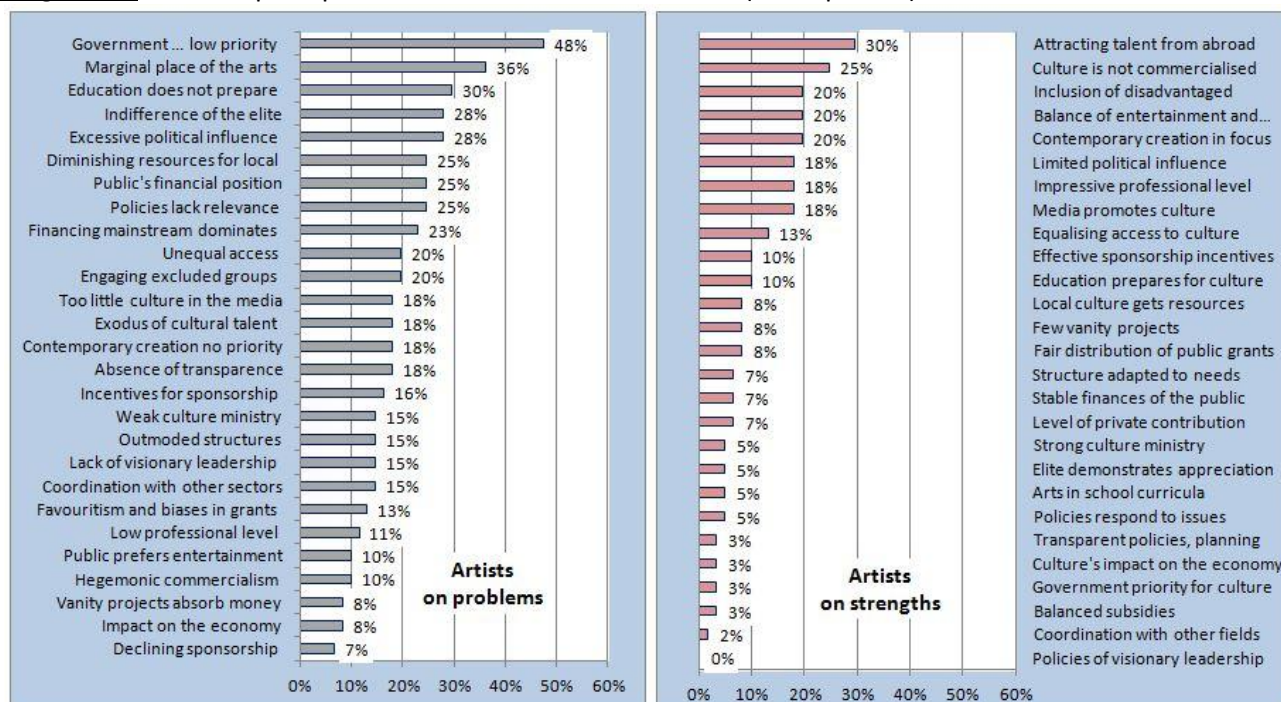
Patterns by profession

Differences in the perceptions of various professional groups

Respondents to the cultural climate barometer were asked to identify their professional backgrounds which allows for examining perceptions of the various professional communities. Where there was a possibility (e.g. at answering off line on a sheet) most people marked multiple identities or chose “other” with or without specifying their atypical position, this has reduced clear cases to an unfortunate small share. With all that the largest group of *artists* contains 61 answers from 45 *performing* and 16 *visual artists*.

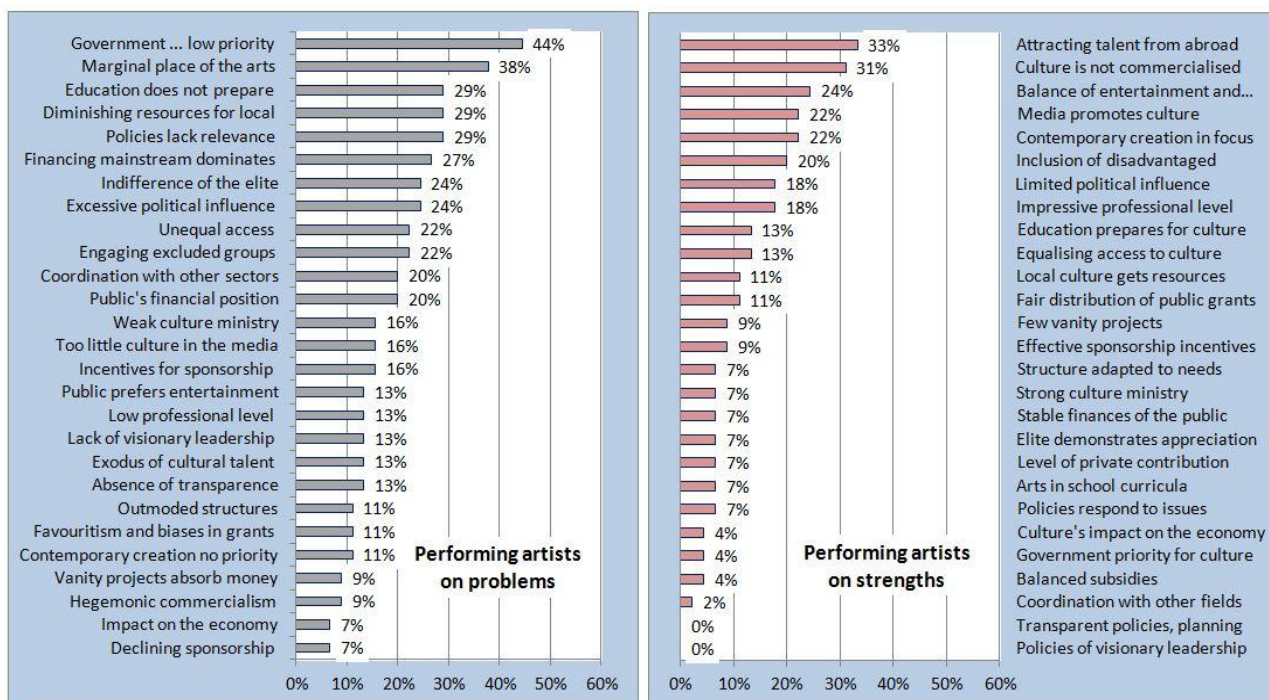
The single most remarkable point about artists’ rating of problematic and favourable aspects of the cultural climate is the clear contentment about the attraction of talent from abroad – the famous mobility of artists (Diagram 29).

Diagram 29 Artists’ perceptions about the climate of culture (61 responses)



Since performing artists are the great majority in the sample, removing visual artists results minor changes from the rank list of the artists’ choices. The greatest difference – surprisingly – is about *Contemporary creation gets too little priority*: this complaint received seven percentage points smaller support from artists than from the larger group of artists. Also, a slightly greater share of performing artists agreed with the statement *Contemporary creation is in focus* than artists in general.

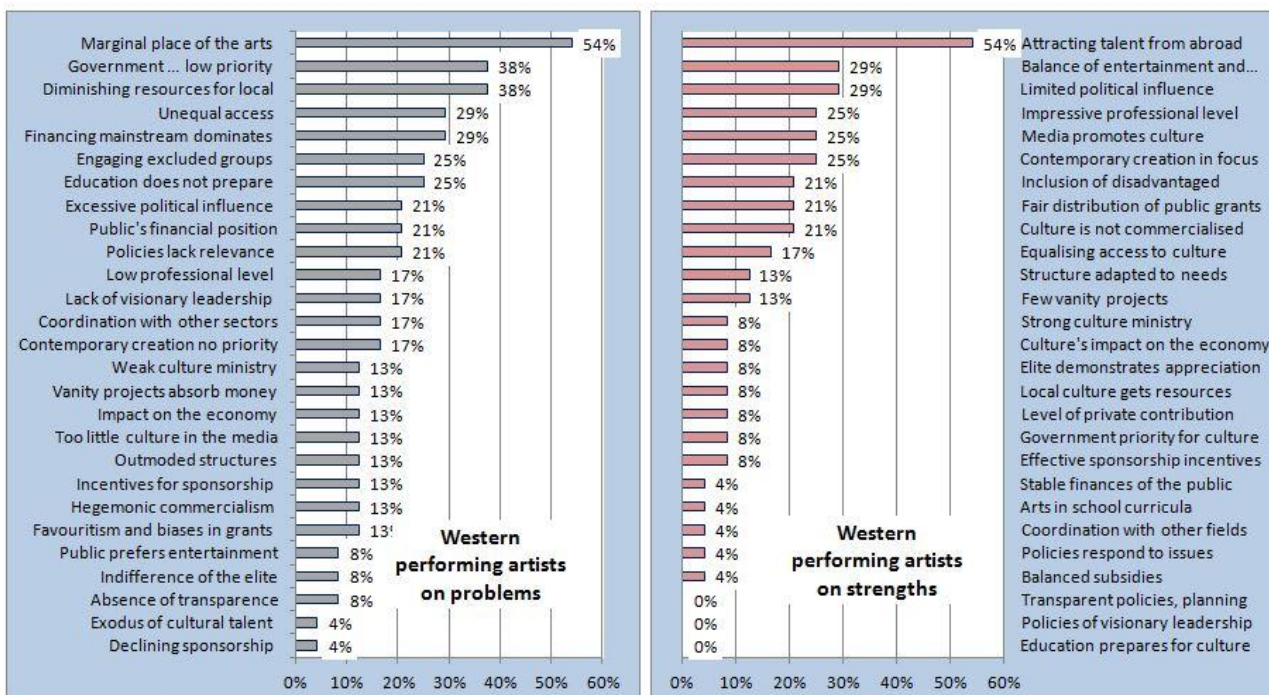
Diagram 30 Performing artists' perceptions about the climate of culture (45 responses)



Real differences are produced by dividing the group of performing artists to west and east which the number of responses with this professional background allows; division is done along the lines as west and east were defined above.

The group of 24 “western” performing artists seems to be the most engaged of all professional circles, with high numbers of positive remarks (an average of 3.7); also they scored items relating to equality and fairness quite high. *The country attracts cultural talent from abroad* – that we identified with the satisfaction about the high degree of mobility – was selected by 54% of western performing artists, marking it as the most positive symptom by far of the cultural climate (Diagram 31).

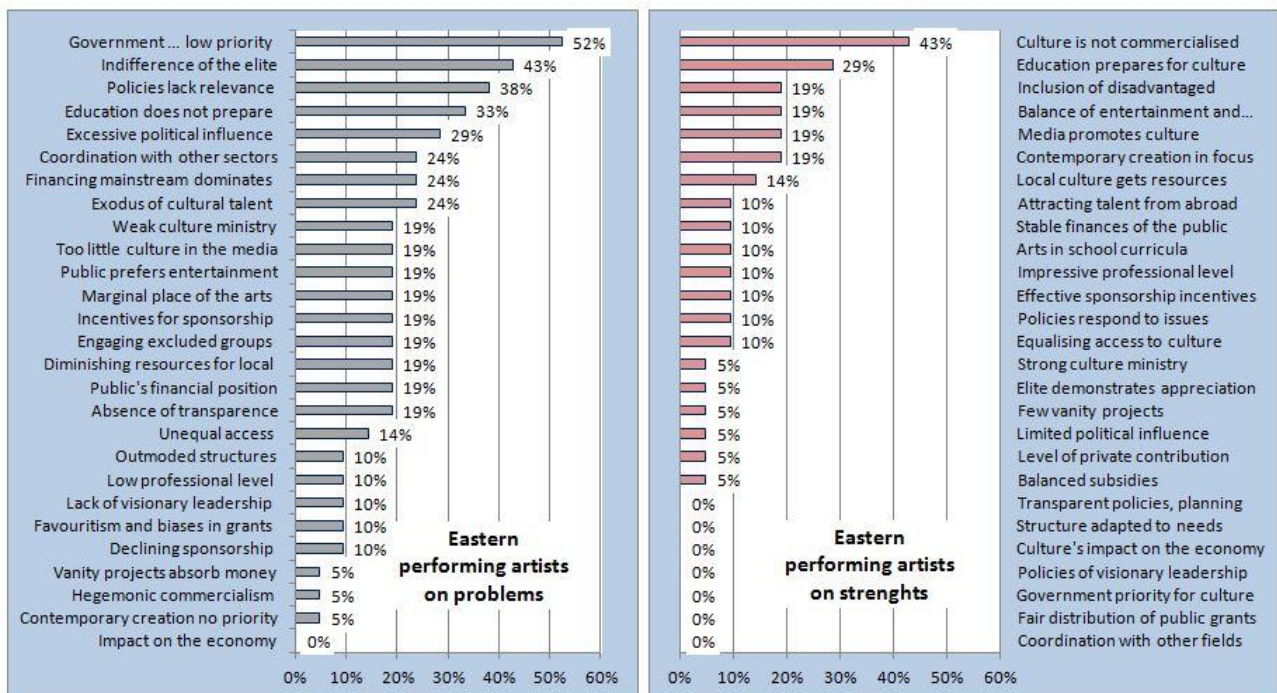
Diagram 31 Perceptions of western performing artists about the climate of culture (18 responses)



A caution is due here. Participants were required to mark the climate of which country their remarks refer to. Mobility has turned it increasingly customary that this may not be the same as citizenship or residence. Some of the 24 views on western countries from a performing art background might in fact be citizens of “eastern” or “third” countries. This, anyhow, has no relevance to the result as responses supposedly refer to the actual environment of the contributor.

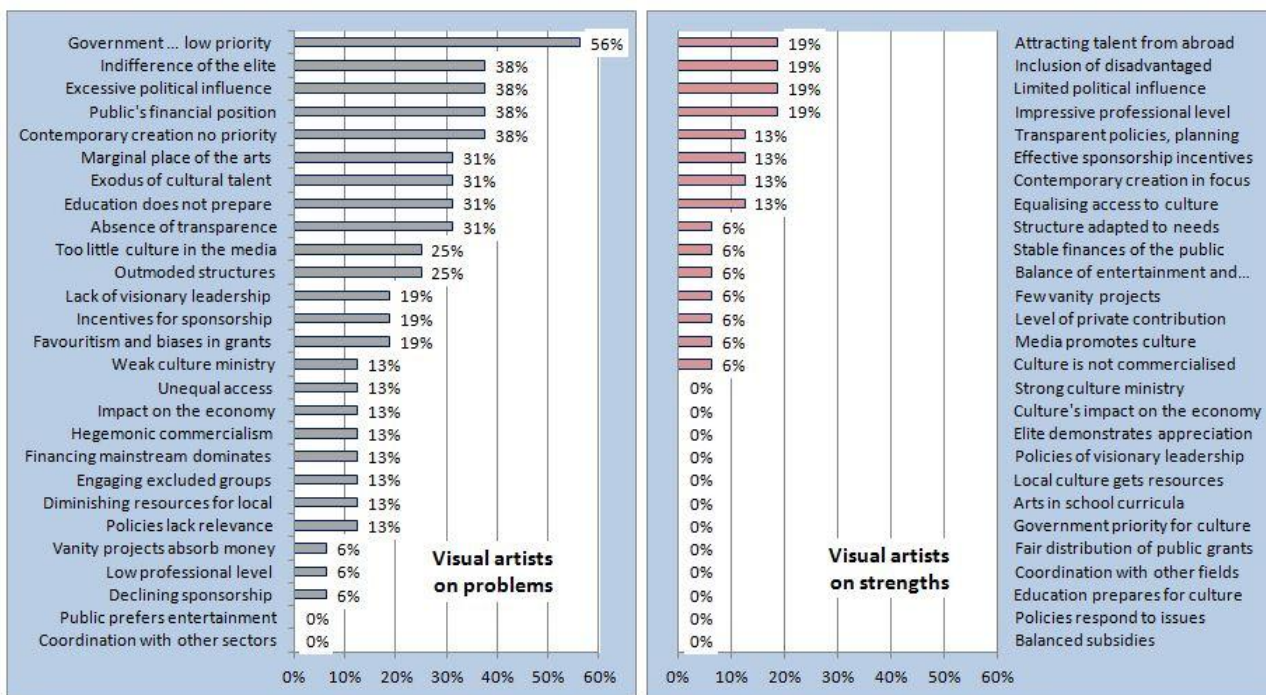
Performing artists in the east suffer most from the indifference of the elite, nearly every second respondent identified it as a leading worry. Not one of them complained about *Too much emphasis on culture’s impact on the economy*, which is 13% less than the share among their western colleagues.

Diagram 32 Perceptions of eastern performing artists about the climate of culture (21 responses)



The peculiarity of visual artists is their reluctance to name good sides (1.7 by average, [Diagram 33](#)). Out of the 27 positive aspects 12 did not receive a supporting vote from any of the 16 contributors with a visual art background.

Diagram 33 Perceptions of visual artists about the climate of culture (16 responses)



The 35 researchers (academics) were found enough in number to be divided into east and west. Diametric opposition was revealed about *Too much emphasis on culture's impact on the economy*, loathed in the west and left unnoticed in the east. A powerful claim for *relevance of cultural policies to fundamental issues of society* is high on the list of eastern researchers with regard to problematic factors.

Diagram 34 Perceptions of researchers about the climate of culture (35 responses)

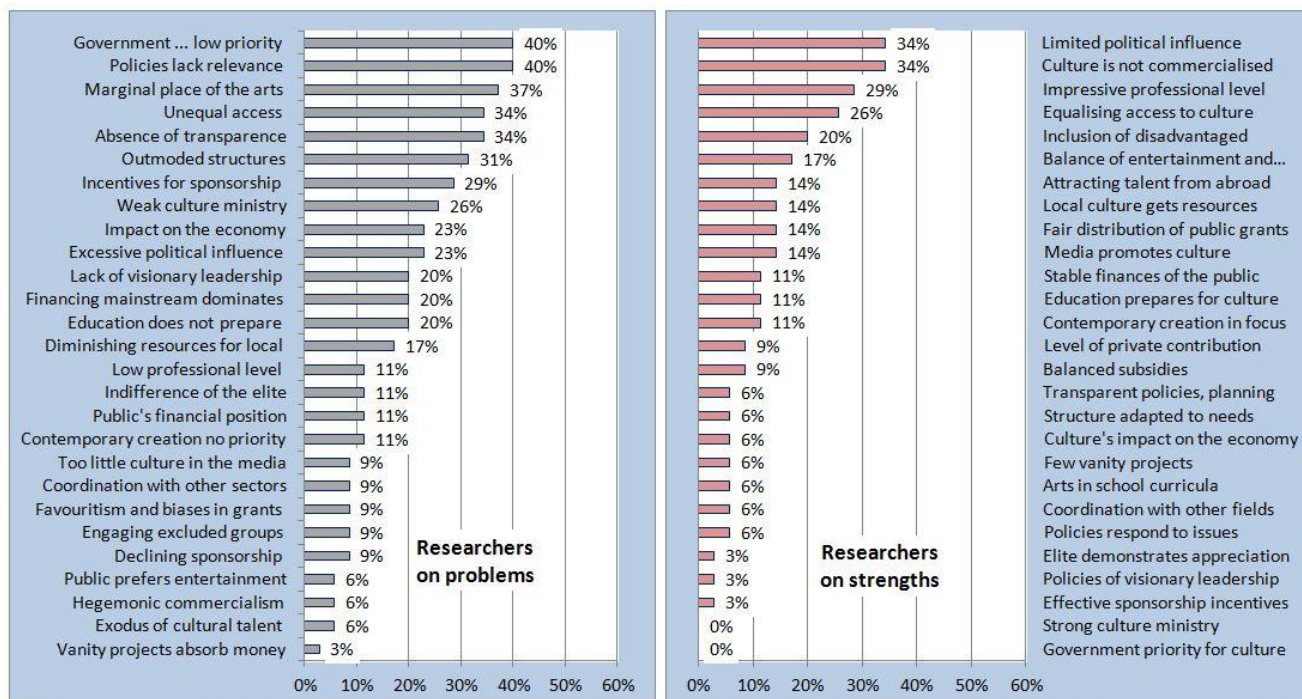


Diagram 35 Perceptions of western researchers about the climate of culture (18 responses)

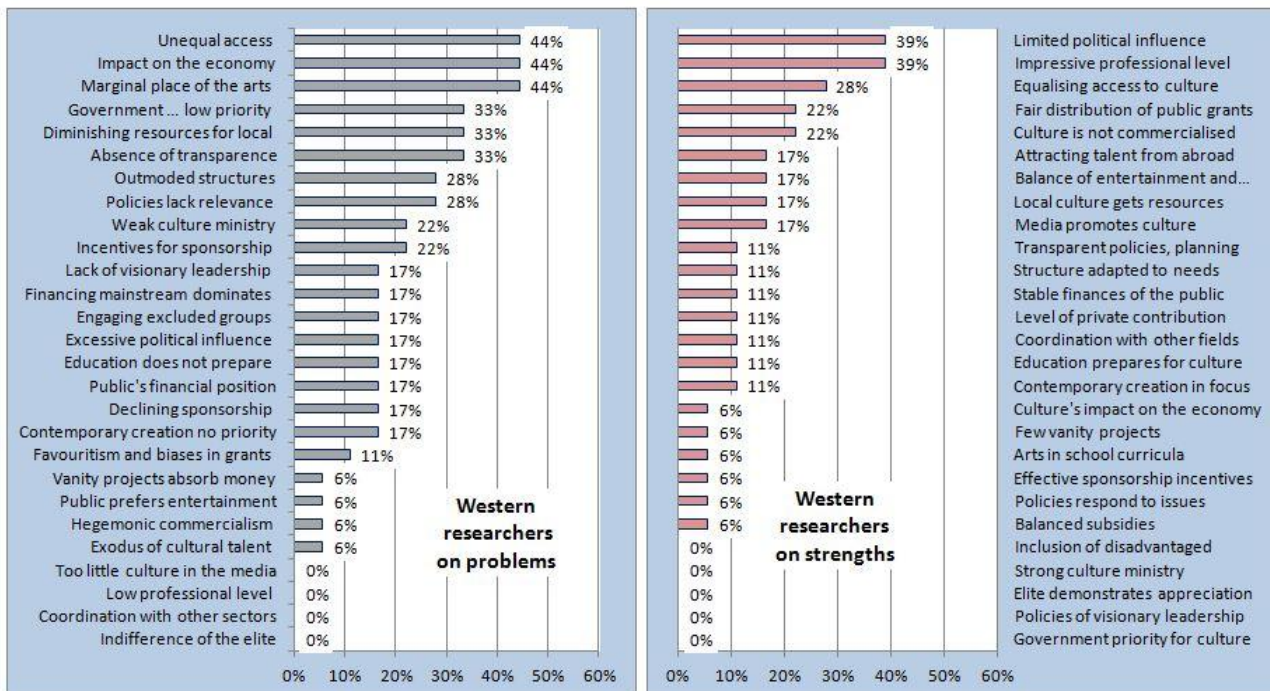
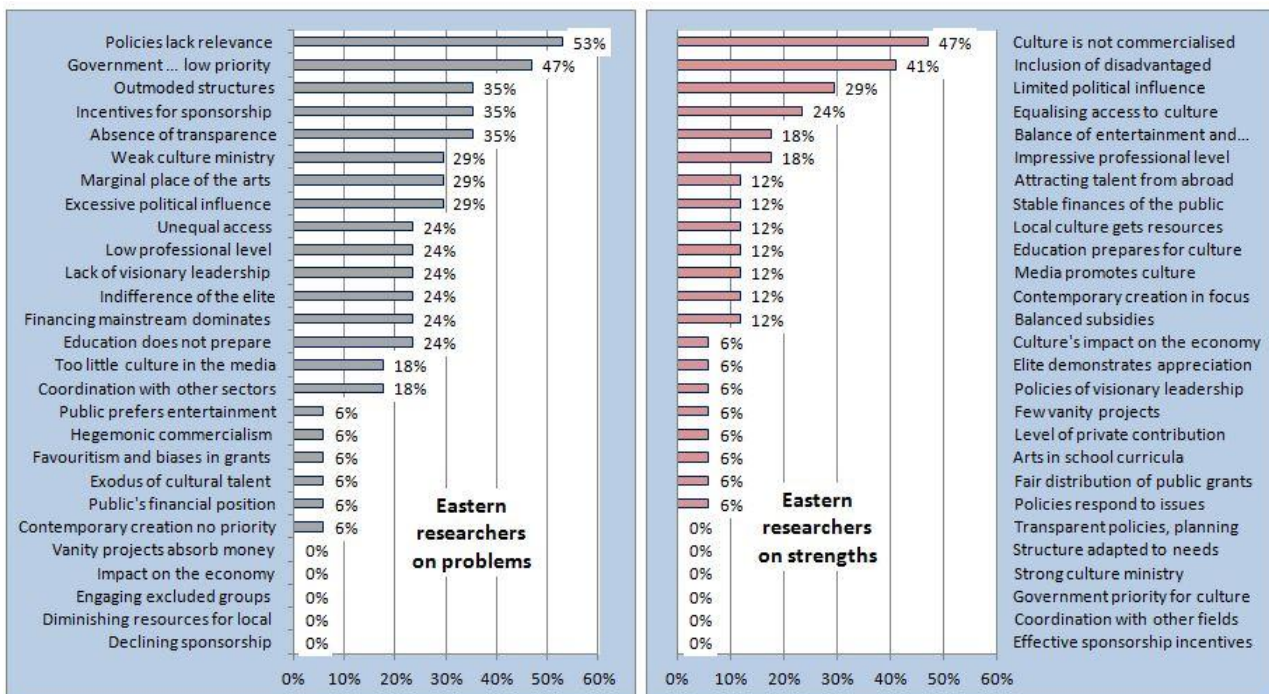
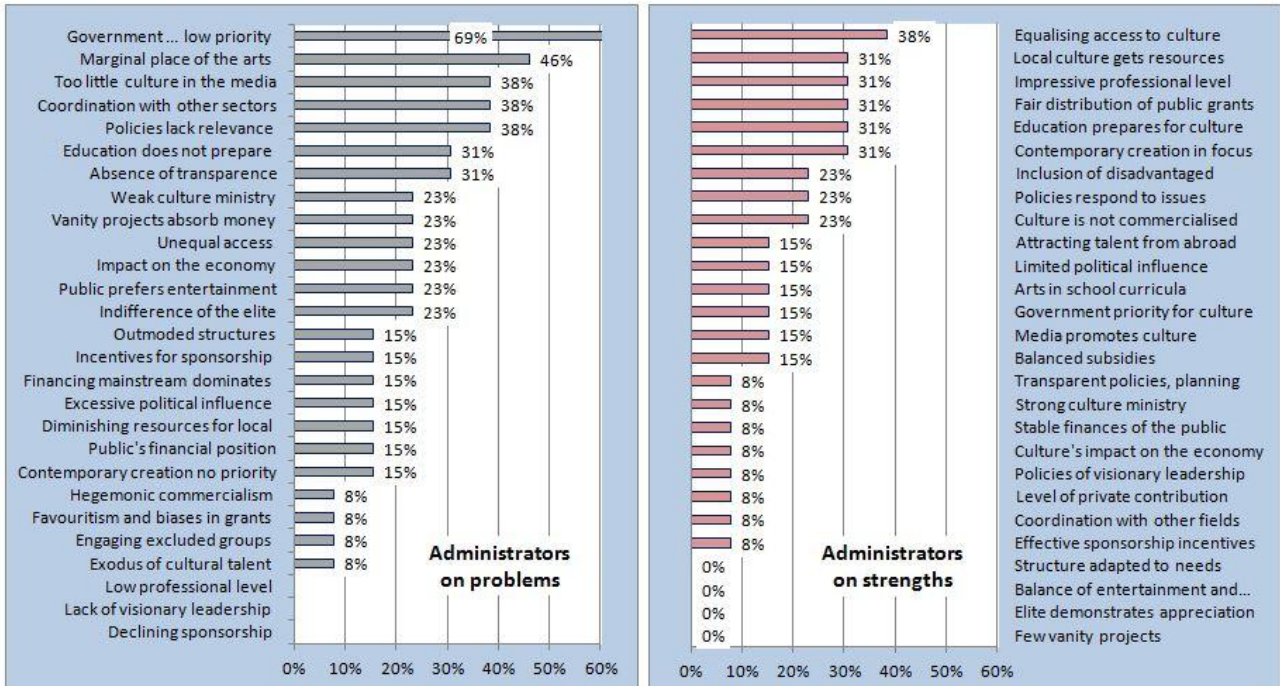


Diagram 36 Perceptions of eastern researchers about the climate of culture (17 responses)



Worth for attention is the contentment of the contributors with a background in the administration about the issues connected to equality. That again may be a tribute to such aspirations rather than evidence about accomplished facts. With nearly 70%, this is the group for whom the position of culture in the government budget is a top priority.

Diagram 37 Perceptions of administrators about the climate of culture (13 responses)

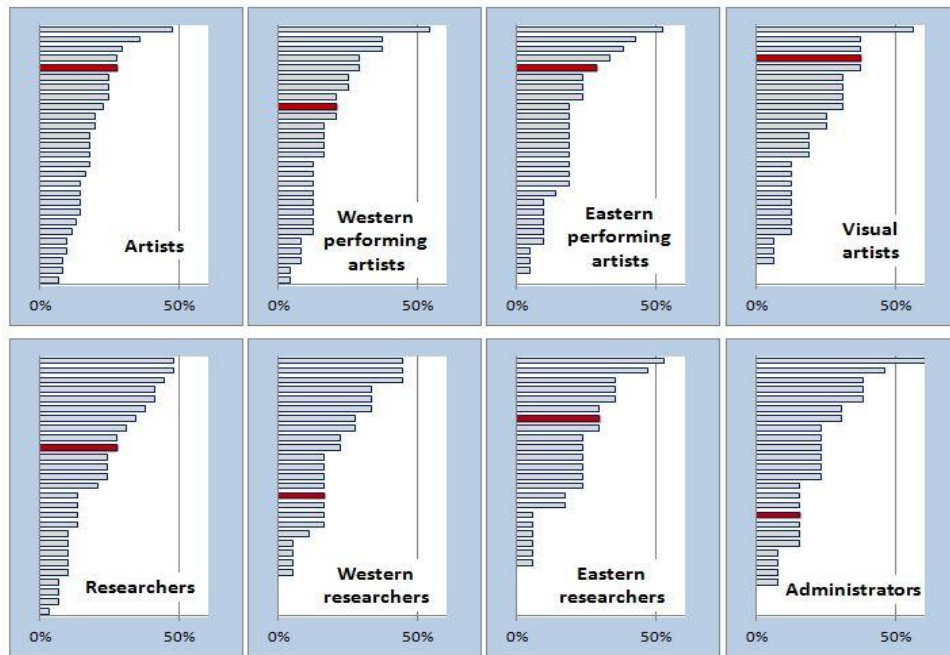


The remaining professional categories in the survey were represented with low numbers: media, creative industries, literature and heritage, although they (especially the last one) appear often in combinations like “administration and heritage” which we did not dare to enrol into one or other clean category. Librarians admitted their dilemmas of choosing between heritage and “books, literature” as it was worded. In the future the scheme for professional identification needs to be more rigid and more flexible at the same time, allowing for clear and adaptable categorisation. Receiving higher numbers of views about the aspects of cultural climate will lead to more nuanced pictures about the differences in the perceptions of various professional groups.

Transversal comparison of selected themes

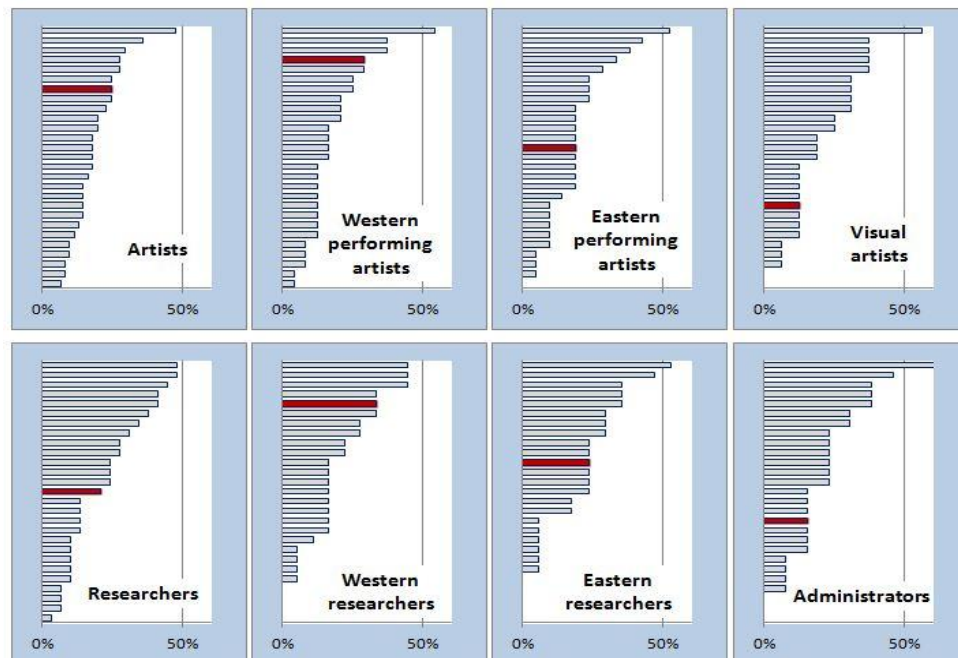
Characteristic features of the perceptions of the various professional groups can best be displayed by matching their rank lists to one another. The position of the same three divisive problematic factors to culture on the various geographic groups is displayed across the respective professional circles of respondents. First is the issue about political interference (Diagram 38). We could see it was an eastern feature, and now we can see visual artists (the small group that identified themselves as such in the survey) behaved even more “eastern” in this regard.

Diagram 38 The position of *Excessive political influence in cultural matters* on rank lists of respondents with various professional background (109 responses)



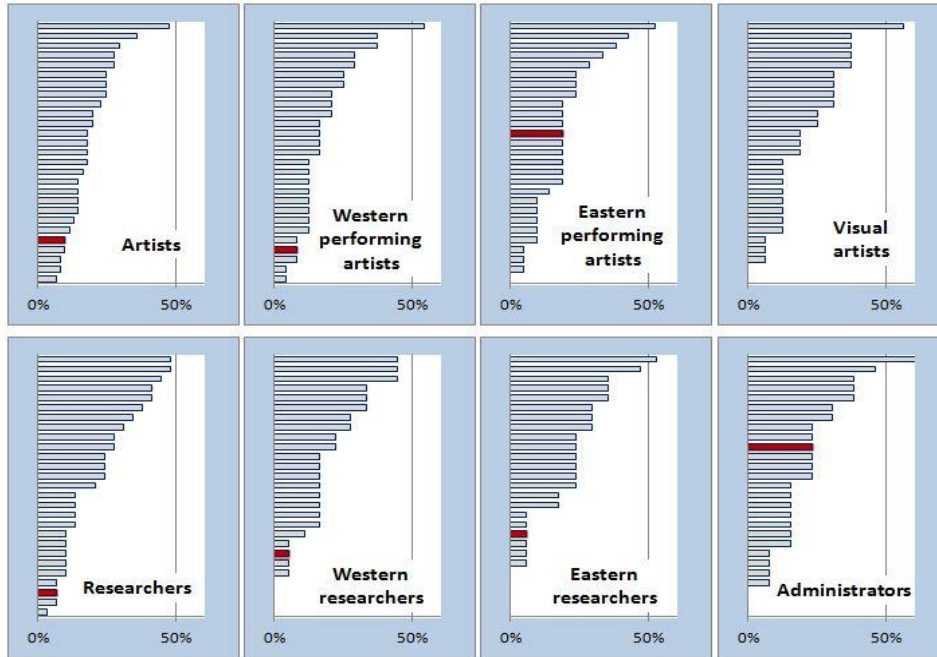
The previous remark applies to the issue of local culture as well: visual artists demonstrate even greater indifference to the issue than eastern artists and academics.

Diagram 39 The position of *Diminishing resources for local (municipal) culture* on rank lists of respondents with various professional background (109 responses)



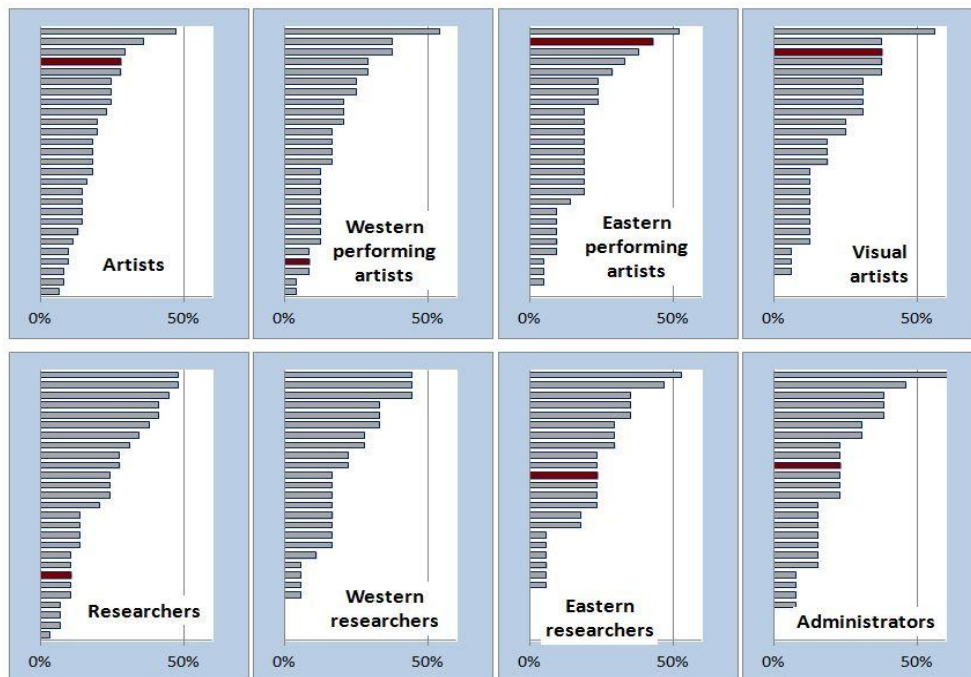
Visual artists demand attention also about the third selected variable on [Diagram 40](#): not one of them has put people’s inclination for easy entertainment among the five evils of the cultural climate, unlike administrators and eastern performing artists.

Diagram 40 The position of *Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment* on rank lists of respondents with various professional background (109 responses)



The search for an issue that divided professional groups produced the complaint about the attitude of the elite to culture. Considered vital among eastern colleagues, western performing artists could not care less about the elite; or rather yes, western researchers did care even less.

Diagram 41 The position of *Indifference of the elite* on rank lists of respondents with various professional background (109 responses)



Considerations about the barometer

The potential of the barometer

In an attempt to judge the cultural climate in a place the barometer aims to group or list countries according to relevant features. The features relate to the climate (circumstances, conditions, fundamentals etc), but also to the performance (accomplishment, success or deficit), and more obviously than in most other societal fields, to the features of public intervention.

The search for realistically accessible information (data) for standardised responses can follow two paths. One is the hunting trail for suitable data from the existing sources, doing secondary analysis of the myriad of regularly collected statistical records. Regardless whether the hunt is systematic on a theoretical basis or follows a heuristic approach of trial and error, this is a promising quest.

The other path is devising instruments that are simple enough to be applied with the available resources. The Cultural Climate Barometer is one such fabrication. It is a close replica of one element of the Executive Opinion Survey, itself part of a complex operation, the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum. By sorting fifteen “problematic factors for doing business”, the original model created diagnoses about the business climate in the respective countries. The Cultural Climate Barometer followed the same aim by defining problematic factors for culture, which was later complemented by their positive counterparts.

The responses to the barometer identify patterns of perceptions about the conditions of culture along a variety of dimensions. Some of the patterns reinforce previous knowledge or opinion but in a number of cases unexpected results are produced which deserve consideration. In this respect the barometer is a diagnostic tool, sending early signals of changes or pointing at frozen problems, and in fortunate cases exerting influence on thinking and decisions.

In a number of cases the consistency of the choices from the statements on negative or positive aspects is low. It will be interesting to find ways of comparing the internal consistency of responses on the cultural climate to similar polls on other societal issues (e.g. with the surveys on the economy that inspired our barometer). Before such comparisons are made we may guess that general orientation among the concepts and terms in cultural policies falls behind that of most other fields from the economy through environment, education, health, security etc.

The frequent resistance to name positive aspects may be another symptom of a low degree of conceptual clarity about culture. By improving the instrument of the survey one can expect higher level of internal consistencies in the answers (and definitely from the increase in the size of samples). Still, we maintain that other than being a diagnostic tool, the Cultural Climate Barometer may play a role in consolidating our language on cultural policies, which is subject to conceptual clarity in the relevant discourses. Participating in the survey and reasoning about the results brings the complexity of the issue to the fore, highlighting underrated or misconceived aspects.

One area that in this context has received considerable attention in the past few decades is cultural policy models⁴. How does the barometer relate to them? Does it contribute to formulating models and identifying their prevalence in the respective countries?

It certainly does, although there were no explicit references to cultural policy models on the preceding pages. One explanation for the absence of direct references is that those overarching

⁴ From the classical four types defined by Chartrand and McCaughey in 1989 (<http://web.archive.org/web/20080827211222/http://www.culturaleconomics.atfreeweb.com/arm%27s.htm>) through Jennifer Craik in 2007 (http://press.anu.edu.au//anzsog/revisioning/mobile_devices/index.html) to Christopher Madden in 2009 (<http://artspolicies.org/2009/08/30/arts-and-cultural-policy-models/>) or Vincent Dubois in 2013 (<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00836422/document>).

models are not appropriate for deriving indexes from them. Furthermore, the Cultural Climate Barometer aims to signal the entirety of factors that determine the climate of culture, of which only a part depend on cultural policy conceptions, strategies or decisions – albeit a decisive part in many cases. One important mission of the barometer is to identify the specific mandate that cultural policies can and should fulfil at determining the climate of culture.

Related attempts on detecting societal issues

The Cultural Climate Barometer, like all other surveys called barometer, belongs to the family of data collection that are based on opinions. Why opinions? Why not facts, “evidence”? – we asked in the introductory lines of this report, and we answered with what is an elementary truism for market researchers and political analysts and spin doctors, namely that opinions and perceptions are evidence, too.

Closest to the aims of the Cultural Climate Barometer are Eurobarometer surveys on a multitude of societal issues. Some of these come close to the aims of the barometer, asking about citizens’ perception and mood on topics like well-being. (Had they included questions on the climate of culture, our barometer would not have been born.) The Eurobarometer surveys offer complex pictures about state of affairs in the respective countries. These multidimensional portraits are not made to rank countries, although the single dimensions invite for ranking: the Budapest Observatory is notorious for doing so.

With the media much more popular are polls that are devised for linear rank lists of countries, starting with the Global Competitiveness Index, linked genetically to our barometer. A few more examples: the Global Corruption Barometer, the Global Gender Gap Index or the various rankings of the liveability of cities: Monocle, Mercer, Economist Intelligence Unit etc.

Some of these surveys are based on the opinions of selected specialists (expert surveys), others on citizens selected random from carefully stratified samples. For the Cultural Climate Barometer neither of these devices was available: the sample has in both years been the people who subscribe to the monthly newsletter of the Budapest Observatory⁵. The respondents to the 2015 barometer correspond to some 10% of the regular readers.

Related attempts in the field of culture

Opinion polls are a complement to hard statistics. A broadly applied intermediate area (“semi-hard statistics”) is based on interviewees reporting about facts: “How many books did you read in the past twelve months” or “How much did you spend on culture last year” etc. In fortunate cases these can be matched to real hard data like books sold or lent from libraries, and relevant sales figures, etc.

At present there is no regular harmonised and standardised collection and disclosure of cultural data across Europe, not even in the EU, regardless of the important work done in the *ESSnet-Culture* project: *European Statistical System Network on Culture*. This lends importance to the semi-hard international surveys conducted at irregular intervals. Last time in November 2013, the *Special Eurobarometer 399 on Cultural Access and Participation*.

Similarly to other multidimensional investigations mentioned above, participating countries can be ranked along selected dimensions of such surveys but usually no attempt is made for devising composite indexes of selecting a couple of super-indicators for the purpose.

Public expenditure on culture can be regarded as information coming close to the requirements of super-indicators on a sector. Indeed, the Eurostat COFOG data based on a device of the United Nations provide important insight to the amount, rate, structure and trends of public spending on culture – except that statistics tell little about how that money is spent.

⁵ Except for the participants of a cultural policy conference in Dnipropetrovsk, described in [Annex 3](#).

Endeavours at linear one-dimension assessment appeared not only with regard to countries (or other geographic units) but also with the aim to express trends in time. In fact, COFOG corresponds to this function as well. The archetype of more overarching super-indicators is the American Arts Index⁶ that measures the vitality of “the arts” in the USA year after year with the help of one composite index that is based on well over a hundred statistical indicators on the many sides of culture. The most promising attempt to adapt it has been the Cultuurindex Nederland⁷.

This is the environment in which the Cultural Climate Barometer has promised to contribute to the deeper knowledge about the conditions that shape the vitality of culture in various places.

The 54 statements on the cultural climate

The fifteen factors in the “archetype”, the economic competitiveness survey have remained unchanged over the years and do not claim to stand for theoretical models; the list echoes down-to-earth statements in ordinary journalism terms. The Cultural Climate Barometer has aimed the same, to arrive at matter-of-fact common statements about culture. Just like in the economic example, in the culture barometer policy measures are mixed with general aspects beyond the direct reach of governments. And as the business factors cover a wide scope, the selection of cultural factors also embraces a broad span.

The list of problematic factors for culture was not selected by deduction: the statements were not derived from an a priori structure, map or model. At least not explicitly; nevertheless the list certainly implies a definite perception about the main constituents of “culture” in a country. By the iterative modifications during the pilot surveys the list got closer and closer to the shared implicit perception of a larger community, the Budapest Observatory network.

Besides various consultations beforehand, the relevance of the list was best tested – and improved – through the three (pilot) rounds involving the subscribers to the monthly newsletter of the observatory. The list that may be considered fairly adequate for proper diagnosing of the cultural climate in a place is almost twice as long as the original model on business. This abundance is explained and maybe justified by the scarcity of diagnostic terms on culture as common and familiar as are the fifteen factors on business.

In the 2014 questionnaire there were 28 statements. One was deemed disposable and deleted. Upon the experience of 2014 the wording of several items was improved. The resulting 27 items appear to have stood the test of the 2015 edition well. The list is still quite long, which poses a challenge to participants in the survey.

Yet even with such a big number of items some of the respondents feel that important issues are missing. Free comments, an important component of the barometer survey, advised a number of improvements. Additions rather, implying that 27 negative and 27 positive items are not enough to convey the complexity of cultural climate. The following additions were proposed: creative industries as a priority; training for cultural practitioners; economic security for those engaged in culture; generational gaps in the value of culture; cultural infrastructure available to the youth; level of international co-operation; local markets on home made art, etc.

These items can be formulated both as problems (challenges) and achievements. The following, on the other hand, were signalled clearly as concerns on top of the 27 problematic factors: self-censorship practiced by artists; fragile status of intangible cultural heritage; unemployment of youth in the cultural sector; great majority of funds taken up by salaries of employees.

⁶ <http://www.artsindexusa.org/>

⁷ <https://www.boekman.nl/cultuurindex>

Conversely, quite a few comments articulate outright positive aspects. Some respondents tell us that a strong civil sector has been dynamising cultural life. In these comments independent NGOs and grass root movements are seen as the saviour of wrong or failed cultural policies. Eighteen participants – a considerable number – are happy to communicate about a lively cultural scene based on individual talent and enthusiasm. Here, too, national specificities play a role, which eminently applies to the positive example connected to the competition for the European Capital of Culture (in Bulgaria, to be precise).

Some of the proposed additions appear to be connected to the specificities of a few countries only. Moreover, increasing the amount of items in the survey would make it even more difficult to handle for the respondents and the researchers alike. Reduction would be more advisable, or replacements of less successful items. The 2015 survey nevertheless shows a fairly even distribution in the choices of the 54 factors. At closer look, even the least often selected items proved to carry significance for certain environments (demonstrated by some of the transversal comparisons). *Hegemonic influence of commercialism* was selected by 6.6% and *Declining private contributions (sponsorship, philanthropy)* by 7.1% of respondents; nevertheless mathematical statistical exercises demonstrate higher explanatory (discriminating) weight for both than what occupying the last two positions by frequency implies. Also, both items attracted somewhat greater attention a year ago. (Conversely, the last item on last year's list, *Contemporary creation gets too little priority* elicited more choices this year.)

We therefore came to the conclusion not to administer important changes in the instrument. No more reduction is proposed from the list of problematic factors and the positive counterparts.

* * *

Confident about the necessary encouragement and support, the Budapest Observatory is looking forward to applying the Cultural Climate Barometer in various environments and to arranging the next annual general survey in the late months of 2016.

Annexes

Annex 1: The list of problematic factors with their positive counterparts

What are the most problematic factors for culture in your country?

1. Absence of clear goals and transparent planning
2. Contemporary creation gets too little priority
3. Cultural policies lack relevance to fundamental issues of society
4. Declining private contributions (sponsorship, philanthropy)
5. Deteriorating financial position of the public
6. Diminishing resources for local (municipal) culture
7. Education does not prepare for contemporary culture
8. Excessive political influence in cultural matters
9. Exodus of cultural talent from the country
10. Failures in engaging excluded social groups to culture
11. Favouritism and biases in the distribution of public grants
12. Financing mainstream institutions dominates government budgets
13. Government budget reflects low priority for culture
14. Hegemonic influence of commercialism
15. Indifference of the political and economic elite
16. Ineffective incentives for private sponsorship and philanthropy
17. Inefficient coordination with other sectors
18. Lack of visionary leadership
19. Low professional level of cultural managers
20. Marginal place of the arts in school curricula
21. Outmoded structure of cultural institutions
22. Public's one sided preference for easy entertainment
23. Too little promotion of culture in the media
24. Too much emphasis on culture's impact on the economy
25. Unequal access to culture across the country
26. Vanity projects absorb too much money
27. Weak culture ministry

What are the most positive factors that affect culture in your country?

- Transparent procedures in policy decisions and planning
- Contemporary creation is in focus
- Cultural policies respond to fundamental issues of society
- Level of private contribution (sponsorship, philanthropy) is stable and important
- Stable financial situation of the public
- Local (municipal) culture receives necessary resources
- Education prepares successfully for contemporary culture
- Limited direct political influence into cultural matters
- The country attracts cultural talent from abroad
- Successes in the inclusion of disadvantaged social groups into culture
- Fair procedures in the distribution of public grants
- Balanced subsidies between mainstream institutions and new or small-scale initiatives
- Government budget reflects priority for culture
- Cultural life is not overwhelmed by commercial forces
- Political and economic elite demonstrates appreciation for culture
- Effective incentives generate private contributions (sponsorship, philanthropy)
- Efficient coordination mechanisms exist between culture and other policy fields
- Policies reflect visionary leadership
- Impressive professional level of cultural managers
- In school curricula the arts are given an important place
- Structure of cultural institutions has been adapted to today's needs
- Public's attention is balanced between entertainment and deeper cultural challenges
- Culture is amply promoted in the media
- Proper attention is given to culture's impact on the economy
- Conscious efforts at equalising access to culture across the country
- Limited instances of vanity projects that absorb huge sums of money
- Strong and influential culture ministry

Annex 2: Draft sliding scale of the culture climate barometer

What factors influence or characterise the climate of culture in your country? Please, mark your country's position on each of the 27 scales below. With 5 you fully agree with one of the extremes, with 0 you are completely undecided, and all other options express shades of opinion in between.

Here, the scale is displayed at the first item only for illustration. Also, the content of the statements is slightly different from the two sets of 27 items applied in the survey.

1. Public's attention											
Easy entertainment enjoys one sided preference						Balanced between easy entertainment and cultural challenges					
5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Financial situation of the public											
Weak						Stable					
3. Commercial market culture											
Dominates cultural life						Does not dominate cultural life					
4. The attitude of the political and economic elite towards culture											
Indifferent						Demonstrates appreciation					
5. Exodus of cultural talent from the country											
Critical						Non-existent					
6. Promotion of culture in the media											
Too little						Receives ample space					
7. Positions of the arts in school curricula											
Marginal						Adequate					
8. Preparation for the understanding and appreciation of contemporary culture by the educational system											
Poor						Satisfactory					
9. Government budget											
Reflects low priority for culture						Reflects due priority for culture					
10. Culture ministry											
Weak and ineffective						Strong and effective					
11. Procedures on policy decisions and planning											
Lack of transparency						Transparent procedures					
12. Relevance of cultural policies to fundamental issues in society											

Policies lack relevance Policies respond to basic issues

13. Coordination of cultural policies with other sectors

Inefficient Policies are developed in conjunction

14. Culture's impact on the economy

Overtly emphasised Balanced treatment of the spin-off effects

15. Cultural budget of the government

Dominated by the financing of mainstream institutions Balanced between mainstream institutions and new or small scale initiatives

16. Structure of cultural institutions

Outmoded, crying for reform Fit for today's and tomorrow's world

17. Professional levels of cultural leadership and management

Low Impressive

18. Distribution of public grants

Favouritism and biases prevail Rule of law and fairness prevail

19. Vanity projects

Absorb too much money Only isolated cases of wastage

20. Political interference into cultural matters

Excessive Limited

21. Contemporary creation

Receives too little priority It is in focus

22. Level of private contribution (sponsorship, philanthropy)

Declining Stable

23. Incentives for private contribution (sponsorship, philanthropy)

Non-existent or inefficient Effective

24. Access to cultural services across the country

Unequal Conscious efforts at equalising

25. Local culture and participation

Its resources are declining Receives necessary support

26. Boosting citizens' cultural activity

No priority Top priority

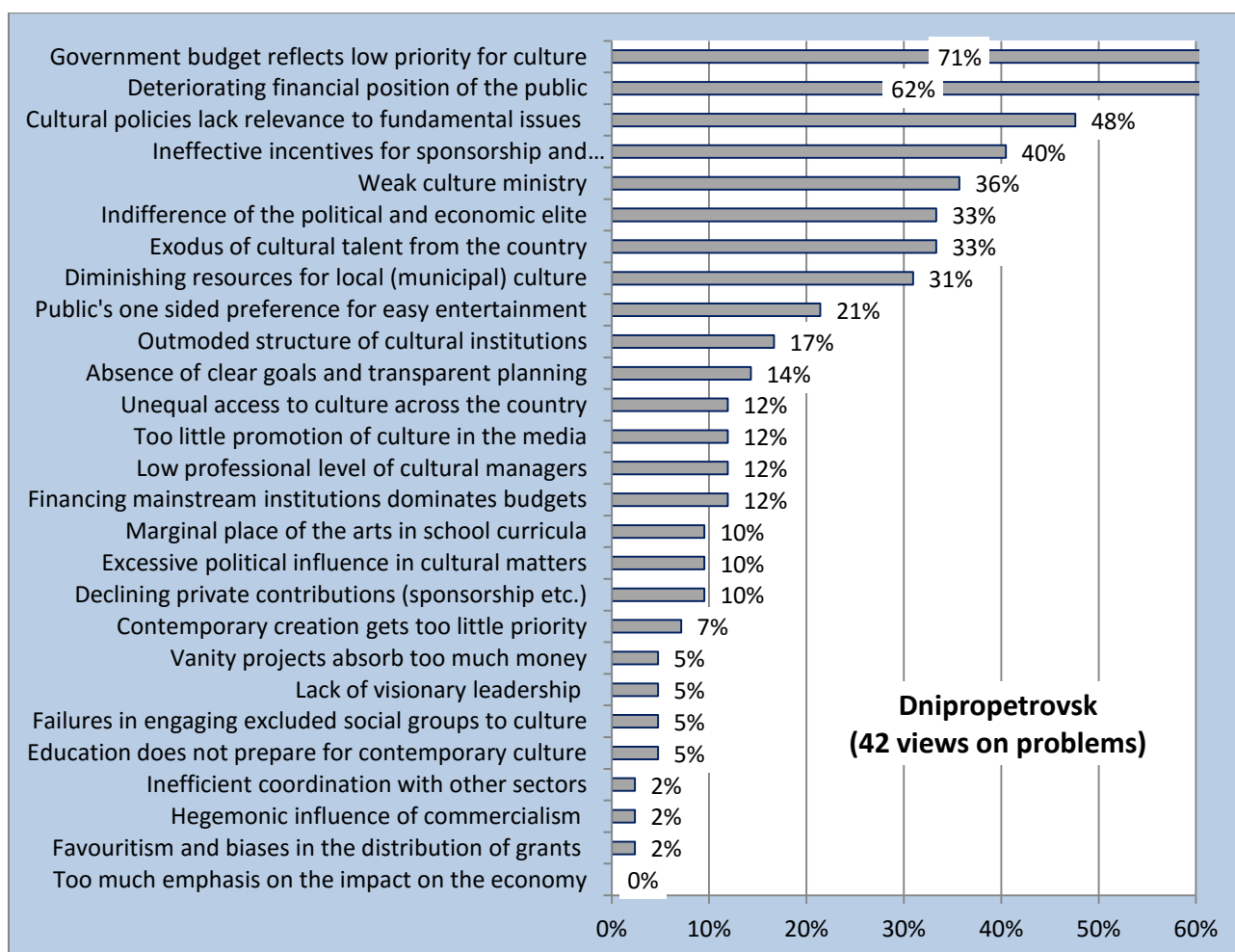
27. Engaging and empowering marginalised groups in culture

Failures and neglect Successes exist

Annex 3: The Dnipropetrovsk case

In the early piloting period of the questionnaire ad hoc small groups (like a class in a course) were asked to fill in but the instrument was applied in real life combat situation for the first time in December 2015 in the Ukrainian city of Dnipropetrovsk. The participants of a conference on regional cultural policies⁸ filled in the questionnaire translated into Ukrainian by the Ukrainian Centre for Cultural Studies⁹. The answers were processed and presented on the spot the following day, including comparisons with findings elsewhere.

Diagram 42 Answers received in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, about problematic factors



The highly dominant position of the complaint about the government budget (and 36% wishing for a strong ministry) is symptomatic of a place with strong legacies of centralised power also in matters of culture. In a country with so many hardships it is no surprise that nearly two thirds refer to the precarious conditions of the population. Hopes are pinned to sponsorship and altruism, as over 40% expect more effective incentives in those directions.

⁸ http://mincult.kmu.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=245025510&cat_id=244913751

⁹ http://uckd.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9&Itemid=31&lang=uk

Diagram 43 Responses from eastern countries, including those received in Dnipropetrovsk

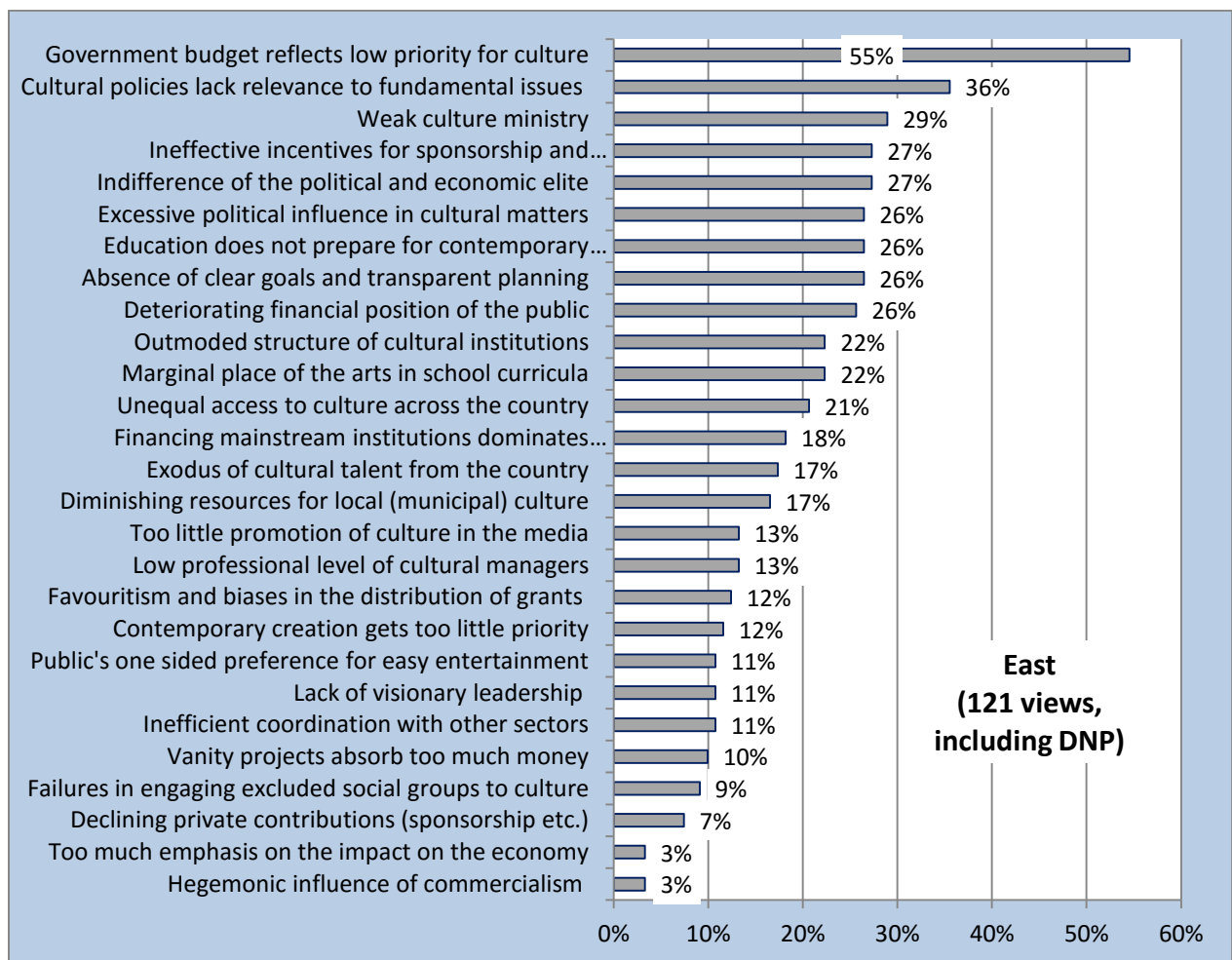
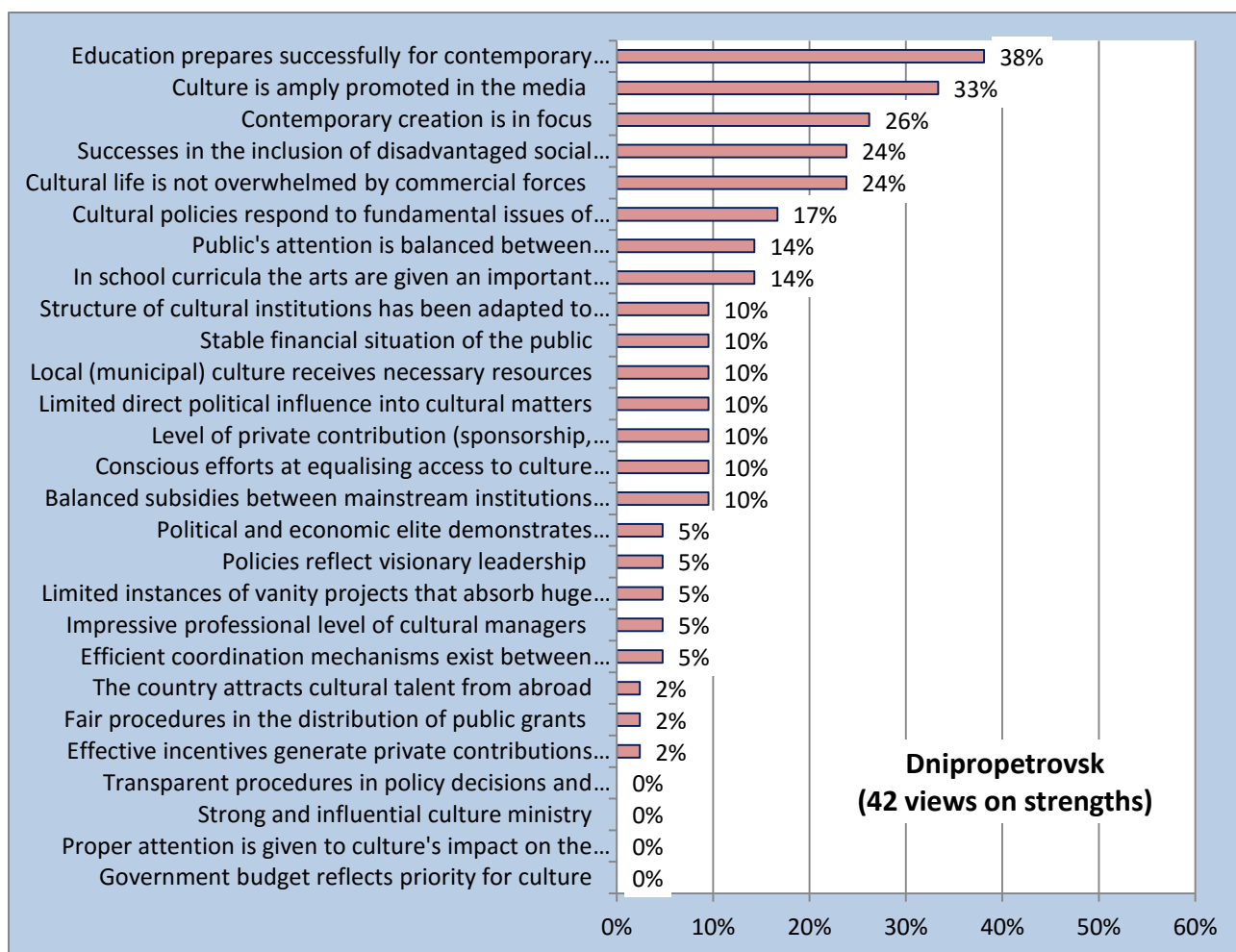


Diagram 43 is a reinforced edition of Diagram 6, containing everyone’s cumulated opinion on the problematic aspects in post-communist countries.

Adding the 42 views collected in Dnipropetrovsk (DNP) lends a bit more optimism to the eastern responses (no matter how ironic this appears). People in DNP chose 3.3 positive aspects by average, more than others in the east yet still much less than in the west. One wonders whether looking at the list in Diagram 44 outsiders would guess that it comes from cultural operators in a crisis torn east European country. The high position of *Contemporary creation is in focus* may surprise one, especially reinforced by the relatively few mentions of its negative counterpart on Diagram 42.

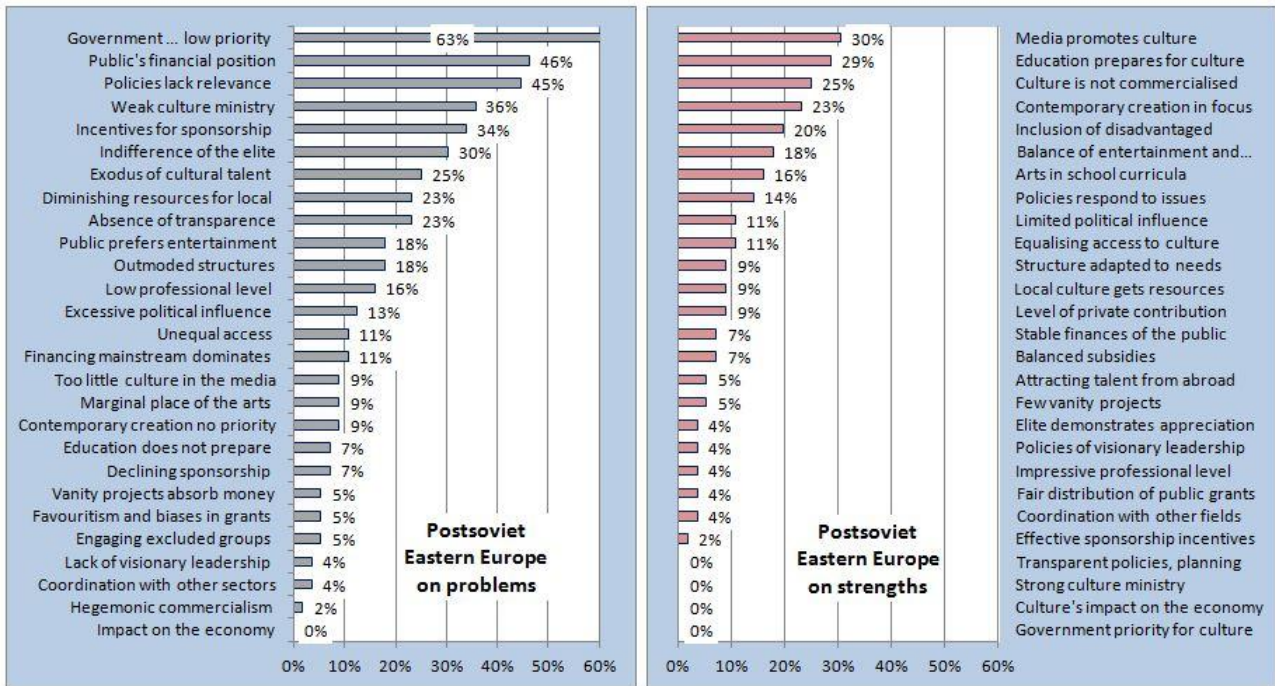
Diagram 44 Answers received in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, about positive aspects.



With the last [Diagram 45](#) we open the regional scope to include the 42 answers collected in Dnipropetrovsk and present a fuller picture on eastern Europe. It may be a pleasant surprise to learn that ample presence of culture in the media is the leading asset about the climate of culture in the region. The opinion of 46% about the precarious condition of the public as a seriously problematic factor to culture is a recognition of the sad realities.

[Diagram 45](#) Perceptions about the cultural climate in ex-soviet countries (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, including the participants of the Dnipropetrovsk offline survey, 56 responses)

The Budapest Observatory



The Ukrainian case has confirmed the potential in the Cultural Climate Barometer in detecting the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural climate offline, involving closer circles of stakeholders. The instrument is free to use in similar opportunities.