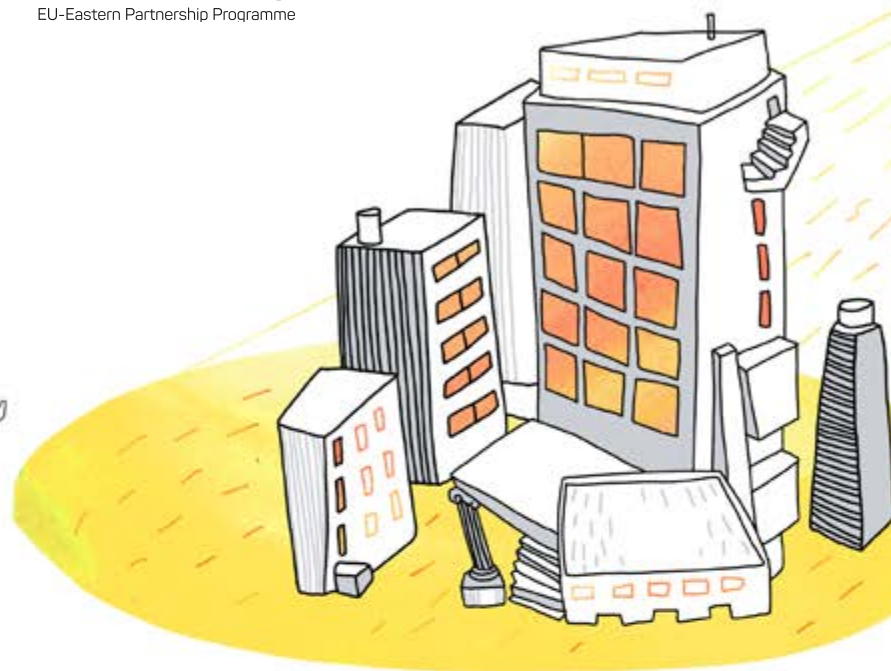


Culture & Creativity

EU-Eastern Partnership Programme



INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, URBAN DEVELOPMENT

*Contribution to improvement
of infrastructure*



This Programme is funded
by the European Union

Introduction

Most Western European and North American cities that were the centres of industrial and cultural life throughout the most of the 20th century, went through a sharp decline, when industrial economy started to collapse in the late 1970's. Jobs were shrinking, the city centres were emptying and inhabitants fled to suburbs. Transition to the knowledge-based economy, rooted in creativity, knowledge and innovation, put the cities back into the focus, relying on its resources in learning, its capacity to help exchange and transactions, its cultural institutions and richer artistic life and vibrancy, its stock of buildings and infrastructure and its transport links. The city was seen as an accelerator of opportunity.

Vast array of old and abandoned industrial infrastructure and supporting living quarters needed revitalisation. People and buildings needed new senses and new possibilities. Creative economy and the rise of cultural and creative industries (CCI) provided the cities with some answers to these questions.

"World-wide several hundred old warehouses, breweries; train, bus or fire stations; cement, coal, textile, tobacco or steel factories; old markets or military barracks or older working class districts were transformed into culture or experience centres, incubators and company breeding grounds and as hubs for wider urban regeneration. The creative professionals, such as musicians, graphic designers, artists or actors in particular were drawn to these places. Their mere presence made them the vanguard of regeneration," — reports Charles Landry in his research ***Creativity, Culture & the City: A question of interconnection.***

The advancement of CCI is often closely connected to the development of clusters, a notion that has been associated with Harvard Business School economist Michael Porter. Clusters enhance knowledge and experience exchange between the creative entrepreneurs. They also provide more incentives for investments into revitalisation and redevelopment of infrastructure. The European Cluster Observatory Report on Creative Industries (2013) notes that CCI are always rooted into local creative resources and traditions. It places cultural heritage, including industrial one, at the core of development of creative economy and clusters.

The European Commission program of the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) opened up various sources of large investments into the infrastructure of the cities. Capital expenditures went directly to cultural infrastructure (museums, theatres, art centres etc), but also to urban revitalisation (parks, squares, lightning, development of public areas), and to the transport infrastructure (airports, railroads, roads etc).

Nowadays a large number of cities in the Eastern partnership region find themselves in the conditions similar to those that are described above. Extensive industrial infrastructure left from the Soviet Union heavily industrial economy, is staying abandoned and being seen as a liability, not an asset. Cultural heritage, although being praised and valued, often demonstrates signs of deterioration and decline. A turnaround in vision and strategy towards revitalisation of the cities and redevelopment of infrastructure is needed.

Facts and Figures

- According to **UNESCO Creative Economy Report (2013)**, today, more than half of the world's population lives in cities, and **up to three-quarters of all economic activity** occurs in them.
- Creative economy is based on local traditions, knowledge, skills, and specific know-hows. It is majorly rooted in cities and regions, **showing them how they can reposition and renegotiate** themselves in the global market.
- With tourism industry growing worldwide, Europe is a key cultural tourism destination, with a large number of major cultural sites and a strong flow of culturally motivated international and domestic visitors. It is estimated that **cultural tourism accounts for around 40%** of all European tourism (including general and specific cultural tourists).
- Investment into infrastructure projects provides **immediate effect** on development of local and regional civil engineering as well as supporting sectors. Data about capital investment for the ECoC in period up to 2011 shows following numbers (in euro): Copenhagen in 1996 (219 mln), Brussels in 2000 (82 mln), Porto in 2001 (168.5 mln), Geneva in 2004 (200 mln), Patras in 2006 (100 mln), Liverpool in 2008 (984 mln), Linz in 2009 (300 mln), Vilnius in 2009 (442 mln), in 2010 Pecs (141 mln) and Turku in 2011 (145 mln).
- Culture in general and CCI in particular have **a direct impact on the value of urban real estate**, becoming a key element of culture-led urban regeneration strategies. This impact can come as a result of both large flagship projects, like a heritage regeneration project or a creative cluster, and smaller creative micro-businesses or small scale cultural activist activities.



Solutions

Case 1

Sopron is a small Hungarian city situated on the Austrian border. A widespread fire in 1676 devastated the city and it was reborn over the next few decades with Baroque architecture replacing the earlier medieval style. The Castle District of Sopron boasts of strong architectural styles over subsequent years – walls and foundations from the Roman Empire together with a wealth of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque structures display the District's prosperity, stability, and history.

The major problems of the district were, though, traffic overload, the breaking of the continuous streetscape, traffic stalling due to parking, and insufficient lights acting as a deterrent for people to unwind after dusk. It made the historical center less attractive and less safe for locals and tourists.

To find a solution, the city council announced a competition – “Sopron – Revitalization of the Castle District”. The competition's aim was to give the area surrounding the historical city a new look and improved function.



The first phase of the 15000 sqm public space was completed in 2015 with the middle part of the Castle District devoted to cyclists and pedestrians. There were three major issues the revitalization plan focused on:

1. Pedestrians as the priority. The goal was to make the city friendly for visitors, who would be mainly pedestrians. Thus the major traffic load was moved out of the historical center to the circle road. Remaining traffic was safely separated from the

cyclist track and pedestrian path. A centrally-located, small Touristic Information Centre with info desks and public toilets, was built recalling reconstruction works of the end 20th century. It is immediately visible, but at the same time it does not out-shadow the historical buildings.

2. Respecting history through zoning. The architects used modern material, but fitted them to the scale and the spirit of the little town. Different and distinct materials have been used to mark different functional zones.
3. Establishing Identity. By creating public spaces and recreation zones, this project highlighted the rich and diverse heritage of the city. Historic housing, which forms the core of the city, could be seen and appreciated. The key concept was that at any point of the District, one should feel to be a part of the area.



Impact:

- The District became more safe and livable zone, increasing the quality of life of its residents.
- The District received its public space for interaction, communication, and recreation. Outdoor furniture, streetlights, fountains and temporary pavilions not only enhanced the aesthetic beauty of the city, but it also encourages people to hold festivals, exhibitions, concerts etc.
- It has managed to unify the present and the past and act as a bridge between the east and west neighbours of the country.

Case 2

Eindhoven, the fifth largest city in the Netherlands, which once was a hometown to Philips company. Since company's establishment in 1892 the city developed through attraction of investments and workforce, making Eindhoven a major technological and industrial hub. In 2000 Philips closed down and the city went through a period of depression. The area of Strijp where the company was located, also known as the "Forbidden City" (because of the fences surrounding it), was then a no-go area of 270,000 sqm.

- Main challenge for the city was to reposition itself as a center for creativity and innovation. This involved reimagining and replanning the whole abandoned area of the "Forbidden city", adapting or reconstructing existing infrastructure to make it fit the needs of the city as well as connecting the area to the existing city fabric.
- Masterplan Strijp-S was created to redevelop the area into a new creative and cultural are of Eindhoven and to rediscover its industrial heritage.
- Strijp-S was envisaged to connect creative people and businesses with the public, which will learn and understand the creative and cultural potential of art and technology and appreciate it at the Dutch Design Week, the art and tech STRP festival and Glow NXT (LightArt).
- The city of Eindhoven applied for European Capital of Culture 2018. Although it lost the bid, the city continued to reinforce its cultural infrastructure to connect art and culture with technology and innovation, and to open it to wider public.



Infrastructural development:

With Strijp-S, Eindhoven transformed an industrial area into a creative and cultural quarter. It is in many ways an exemplary (re)development scheme, where strategic infrastructures have been developed:

- In 2008 "Cultuurfonds Strijp-S" was launched, as a private/public fund to stimulate creative initiatives, events and programmes in the Strijp-S area so as to contribute to the national and international reputation of Strijp-S. It supports cultural and creative projects with grants ranging from €5,000 to €25,000.
- Since 2010, Klokgebouw, the main building of Strijp-S, has hosted 100 creative companies.
- Apparatenfabriek, the old Philips Device Factory, offers 20,000 square feet of commercial and working space for CCI's. Additionally, other Philips buildings have been transformed into lofts, leisure facilities (skate park, festival event spaces), restaurants and retail shops (Anton & Gerard buildings, Ketelhuis, Machinekamer).
- In 2013 the famous Natlab building (former Philips Research Laboratories building) reopened as a cultural centre for film, theatre and two media labs.
- The grand total of all investments in relation to culture on Strijp-S is €36.5 million. Most of the investment for Strijp-S came from private investors; 1% came from EU funding (BLISS project, INTERREG IVB North- West Europe).



Impact:

- Strijp-S has become the high-tech creative and cultural centre of Eindhoven, attracting new activities and especially creative industries.
- Abandoned area and a liability was turned around to become a heart of the city, changing its overall infrastructure and communications. Once seen as an industrial area, Eindhoven managed to become a real city, home for its residents and important creative hub. Depression and economic decline were transformed into a high quality of live.
- Eindhoven was announced Intelligent Community of the Year 2011 and the most inventive city in the world in 2013.
- Recently, the municipality bought another huge connecting area and building, the boiler house at Strijp-T (next to Strijp-S area), to develop more spaces for creative industries (as well as a largescale central biomass).



Results and Impacts

- **Responsible development is at the core of sustainable urban development.** It balances the need to safeguard historical and heritage sites, contemporary needs of residents and the city, potential visitors experiences, and available resources.
- **Some of the benefits of placing culture at the core of urban regeneration** are: a broader and more inclusive understanding of culture; greater recognition of lifestyle factors and consumption activities in urban planning; and the development of new cultural infrastructures that have renovated the image of cities and acted as attractors of tourism and investment.
- **Cultural activities and institutions contribute to better urban governance**, to the creation of a new people-centred city, one that is capable of integrating the tangible and more intangible aspects of prosperity, and in the process shedding off the inefficient, unsustainable forms and functionalities of the city of the previous century.
- **Revitalisation of abandoned city areas through culture** influences well-being of the residents, increases accessibility of culture by various groups of people, thus enhancing social cohesion. It can also help the city to develop into a multi-center entity, better fitted for the needs and interests of the residents and tourists.
- Some **problems with creative economy** and clusters may include a blurring of arts and culture into entertainment and service, potential contradictions between economic and social agendas, gentrification and urban homogeneity.

Recommendations

- Regeneration of infrastructure and valorisation of areas and districts is a complex process that should **balance both social and economical needs of the city and its residents**. Creation of mono-functional (e.g., touristic), secluded (e.g., so-called 'elitist') urban spaces needs to be avoided. Both residential and touristic infrastructures need to be well planned and placed.
- Plans for infrastructural development or redevelopment have **three important components** that have to go hand in hand: cultural infrastructure (museums, theatres, art centres etc), urban revitalisation (parks, squares, lightning, development of public areas), and transport infrastructure (airports, railroads, roads etc).
- **Public space is a key to the identity and landscape of the city**. It's a space for social interactions and belongs to all residents. It needs to be taken into account, while planing infrastructural changes in cities. City's public space and infrastructure must support diverse residents to engage in cultural practices and expression in the public space of the city.
- **Cultural heritage** can become core of development of CCI and creative clusters. Revitalisation and valorisation of cultural heritage can help regenerate challenged and remote areas (former industrial sites, sites, placed far away from traditional touristic routs, etc). **Building CCI around cultural heritage sites boots their sustainability** in terms of emotional and financial co-responsibility, visitors experience, and making them a part of contemporary cultural domain.
- Urban regeneration can happen though a **large flagship projects** (e.g., building a landmark object – new museum, theatre or cultural centre). It is a long-term investment into city's image and touristic attractiveness. Nevertheless flagship projects have to be handled with caution, because they tend to create a mono-functional space, alien to the city inhabitants, and overload city's transport infrastructure. Supporting development plans that envision balanced regeneration of the city as a whole have to be in place.
- **Transparency, on-going consultations, collaboration and open communication** is a key to the success for any urban regeneration processes. Close collaboration with local communities, public hearings, open architectural competitions are just some of the good practices.
- Development of hard cultural infrastructure (buildings) requires support for **the development of soft infrastructure** – cultural institutions and projects, creative SME and platforms.

Additional information

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Strijp-S

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