

CITIES IN TRANSITION

SPRING/SUMMER 2016

**EU
2016**

NEW EUR OPE #01

LOCAL INITIATIVES **THE (IM)PACT OF AMSTERDAM** **EUROPEAN NEWCOMERS**

THE CITY AS COMMONS **COHOUSING** **COMMUNITY FINANCES**

AIR QUALITY **METROPOLITAN FIELD TRIP PARIS** **URBAN POVERTY**

HELSINKI **ATHENS** **SOFIA** **DUBLIN**

NEW EUROPE 27-30 MAY 2016 CITY MAKERS SUMMIT

WE MEET

WE CONNECT

WE LEARN

WE ACT

DEZWIJGER.NL/SUMMIT



INTRODUCTION

WE MEET,

WE LEARN, WE ACT

A CITY MAKERS AGENDA TO ENHANCE
THE (IM)PACT OF AMSTERDAM

For the past years as a programme maker at Pakhuis de Zwijger in Amsterdam, I have had the honour to meet and connect a tremendous amount of inspiring City Makers all over Europe. People who take up initiatives to enliven neighbourhoods, revive derelict buildings, and rethink welfare, inclusion, the use of natural resources, and social capital. Who dare to experiment and challenge existing systems and impact institutional actors and people around them with their endless efforts and infectious enthusiasm.

It fulfils me with pride to present a glimpse of the City Makers Agenda, the fruits of the many meaningful interactions connected to our platform *New Europe - Cities in Transition*. A glimpse, because to us the City Makers Agenda is an ongoing movement. A movement that expands from Athens to Vilnius, from Bologna to Helsinki and Zwolle, connecting City Makers in more than 80 European cities today. The network is the fundament for exchanging knowledge and know-how, and a collective tool in igniting more fundamental societal change. Change that envisions the future of making our cities in a more co-creative, integrated and inclusive manner, with governance that meets the increasing complexity of the networked society that we are all part and co-owners of.

We are moving beyond the best practices and showcase the best processes that allow for continuous experimentation and a level playing field open to all stakeholders. Our envisioned future cities are interlocally connected ecosystems of City Makers: pioneering professionals, bureaucrats and citizens that co-create the most livable, resilient and inclusive urban environments. City Makers who, above all, never stop to question and rethink what that means.

The City Makers Agenda is meant to inspire and reflect the network on the one hand and offer a helping hand to policy makers involved in the Urban Agenda for the EU on the other. Because we believe that it is you who have an extraordinary task in an extraordinary time. A time of transition, that we can perceive as challenging or disruptive, or rather as an opportunity for redesign all that has long been taken for granted. Its impact in the long run will be marked by decisions we make today.



Charlot Schans
programme maker Pakhuis de Zwijger
project leader New Europe

citiesintransition.eu

THE (IM)PACT OF AMSTERDAM

NEW EUROPE CITY MAKERS CALL FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION AND COLLABORATIVE CITY-MAKING

The complex challenges of our time demand innovative solutions and above all, a new way of working. The city of the future doesn't originate from a blueprint on a designer's table or the executive's office. Our cities are in transition. Urgent matters like climate change, increasing poverty and inequality, housing or food supply demand an approach characterised by experiments and integrated collaboration, rooted in ownership and participation of the city's users.

City Makers are the pioneers exploring, shaping and defining this new way of working. They are the active citizens that enhance livability and create communities in their own neighbourhood, setting up cooperatives, starting communal gardens, and organising self-sustaining energy facilities. They are the architects and developers starting their design process by building a community and developing buildings and areas in collaboration with end users. They are the civil servants and political decision makers who base their policies on participative decision-making, transparency, open data, and so on, based upon trust in the strength of their partners in the city. They are the alliances of residents, entrepreneurs, civil society organisations, municipalities, and knowledge institutions, sharing circular ambitions and working together in closing loops of water, energy, raw and waste materials.

Pioneering City Makers often work on a small scale, which doesn't apply to the impact of their work. You can find City Makers anywhere. They constitute a movement capable of shaking up society and redefining existing systems. It is a movement manifesting itself throughout Europe and causing a change in cities. A movement

connected through shared ambitions and principles but characterised by a diversity of initiatives adapted to different socio-economical contexts and needs. *New Europe - Cities in Transition* wants City Makers to connect, inspire, and learn from one another and work together in increasing support by the public and on a political level. The highlight to date is the City Makers pre-Summit held in Amsterdam in February 2016, in which more than 500 City Makers from 80 European cities met to collaboratively work on the City Makers Agenda. This agenda is presented on May 30, 2016, at the informal ministerial meeting concerning the Urban Agenda for the EU. At the same moment, the City Makers meet each other at the New Europe City Makers Summit, only 500 metres away at Pakhuis de Zwijger. It is these links City Makers are always looking for.

Although the City Makers Agenda is an ongoing process - and sees itself reflected in the expanding network of City Makers, the know-how they exchange and the collaborations they develop, we want to take this opportunity to call to the Ministers responsible for the Urban Agenda for the EU to the following.

ACKNOWLEDGE the vital role that City Makers play in sparking social innovation. They are taking up initiatives that create innovative, resilient, inclusive, economically flourishing, and inspiring neighbourhoods.

CO-CREATE THE CITY with a multiplicity of stakeholders: City Makers and social innovators, businesses, civil society organisations, knowledge institutions, and public authorities.

CREATE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD that allows for the stakeholders in the Quintuple Helix to contribute according to competences and fitting roles - being careful not to confuse citizen participation for consultation or pseudo-politics.

EXPERIMENT as a default for city-making. Allow for and support initiatives that emerge out of the efforts of City Makers, secure the translation into knowledge and know-how and transmit this to new governance models and more participatory and co-creative processes.

SHIFT FOCUS from best practice to best process and recognise the contextual differences from which initiatives emerge. Be cautious with upscaling and replication, but curious to learn and implement lessons learned. Allow for diversity in many ways.

INCLUDE EVERYONE. Allow for a reinterpretation and redesign of regulatory frameworks for the protection of the common good, such as the principle of equality, along lines of community, diversity and inclusion rather than individual freedom and uniformity. Allowing initiatives to make a difference, but calling upon the responsibility of the initiators to be open and inclusive.

POOL AND PROVIDE ACCESS TO UNDERUSED RESOURCES in terms of physical buildings, natural resources and energy, public space, and economic and social capital.

OPEN UP AND GIVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA as prerequisites for changing processes of decision-making, budgeting and governance.

PROVIDE ACCESS TO FINANCE, public procurement procedures and supporting networks for alternative and community financing.

FACILITATE LOCAL AND INTERLOCAL LEARNING NETWORKS and on- and offline platforms where know-how and practices are exchanged and co-creation can be experimented with.

ASSESS IMPACT IN AN INTEGRATED MANNER by taking into account multiple value schemes where economic, social, environmental, societal and cultural value can be carefully balanced.

LEARN IN PRACTICE. Dare to question existing allocation of roles and interests and allow for the flexibility to change. Adapt the rules where sets of regulations no longer fit current needs and challenges, rethink legal forms and desirable scale.

CONNECT TO CITY MAKERS' INITIATIVES and cooperate in prioritising and developing policy and political agendas and use subsidiarity as a leading principle in decision making.

DARE TO PRIORITISE and diverge on the basis of added societal value.

REDESIGN DEMOCRACY to allow for more direct, inclusive and tailor-made decision-making and a commons-based public domain.

dezwijger.nl

stedenintransitie.nl

citiesintransition.eu

The (Im)Pact of Amsterdam is a living document, we seek your input to help it grow. Please discuss, contribute, rethink and redefine its principles. Share updates, questions and comments with us on [fb.com/necitiesintransition](https://www.facebook.com/necitiesintransition) or via Twitter: @cityembassies.

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© 2015 moovel Group GmbH / data by OpenStreetMap

Cover: **New Europe**

Researchers and designers Benedikt Groß, Philipp Schmitt and Raphael Reimann of moovel lab visualise data to make the phenomenon of mobility more tangible. Testing the statement 'All roads lead to Rome', they used the GraphHopper open source routing engine and their own algorithm to develop a map of Europe. All roads might not technically lead to Rome, but the visual presentation of Europe's road network connecting the continent to the Italian capital is quite impressive. Using the same technology, they created a map showing the shortest driving time by car to the nearest capital city. Their version of 'New Europe' differs significantly from the political borders as we know them today. In addition to its beauty and visual intrigue, the map reflects the strengths and weaknesses of current road infrastructure and the political and social decisions that build a country. The map is available as a poster via redbubble.com.

lab.moovel.com/projects/roads-to-rome

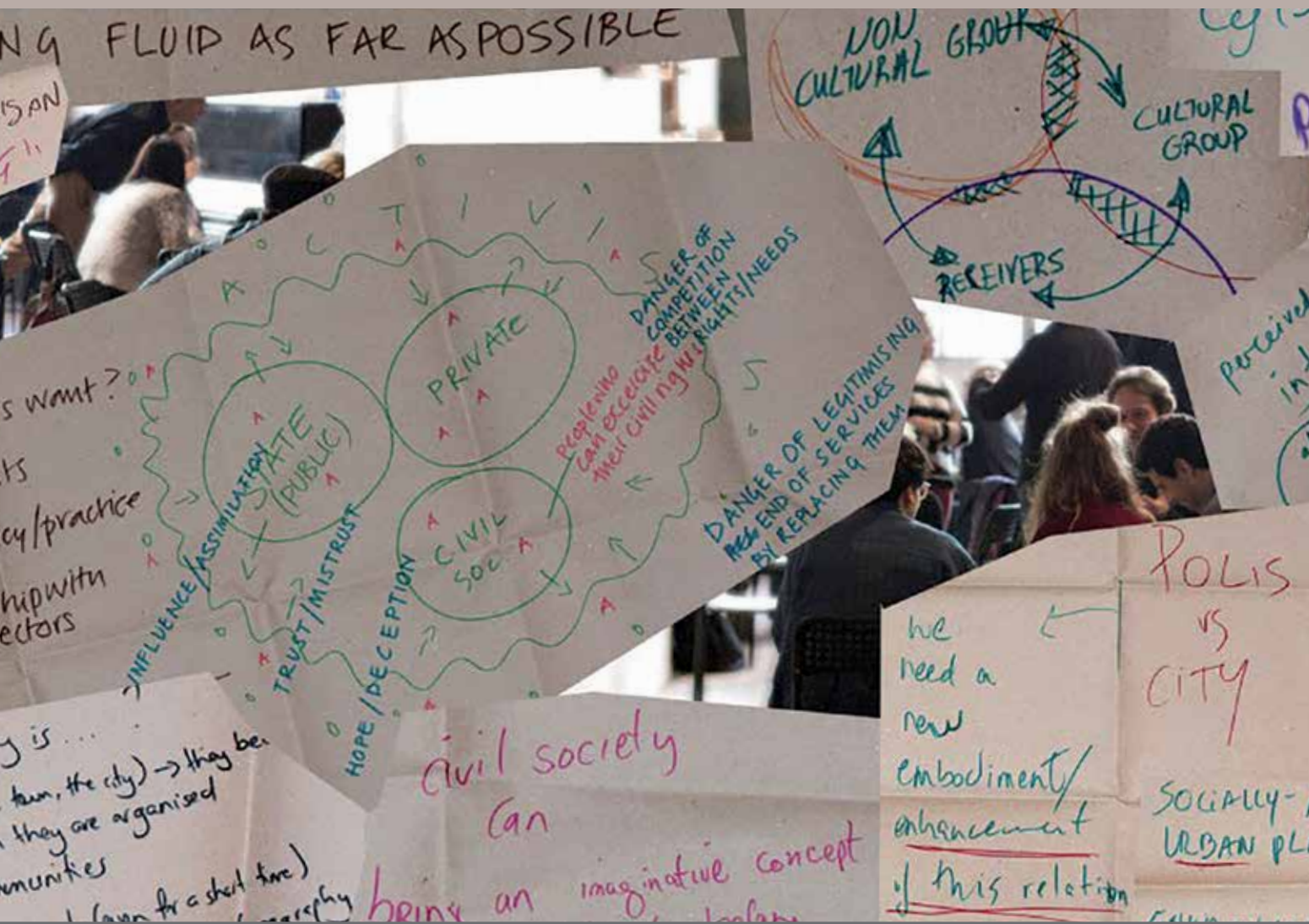
Build the City

How people are changing their cities

Build the City was initiated by the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) to raise awareness of 26 innovative civil-public partnership initiatives from across Europe that have brought concrete solutions to existing urban challenges.

In order to restore our trust in society, we need to place culture and more participative decision-making models at the heart of local and EU decision making. The 26 practices highlighted in this publication are based on commons principles of civil-public partnerships – enabling citizens and governments to share power, co-design and co-shape legislation, management or collective action for

the common good. Culture contributes to this by engaging and inspiring people, challenging stereotypes and catalysing the social revitalisation of urban commons. This is essential when it comes to building a more equitable and sustainable future and helps us to live together in our increasingly diverse communities.



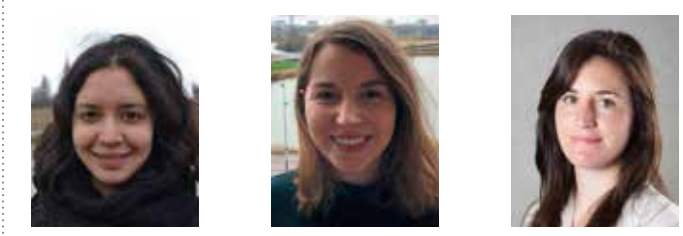
LOCAL INITIATIVES FILL OUR CITY WITH COLOUR

In capital cities throughout Europe, life between big buildings and large-scale projects is thriving, permeated by City Makers and the initiatives they have developed. City Makers - citizens, professionals and local entrepreneurs who have dedicated themselves to developing small-scale, bottom-up initiatives – are creating new life in the city.

New Europe - Cities in Transition shines a spotlight on these City Makers and initiatives. Highlighting innovators and movements, our platform maps the mosaic created by these organisations that are filling in gaps in European cities. *New Europe* also serves as a platform that connects organisations, inducing knowledge sharing and inciting inspiration.

Are you eager to learn more? Our daily online reports will keep you updated on the latest developments, initiatives and active City Makers across Europe.

citiesintransition.eu stedenintransitie.nl



Melisa Argañaraz Sharon van Kouwen Sheila McGraw
intern editors *New Europe*



Want to read the complete manifesto? Head over to ECF's site www.culturalfoundation.eu/build-the-city-manifesto
Discussions on the manifesto take place in our dedicated 'Build the City' lab at www.ecflabs.org

LOCAL INITIATIVES

MX3D



AMSTERDAM Amsterdam will get its first 3D printed steel canal bridge in the near future, designed by Joris Laarman. The construction site is on the NDSM Wharf, and you can already see the progress of their research at FabCity. It is expected that the robots will start printing in August 2016, so this is definitely *something to watch!*

mx3d.com

L'HORTET DEL FORAT



BARCELONA L'Hortet del Forat is a free, self-managed organic urban farm. It has been organised for the community's enjoyment where everyone is encouraged to participate, build relationships and learn from each other. During workshops, urban growers can cultivate best practices for sustainable living.

lhortetdelforat.blogspot.com

Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona & Berlin



TIP THE CHEF

ATHENS In the wake of the economic crisis in Greece, a group of young and talented chefs have pooled their culinary knowledge to offer their services free of charge. The host solely needs to provide the space and cover the cost of the groceries. If they are happy with the service, then they can Tip the Chef!

tipthechef.gr

BÜRGERENERGIE BERLIN



BERLIN BürgerEnergie Berlin is a free, cross-party collaboration that is committed to establishing a viable, sustainable, and democratic energy policy in Berlin. In their energy cooperative, every member has an equal vote, regardless of their investment. The cooperative has set out to buy a power grid and become its operator.

buerger-energie-berlin.de

LOCAL INITIATIVES

SOCIAL STREET COMPANY



BOLOGNA Social Street Company is an online platform and method to promote social intention between neighbours living on the same street. They recently moved from a network of neighbourhood Facebook groups to a non-profit with a set of tangible projects including an outdoor billboard turned into a neighbourhood bulletin board.

socialstreet.it

RECYCLART



BRUSSELS Recyclart is a multidisciplinary arts and music centre that integrates media, people and art. Various parties, concerts, exhibitions, debates and lectures on topics such as architecture, public space and design are organised, and this all takes place in an old unused train station in the centre of Brussels.

recyclart.be

Bologna, Bratislava, Brussels & Bucharest

TOVARNA ROG



BRATISLAVA The former Rog bike factory was certain to meet an unfortunate ending following fifteen years of vacancy. The informal group TEMP called for action and developed the site into a cultural and social centre, now an open structure where space is used day and night by artists and cultural producers.

tovarna.org

MAKE A POINT



BUCHAREST Make a Point aims to transform undesirable characteristics of the city into revitalised urban spaces. This includes transforming vacant industrial buildings to places of culture and creativity making them a part of the city. There, you can visit exhibitions, films and workshops.

makeapoint.ro



© József Sztupa

BUDAPEST BIKE MAFIA

BUDAPEST With the slogan ‘empathy, respect, love, ride’, the Budapest Bike Mafia combines cycling culture, a respect for the environment and social work. They can be seen riding around the city engaged in radical acts of kindness, handing out food to homeless people, helping out the elderly, or caring for shelter animals.

bbm.hu

CYKLING UDEN ALDER



© Cycling Without Age

COPENHAGEN Cycling Without Age (CWA) uses the bike as a means of combating issues of an ageing population, loneliness, and limited mobility among elderly people in cities worldwide from Copenhagen to San Francisco to Utrecht. Through Cycling Without Age, participants connect as they ride together through their city laughing and sharing stories.

cyklingudenalder.dk

THE DUBLIN HONEY PROJECT



© Keran Harnett & Gearóid Carvill

DUBLIN This urban beekeeping initiative was set up by friends aiming to produce honey in as many parts of the city as possible and at the same time boost local biodiversity and knowledge about bees. What a tasty way to work together and create a buzz about sustainability in Dublin!

fb.com/DublinHoneyProject

TOREKES

Ghent In 2010, the local complementary currency, Toreke was introduced by the Flemish Minister of Employment and Social Economy to incentivise local social engagement. Residents who help out in their community can earn this reward and spend it at local shops or use it to rent an allotment or buy bus- and theatre tickets.

torekes.be



PRO HELSINKI 2.0



© Urban Helsinki

HELSINKI Could your city benefit from DIY urban planning? Urban Helsinki, a group of young urbanists, drafted an alternative plan for the city based on surveys completed by residents. Pro Helsinki 2.0 illustrates how the city can develop in a more sustainable way, inciting an important debate and dialogue about city planning.

urbanhelsinki.fi

ASSOCIAÇÃO RENOVAR A MOURARIA



© Carla Rosado

LISBON This community organisation redeveloped a government-owned derelict building into a small cultural centre with office spaces and a cafe. Their action plan is based on inclusion and inter-generational living, which is reflected in the launch of the local newspaper *Rosa Maria*, citizen support services, public workshops, and classes at the Mouraria Community House.

renovaramouraria.pt



© rdpa (CC BY 2.0)

METELKOVA MESTO

LJUBLJANA A few hundred metres from Ljubljana’s main train station you will find Metelkova Mesto, a former military headquarters transformed into an ‘autonomous cultural zone’. At this renowned cultural centre, full of alternative organisations, you can discover the underground art scene, debate with locals and travellers or dance the night away.

metelkovamesto.org



© Bromley by Bow Centre

BROMLEY BY BOW CENTRE

LONDON Bromley by Bow Centre provides a dynamic model of community regeneration based on the belief in the capacity, creativity, and entrepreneurship of local residents. The organisation is based in East-London and has been supporting residents since the 80’s. It has grown into a stellar example of bringing economic development to deprived communities.

bbc.org.uk

PIAZZA VERDE



© Giacomo Piovani

LUXEMBOURG Piazza Verde brings creatives and local neighbours together through urban farming on site of the 1535°C creativity hub campus. The approach of the garden is unique in the sense that it was co-designed by the people involved, resulting in a project that is highly creative and flexible, involving 3D printed mini-greenhouses and other innovative designs.

1535.lu

ARTOS FOUNDATION

© Achilleas Kentonis



NICOSIA ARTos combines the worlds of arts and sciences, offering both a platform and promoting them at the local as well as at an international level. Through the Foundation, artists, thinkers, writers, scholars, and researchers are able to co-exist and creatively interact with each other and participate in various cultural and research programmes.

artosfoundation.org

BASURAMA



© Basurama

MADRID Since its creation in 2001, this artist collective has been working on changing people's perceptions of waste. Plastic bags, wooden pallets and old tires serve as the primary resources and inspiration for the art created, ranging from installations to film. At Basurama, one man's trash is another man's treasure!

basurama.org



© Alain Leroy

LA RECYCLERIE

PARIS Based on the three R's (Reduce - Réutiliser - Recycler), La REcyclerie opened its doors in 2014 in the old Ornano train station. You can visit the urban garden located on the old train tracks, grab a bite in their canteen, or fix your broken items in the DIY repair workshop with saws, drills and many other tools. The space is also used for exhibitions.

larecyclerie.com



© Pavel Šinagl

CRYPTOANARCHY INSTITUTE

PRAGUE Located in a former factory called Paralelní Polis (Czech for Parallel City), the Cryptoanarchy Institute was formed by guerilla artist collective Ztohoven, in close cooperation with the international hacker scene. Inspired by technological innovation and its potential impact on society and democracy, they create tools for the unlimited dissemination of online information and encourage a parallel decentralised economy supported by cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin.

paralelnipolis.cz

GRUPPI DI ACQUISTO SOLIDALE

ROME Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale develops consumer awareness by bringing the attention back to the importance of sustainable, local food products in Italy. This initiative avoids traditional market concepts and focuses on creating new, short supply chains that connect food producers directly with consumers.

gasroma.org

FREE RIGA



© Vija Eksta

RIGA Mapping vacant properties in Riga and mediating between civic initiatives, the municipality and property owners are among the key activities of Free Riga. While its name might lead you to think of a radical movement, the group contributes and acts in support of integrated projects for urban regeneration and reclamation.

freeriga.lv

HRANKOOP



© Hrankoop Sofia

SOFIA Hrankoop is Bulgaria's first food cooperative set up by a group of people seeking pure food. Food cooperatives are known in Bulgaria as Community Supported Agriculture. Hrankoop supplies local products and builds strong, stable and mutually beneficial partnerships between the community, manufacturers and retailers.

hrankoop.com

MITT127



© Aseffa Heilu

STOCKHOLM Mitt127 is an initiative organised by young people for young people from Skärholmen, an outer district of Stockholm where 90% of the population has migrant roots. They organise festivals, launch educational programmes and raise awareness about political issues amongst the youth from the area. Everyone is welcome in this local community!

fb.com/127festivalen



© Tele Pehk

KALARAND

TALLINN Kalarand is a privately owned seaside plot in Tallinn, subject to an ongoing debate about its purpose and designated uses. Meanwhile, the local community has taken it upon themselves to independently maintain the beach. They organise public beach and sauna parties, open-air dinners and social gatherings of all sorts during the spring and summer.

fb.com/kalarandtallinn



© Marija Jociute

DAS PACKHAUS

VIENNA Paradocks, a collective researching and implementing socio-spatial concepts for temporary use, came across a unique opportunity two years ago to re-open a former vacant office from the 1970s. Their temporary use project Das Packhaus offers spaces in this 2200 m² building, where more than 250 start-ups, initiatives, and organisations work together and share their ideas on urban resources and temporary use with the city.

paradocks.at



© Laimikis.lt

ŠNIPIŠKĖS NEIGHBOURHOOD REGENERATION

VILNIUS After carrying out a pilot research project on the potential of public spaces and social connections in the Šnipiškės neighbourhood, Laimikis developed a set of tools and methods for inclusive neighbourhood regeneration, which was launched in cooperation with the residents. With the support of the local administration, the local community collaborates with artists and others on cooperative projects to revitalise public spaces.

laimikis.lt

NAQSAM IL-MUŻA



© Alex Artue

VALLETTA As the Fine Art Museum transitions to Malta's new national community art museum MUŻA, Valletta residents will pick ten artworks to represent their city as part of Naqsam il-MUŻA, an exercise in community curation. MUŻA will open its doors in 2018, as a flagship project when Valletta is the European Capital of Culture.

fb.com/NFAMalta valletta2018.org

PER.KA



THESSALONIKI Operating on a former military base, Peristikes Kalliergies (PER.KA) is the first and biggest citizen urban agriculture initiative in Thessaloniki. After the municipality conceded spaces from the district to self-organised citizen groups, PER.KA was formed in 2011. They cultivate sustainable vegetables and fruits for local consumption, not for commerce or profit maximisation.

perka.org

OTWARTY JAZDÓW



WARSAW Jazdów is an extraordinary historical green oasis with great social and cultural potential. Local residents, urban activists, and many grassroots organisations form the Otwarty Jazdów community, which fights for its preservation. Cultural institutions have been flourishing here, implementing summer projects and preserving Warsaw's heritage.

mapajazdowa.pl

jazdow.pl

OKUS DOMA



© Neven Milić

ZAGREB Social cooperative Okus Doma (Taste of Home), is a culinary-cultural-research project connecting the culture and customs of refugees and migrants in Croatia through memories of home and their cuisine. By cooking together, they share memories, and create new friendships and experiences, while building upon skills supporting employment and integration. They have an upcoming project, a food catering business!

okus-doma.hr

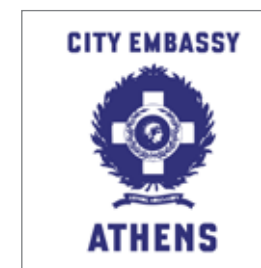


© Nicolas Wirmann

NEW DIVISION OF ROLES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CITY MAKERS CITY EMBASSY ATHENS

The Mayor and the City of Athens are administering public services in one of the most difficult periods of recent times. The Municipality recognises that one of the main strengths of the City is its own citizens. In particular, that citizen-led groups in many neighbourhoods across the city are birthing new social innovation through the support and solidarity offered in this time of crisis. At the heart of the Mayor's vision is engendering collaboration between sectors and modernising how the Municipality operates internally, offers its services, and acts as a community leader to the many serious challenges the City is facing. The desire to genuinely engage with stakeholders and citizens is key to actualising this vision.

The synAthina experiment, a mechanism which was awarded by Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors Challenge in 2014, attempts to establish a systematic way by which municipalities can develop a stronger bond with their citizens, particularly those who are active and creative in finding solutions for their city. City Makers are an invaluable source of knowledge for municipalities, bringing to the surface not only citizens' priorities for the city through their actions, but also an update on ways to address and solve new pressing needs in neighbourhoods. If the municipality wants to capture this knowledge, they might find that they have to change their own traditional role towards City Makers. Connecting to that knowledge means that the municipality may become a facilitator or something like the music conductor of the city, and hand over its star position of the first violin to the crowd itself!



Athens, in all of Greece's hardship, is experiencing a universal condition as if through a magnifying glass. In its effort to face the complexity and unpredictability of the urgent problems that are arising, the Municipality is creating stronger bonds and new collaborations with the City, the private sphere, available expertise and civil society. This is a

situation that can be illustrated through the refugee phenomenon: for the thousands of refugees passing through Athens, Mayor Giorgos Kaminis has opened a hosting provisional camp in the centre of the city. The camp is run by a variety of different organisations: established NGOs such as Médecins sans frontières, PRAKSIS and the Red Cross, along with other social integration and supporting groups, government organisations, university departments and community groups that have come from all over Europe. >>

<< Artistic intervention on public space by PIXEL[13], Sauzé-Vaussais, France, 2011. In November 2015, in the urban environment of Athens, PIXEL[13] and Greek artists worked together on the interdisciplinary project KAOS, to share their personal approach and work collectively on urban transformation and creative intervention in public spaces.

pixel13.org amongtheants.com

THE REFUGEE CRISIS SPURRED CITY OFFICIALS TO CHANGE THEIR ROLE

>> The Municipal Administration and the Ministry of the Interior have been automatically transformed into facilitators and coordinators of the solutions initiated by these organisations and the voluntary citizens involved. Up until now, this new distribution of roles has shown its direct results and has literally saved the city from chaos. It is interesting to see how city officials, having to moderate meetings and give space to those that come with solutions, suddenly need different skills.

Some other City Makers squatted an old school building to host more newcomers (there are literally thousands arriving at the moment with unknown prospects about how to move on to Germany or other European hosting cities). In the pending political situation, City Makers in this school have thought of involving Syrian refugees in repairing the school, building it into a lively community kitchen with respectable dormitories and morning children's classes as a temporary solution for integration. >>



THE SYNATHINA TOOLKIT

SynAthina is a mechanism in progress. Its goal is to create a systematic way to harvest knowledge from citizens' actions, in order to empower and further transform them into long-lasting, co-created results for the City. It maps activities, empowering them by connecting those involved with other interested stakeholders - such as sponsors, experts or municipal services. It also evaluates activities to identify which ones have a bigger impact on the City and it pushes this new knowledge into the municipal system in order to update and upgrade its own services and respond to people's needs with more precision and accuracy. None of these experiments could

have happened without a mayor with a true vision for including City Makers in the official picture of the municipality. Mayor Giorgos Kaminis created a new political sector for a Vice Mayor for 'Civil Society and Municipality Decentralisation'. This became the official home of the synAthina mechanism and is still a work in progress.

Athens lacked any previous form of systematic city-citizen collaboration. Other European cities may not have such a rounded mechanism,

but various attempts to include volunteers and active citizens are embedded in activities initiated by city officials themselves. External experts comprise the synAthina team some being on its core team, and others rotating in for particular projects. Each of them is an actor who has some experience as a City Maker. They bring fresh new blood to traditional administration and are true believers in change through genuine collaboration.

synathina.gr

AKALYPTOS 2.0

Initiated by the MicroMega architects' office, Akalyptos 2.0 is an action which aims to unite and transform the often unused spaces hidden between blocks of flats in Athens into wider green spaces, fulfilling residents' specific needs, through participatory design processes and laboratories. Acknowledging the lack of public green areas in Athens' densely urbanised environment of 17,000 km² Mayor Giorgos Kaminis has integrated the action in his



priorities as part of a continuous strategy for environmental quality. SynAthina uses seed funding to support and facilitate Akalyptos 2.0, which is launching its first pilot project in the neighbourhood of Neos Kosmos.

micromega.gr

akalyptos-2.org

© Jiske Schols

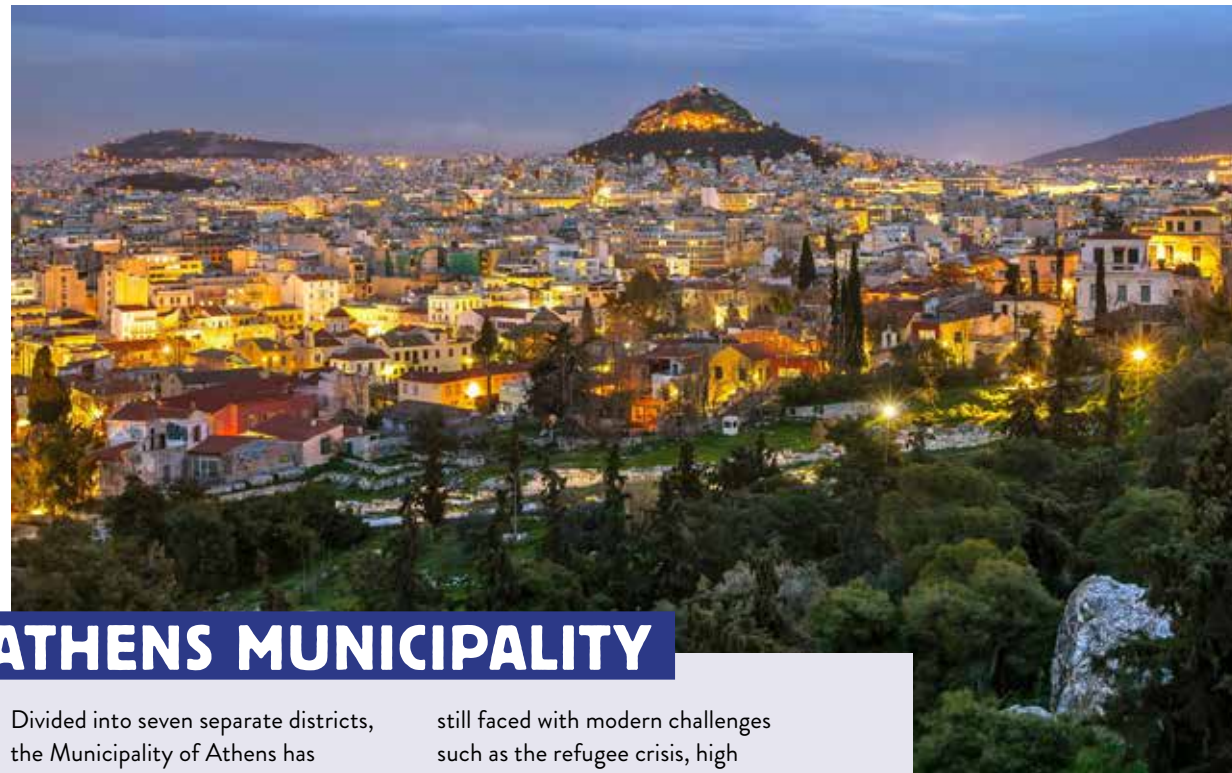
>> This gives an incredible opportunity to change, refine and re-think ways to govern. The synAthina model has really come out of the observation of similar examples in the City of Athens, where better results have emerged from City Makers' initiatives in various fields. But we are still far from having changed the old traditional model, and there are still no signs of administrative reform: the challenge is to use on-the-ground experience to update and upgrade government models. Changes so far are small-scale and too discreet. But the experience of the refugee situation is a form of national cultural change, a precondition for bold innovative administrative upgrading. In other words, an immense opportunity.

CLOSING THE TOP DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP GAP

Is there a way to close the gap between bottom-up and top down? SynAthina's mechanism maps the activities of public-spirited citizens in meaningful ways. Among the average 800 activities per year mapped on its site, we can

see the tendencies and priorities of citizens through their actions. These priorities, once they are empowered and evaluated, can become part of the Mayor's own agenda or they may even bring changes in the administration.

Graffiti removal and artistic interventions may become new facilitating sectors in the Municipality; temporary use of public buildings may lead to a new regulatory framework for the use of the City's empty spaces. A programme called *Open Schools*, about using school buildings after school hours, may be handed over to local communities who share not only the use, but also the running of the school's afternoon programmes. All three examples show that (a) each type of collaboration between City Makers and the Municipality are different, (b) each has to adapt to the particular character of the project and (c) when collaboration brings positive results, it embodies sustainable mechanisms which are further adopted in municipal routines. These examples are also indicative signs of how important the role of cities can be for the way Europe will choose to find its lost sense of cohesion. Hundreds of such recorded activities are similar to others all over Europe. They convey a new way of how citizens relate to the public sphere. >>



ATHENS MUNICIPALITY

Divided into seven separate districts, the Municipality of Athens has a population of approximately 664,000 residents. Following a seven year period of recession and austerity measures in Greece, the Municipality of Athens has witnessed a decrease in population and GDP alike. Under the pressure of its financial decline, the Municipality is

still faced with modern challenges such as the refugee crisis, high unemployment rates, empty buildings and a general sense of urban decay, which creates a pressing need for a change of culture and a formation of collaborative and innovative solutions.

cityofathens.gr
thisisathens.org

>> In May 2015, I was asked to consult the local community from the Kypseli neighbourhood in central Athens, an area that used to be one of Athens wealthiest and most cultured neighbourhoods, but in more recent times has had racial and migrant problems. The Kypseli Market is a landmark building from the 1930's, that used to be a covered traditional market until the 90s when it was left unused. Local citizens self-organised a takeover of the market and began to run different community activities there. It became a lively and vibrant local community focal point for a period of time. However, the running of the market became politicised. The building was in disrepair and in danger of causing harm. Citizens were evicted from the building and it was shut down.

This caused an intense response from the local community and became a point of conflict. European Structural funding was obtained to renovate the building and works began in the spring of 2015. However, details of the future use and the management of the building were unclear. The challenge was to bring back active City Makers that had previously run lively events in the market and ask them to collaborate with the Municipality in a structured and sustainable manner. What did they want the refurbished building to become? Conflict had been expressed from many directions, between all of the stakeholders involved. So it was a test to address how to bridge those gaps! >>

WE NEED CITY MAKERS TO CREATE A FOUNDATION OF TRUST BETWEEN THE MUNICIPALITY AND LOCAL PEOPLE

>> The opportunity to begin engaging with citizens did not come from the initiation of a community group (which is where the synAthina initiative is placed to respond to), but instead came from several different meetings together about needs. The first need was for conflict transformation. The second was based on ensuring the positive usage and impact of the market on the local area. The third need came from the community that was clearly wishing to ensure that the market would become an attraction to the area and that it would add to local life. All in all, the overriding need was to create a foundation of trust between the Municipality and the local people so that the market could become a sustainable endeavour. We, the synAthina team, therefore decided to invite City Makers to set up a new form of public consultation in order to test and create a new model for its future use: a model that would bring city officials, young entrepreneurs and City Makers under the same roof and run the market in a long-lasting, sustainable way. Inviting citizens to participate through art and play can be one of the wisest actions to take when a community is facing difficult choices or where disagreement exists from previous experiences. Participation immediately opens the door for differences that lie below conflicts to be voiced, seen and discerned. The art in doing this, however, is in how one engages, how one invites diversity to become visible so that it can be transformed from disagreement to wanting to work together.

Making the leap from deciding-and-telling to consulting-but-not-fully-including to truly engaging with citizens, can feel like a huge step for public authorities. It is this form of participation - and specifically when it is done in a light-hearted and playful way - that leads to change beyond difference, dissension, and disturbance. This way of engaging not only transforms disagreement, it invites the best chance for new innovative solutions and options to emerge through the interaction of the diverse ideas. Showing people that their ideas can be transformed in a short period of time into something that can complement other ideas, transforms competitiveness into collaboration. Artists have the gift of taking ideas and giving them form so that the invisible - i.e., concepts - become visible. This liberates the ideas from people's minds and hearts so that they can benefit and improve decisions that will affect their local neighbourhood.

At the heart of this experience is what is now widely referred to as 'co-creation', 'co-everything' or 'co-anything'. It will be important for the Urban Agenda for the EU to include a word that moves the notion of citizen participation to a co-creation modus vivendi with the authorities. It breaks the ice and opens doors to fast results. ••

agorakypselis.gr

synathina.gr



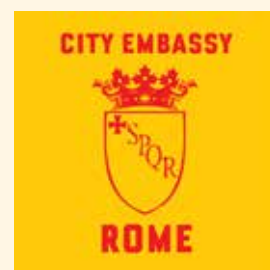
Amalia Zepou
 Vice Mayor for Civil Society & Municipality Decentralisation at the Municipality of Athens & founder synAthina
cityofathens.gr

GIORGIO DE FINIS

ROME

‘IT IS IMPORTANT TO CREATE A SPACE FOR HOPE AND THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR CHANGE.’

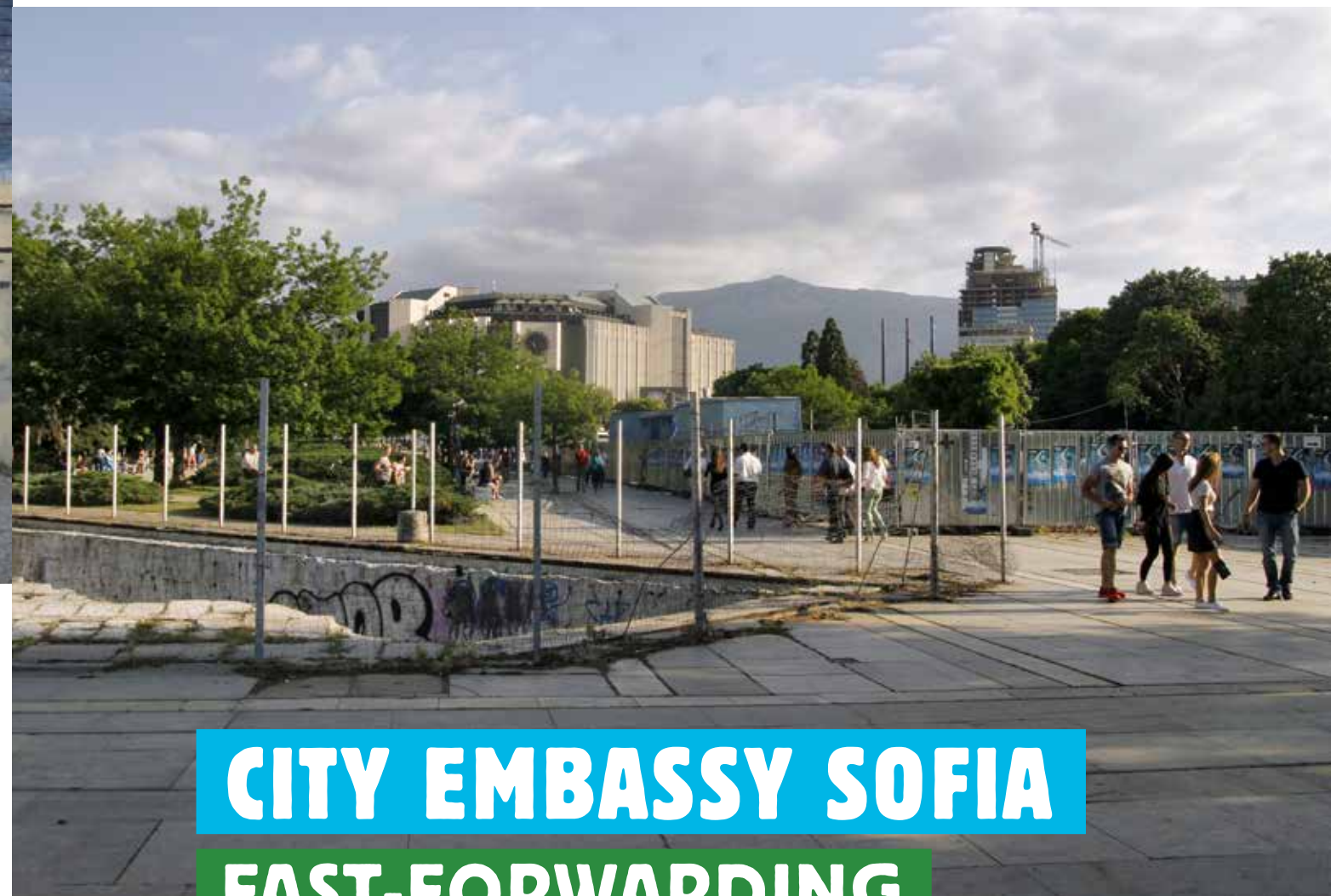
As an anthropologist, Giorgio de Finis studied the Batak people in the Philippines. Since then, he has worked across disciplines as a photographer, writer and filmmaker having directed over one hundred documentaries. Most recently, he has dedicated himself to creating and maintaining the Museo dell'Altro e dell'Altrove di Metropoliz_citt meticcica (MAAM). Located in an old salami factory in Rome, this unique project not only acts as a warehouse gallery, but also serves as the home to about 200 marginalised people. He started MAAM in realisation of the failed promise of globalisation. Instead of creating a world where everyone can travel freely, in practice goods and money are the things that move uninhibited. ‘The centre of Rome is full of tourists, of people who have the opportunity to travel.



However, the suburbs, like MAAM, are places where poor and homeless people live without access to globalisation. They are treated as human waste’, says Giorgio. The museum showcases some of the major difficulties that people experience on a daily basis such as housing, immigration issues, and social exclusion, or what Giorgio calls ‘the invisible reality that is happening in Rome’. MAAM embodies his vision of a Rome reimagined, a city that is more human and livable. It is a place where a once ostracised population has now been made visible to the rest of the city, has direct access to art and beauty, and engages in weekly community assemblies.

fb.com/museoMAAM

The National Palace of Culture (NDK) in transition - the signature socialist era building, about to host the 2018 Bulgarian presidency of the Council of the EU, was previously notoriously inaccessible but is currently undergoing major changes and becoming a favourite spot in the city.



CITY EMBASSY SOFIA

FAST-FORWARDING TO POSITIVE CITY-MAKING

© Dimitar Stoychev / Grupa Grad



Sofia is a city of many green spaces and historical complexity that could be really exciting when handled adequately, and it's wonderfully located at the foot of a mountain. Yet, to the critical mind, Sofia is also a city of fragmented development, in transition, and plagued by a lack of updated expertise in city governing. So which of these two sets of qualities comes first? Having lived in a state of constant transition for nearly thirty years, it oftentimes seems like City Makers in Sofia and Bulgaria are having a hard time overcoming the pessimistic mindset. Nevertheless, over the last five to ten years, the mentality of Sofia's citizens has made a steady change towards positivity and activity, and here is how. >>

>> Attending the New Europe City Makers Pre-Summit at Pakhuis de Zwijger last February, all of the participants from around Europe were asked to identify their city's most pressing urban challenge in the context of the Urban Agenda for the EU. Out of the twelve themes on the agenda, the one that immediately stood out as matching Sofia's condition was - unexcitingly - none of the ones related to environmental sustainability or social innovation, but the single one mundanely related to ineffective and outdated bureaucracy: 'Innovative and responsible public procurement'. And there it is in a nutshell. From the unsatisfactory renovation of one of the signature streets in central Sofia (Vitosha Boulevard) to the controversial Tsar Samuil statue; inadequate public procurement has been the windmill all professionals and active citizens in Sofia have been tilting at. It has been the key problem whose possible solution promised to offer a remedy to all of the urban woes of the city in an over twenty-year long state of major political, economic and social transition.

It is precisely through the valuable exchange with other City Makers, local and European, that I have grown aware of the pessimistic retroactive mindset reflected above - that of a civic society still processing its past and trying to catch up with the historicity of the world around it. But is catching up really necessary and how about facing forward and adjusting course to merging paths instead?

FROM REACTIONIST TO HOLISTIC AND POSITIVE APPROACHES

Last year, we worked on the Alternative Interaction Model for the Development of Public Urban Environment and the accompanying step-by-step manual to propose to the Sofia City Administration. During the process, my colleagues from the multidisciplinary platform Fragment and I organised a number of public discussions exploring current city-making mentality among citizens, NGOs, professionals shaping the built environment, and city administration representatives. Some important points emerged in the course of the debates.

In the early stages of transition in Bulgaria, characterised by a sluggish separation of state and citizens from the previous political regime, 'politics' was a dirty word and thus shunned by the professional community. At the same time, as social, political and economic changes slowly took hold, citizen participation in city governing shifted from passive to reactionist. The result was that citizens were oftentimes angry or offended by uncoordinated urban redevelopment and city administration - usually in the state of stress and crisis solving and not really aware of what had gone wrong. Over the same course of public meetings, we observed that it is now safe to say that over the last five to ten years, there has been a certain positive development in both citizens' and bureaucrats' mentality and willingness to interact.

How did that happen? Much of the credit seems to go to social media and the opportunities for the direct and honest communication and interaction it offers. It brought previously isolated NGOs, citizen groups and individuals with similar outlooks on city-making together. This is now further snowballing into the consolidation of a fairly organised city network of active citizens and professionals. They have communicated and interacted long enough with each other and with city administrators, to evolve past reactionist activism against unsuccessfully realised public space redevelopments and into systematic monitoring, analysis and planning of sustainable change for the City of Sofia.

Another major local factor in changing the mindsets of the post-communist era citizens, from an apathetic belief that public space development is a prerogative of the state only to a growing interest in city locations and an enthusiastic desire to appropriate and change them, is place-making by culture festivals. Over the last decade, they have become instrumental in unveiling the potential of existing spaces, buildings, and infrastructure in the city, and in inviting citizens to reclaim and re-inhabit them. >>

THE WAY TO GO: FAST-FORWARDING INSTEAD OF CATCHING UP?

>> Nevermind the different political paths of European countries, the outdated dichotomous state of cities - where private / public and nature / architecture are considered polar opposites - is a concept all post-industrial societies have been growing increasingly aware of and struggling to advance beyond. In Bulgaria, throughout Europe, and also on a wider international scale, the coming of the postmodern age has revealed an important shift of mentality back to the basics defining human existence: the relationship with nature (ecological concerns) and the relationships among people (social concerns). An ensuing re-invention of the general understanding of democracy as a return to its classic Athenian direct form, is another defining feature of the current Zeitgeist.

In another episode of the City Makers Pre-Summit, having reconnected with my positive and forward-thinking city-making self - instead of the pessimistic reactionist one from the first paragraph, I headed straight to the expert session about Circular Economy, where all chief concerns of our time (ecological, social and economic) came together. Swedish City Maker Jan Rydén addressed the importance of rethinking traditional budget-driven development plans to respect planetary boundaries, with environmental concerns coming first, followed closely by social concerns, creating the boundary under which budgetary concerns must fall. As it echoes similar concerns expressed by City Makers in Sofia at Fragment's public discussions, I rest assured that the necessary positive shift in mentality has already started to take place in Sofia and that fast-forwarding to time-relevant city-making, instead of catching up with 'what-should-have-could-have-happened' in city administration, is by now not only possible, but also plausible. >>

A Million Trees for Sofia Project © Dimitar Paskalev

инициатива

ЕДИН МИЛИОН ДЪРВЕТА



SOFIA – GREEN CAPITAL

Founded in the summer of 2015, the Sofia - Green Capital initiative is the result and evidence of increasing dialogue among City Makers in Sofia. It is a union of NGOs and professionals supporting the common cause of pro-active ecological development in Sofia. They started off by proposing a set of concrete green measures to the Municipality of Sofia. Based on realistic assessment of Sofia's natural environmental assets, the initiative aims to engage public and political attention, energy and resources to transform Sofia from being one of the cities with the worst environmental conditions in Europe, to a truly ecological green city with an ambitious sustainable development policy.

sofiagreencapital.org

CITY-MAKING REQUIRES BOLDNESS AND WILLINGNESS TO RISK AND EXPERIMENT

>> Another lasting impression from the City Makers Pre-Summit, is Levente Polyak from KÉK- Contemporary Architecture Centre in Budapest discussing the discrepancy between different parts of society. This caused their organisation to identify itself as a company when interacting with investors in order to be considered reliable, and as an NGO when interacting with citizens in order to be considered trustworthy. This is all done for the greater goal of bringing them together into fruitful discussion on reactivating the vacant spaces of Budapest. While the Sofia city-making scene has already acquired both richness and some structure, it is perhaps such strategic boldness that City Makers here still need to work to achieve.

That and the playful willingness to risk and experiment in order to instigate change, is demonstrated by Helsinki-based organisation Yhteismaa. Founder Jaakko Blomberg shared that in the city it is easier to ask the authorities for forgiveness for an unauthorised event that was loved by people, than to wait for permission. Reaching the stage where it would be possible for City Makers in Sofia to compress their combined knowledge of the city and successful city-making into simple but effective proposals that work like urban acupuncture, is still around the corner for Sofia's city-making scene – where the multidisciplinary input data on the city is still in its accumulative state.

While the above must-haves stand as important mentality milestones ahead of Sofia's City Makers, it is noteworthy that the city now boasts an encouraging number of interconnected actors on the city planning and development scene. Actors who are struggling to change the public urban environment by employing both bottom-up strategies and innovative ways to interact with local authorities. Some of the honourable mentions here include Transformatori (for urban activism in all spheres), Bike Evolution (for raising awareness about cycling culture), Za Zemiata (which translates equivocally as 'For Earth/For Land' – >>



ZA GRADSKO RAZVITIE FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT

© Ilyan Ruzhin

At the forefront of acupuncture city-making – this time in terms of city governing and city administration – comes FOR Urban Development. Started in late 2015, as a reaction to the resignation of the former chief architect of Sofia, the initiative represents a symbolic point in time to start rethinking urban planning policies in Sofia. FOR Urban Development unites over fifty NGOs and professionals. Their first objective was to present a timely proposal for reforming the urban planning system, as well as the structure of the Sofia Municipal Administration in a way that envisions broader expert participation in city planning and monitoring to the Mayor and the City Municipality of Sofia.

fb.com/ZaGradskoRazvitie

>> for raising ecological awareness), WhAT Association (for their regular and objective social and urban critique), Studio Projectirane (for their efforts to change architecture and urbanism education in Sofia from within), Grupa Grad (for reconnecting the architectural profession with social responsibility), Multi Kulti Collective (for their fresh, existential and non-reactionist take on immigrant integration), and many more.

NDK HEATING PLANT



© dontDIY

The redevelopment of Heating Plant Contemporary Art Centre in Sofia is a major manifestation of the increasing willingness for collaboration between city administrators and citizen groups and organisations – in this particular case, of independent artists. Following the step-by-step interactive model (as prescribed by Fragment), the project took off last year with research and the proposal of three alternative models for the redevelopment of the site and management of the future art centre. It was developed by several multi-disciplinary teams, one of which included our architecture studio dontDIY.

BUILDING CHARMING CITIES INSTEAD OF SMART CITIES

I often reflect on the definition of the 'best city', since I am certain a 'smart city' is not enough to reflect the complexity of human life. The New Europe - Cities in Transition platform has been instrumental in shaping and enriching my thoughts on the matter over the last months. It's through the valuable opportunity to meet and learn from City Makers from around Europe and work together on obstacle-overcoming strategies that would work for one and all of us while keeping local contexts in mind, and also through the first-hand experience of successful and vibrant urban initiatives in Stockholm, Budapest, Helsinki, Amsterdam and elsewhere. The best, most livable city to me now comes down to the 'charming city' – not only smart or historic, but a safe harbour for both nomads and homebodies, multidisciplinary, participatory, and level-headedly situated within planetary boundaries. ••

fargfabriken.se

kek.org.hu

yhteismaa.fi

transformatori.net

velobg.org

zazemiata.org

whata.org

fb.com/projectirane

grupagrad.com

multikulti.bg



Antonina Ilieva
architect dontDIY architecture & design studio, Fragment NGO

dontdiystudio.com

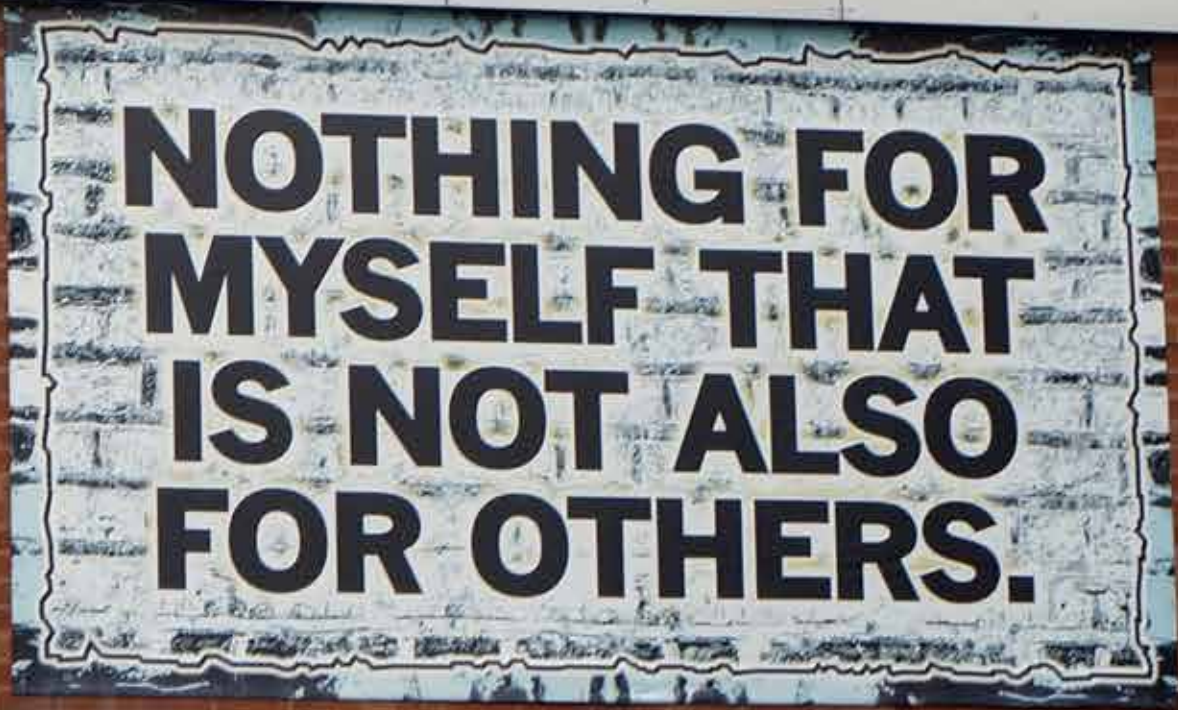
grupafragment.wordpress.com

The members of the architecture studio dontDIY – Hristo Stankushev, Stefan Minkoff, Svetoslav Michev and Antonina Ilieva – divide their time between design projects, business projects, outside-the-box educational projects, interdisciplinary collaborations and city-making activities most recently linked to the work of the multidisciplinary platform Fragment.

WHAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

HOW TO FIGHT POVERTY IN CITIES?

Cities offer people opportunities. To work, and to move forward. But not everyone succeeds. Part of the global urban population lives or risks falling into poverty or social exclusion, with more than 120 million people in the European Union alone - that's nearly one in seven. A European ambition is to bring at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020, but does Europe manage to do that? And what can citizens do? >>



>> Economically, cities are becoming increasingly important for countries. Powerful towns with highly qualified workers increasingly define the level of prosperity of a country. In the coming decades, the economic importance of cities will continue to increase, as the Cultural Planning Institution (CPB) already envisaged a few years ago. Cities will become even stronger economic centres than they are today, because cities are places where large and small companies want to settle, where innovation takes place, and highly educated people want to live and work. And cities provide opportunities for those who want to share in this economic success. Therefore, it is not surprising that migration to cities in Europe and worldwide continues. But does everyone benefit from this increasing prosperity in cities?

At this time, certainly not. Several recent studies show that poverty is increasing in Europe. In Eastern European countries, that is especially the case in rural areas. In the Western part, poverty is mainly an urban phenomenon. It is clear that disparities in income levels are growing in European cities. Urban poverty is not a new problem. A century ago, many urban dwellers in Amsterdam, for instance, lived in drafty hovels. Thousands of social houses have been built to provide low-income workers with good housing. After the Second World War, the improvement of the living conditions of the urban poor has continued with the involvement of the European Union. Until the

seventies, the strongest emphasis in Western Europe was to solve the housing shortage. Houses were built rapidly to supply the population with a good range of modern accommodations. Those who had low incomes could use cheap loans or rely on social housing. But as soon as the housing shortage was as good as solved, poverty was not eradicated. During the late seventies, two strategies arose to combat poverty. Should investments be made in educating and training underprivileged people wherever they live (people-based policy)? Or would it be better to renew deprived neighbourhoods (place-based policy)?

According to Iván Tosics, researcher at the Metropolitan Research Institute in Budapest and one of the experts of the partnership Urban Poverty on the Urban Agenda for the EU, place-based regeneration gradually gained importance. This initially strongly focused on the physical side of urban renewal. 'However, a lot of criticism arose as to whether this kind of renewal leads to displacement. The poor people move away from the improved areas to cheaper neighbourhoods. The problem of poverty is therefore not solved', he says. According to Tosics, slowly a shift towards a more 'soft approach' to urban renewal was made. Physical interventions became much more devoted to improving the chances of the present residents. 'And, not least, the residents were increasingly involved in the renewal of their neighbourhoods. That was not only national policy but also happening at a European level.' >>

FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES BANQUES ALIMENTAIRES

In France, the first European food bank was founded in the eighties, shortly followed by Belgium. The Netherlands also has a network of food banks that were initiated by concerned citizens. Whoever lives on a minimum income can pick up food every week. This way, low income are ensured to have a healthy and varied diet. Food banks are now established in 22 European countries and several community gardens have been created to grow food especially for food banks.

eurofoodbank.org



ELSŐKÉNT LAKHATÁS BUDAPEST



© Anna Vörös

Affordable housing is a problem for anyone with a low income. Especially in Hungary, where homeless people are often seen as second-class citizens. In 2014, A Város Mindenkié (translated The City is for All) and Habitat for Humanity Hungary took the initiative to renovate several empty buildings of the municipality in order to create sustainable housing for a group of homeless people. The two Elsőként Lakhatás (Housing First) projects seized the opportunity to match the supply of low-cost social housing apartments to the needs of the homeless.

avarosmindenkie.blog.hu

habitat.hu

RECOGNISING A PROBLEM IS NOT ENOUGH TO SOLVE IT

>> The intentions of the EU in this field were also promising. 'The Social Agenda received more attention and had to be prioritised when tackling poverty in Europe', Tosics says. But recognising a problem is not enough to solve it. There are two main reasons according to Tosics why this became a complicated matter. In the field of environmental law, the EU managed to secure a strong position in relation to the member states, but in the Social Agenda, this was certainly not the case. Work and income are for the most part determined by domestic policy, Europe has limited influence here. That, combined with the crisis that drove the World and Europe into economic depression in 2008, forced member states to pull out all the stops in order to rescue their national financial situation. Nation states put all their effort in saving the main structure of their economies. Therefore, major banks and firms were supported, while budget cuts severely diminished the money available for fighting poverty. That had consequences for European citizens. Six and a half million more Europeans fell into poverty between 2008 and 2012, while in 2010, the European goal was to reduce

this number by twenty million by 2020. According to Tosics, it is not possible to change this substantial backlog in the four years time left. Moreover, European policy has changed somewhat, says Tosics. The emphasis is increasingly on work. 'Work is a way to get people out of poverty, but the emphasis on competition, boosting the economy and enticing private investors, can also have a negative effect on people who are in a weak position', he says. 'The question is to what extent people with a worse starting position in the field of education and work can take advantage of it.'

Recent figures of Oxfam Novib show that inequality is actually increasing. In Europe, there are 342 billionaires, while a quarter of Europe's population (123 million people) lives in poverty or are in very vulnerable position. These are European citizens who do not have enough money to heat their homes and lack reserves to tackle unforeseen expenses. Moreover, according to a comparative study of the Delft University of Technology in thirteen European cities over the period 2001-2011, the income disparities in cities have become more visible spatially, due to a number of factors including the influence of globalisation, the restructuring of the economy and labour market, neo-liberal politics, and declining investment in social housing. >>

>> Riots in poor areas of Paris, London, and other European cities are the direct result of this, says Tosics. According to him, this trend is mainly due to the shift at the national level, away from welfare politics. 'Cities have little impact on employment and financial measures to combat poverty. But cities also compete with each other', he continues. 'To bring in as much money from investors, they are increasingly focused on highly educated people who can pay for their housing and are seen as essential for the success of their city. Poor people translate to less economic success and honour. In this framework, they are increasingly forgotten.'

WHILE THE RISK IS AMONG THE LOWEST, 1 IN 5 AMSTERDAM HOUSEHOLDS IS LOW INCOME

Also in cities such as Madrid and Tallinn, socio-economic segregation has increased dramatically. The fact that the prosperities of these cities and the countries in which they are located are very different from each other, are not extenuating circumstances for Tosics: 'Also poorer countries can do more than at present as they also receive money from the EU to counteract social inequality.' In

the Netherlands, the CBS poverty monitor shows that poverty decreased a little last year and that the risk of living in poverty is among the lowest in Europe. Only the Czech Republic performs better than the Netherlands. However, the number of people in the Netherlands who are structurally impoverished (four years or longer) has increased. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the risk of living in poverty is the highest in the Netherlands; about one in five households is low income.

Cities are largely dependent on the financial resources they receive from national governments to fight poverty and to combat the situation of people with little money. This means that local governments in cities should be creative in order to protect those with the lowest incomes. Sometimes it is the local government and sometimes the citizens themselves are the driving force behind initiatives. Therefore, citizens' self-involvement is also needed. According to Tosics, there is a new interplay between the local government and citizens that is needed for new ways to help the poorer part of the population. On a side note: 'How well intended and how successful some projects can be, bottom-up projects have a limited impact as long as there is no structural economic change, no shift in national welfare policies and inequality in cities continues to increase', he adds. >>

VOIDSTARTER DUBLIN

Voidstarter tackles two of Dublin's most pressing challenges: youth unemployment and vacancy. The initiators saw an opportunity to use vacant buildings on a temporary basis to improve the confidence, skills and employability of young people who are not in employment, education or training. The project involves unemployed youth are involved in the refurbishment of empty properties. These renovated voids are used as temporary offices and social enterprise incubators to provide entrepreneurship mentoring and training to young people until the renovated units can once again be used for housing. Voidstarter boosts new skills and



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knowledge among participants leading to improved job prospects while stimulating new enterprises and creating an improved urban environment for local communities.

voidstarter.com

CO-CREATING SOCIETY

If we really want to change the way European cities thrive and develop, participation - co-creation - is our tool to overcome the shortcomings of the past. Participation is not just about organising nice debates or creative flash mobs. Local actors - businesses, universities, NGOs and especially the citizens - must have access to information, knowledge and decision-making processes so that they can help tackle societal challenges while simultaneously building more livable and smarter cities. We need investment for elaborating and promoting open working methods, helping different actors to take responsibility and ownership of specific innovative processes. I've spent my professional life studying and promoting bottom-up innovation, together with the use of enabling technologies to boost societal change. Now, serving as President of the European Committee of the Regions, I'm focusing on mobilising the EU's local and regional leaders as enablers of participatory and open innovation on the ground. From the Urban Agenda for the EU to the Energy Union, from green mobility to social cohesion, the Committee's contribution to improve the EU's action for sustainable and inclusive growth is permeated by this awareness. We know that projects can be smart and innovative, but without participation and broad ownership, they will hardly change our societies. Alternatively, we can have beautiful participation experiences that lack the courage and competences that are needed to innovate. As the European Committee of the Regions, we support and follow with the highest attention the initiatives connected to *New Europe - Cities in transition*. Without bottom-up innovation and smart specialisation, our efforts for sustainable and inclusive growth will be in vain.

>> It does not mean that Tosics is not enthusiastic about local initiatives in European cities. He mentions the Social Pharmacy that opened its doors in 2012 in Kavala, Greece. 'Many poor people have no money for medicine', he says. 'The local government made an empty shop available where retired pharmacists, working voluntarily, collect old medicines, test them and subsequently distribute them to low-income residents.' In addition, initiatives such as community gardens can help the poorer part of the urban population to obtain food cheaply. 'And it can be a way for people without a job to gain experience. Moreover, it is a type of work that most people can do. Such initiatives also further capitalise on health, also an important issue when it comes to poverty.'

TACKLING URBAN PROBLEMS BY INTEGRATING THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC IN POLICY

It is clear that this kind of bottom-up initiatives have a greater chance of succeeding if local authorities trust and cooperate with citizens. 'Bologna, Italy, is in that respect a good example', Tosics says. 'A group of women wanted to invest their own money in a run down playground nearby. The first reaction of the local government was that this would not be possible due to administrative hurdles. However, after some time and struggle, it succeeded.' Today, in the municipal policy it is now even recognised that resident initiatives should be carried out unless there are compelling reasons not to do so. By integrating the role of the public in policy, it is easier to tackle urban problems. 'And,' Tosics adds, 'it also offers more space to deal in new ways with urban poverty.' ••

mri.hu



Joost Zonneveld
independent journalist

joostzonneveld.nl



Markku Markkula
president of the European
Committee of the Regions

cor.europa.eu

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CITY EMBASSY DUBLIN

CONNECTING THE DOTS

OF DUBLIN

© Barry Sheehan



Dublin has a story to tell. In fact, it has many stories to tell if you can wait around long enough to hear them. This particular story is about the place and people on the ground creating something out of nothing. It is a story about economic collapse that could have been crushing, but instead it spurred an explosive grassroots movement of artists and community activists, transforming vacant properties into innovative community hubs. It is not a story of full recovery and happy endings, but it is a story of resilience and growth.

Ending Ireland's self-styled 'glory years' known as the Celtic Tiger, the 2008 economic crash left a path of destruction in its wake: a crippled banking system, a ruined housing industry, and a ravaged commercial and community sector. Forced to ask for an international financial rescue loan of almost 80 billion euros from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and EU in 2010, Ireland still maintains a weak domestic economy with unemployment at over 14% and over 1 in 10 business premises vacant. >>

OLD AND NEW SPACES

The Joinery, Supafast, Exchange, Seomra Spraoi, Dubzland, Block T, and Mabos are spaces that opened and closed during the last decade. They were largely used for cultural and creative events and as social gathering points. In most cases they were not commercially focused, and offered up space for free for social causes/groups.

Grangegorman, D-Light Studios, Back Loft, Jigsaw (formerly Seomra Spraoi), A4 Sounds, The Complex, Steambox, and Jaja Studios are artist studio and event spaces currently located in Dublin districts 1, 7 and 8. They are available for meetings, fundraising events and groups' activities and some have been functioning and moving around for over twenty years already.

d-lightstudios.com

thebackloft.blogspot.nl

a4sounds.org

thecomplex.ie

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- >> Dublin, in particular, suffered many vacancies and the economic crisis emptied storefronts, warehouses, and factories, leaving the capital a shell of its former self. Rather than succumb to such dark economic times, some Dubliners responded to the crisis with resilience. A vibrant, DIY (Do It Yourself) arts culture emerged, spearheaded by local artists repopulating the city's vacant spaces. There has also been an increase in the number of other grassroots City Makers, from community growers to housing cooperatives and emerging collaborative structures within local authorities, that are slowly changing the relationship between the citizens and the city.

ARTS AND CITIZENS CAN PROMOTE GROWTH IN THE FACE OF CRISIS

Structured as nonprofits and cooperatives, many of these art groups are promoting the visibility of the arts, creating community and spurring urban regeneration. For example, there was the Art Tunnel in Smithfield: a derelict, drug-ridden property transformed by curator and artist-architect Sophia von Maltzan, artists, and community members into a collaborative garden and art space. Pallas Projects hosted gallery shows, artist collaborations, and community events in an abandoned school building. And there was Exchange Dublin, a non-hierarchical collective that encouraged anyone to come in, vote on, debate, and run events from vegan potluck dinners to salsa dancing lessons to art shows by the homeless.

These examples give just a taste of the energetic post-crash Dublin, working to encourage innovation, collaboration, revitalisation, and community cohesion amidst recession and austerity. The case of Dublin illustrates that the arts and citizens can promote extraordinary urban resilience and even growth in the face of crisis.

There is something unique in the nature of Dublin - a variety of sources of adaptability, mutual support and resilience - that primed the city for an arts-based response to disaster. A precedent for grassroots structures; a strong history and appreciation of culture and art; a village-like city infrastructure, and a concentration of artists and art schools, to name a few. The economic crash then activated these elements - opening up a multitude of new opportunities for artists in the form of a sudden preponderance of vacated, cheap spaces - and initiated the birth of a powerful art movement that has been able to thrive in the tough recession environment. While these spaces existed they posed as cracks of light, in opposition to the dominant political and economic narrative. These initiatives created open and inclusive spaces with more possibilities and opportunities for people to have studio space or host an event for free or very little money, challenging the high rents of businesses around the city. >>

>> As David Harvey noted in his article *The Right to the City* (2008), there are a great many 'social movements focusing on the urban question'. However, he maintains that these voices are not loud enough. In Dublin, the unruly make themselves known, but there is no 'Commune' as in Paris in the late 1800's during Haussmannisation (Georges-Eugène Haussmann's renovation of Paris). With the recent closures of many of Dublin's DIY spaces, the issue is ever more pertinent.

IT IS TIME TO CONNECT THE DOTS

There was a huge demand for and a huge supply of vacant spaces, but the barriers are high in number and there exists no clear process to surmount the obstacles that grassroots initiatives face in Dublin. There is a panoply of challenges and barriers, ranging from bureaucratic to regulatory to financial, that are creating an artificial scarcity of space. Thus, many of the vacant spaces in Dublin remain as underutilised assets.

To better understand these obstacles in Dublin and to co-create pathways around them, we established Connecting the Dots in 2014. Our aim is to document and analyse the urban DIY initiatives in Dublin that create alternative spaces for communities in the city. We want to highlight the individuals and initiatives creating platforms for peripheral and underground groups to exist and express their creativity. We were particularly interested in exploring the link between the challenges of urban living and how people are functioning within spaces in the city. Much of our research was based on participatory ethnographic observation and action research conducted in and around Dublin within the creative spaces operating at the time. The diverse set of events that occurred in these spaces included: exhibitions, performances, spoken word events, music nights, open mic nights, interdisciplinary arts events, community-based events, gallery openings. The events happened in a range of spaces - including squatted warehouses, JaJa Studios, Steambox, Mart, Chocolate Factory, Seomra Spraoi and the Irish Museum of Modern Art. Some of these spaces were either rented out or used temporarily by DIY initiatives and collectives.



© Eugene Langan

One of the issues we discovered was the 'value struggle' between the commons and real estate, in which the value and practices associated with the urban commons come into direct conflict with the extraction of value via ownership of property deeds and access to credit associated with real estate and property speculation. On the one hand, independent spaces attempt to prioritise common value and common practices while, on the other, they come up against the reality of private ownership. In a similar manner to other cities, Dublin experiences the tensions between what DIY and grassroots spaces create and the neoliberal economics and property speculation still ongoing in Dublin. An enormous amount of energy is spent by established grassroots cultural organisations on locating and maintaining spaces, which often are not wholly suitable for the purpose, or which have no security of tenure. Recent initiatives have supported short-term solutions suitable for younger organisations, or temporary projects. Much can be done to encourage the development of policy to provide for and encourage longer term reuse of space by DIY initiatives as well as other cultural groups. >>

>> Despite the attempts of various stakeholders to change the status quo, vacancy still prevails. Our research revealed a fragmented ecosystem around vacant space, in which stakeholders are disconnected and working in silos. Urban resilience researcher Johanna Varghese attributes this to Irish society being 'high context' and 'network based', which makes it difficult to find out what is outside one's network. Each has experience, interest, knowledge, connections, or leverage on their own, but rarely shares these resources with others. With no vehicle through which to share and collaborate on approaches to reusing space, each individual attempt starts fresh, without learning from the successes and failures of others, leading to a lack of innovative and resilient solutions to the complex problem.

IT IS TIME TO ADJUST ONESIZE-FITS-ALL REGENERATION STRATEGIES

Through the dialogue we facilitated, from the grassroots to political level, a clear understanding of the challenging nature of activating and sustaining such spaces was developed. DIY spaces in Dublin are faced with two options: to become more like other spaces in the city (in terms of extracting rent from people, becoming bureaucratically 'transparent' etc.) or going 'underground' (implicitly accepting a position of marginality in the city). Both options are problematic from the point of view of sustaining and enhancing the commons. While other squatted social spaces such as The Bolt Hostel and Barricade Inn display themselves on main streets, taunting authorities to attempt an eviction, they end up being brought to court, sapping what little money they had to carry out the positive work that they want to do.

Where to next? Dublin at the grassroots has been changing rapidly in the last few years. While the government talks about 'recovery', many of the spaces and initiatives that emerged to facilitate the social and creative recovery - from Mabos to Exchange to The Joinery to Moxie Studios to Market Studios, to the biggest, BlockT - have had to close. Policymakers and planners can be more sensitive when crafting regeneration plans and ensure that they fit into the character of the city rather than blindly injecting art and expecting renewal. Dublin shows us that every city and the people within it have characteristics that will determine how it responds to an economic crisis and whether art is the appropriate strategy to encourage rebirth.

Though not perfect, Dublin illustrates how a city's social-cultural ecology and resources can support resilience in the face of economic disaster. It is time to adjust one-size-fits-all regeneration strategies. As we continue to be mired in recession and slow growth, Dublin provides an outstanding example of where to look. ••

arttunnelsmithfield.com

pallasprojects.org

fb.com/exchangedublin

barricadeinn.squ.at

This article is based on research by Marisa and Naomi during their MA Design Practice: The Dublin Project, Dublin Institute of Technology.

thedublinproject.com



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Naomi Murphy & Marisa Denker
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Simon O'Rafferty
post-doctoral Research
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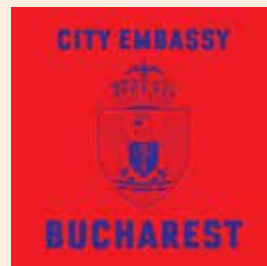
COSMINA GOAGEA

BUCHAREST

© Julie Lunde Lillesæter / Differ Media

'COMMUNITY BUILDING CAN REALLY HELP PUT A PLACE ON THE MAP.'

Architect Cosmina Goagea wears many hats as a City Maker: she is involved in urban activism, participative architecture, and public space rehabilitation, as well as in political programmes and urban strategies. Cosmina co-founded Zeppelin Association, an NGO involved in both practical city-thinking projects and research. Zeppelin publishes online articles and editions in print to inspire communities to develop a sense of civic responsibility as a lively factor of urbanity. Cosmina and her team led the European project *Connected. Things about future, cities and people*. Hosted in Bergen, Amsterdam, Stockholm and Bucharest, the multi-disciplinary project addressed the future impact of new technologies on urban dynamics. Cosmina is at the forefront of the transition taking place in Bucharest. 'Critical challenges are activating public space, preserving urban heritage, and the tension between excessive regulation and a lack of government support', she says. Change is slow, but she emphasises



that the number of urban interventions and events is becoming increasingly visible every year and people have started taking more responsibility when it comes to creating a better city. This was intensified by a tragic fire accident at a nightclub last autumn which killed at least 64 people. It provoked tens of thousands of young people to take to the streets of Bucharest calling for an end to corruption, ultimately leading to the prime minister's resignation. 'All the bottom-up initiatives mobilised, together with a group of experts', says Cosmina. 'Now, these initiatives are acting together in order to reset the rules and make a shift possible. We can now actually say that civil society is making the cities in Romania today.'

e-zeppelin.ro
citiesandpeople.eu


Smog Free Tower

© Studio Roosegaarde

KEEP IT FRESH

CLEAN AIR FOR EVERYONE

When it comes down to food, most of us have the luxury to choose what we eat. Whether we are vegetarian, want to eat solely organic or require a gluten-free diet, we have options to choose from. But with the air we breathe, we have no choice of what goes into our lungs. As part of the Urban Agenda for the EU, the 'healthy city' is one of the top priorities on the EU agenda. And as figures on air pollution point out, urgent action has to be taken. How can we make a city where people can breathe healthy air?

In Great Britain there are active 'air farmers', bottling fresh countryside air and selling it online for 80 pounds a jar (I'm not making this up), mostly to Chinese buyers, where air pollution is at extremely hazardous levels. Pollution levels there are so high that the City of Beijing issued its first pollution 'red alert' last December. It's the highest possible warning level, temporarily closing schools, factories, and construction sites, and ordering half of all private cars off the road. Figures from a recent study, commissioned by the Greater London Authority and Transport for London, show that not only the Chinese have a problem: nearly 9,500 people in London die each year due to long-term exposure to air pollution. This silent killer poses a great threat to our health, causing a multitude of serious illnesses. It is with good reason that a lot of people are worried. >>

>> The premature deaths in London are mostly due to two key pollutants; fine particulates (known as PM_{2.5} or PM₁₀ - depending on their diameter) and the toxic gas nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Also, the pollutant carbon dioxide (CO₂) is harmful to us. NO₂ is largely created by the combustion of fossil fuels in stationary sources and by motor vehicles (internal combustion engines). The UK capital has plans to turn London into an Ultra-Low Emission Zone by 2020 and plans to raise the Congestion Charge (a fee charged on most motor vehicles operating in Central London) for diesel vehicles from £10 to £20 a day.

AIR POLLUTION IS HARMFUL TO HUMANS, PLANTS AND ANIMALS

According to NASA, much of Germany, the whole Belgium and the Netherlands, plus Paris, northernmost Italy and Warsaw are also in the danger zone. If we want to reduce health impacts from air pollution, we have to take more rigid measures. At the UN COP21 Climate Summit in Paris last December, the mayors of 20 European cities including Paris, Brussels, Madrid, Copenhagen, Oslo, Lisbon, Stockholm, Vienna, Warsaw, Amsterdam, and Athens signed an open letter addressed to the European Union, after Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have failed to veto loopholes in air pollution limits on new diesel cars. The group of Mayors is now calling for more stringent regulations to be put in place across the continent to tackle the deadly levels of air pollution caused by the vehicles. The Mayor of Paris wants diesel cars out of the French Capital by 2020. Oslo has published a proposal to stop all private vehicles from driving through the centre by 2019. All the cars in Copenhagen's municipal fleet are already electric or hydrogen powered and the city strives for a complete transformation. Amsterdam also wants to work on the city achieving emission neutrality. The city invests a lot in safe cycling and walking and stimulates car sharing. 'Now, a car has an average of 1.4 owners. By 2025, that should be at least 10', says Mayor Eberhard van der Laan. 'It is time to to ask ourselves how we want to live our lives.' Still, more urgent action is needed, and governments should help municipalities to improve the living conditions in their cities.



Tree-WiFi uses technology and gamification to inspire residents to improve their local air quality, proving that trees truly are the lungs of the city. With a first investment of 1000 euro through the Awesome Foundation, Joris Lam outfits trees with air-quality sensors. The low-cost system uses coloured lights to show local air quality levels and gives free WiFi when the air quality improves. And obviously more clean air on top, so stop using your scooter and get on your bike!

treewifi.org

WE HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLACE WE LIVE IN, WORK IN AND LOVE

Rather than a passive consumerist approach, with new technology we can enable smart citizens' direct and active commitment, and increase citizen engagement and awareness in the well-being of our cities. 'By involving citizens' participation in measuring the city's air quality, people gain more knowledge about the air they breath', says Anne Knol, who works as a campaign leader on >>

>> transport and air pollution at Milieudedefensie. 'With the gathered data, they can point to the importance of rethinking the air quality policy with the Municipality and open a dialogue with their neighbours to explore and discuss solutions together. The data are also valuable for scientific institutions, who can use this information as complementary input for their own datasets.'

This May, Milieudedefensie announced to take legal proceedings against the State to demand clean air, based on test results derived with local residents. The Netherlands has been required to meet EU air quality limits on the concentration of NO₂ in the atmosphere since January 2015, but fails to do this in at least 11 places. If you want to convince the municipality or government to take action because standards are being violated, you need to make sure your outcomes are reliable. There are different ways to measure air quality. 'If you want to have a rough estimation of where the air quality in your city is the best - or worst - you can use a sensor. We used a proven method with Palmes tubes, but the downside is that if you want good results, you need to take measurements for at least a year', says Anne. 'There are sensors that are faster and measure more pollutants, but they are less reliable. Your choice of sensor depends on what you want to measure. They are getting better every year, so hopefully there will soon be a sensor that is cheap, fast, and dependable.'

SOMETIMES YOU NEED CRAZY IDEAS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Paris-based Plume Labs, which provides pollution readings via a smartphone app, sent ten pigeons on a mission in the skies over London this March, carrying lightweight pollution sensors in specially designed backpacks that provided live air-quality updates. Pigeon Air Patrol was a PR stunt, stimulating people to help monitor air pollution on a street-by-street basis to provide a reliable pollution map of the whole city. The sensors measure the main pollutants, CO₂, ozone concentrations and volatile compounds. Over one hundred backers invested in their crowdfunding campaign for a new wearable air quality sensor. By building a crowd-sensing platform that will eventually enable them to crowdsource a worldwide air pollution map available online in real-time, Plume Labs wants to empower citizens all over the world. Beta testers will not only shape the development of environmental tracking technologies, they also help research how better-informed citizens can protect themselves against air pollution. >>

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>> Measuring is the first step to better air for our lungs, but certainly not the only one. Conventional thinking does not change the world, it is crazy ideas that do. That was what Ton van Oostwaard must have been thinking, when he presented his idea of The Green Junk. Ton is working as a senior advisor at the Municipality of Amstelveen (the Netherlands) and is an engineer on a mission. By building a green belt of pollution absorbing plants around the City of Amsterdam, he wants to clean up the air around the metropolitan region. Ton sees the Defence Line of Amsterdam - the 135-kilometre long ring of fortifications around Amsterdam that functioned as a former water defence line and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site - as the perfect place to plant his CO₂ eating shrubs. Similar ideas are happening in other cities - be it on a smaller scale - with different initiatives being involved in urban farming, green roofs and vertical gardens. France - inspired by all these examples - passed a law last year, requiring renewable energy or plants on all new commercial buildings. Similar laws exist in Copenhagen and Zurich, but France is the first to administer it at a national level.

iSPEX



Using the iSPEX app and add-on, you can detect and measure the air quality in your city. The app allows you to personally see air quality levels and it automatically records the exact place at which you took the measurement with your phone. All recorded observations are sent to a central database that collects all of the data and is able to produce detailed maps of particulates in a country. This collective data measurement by citizens can help to improve the air quality in your city!

ispex.nl



© Studio Roosegaarde

Taking air purifying to the next level is the Smog Free Project, started by Dutch designer Daan Roosegaarde and his team of experts. They wanted to create a place where citizens, makers, NGOs, and governments can experience clean air. They created a bubble of clean air, where people can think and work together on how to make an entire city smog free. The air is cleaned by The Smog Free Tower, the largest air purifier in the world, which is mobile. The tower operates as a smog vacuum cleaner, creating smog-free areas in public spaces that allows residents to breathe the clean air for free. In the future, waste should not exist according to Daan. By putting the captured smog particles under high pressure, you create new material. Out of carbon, you can make diamonds for instance. Chinese activist-artist Brother Nut used the same technique in Beijing, where he spent one hundred days wandering around with a 1000 Watt industrial vacuum cleaner, sucking up the contaminated air. With the sucked-in fragments, he created a large brick. Although it wasn't his intention to turn air pollution into a resource or clean the air in the city (for which his vacuum cleaner would be too small anyway), with his Project Dust, Brother Nut hopes that more people will start reflecting on the way they use natural resources. 'The more we pursue and dig for resources, the more dust we will produce. The day we exhaust all the world's resources, we will end up becoming dust ourselves', he wrote in his project plan. With the dust collected through The Smog Free Tower, Studio >>

HACKAIR



Also hackAIR wants to involve citizens directly in measuring and publishing outdoor air pollution levels. hackAIR is an EU-funded project aiming to develop an open technology platform for citizen observatories on air quality. The platform, which will be launched in Summer 2017, will provide citizens with information about air pollution levels - useful for those who look after children or the elderly, like to exercises outside, or suffer from respiratory problems. It will also stimulate a conversation in the local community about possible improvements in air quality.

hackair.eu

>> Roosegaarde creates Smog Free Jewellery. For every ring you buy, you donate 1000 m³ of clean air to the city where the tower is currently stationed.

CARBON UNDER HIGH PRESSURE TURNS INTO DIAMONDS

Even if you aren't that tech-savvy, you can get involved in improving your local air quality and take measures to avoid breathing polluted air. 'You could become a member and support our activities, to make national governments aware', says Anne. Milieudefensie is the Dutch branch of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network. Together, they campaign for the most urgent environmental issues of our time to influence policies on a EU and global level. 'The easiest improvement you can make in your own environment, is to leave your car at home more often and take your bike or use public transport instead', says Anne. Eating less meat and dairy would help too by the way. 'Or buy a cleaner car and share it with your neighbours. It is not only better for the environment, but also for social cohesion.' To reduce your own risks, just use common sense. Don't go running along busy roads but in a park.

Just like with all great challenges, we - citizens, municipalities, national governments, higher education institutions, research labs, and companies - need to work together and form cross-border partnerships if we want to solve this issue. We need to take on a collective responsibility in becoming the stakeholders of our future environment. The occupation of pollution digger might make it to the list of top ten jobs of the future - that either don't exist yet or will soon see great expansion - but let's make sure that air farmer won't be one of them. ••

aethaer.com

milieudefensie.nl

air.plumelabs.com

destelling2.nl

studio Roosegaarde.net

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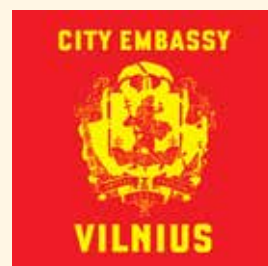


Dymphie Braun
programme maker
Creative Industries
dezwijger.nl

MILDA VARNAUSKAITE VILNIUS

**‘MY STRATEGY IS NOT TO FEAR,
NOT TO BECOME PESSIMISTIC - IT WORKS!’**

Like many other Eastern European cities, Vilnius struggles with activating public space as a consequence of Soviet occupation, straining how citizens relate to their city and government. The effects can still be observed today, as residents lack connection to their streets and squares creating disconnected communities. This inspired Milda Varnauskaite to get involved with the Little Free Library network, a ‘take a book, return a book’ movement that originally started in Wisconsin (US) in 2009 and is now active in over 70 countries around the world. With the help of her father – who was sceptical at first, Milda built Vilnius’ very first *Bibliotekėlė*, a small little library on Tramvaju Street, accessible to all neighbours willing to donate and exchange books. Small interventions, big changes: vandals stayed away and the street library is actively used by readers who leave



books and warm messages in the library box. From her apartment window, Milda often observes the ballet of people passing by. Intrigued by the colourful wooden box, residents and families stick around to chat. ‘I started receiving letters from the elderly, thanking me for building *Bibliotekėlė*. Not only was it a tool to acquire new books, it was also a way to communicate and share

knowledge between residents in the neighbourhood’, she says. Milda inspired others to replicate the idea in other neighbourhoods in Lithuania and became a consultant and local ambassador for the network. Every *Bibliotekėlė* is unique and filled with wonderful stories shared within the community.

littlefreelibrary.org
bibliotekele.lt

LA CITTÀ COME BENE COMUNE

© Jitske Schols

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN IAIONE ON THE CITY AS COMMONS

A commons-based economy cannot thrive without appropriate institutions, especially those that represent a *partner state* approach. Professor Christian Iaione of LUISS University in Rome is a pioneer of such institutional innovation in Italian cities. I believe his work with the City of Bologna on Bologna’s Regulation for the Care and Regeneration of Urban Commons is a breakthrough. This regulation allows citizen coalitions to propose improvements to their neighborhoods, and the city to contract with citizens for key assistance. In other words, the municipality functions as an enabler, giving citizens individual and collective autonomy. >>

>> More than 30 projects have already been approved in this context and dozens of Italian cities are adopting this regulation. The CO-Mantova project in Mantua, Italy is one such example. It has been set up for citizen-based social innovation using a multi-stakeholder approach that includes Professor Iaione. In the interview below, we asked him about his motivation, the ideas that have shaped his work, his urban commons projects in Bologna and Mantua, and how he sees the expansion of this approach in cities throughout the world.

Before we explore your work, what sparked your passion for urban commons?

'I grew up in Southern Italy, but with an Anglo-Saxon imprinting. My parents lived in the United States in the sixties. They eventually decided to go back. My father told me they made this choice because they wanted to give back to their country. In the seventies, they were both Vice Mayors in their respective hometowns (Contrada and Atripalda, near Avellino). The first time I went to the U.S. was in 1980. I was five years old and running away from a catastrophic earthquake that hit my city and its county (Avellino). Schools and other public services were shut down. My mother, my brothers and I fled to New York and New Jersey to stay with friends and relatives. My father decided to stay in Italy to take care of his city and his citizens.

These were the first lessons I learned about life and the U.S. The sense of duty that my father taught me with his example, and that the U.S. can be a welcoming land for those in need. Almost twenty years later, in 1999, I enrolled in the UC Berkeley Extension Program. At Berkeley, I learned the importance of becoming a unique human, able to collaborate with other unique human beings, rather than competing to be the first in my class. I came back to the States for a third time to intern at the International Law Institute in Washington - a city where you can feel the immanent presence of power and how distant institutions can be from the needs of citizens and how reluctant they are to innovate, but also how you can find innovators within government.'

IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE SOMETHING, CHANGE IT FROM THE INSIDE OUT

'Lessons learned: if you want to change something you have to change it from the inside by finding those who are willing to work with you. I then had the opportunity to work and develop my academic studies as a research fellow at New York University School of Law. It was there that I developed the theoretical framework for local public entrepreneurship, which is the basis of the CO-Mantova project and the idea of the city as a commons. My study on the tragedy of urban roads and experiments in Bologna lead to this.'

You run LABoratory for the GOVERNance of the Commons (LabGov), which is part of the important Italian academic institution LUISS University and - in particular - the International Center on Democracy and Democratization (ICEDD) led by Leonardo Morlino, a prominent international political scientist.

What is LabGov?

'LabGov is an in-house clinic for social, economic, institutional and legal innovators that carry out empirical work to implement innovations in public policy based on collaborative governance and public collaboration for the commons, subsidiarity, active citizenship, sharing economy, collaborative consumption, shared value and collective impact. I co-produce the clinic with young people graduating from LUISS University. I designed this program having in mind a powerful new social class which is on the rise. It is a class of active citizens, social innovators, makers, creatives, sharing and collaborative economy practitioners, service designers, co-working and co-production experts, and urban designers. >>



>> This social class is pushing or nudging society, business and institutions towards new frontiers. Students should have the opportunity to join this social class and help it move the frontier forward. That is why, through the clinic, student interns develop projects that must come to life. Students must implement innovation in areas where innovation has not been brought yet or amplify the innovation in existing projects. In 2013, LabGov was devoted to the subject 'The City as a Commons', while in 2014 it was focused on 'Culture as a Commons'.

In the academic year 2014-2015, the focus of study is green governance, to be understood as a social, economic, institutional and legal technology. Therefore, this year the LabGov is devoted to the 'Land as a Commons: environment, agriculture, and food'. All the real life projects we design in the Laboratory are then proposed to real life actors that are willing to experiment with the ideas we seed. LabGov is a nonprofit rooted in the university, but working on the outside. LabGov intends to update the Triple Helix concept of the university-industry-government relationship because we believe in a Quintuple Helix approach - embedded in LabGov's logo, where universities become an active member of the community and facilitate the creation of new forms of partnerships in the general interest between government, industry and businesses, the not for profit sector, social innovators and citizens, and other institutions such as schools, academies, plus research and cultural centers.'

You are known as one of the key authors of the new regulation on collaboration for the care and regeneration of urban commons, which was adopted by Bologna and is now being adopted by other Italian cities. What exactly does the *Regolamento sulla collaborazione per i beni comuni urbani* entail, and are there already practical consequences?

'The Bologna Regulation is part of the 'The City as a Commons' project that LabGov started in 2012. It consists of two years of field work and three urban commons governance labs. The Bologna regulation is a 30 page regulatory framework outlining how local authorities, citizens and the community at large can manage public and private spaces and assets together. As such, it's a sort of handbook for civic and public collaboration, and also a new vision for government. It reflects the strong belief that we need a cultural shift in terms of how we think about government, moving away from the Leviathan State or Welfare State toward collaborative or polycentric governance. This calls for more public collaboration, nudge regulations, and citytelling.'

MORE PUBLIC COLLABORATION, NUDGE REGULATIONS, AND CITYTELLING

'I have been researching the topic of the commons for quite a long time, and at some point I realized that the city could actually be interpreted as a collaborative commons. I synthesized my research in the paper *City as a Commons*, presented at a conference in Utrecht and later published in the Indiana University Digital Library of the Commons. This was the background study for the Bologna and Mantova projects. I am working with Sheila Foster from Fordham Law School on a more comprehensive study which is going to lay out a theoretical framework building on the background studies I developed in Italian and the empirical work I am carrying out in several Italian cities.' >>

>> We met at the presentation of CO-Mantova, an ambitious project to revive the local economy with young social innovators, which also proposes an innovative fivefold local governance scheme. Tell us why Mantova needed this, how the process with youth worked, and how the city, province, and Chamber of Commerce came to accept the process. Above all: what's next?

'CO-Mantova is a prototype of a process to run the city as a collaborative commons, i.e. a co-city. A co-city should be based on collaborative governance of the commons whereby urban, environmental, cultural, knowledge and digital commons are co-managed by the five actors of the collaborative / polycentric governance - social innovators (i.e. active citizens, makers, digital innovators, urban regenerators, urban innovators, etc.), public authorities, businesses, civil society organizations, knowledge institutions (i.e. schools, universities, cultural academies, etc.) - through an institutionalized public-private-citizen partnership. This partnership will give birth to a local peer-to-peer physical, digital and institutional platform with three main aims: living together (collaborative services), growing together (co-ventures) and making together (co-production). The project is supported by the local Chamber of Commerce, the City, the Province, local NGOs, young entrepreneurs, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME's), and knowledge institutions - such as the Mantua University Foundation and some very forward-looking local schools. The first step was seeding social innovation through a collaborative call for Culture as a Commons, to bring forth social innovators in Mantua. Second step was the co-design laboratory 'Enterprises for the Commons', an ideas camp where the seven projects from the call were cultivated and synergies created between projects and with the city. The third phase was the Governance Camp, a collaborative governance prototyping stage which led to the drafting of the *Collaborative Governance Pact*, the *Collaboration Toolkit* and the *Sustainability Plan*, which was presented to the public during the Festival of Cooperation in November 2014. The next step is the fourth and final phase: the governance testing and modeling through the launch of a public consultation in the city on the text of the Pact and a roadshow generating interest in CO-Mantova among possible signatories belonging to the five categories of collaborative governance actors. We may also have CO-Mantova opening up a Commons School.'

What are the prospects for public collaboration and commons-oriented local governance schemes? What do you see happening elsewhere and what do you want to see changed in the near future?

'This really depends on the local context. In my opinion, people are what matters the most, and the best entry point is always to find the people or group who believe in change, and in doing things better by pushing the boundaries of institutional innovation. You need people with an around-the-clock commitment beyond their official duty both to the community, the institution and to excellence. You always have to take into account that public officials are likely to be very cautious since changing one thing tends to impact other things. Innovation is not the result of revolution, but it's quiet, not necessarily slow, but difficult and involves a continuous negotiation process. This is something that you have to 'figure out on the ground'. If you manage to implement change with the public administration rather than using political drivers, your change is much more likely to be permanent.

There are some good examples of how public collaboration and commons-oriented local governance schemes are taking place. Florence is one example where collaboration has been seeded in several institutions and projects that the city is already running. The new Mayor and new commissioners have already shown interest in expanding the reach of a collaborative approach within the city government. Moreover, a growing community of innovators is working in Italy to foster collaborative practices, sharing economy and social innovation, like the Sharing School in Matera, the 2019 European Capital of Culture.' >>

PEOPLE ARE WHAT MATTERS THE MOST

>> What else are you working on? What are your long-term goals?

'We are talking about a cultural shift. The new governance model proposed is a new way for us to relate to almost everything, from economy to society as a whole and to other people, in other words: our vision of the world changes. Whether this cultural paradigm takes expression in sharing a car or caring about where the trash ends up, this is all part of a 21st century way of living: a way of sharing things, sharing services, sharing spaces, sharing production and sharing responsibilities. You need a 'nudging class' instead of a ruling class, a class that has the drive to convince and nudge society and institutions towards a sharing and collaborative paradigm. But you cannot force change, you have to nudge people to share and collaborate.

For this reason, since 2012, I've suggested the creation of a federalized network of local hubs of expertise gathering best practices, starting up experimentations in different territories, spreading governance culture and disseminating knowledge among Italian territories. This National Collaboration Network could become a hub that provides collaboration toolkits, regulations, and governance schemes, as well as training programs and day-by-day assistance for local administrators to help them drive change toward sharing and governance of the commons. This could accelerate the shift towards a 21st-century paradigm of public administration.'

What other cities are you allied with or are learning from? Is CO-Mantova part of any networks or associations that support commons-based urban development?

'Many other cities are taking the route synthesized by CO-Mantova and opened by Bologna with its regulation on collaboration for urban commons. Milano, Firenze, Roma, Naples, Battipaglia and Palermo have decided or are deciding to invest energy, skills, and other resources on the challenge of collaboration. They increasingly believe that only through co-design and bottom-up processes of civic and economic empowerment is it possible to face the challenges that congestion, agglomeration, and density that cities will face in the future.'

How are LUISS students or LabGov interns involved in Co-Mantova? And what feedback are you getting from them so far?

'Labgovers, as we call LabGov interns, participated actively during all the phases of the Mantova project. They supported project design and field implementation. They handled internal and external communication, organized the workshops and conferences, and facilitated the different project working groups, which, for instance, created the Collaboration Pact, the Collaboration Toolkit, and the Sustainability Plan. For them, CO-Mantova was their first fieldwork and occasion to test the competencies acquired during their University study, and through the colloquium that LabGov holds every year on commons governance, sharing economy, social innovation, nudge regulation. LabGov helps young, talented students develop useful skills for their careers. All skills that due to the continuous transformation of society, you will not find in books or learn in a classroom. For this reason, LabGov teaches collaboration, service design, project management, and the sharing of roles and responsibilities through a 'learning by doing' approach. Thanks to LabGov, young students and graduates enter the working world better prepared than their colleagues. I am confident that Labgovers will hold important positions in society and will be the driving force of change by fostering collaboration and a commons-oriented economic approach.' >>

SKILLS THAT DUE TO THE CONTINUOUS TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY, YOU WILL NOT FIND IN BOOKS OR LEARN IN A CLASSROOM

>> **In conclusion, how do you see the interrelationship of the commons, city governments, citizens, market players, and market institutions?**

'The job of city governments, and maybe every government layer, is changing. Their function is less about commanding or providing. They are increasingly acting as a platform that enables collaboration between citizens and social innovators, not for profit organizations, businesses and universities - the five actors of collaborative governance - to unleash the full potential of urban, cultural, and environmental commons, promote a sustainable commons-oriented development paradigm, updating the concept of State or government and therefore implying as Neal Gorenflo (co-founder of Shareable) would say 'a shift in power and social relations'. Market institutions are more interested in this process than one might think. This is the main take away of the Mantova experiment. In fact, it is the local Chamber of Commerce, the local cooperative movement, the local businesses and the young entrepreneurs that are investing more in this innovative project than other sectors. SMEs and big companies alike are looking for new, innovative approaches to the way value is produced. The race to the bottom that globalization has triggered is no longer an available strategy for a knowledge economy system like Mantova. Economic actors increasingly understand that they should invest in producing collaborative value and create collaborative economic ecosystems that foster creativity, knowledge, identity, and trust.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR GLORY, YOU ARE PROBABLY NOT A VERY GOOD INNOVATION AGENT

This new phenomenon represents an opportunity to revolutionize the current state of play of the society, economy, institutions and law. This new social, economic, institutional and legal paradigm is going to characterize the 21st century as the *CO-century*, the century of COmmons, COllaboration, COoperation, COmmunity, COmmunication, CO-design, CO-production, CO-management, COexistence, CO-living. For all these reasons, it is urgent to design the rules and institutions of this new century. LabGov is working on this frontier and is doing it together with experts, organizations, and individuals that represent what we think is a newly rising social class, a class of economic and institutional innovators.' ..

- luiss.edu
- icedd.luiss.it
- co-mantova.it
- fordham.edu
- labgov.it
- sharingschool.it



Michel Bauwens
founder P2P Foundation
p2pfoundation.net

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'THE MORE PEOPLE PARTICIPATE, THE STRONGER THE COMMUNITY WILL GROW.'

Joana Dias is one of the organisers behind Academia Cidadã, which means 'Citizen Academy'. Academia Cidadã intends to create scenarios that stimulate people and make them participate, empowering them to cope with current social problems. Joana argues that there is a big challenge. 'People are far away from politics. It seems that most of them are demotivated and are not involved. Those who do not participate, think that they do not have anything to do with politics or they do not understand them. But if they could just see how important they are in these processes, our future could be shaped differently,' Joana says. Portugal is a young democracy and civil society is in its early stages of development. This is reflected in the bottom-up movement and its activist nature. 'Politics are everywhere!' she says. The main motivation of the initiative is to create awareness of what is happening around inhabitants - not just at the local, but also at



the global scale. According to Joana, it is very important to make the connection between the local and the global. This awareness is greatly linked to a sense of community and how this influences people's actions. One of the current project of Academia Cidadã is related to tourism and gentrification in Lisbon. Residents are leaving several historic districts, largely due to the massive influx of tourists that is driving up housing prices and living expenses in these areas. This has created a paradoxical situation in which tourists are flocking to the historic districts in search of traditional stores, which are in turn being pushed out due to rising prices. Academia Cidadã searches for balance in Lisbon, where tourism is not directly at odds with the livelihood of local residents.

academiacidada.org

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COHOUSING

IN EUROPE

BUILDING OUR HOMES,

LIVING TOGETHER

The housing crisis is a major issue that affects most countries in Europe as more and more people are being excluded from the housing market. In 2015, an alarming report by Habitat for Humanity Europe pointed out the increase in homelessness across Europe (estimated at over four million), overcrowded flats, a growing number of young people forced to stay or move back in with their parents, and so on. And yet, according to a report by the European Union, the existing social housing stock does not even cover 10% of the European population's needs. If we also consider the current influx of refugees and migrants, there is a blatant lack of affordable housing. The question here is: how can we achieve inclusive housing policies in these times of economic crisis, budget cuts, and real estate speculation? >>

>> Part of the answer might lie in the self-organised housing projects that are emerging all over Europe, called cohousing, community-led housing, collaborative or participative housing. These initiatives are set up by groups of local citizens in order to tackle their own housing needs and improve livability within their neighbourhoods. From Barcelona to London, Berlin and Amsterdam, through New Europe we met City Makers who are actively engaged in cohousing projects.

WHY IS COHOUSING BECOMING SO POPULAR?

Looking at the past, there were times when social housing communities were set up by individuals and private organisations in order to fight against endemic poverty in Europe. During the Industrial Revolution, rich industrialists, philanthropic organisations, and charity movements decided to build new housing for the poor, including working class families. After the Second World War, public institutions took over this role, providing affordable housing and a welfare system to protect them. The cohousing movement started in the 1960's in Denmark, and then was emulated all over Europe and the United States. Families willing to experiment with an alternative lifestyle built their ecological houses with community spaces outside of cities. Nowadays, the movement has been integrated into urban environments. Community-led housing has become a valuable tool for participatory democracy and self-expression, as it enables people to collectively shape their neighbourhoods.

The right to housing is part of a larger, more general fight for the right to the city and against urban inequalities. By pooling resources and sharing costs throughout the whole process (design, finance, construction, maintenance), cohousing gives disadvantaged groups access to quality housing way below the market price. It can also provide additional income for community groups that tend to receive less public funding. In the case of England, Lyn Kersterton - who is a development manager in charge of community-led housing at Locality, has noticed this recent phenomenon. 'Community housing is an interesting option because it allows groups to meet the local needs for affordable housing among their own target groups', she says. 'It also has the possibility to raise new income through rent, which they can later reinvest into more housing or other aspects of community support.' A cohousing community gathers - above all - people who share the same core values and desire to live together. It can be a real driver of societal change, especially when people decide to co-create sustainable communities.

Since cohousing projects are initiated and designed according to the local context, there is no ready-made recipe. We observe a variety of projects in terms of scale and activities. On the one hand, there are micro-communities of only a few families living together, such as La Borda in Barcelona. On the other hand, there are much larger and mixed-used projects such as is the case of Coin Street Community Builders. Located in Central London, this interesting case of community-led housing and neighbourhood planning was initiated thirty years ago by a group of locals and activists. In addition to 220 >>

IEWAN STROWIJK NIJMEGEN

IEWAN Strowijk (translated Straw District) is a unique example of a self-built, eco-friendly social housing project in the Netherlands. Initiated in 2010 by a group of locals, this project was conceived in partnership with a local housing association and construction company. It was also supported by the Municipality and the Province Gelderland. The 24 dwelling housing complex is made of sustainable materials like straw, clay and wood. The architecture and everyday life activities are based on circularity such as permaculture, solar panels and rainwater management. Future residents and 200 volunteers joined forces to build these ecological buildings that were completed in May, 2015.

iewan.nl



© Wen Versteeg

SPREEFELD GENOSSENSCHAFT

The Bau- und Wohngenossenschaft Spreefeld Berlin eG is a unique experiment of cooperative self-organisation and direct citizen participation, conveniently located by the river Spree in Berlin's popular Kreuzberg. The cooperative built three mixed-use affordable apartment blocks of around 7,000 m² in total, deviating from the three-room-kitchen-bathroom scheme. The area, deliberately open to the public, includes shared roof gardens, resident-managed services and space for cultural activities and social enterprises. The co-op has



© Spreefeld eG.

offices on site and meetings in the rugged garden. Sub-groups of residents deal with different issues: the shared energy centre, managing the commercial units and renting out spare units to refugee families.

spreefeld-berlin.de

>> affordable homes, Coin Street has developed a large range of facilities, social programmes, and economic activities. In Berlin, a city with a long history of self-organised housing, community-led housing now represents about 10% of the housing stock. Michael LaFond, director of Id22 and founder of the platform CoHousing Berlin, observed a change in the scale from small initiatives to larger projects that have been built recently. 'This phenomenon can be explained by the growing professionalism of these housing communities', argues Michael, who lives and works in a large cohousing project called Spreefeld, that was completed in 2013. 'Also, we realised that if we make the project bigger, we can start interesting things, build a lot of opportunity for participation, self-organisation, etc.'

SELF-ORGANISED AND COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING IS PROFESSIONALISING

There are several models of community-led housing, such as cohousing, cooperative housing, community land trust (CLT) or self-help housing. The cohousing model is a self-managed community with single private dwellings and shared facilities. Each member owns a house or a flat, like in Vrijburcht in Amsterdam. Then, there is the cooperative, a very common model. The group creates a housing organisation where members, who are also tenants, democratically control and manage the project. CTLs, like Coin Street Community Builders in London, are independent, local organisations that build affordable housing for purchase or rent. Self-help housing initiatives are groups of locals who refurbish empty properties to provide affordable housing. Choosing a model will depend on several factors, such as the group's initial motivations, activities and the existing legal framework that applies to the city. Once the group is structured and has figured out the main concepts for their cohousing scheme, financing the project on a long-term basis is a big issue. Together, they have to find innovative solutions and build partnerships to overcome several obstacles. The range of options varies from one city to another, depending on the legal possibilities and the local political climate. >>

AIMING FOR AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

>> In this next phase, the first challenge is to acquire the land where new housing units will be built. As the land value increases in most European cities, communities can hardly compete with wealthy investors. On their own, they can manage to find plots far away from urban centres (at best) or be forced to give up on their plans. Local authorities can make a huge difference by giving them access to their land. One option is to transfer the property by selling plots below the market value to cohousing projects, as was the case with Vrijburcht in Amsterdam. Municipalities can also contract long term leases. This allows communities to build affordable housing while municipalities maintain the ownership of the land.

The second challenge is to raise enough money to finance the preliminary phases and the construction costs. Members of the group can contribute by investing their own funds, but they will most likely have to look for external sources of funding. Again, they can turn to local or national public institutions and apply for specific grants. They can also try to get loans from banks, but it can be difficult to convince them to invest in social projects. Nonetheless, there are some alternative banks that are willing to support such initiatives. In Germany for example, cohousing groups have good access to credit, thanks to a number of established alternative banks (such as GSL Bank and UmweltBank) and foundations (like Stiftung Trias and Stiftung Edith Maryon). As Spain has been facing a serious financial crisis for almost a decade, the housing cooperative La Borda in Barcelona finances its project with the help of Coop57. This cooperative bank lends 20% of the budget through a low-interest loan, but they also help the group collect money through a micro-lending campaign that every citizen living in Spain can contribute to.

Besides public institutions and banks, building partnerships with larger organisations is also a good way of getting additional funding and reinforcing the plan. The Vrijburcht community was supported by De Key, a national housing association that invested money during the first phases of the project. On top of that, they committed to buying any unsold flats if the community experienced difficulties selling them to families.

Once construction is complete, communities should keep in mind that maintaining the financial stability of the cohousing structure is a delicate balancing act. They are confronted with challenges such as how to keep rents or member fees for occupants relatively low, pay back loans while also maintaining infrastructures and develop the community life. A business model enables cohousing groups to diversify their incomes, but it also helps with convincing potential investors or partners to get on board. However, those activities must fit with the community's core values and non-profit programmes should be legally separated from profit-making activities.

PROMOTING AND STRENGTHENING THE MOVEMENT

All of the projects mentioned before show that community-led housing can be a valuable tool to provide affordable housing and stimulate social interaction in our cities. But how can we bring this movement to another level in practical terms? For the past decade, CoHousing Berlin has been active in promoting self-organised housing models in the German capital through communication and networking. On this online and collaborative research platform, which Michael LaFond created together with Winfried Haertel, people can publish their own projects, events, and articles. It features more than 150 initiatives that have been built in the Berlin area. 'We aim to connect people with existing projects in order to make it easier for them to take these steps', they say. In 2012, they published the book 'CoHousing culture', which explores the diversity of community-led housing throughout Europe. It analyses nine case studies in different cities by presenting models, architectural typologies, and practical solutions. CoHousing Berlin also organises workshops, seminars, tours and excursions to draw more attention to this cohousing movement. Since 2003, they have been organising a big event called Experiment Days, which aims to help groups who are developing projects in the city to build partnerships and get assistance. This fair brings together about five hundred people (experts, alternative banks, foundations, government etc.) around forty different projects. >>



© LaCol

LA BORDA BARCELONA

Under the name La Borda, a group of inhabitants and activists involved in Can Batlló (a former factory converted into an alternative cultural centre), decided to create a housing cooperative. By 2018, they will deliver a 28 unit building that will maximise shared spaces, affordability and sustainability. The project is financed through a partnership with the Municipality - with a 75 years lease of the land, a collaboration with a cooperative bank and a financial contribution of the members of the cooperative. La Borda will enable 28 families to rent apartments at a rate that is about 50% lower than the market price.

laborda.coop
canbatllo.wordpress.com

>> Nevertheless, developing cohousing is also a political issue and there is a real need for more integrated and supportive public strategies. The platform works closely with local authorities and the national government. While the Municipality of Berlin wants to build 30,000 new public housing units within the next thirty years, the platform encourages local authorities to consider the potential of small-scale participatory projects. In this regard, Tübingen - in the South West of Germany - is a great example of a city with a proactive and long-term strategy. The Municipality started a cohousing experiment in the 1990's in one neighbourhood. Now, Tübingen is in the process of upscaling the concept, extending it to other neighbourhoods. The overall plan is coordinated by a local agency and the City, recognising the value of community housing, has implemented the necessary means to boost this process.

The community-led housing movement clearly shows that there is strength in unity. This model, which used to be a mere utopia, is about to become an alternative way to build affordable, inclusive and liveable neighbourhoods. This cannot be done without strong political support nor platforms for sharing experiences and new ideas about collaborative housing. So now, let's team up with our friends, neighbours, colleagues and other like minded people and start our own co-housing community! ••

habitat.org
locality.org.uk
iewan.nl
lilac.coop
laborda.coop
coinstreet.org

id22.net
cohousing-berlin.de
spreefeld-berlin.de
vrijburcht.nl
tuebingen.de



Inès Péborde
editor New Europe – Cities in Transition
citiesintransition.eu



CITY EMBASSY HELSINKI

© Jaakko Blomberg

CITY EMBASSY



HELSINKI

MADE BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

Helsinki - the capital of cold Finland, where people don't talk to each other. This is the stereotype often associated with Helsinki, but it is not the whole picture of this city. During the last five or six years, Helsinki has changed a lot. Citizens are creating countless events themselves and in many ways are making the city the place they want it to be. Also, city officials have realised the large potential of civic activism and are increasingly receptive towards these actions.

Citizen participation is increasing in many countries, but it seems to be much stronger in Helsinki than for example in Sweden or Norway, which have a lot in common with Finland. The Finns have had a tradition of doing things together to achieve something that would be hard to do alone. Even though in cities this tradition has been partially forgotten, it has risen again during the last several years - in a new form. >>

NEW PARTICIPATORY CITY CULTURE IS BLOOMING IN HELSINKI

>> A major reason, or actually the prerequisite for the rise of a new participatory city culture is the rise and extensive use of social media. New civic activism is based on the power of reaching large masses in a fast and cheap way. People don't need big and structured organisations to do something themselves anymore. In principle, anyone can start a movement in just one day.

The influence of social media and especially Facebook on the participatory city culture in Finland is hard to overestimate, but it's not the only reason. Numerous Finns have become tired of the countless rules and restrictions which can make the city dull. The Finnish society in many ways does not excite a dynamic social life, but at the same time, people are longing for that. The voice of the people wanting a more urban, free and social life has long gone unheard, but now the situation has changed.

Another reason is probably the fact that Helsinki hasn't been supporting city culture as much as many of its western neighbours. When there is not enough done by the city, the citizens have to create the culture themselves. Especially different kinds of pop-up events made by the people have become characteristic of Helsinki. For these events, you don't necessarily have to have a permanent place and you can often use existing resources, like homes.

Like many others, I also got enthusiastic about this new way of doing things. In 2012, we organised our first big event called Siivouspäivä (Cleaning Day). In the wake of this event, we became aware of the huge potential and wanted to continue to organise similar actions. As a result, we founded an association called Yhteismaa (Common Ground), which specialises in new participatory city culture, social innovation, co-creation, social movements, and placemaking. Since then I have been doing projects that are associated with urban space, culture, people and community. In addition to Siivouspäivä, these include for example setting up tables for a thousand people to eat in the middle of the street, art exhibitions, theatre in homes, turning a street into a weekly flea market, pop-up restaurants in vacant spaces, projects with refugees and much more. >>

RESTAURANT DAY & CLEANING DAY



© Jaakko Blomberg

One of the events that shaped the city of Helsinki is Restaurant Day, a worldwide food festival where anyone can set up a restaurant for one day. It was started without permission from the government in 2011 and quickly gained popularity. It became so popular, that cities had to allow it to happen officially. The year of 2012 marked the first edition of Cleaning Day, a day when everyone can set up a flea market stand anywhere in the city. It was also organised without a permit at first, but now both events are highly popular and are also used for marketing purposes by the city.

restaurantday.org
siivouspaiva.com

>> The 2010s has been the time of rising neighbourhood activism in Helsinki. In 2011, Kallio-liike ('Kallio Movement', an informal citizen initiative in the neighbourhood of Kallio) was founded. They started organising the Kallio Block Party, a street festival organised by volunteers, that attracted thousands of people to reclaim the streets and to have fun together since its inception. Kallio-liike soon got similar followers in different parts of the city, creating a wave of local citizen activism. These new movements aim more to improve neighbourhoods with collective actions instead of nimbysism. Also Artova, a neighbourhood association that revived the help of new active people, has led the way towards a new kind of neighbourhood activism.

SOCIAL MEDIA STIMULATED SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

The importance of Facebook for this new urban culture can also be seen in the Facebook group Lisää kaupunkia Helsinkiin 'More city into Helsinki'. It unites the people who want to see more urban life in the city, and it has almost 9000 members at the moment. There is a continuous discussion about city planning in the group, and alternative ideas and plans for the city are often presented. It is also the origin of Urban Helsinki, a group of urbanists and urban planning activists who want better cities. Urban Helsinki published their own version of the master plan of Helsinki in 2014, which attracted a lot of interest and sparked a lot of debate. >>



SOMPASAUNA

Another representative example of the way people and the city cooperate is Sompassauna, a free public sauna, which was built for the first time in the summer of 2011 on an empty plot by the sea. Because it was made without a permit, it was demolished by the Public Works Department, but every time it was rebuilt again. The case provoked a lot of discussion on social media, which in 2013 led to the founding of an association to run the place with official permission from the city. Recently, Sompassauna received the Helsinki Cultural Prize 2015 from the Cultural Office of the city.

sompasauna.fi

© Eetu Ahanen

>> The city has also responded to the cultural change and the rise of a new participatory city culture. But this didn't happen without growing pains. Just five years ago, city officials were often not that supportive of civic activism, which they often saw as just extra work for themselves. The dialogue was unconstructive or it did not exist at all. The attitude towards these new kinds of events was sceptical and the positive effects were overshadowed by the possible negative ones. Meanwhile, citizens saw the City as something that was getting in the way of doing something good.

But soon, the potential effect of civic activism on the social well-being, economy and tourism in the city was recognised. 'Fun and functional' became the new slogan of Helsinki and the new brand strategy of the city is based on the constant change and participation in doing things together. Representative of this change is the fact that in March 2016, we organised Helsinki Sauna Day - a day when people open up their saunas for free - with the support of the tourism office of Helsinki.

WHO FEELS SUPPORTED BY THE CITY, DARES TO IMAGINE

So what is there to learn from the new participatory culture in Helsinki? First of all, it shows that cities and people can change. Citizens should be encouraged to participate by giving them more freedom and even by bending and changing the rules if needed. The question shouldn't be if something is possible or not, but how is it possible. When people feel that the city is supporting them, they dare to imagine. Seeing how public and private spaces can easily be transformed to totally different uses has really opened the eyes of the citizens of Helsinki and encouraged them to act.

How to get people to participate? There isn't one secret recipe for success, but at least the following attributes are common to all success stories:

1. There is a need for the action
2. The concept is easy and understandable
3. Participating is easy and does not necessarily require a long-term commitment
4. Participating is rewarding
5. There is room for people's own creativity

It is interesting to see what will happen in Helsinki during the next few years. Doing together is 'the new black' in Helsinki and new projects and actions are popping up around the city. The potential of civic activism is now clear for everyone and the city officially supports it. The Finns will definitely remain keen to make something new and a bit crazy together, like going to other people's saunas naked. Looking at the future, I bet we will hear much more about Helsinki, as the city made by the people for the people. ••

kallioliike.org

artova.fi

urbanhelsinki.fi

helsinkisaunaday.fi



Jaakko Blomberg
producer, social activist
& co-founder of Yhteismaa

jaakoblomberg.fi
yhteismaa.fi

SJOERD BOOTSMA LEEWARDEN

© Ruben van Vliet

‘I THINK EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE PROUD OF WHAT THEY DO.’

In 2010, together with other entrepreneurs, Sjoerd Bootsma transformed part of an old prison into Podium Asteriks, a music venue that focuses on new talent, something that was missing in Leeuwarden. At this location, multiple festivals have been created, like Welcome to the Village, an event where young entrepreneurs and other like-minded people joined forces to tackle urban issues related to culture, ecology and innovation. This project helped inspire the idea to nominate Leeuwarden as the European Capital of Culture for 2018. Many politicians, journalists and civil servants did not have high hopes, but Sjoerd and his team envisioned and seized the opportunity. ‘We really hacked this project and in 2012, we were allowed to write the first bidbook with our plans to compete for the title’, he says. In the end, they were victorious as Leeuwarden won – together with Valletta – and will be the European Capital of Culture



in 2018. The programme will be all about new approaches to face urban challenges, including the relationship between the city and countryside, strengthening the economy in a sustainable way, and diversity. With a programme developed in close cooperation with citizens - more than 900 projects were submitted! Sjoerd and his team are engaging with each of them to think about the future and solutions for upcoming urban challenges. ‘I really believe in the power of art and culture as a catalyst to bring people together’, Sjoerd states.

podiumasteriks.nl
welcometothevillage.nl
 2018.nl



Homebaked, Liverpool

© Levente Polyak

COMMUNITY CAPITAL IN ACTION NEW FINANCIAL MODELS FOR RESILIENT CITIES

In the past decade, with the economic crisis and the transformation of welfare societies, NGOs, community organisations and civic developers (City Makers) established some of the most important services and spaces in formerly vacant buildings, underused areas and neglected neighbourhoods. Consolidating their presence in the regenerated spaces, these initiatives are increasingly looking into the power of the local community, the dispersed crowd and new financial actors to invest in their activities.

In February 2015, the cultural centre La Casa Invisible collected over 20,000 euros for their partial renovation, including the installation of fire doors and electric equipment to ensure the safety of their revitalised 19th-century building in the centre of Málaga. A few months later, East London's Shuffle Festival, operating in a cemetery park at Mile End, collected 60,000 pounds for the renovation and community use of The Lodge, an abandoned building at the corner of the cemetery. In order to implement their campaigns, the initiatives used the online platforms, Goteo and Spacehive that both specialise in the financing of specific community projects. >>

>> The fact that many of the hundreds of projects supported by civic crowdfunding platforms are community spaces underlines two phenomena: the void left behind by a state that gradually withdrew from certain community services and the urban impact of community capital created through the aggregation of individual resources.

CAN COMMUNITY CAPITAL FILL THE VOIDS LEFT BEHIND BY THE WELFARE STATE?

The question, if community capital can really fill the voids left behind by the welfare state, has generated fierce debates in the past years. This discussion was partly launched by Brickstarter, the beta platform specialised in architectural crowdfunding, when it introduced the idea of crowdfunded urban infrastructures to the public. Those who opposed Brickstarter did in fact protest against the Conservative's agenda of the Big Society, the downsizing of the welfare society and the 'double taxation' of citizens: 'Why should we spend on public services when our taxes should pay for them?'

Nevertheless, in the course of the economic crisis, many European cities witnessed the emergence of a parallel welfare infrastructure: the volunteer-run hospitals and social kitchens in Athens, the occupied schools, gyms and theatres of Rome or the community-run public squares of Madrid are only a few examples of this phenomenon. European municipalities responded to this challenge in a variety of ways. Some cities, like Athens, began to examine how to adjust their regulations to enable the functioning of community organisations, while others created new legal frameworks to share public duties with community organisations in contractual ways, like Bologna with the *Regulation of the Commons*. In several other cities, administrations began experimenting with crowdfunding public infrastructures, like in Ghent and Rotterdam - where municipalities offer match-funding to support successful campaigns, or in Paris, Lisbon or Tartu - with participatory budgeting. Yet other public administrations, in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands or Austria, invited the private sphere to invest in social services in the form of Social Impact Bonds where the work of NGOs or social enterprises is prefinanced by private actors who are paid back with a return on their investment when the evaluation of the delivered service is positive. >>

ExRotaprint, Berlin

© Levente Polyak



>> Alternatively, some cities chose to support the local economy and create more resilient neighbourhoods with self-sustaining social services through grant systems. The City of Lisbon for instance, after identifying a number of priority neighbourhoods that need specific investments to help social inclusion and ameliorate local employment opportunities, launched the BIP/ZIP programme that grants selected civic initiatives with up to 40,000 euros. The granted projects, chosen through an open call, have to prove their economic sustainability and have to spend the full amount in one year. Operating since 2010, the programme gave birth to a number of self-sustaining civic initiatives, including social kitchens, that offers affordable food and employment for locals and cooperative hotels (like Largo Residências) that use their income from tourism to support social and cultural projects. In 2015, the experience of the BIP/ZIP matured in a Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) as identified by the European Union's Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, which will grant the network access to part of the Structural Funds of the City of Lisbon. The CLLD is a unique framework for the democratic distribution of public funds. It oversees the management of the funding to be shared between the administration, private and civic partners, with none of them having the majority of the shares and votes.

WE WITNESSED THE EMERGENCE OF A PARALLEL WELFARE INFRASTRUCTURE

While, as the previous cases demonstrate, the public sector plays an important role in strengthening civil society in some European cities, many others witnessed the emergence of new welfare services provided by the civic economy completely outside or without any help from the public sector. In some occasions, community contribution appears in the form of philanthropist donations to support the construction, renovation or acquisition of playgrounds, parks, stores, pubs or community spaces. In others, community members act as creditors or investors in an initiative that needs capital in exchange for interest, shares or the community ownership of local assets, for instance, shops in economically challenged neighbourhoods. Crowdfunding platforms also help to coordinate these processes. Using the French platform Bulb in Town, specialised in community investment, over one million euros were gathered for the construction of a small hydroelectric plant in Ariège that brings investors a return of 7% per year.

HERITAGE BUILDING RIGHT

Erbbaurecht, popular in Germany, is a form of a transferable and heritable long-term lease that allows the rightsholder to build or develop the land. Generally granted for 30-99 years, the Heritable Building Right makes development possible without buying the land that would require the upfront payment of large sums. This framework makes it possible to separate the ownership of a building and the land underneath, a preferred choice of ethical investors, municipalities, churches and local communities, creating revenue through the annual lease but keeping the ownership of the land with a designated use.

Besides aggregating resources from individuals to support particular cases, community infrastructure projects are also financed by ethical investors. When two artists mobilised their fellow tenants to save the listed 10,000 m² Rotaprint in the Berlin district Wedding, they invited several organisations working on moving properties off the speculation market and eliminating the debts attached to land, to help them buy the buildings. While the complex was bought and renovated with the help of an affordable loan by the CoOpera pension fund, the land was bought by the Edith Maryon and Trias foundations and rented to the non-profit company, ExRotaprint (with a long-term lease, a 'heritable building right'), making it impossible to resell the shared property. With its sustainable cooperative ownership model, ExRotaprint provides affordable work spaces for manufacturers, as well as social and cultural initiatives whose rent covers the loans and the land's rental fee. >>

TWO ARTISTS TOOK INITIATIVE TO FINANCE A PROJECT THAT WAS NOT FOUND FEASIBLE BY HIGHER AUTHORITIES.

>> Creating community ownership of local assets and keeping profits that benefit local residents and services is a crucial component of resilient neighbourhoods. Challenging the concepts of value and money, many local communities began to experiment with complementary currencies like the Brixton or Bristol Pound. Specific organisational forms like Community Land Trusts or cooperatives have been instrumental in helping residents create inclusive economic ecosystems and sustainable development models.

COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS (CLT)

CLTs are non-profit organisations set up and controlled by local communities to provide charitable activities and develop community assets. Developed since the 1980s in the United States and the United Kingdom, CLTs usually acquire multiple properties or parcels of land in an area in order to transform them for the designated use or lease them to a non-profit developer. Through long-term leases, CLTs can encourage the development of affordable housing, community gardens or civic spaces, and as owners of the land beneath the buildings developed by the leaseholders, they remain continuously interested in their designation.



Granby Four Streets CLT, Liverpool

© Levente Polyak

In Liverpool's Anfield neighbourhood, a community bakery is the symbol of economic empowerment. Renovated and run by Homebaked CLT, the bakery - initially backed by the Liverpool Biennale - offers employment opportunities for locals and is the catalyst of local commerce and the centre of an affordable housing project that is being developed in the adjacent parcels. Similarly, a few kilometres east, local residents established another CLT to save the Toxteth neighbourhood from demolition. The Granby Four Streets CLT organised a scheme that includes affordable housing, community-run public facilities and shops, with the help of social investors and a young collective of architects (winning the prestigious Turner Prize). The economic self-determination of a community has been explored at the scale of an entire neighbourhood by the Afrikaanderwijk Co-op in Southern Rotterdam. The cooperative is an umbrella organisation that connects workspaces with shopkeepers, local makers, social foundations, and the local food market. They also developed an energy collective in cooperation with an energy supplier that realises substantial savings for businesses in the neighbourhood, a cleaning service that ensures cleaning work is commissioned locally, and a food delivery service for elderly people. >>

>> With community organisations and City Makers acquiring significant skills to manage welfare services, urban infrastructures and inclusive urban development processes, it is time that they are recognised by established actors in the public and private sectors. The Urban Agenda for the EU, developing guidelines for a more sustainable and inclusive development of European cities, can be a catalyst for this recognition. It can prompt the creation of new instruments and policies to enable such community-led initiatives. While the Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 has developed the CLLD framework, not many EU Member States chose to use this instrument. The Urban Agenda for the EU could, therefore, envision the adoption of more methods to be experimented with by city administrations, to allow for a more sustainable and inclusive allocation of resources. Whether through match funding, grant systems, or simply removing the legal barriers for cooperatives, land trusts and community investment - municipalities could join civil society in developing a more resilient civic economy with accessible jobs, affordable housing, clean energy, and social integration. ••

- fb.com/LaCasaInvisible
- shufflefestival.com
- goteo.org
- spacehive.com
- brickstarter.org
- teatrovalleoccupato.it
- synathina.gr
- bipzip.cm-lisboa.pt
- largoresidencias.com
- bulbintown.com
- exrotaprint.de
- bristolpound.org
- brixtonpound.org
- homebaked.org.uk
- granby4streetsclt.co.uk
- wijkcooperatie.org



Daniela Patti
architect and planner
eutropian.org



Levente Polyak
urban planner, researcher
& policy adviser
eutropian.org

INVESTING WITH IMPACT

Centuries ago, while forming cities, communities invested not only their time and energy but also their money in local initiatives that had an impact on society. Social control and the proximity of projects was, for a long time, enough for investors to trust that their investments in community initiated projects would be put to good use. In the past centuries, this form of financing has been replaced, for the most part, by indirect financing mechanisms namely taxes for public projects and corporate finances for private initiatives. Although this formalised the investment industry, it added bureaucracy and extra costs, resulting in even more distance and less transparency between the individual investor and the public or private initiative. Because of public acceptance of online payments, new marketing opportunities through social media and the economic instability since 2008, online crowdfunding platforms connect individuals directly with the projects they want to support. This creates new opportunities for public, private and community projects such as local insurance cooperatives, community ownership of local assets through community shares and energy cooperatives that provide energy and financial returns to local communities. Combined with blockchain-based registers (the technology underpinning Bitcoin), this will create efficient governance for community-owned initiatives. This form of community-based financing and direct ownership is called Community Finance, as an alternative to Corporate Finance. With community finance, a group of individuals has a common, long-term goal and supports it financially. With community financed projects, the social benefit and local impact are at least as important as the financial return. Do you really want to change the city? I suggest that you invest locally!



Ronald Kleverlaan
founder CrowdfundingHub
- European Expertise
Centre for Alternative
and Community Finance
crowdfundinghub.eu



VERONIKA ANTONIOU & RENÉ CARRAZ NICOSIA

‘WE REALISED THAT PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE, BUT THEY DO NOT ALWAYS KNOW WHAT TO DO.’

Founder and creative director Veronika Antoniou and director of research René Carraz are two of the members of Urban Gorillas. These City Makers aim to stimulate active participation of neighbourhood residents through creative and community action. In their daily tasks, they work with the regeneration of public spaces and other matters related to sustainable living in Nicosia. René (who is originally French) and Veronika (who lived all over the world) were aware of how different public spaces are conceptualised and used in different cities across Europe. ‘In some other European cities, there are a lot of great public places. We realised that parks were not very well maintained in Nicosia’, says René. This conclusion brought them to devise ways in which



these gaps could be changed in the City of Nicosia. ‘I like to go to cafes, read, cycle and take public transport’, he continues. ‘When I moved to Cyprus, I had to get my driver’s licence because everybody tells you that it is crazy to ride a bike here. Based on this idea, we were thinking about how to make a positive change at the local level in Cypriot public spaces’, says René. Their initiatives aim to modify the perception of several historic locations and challenge their everyday use, or rather its non-use. This allows people to engage in new activities in these spaces and create new memories, generating a sense of place.

urbangorillas.org



© Elena Manente



METROPOLITAN FIELD TRIP PARIS

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO IMPROVE YOUR CITY?

Within the first six months after her election in 2014, Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo took a notable stance by allocating 426 million euros as a ‘participatory budget’ for Parisians to co-decide upon until 2020. Take into account that this is 5% of the city’s total investment budget, and it becomes apparent that this is a considerable step. Each year, Parisians can send in project proposals that answer the simple question posed by the Mayor: ‘What would you do to improve your city?’

For the first year, over 700 proposals were sent in, out of which a short list of 15 projects was put to a public vote through an online voting system and in around 200 locations across the city. Nine projects were voted for by more than 40,000 Parisians.

The first round of 2014/2015 was predominantly driven by initiatives in the sustainable domain. One thing that all successful projects had in common was an interdisciplinary cooperation between multiple stakeholders, which was one of the indicating criteria set by the municipality beforehand. These plans ranged from vertical gardens to diversify the flora and fauna in the city, to the redevelopment of vacant wharfs beneath the ring of Paris for creative purposes. >>

>> And this isn't the only good news presented from French territory over recent years. The national government made some fundamental decisions as well, to ban food waste in supermarkets and implement a law enforcing real estate developers of commercial districts throughout the country to implement solar panels or green rooftops in all new buildings. Over a short time span, both France and its capital city became noticeable for some breakthroughs in innovative governance, by making legislative changes that most government institutions do not manage to push forward.

'DEMOCRACY IS NOT ONLY A WORD IN THE DICTIONARY, IT IS SOMETHING THAT MUST ACTUALLY BE PRACTISED.'

- Mayor Anne Hidalgo in *The Guardian*

But regardless of its relative success, decisions of such leverage are never undisputed. Some of the widely heard criticism is how spending such a notable amount of the public budget on the participatory budgeting programme is a waste of money for fun and innovative but non-strategic matters. It is said that for Hidalgo, the programme is mainly a considerable experiment of scale with new governance - or who knows, a new democracy for Paris. And when it proves to be successful, the same changes may soon apply to other segments of policy. >>

LA PAILLASSE

A hackerspace and biochemical lab in the centre of Paris, that provides a platform for innovative product developers and where traditional processes become more open source. What began in a squat in Paris' banlieues in 2011, where three biochemists started their own lab with inherited and reused equipment from closed down labs, has now grown to a 750 m² transdisciplinary and experimental space, used by a wide variety of scientists, entrepreneurs, students and designers daily. By forming partnerships with the corporate sector, they aim to create open source services and products through cooperation.



lapaillasse.org

Makery - Quentin Chevrier (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



© Rubens Ben

FREEGAN PONY

In a wharf underneath the infamous ring of Paris lies a hidden gem of vegan cuisine and vintage furniture; the temporary squatted restaurant of Freegan Pony. The concrete ceiling almost recalls brutalist architecture, and with the soft lighting of table lamps it makes for a cosy night out on the weekends. The concept is vegan food that was saved from going to waste, and the initiators work voluntarily, except for the weekly changing professional chef, who is paid by the donations of the guests. The location is telling, marking the end of the city in the eyes of the Parisians, but on the lookout of miles of high rise banlieues lingering in the distance.

freeganpony.com

LES GRANDS VOISINS

With their central goal being the common good, Les Grands Voisins stimulates social networks between neighbourhood associations in the old Saint Vincent de Paul hospital. Architects, urban planners and artists are involved in the initiative in order to create another way to experience living in the city. They have created a living place for migrants, a cafe, a restaurant and a concert venue where everyone is welcome.

lesgrandsvoisins.org



© Elena Manente

>> But according to Jean-Christophe Taghavi, founder of Paris City Embassy *Cap ou Pas Cap?*, the process itself has to be improved a lot. Over the past years, Cap has mapped over 500 City Makers' initiatives in Paris, that all do exactly what the Mayor was looking for: improving the city. With initiatives ranging from urban agriculture to local energy and food co-ops, independent artist spaces, welfare and health cooperatives and much more. But instead of working from what is already there, and supporting such existing initiatives to become more sustainable, the participatory budget is primarily used to launch new projects. It is certainly needed to spur and accelerate innovation in the city but does not necessarily secure its impact in the long run. In order to make the process more accessible and inclusive for all Parisians, it needs simplification. The selection procedure between the application and pre-selection before voting leaves much to be desired in terms of transparency and the ownership over the projects raises some questions as well, as there is no clarity about the future involvement of the initiators. Will their ideas be implemented by the government or will they stay on board to design, develop and be responsible for the projects?

As our Metropolitan Field Trip last March to Paris clearly showed, the city is full of the greatest initiatives initiated and maintained by the most passionate City Makers. Not only are they full of ideas, but they

demonstrate hands-on experience in horizontal and non-bureaucratic co-creation. These are the people that would largely benefit from a participatory budget programme. On top of that, it benefits the responsible citizen's learning curve. Luckily, the City Makers remain unstirred as they face unpredictable policy changes and come up with the most inventive and original solutions to Paris' most pressing challenges. These initiatives need the supporting mechanisms, however, on which *Cap ou pas Cap?* has been working through their various campaigns, such as hosting regular meetings for City Makers and creating white papers for specific types of initiatives. When Paris' innovative governance schemes address the question 'What would you do to improve your city?', the answer is found right in the middle: where government meets the middle ground and vice versa. ••

paris.fr

capoupasscap.paris

citiesintransition.eu/paris



Charlot Schans
programme maker Pakhuis de Zwijger
project leader New Europe

citiesintransition.eu



Ik ben net als jij: together with Maartje Joosten and photographer Sophie Steengracht, Doneer je Deken took pictures of people visiting programmes at Pakhuis de Zwijger.

I'M JUST LIKE YOU

ABOUT TOLERANCE, COURAGE AND CURIOSITY

The influx of refugees is very much weighing on the minds of many Europeans and makes us question our own identity and values. What do we want to keep to ourselves and what can we share? Do we have space for so many new people, not only in our country but also in our mind? Some people think we do, some don't. Many essays have been written about how Europe fears the unknown masses who are knocking on its door and how polarisation sets in. It seems more productive to focus on people who are open to creating a place for refugees in their country, life and work.

Moved by the refugees arriving in Europe, a lot of Europeans felt compelled to help, myself included. To witness the day to day reality which three thousand refugees are facing in France, I visited The Jungle in Calais with friends. We walked through muddy trails between makeshift houses made out of wood and plastic and met people, amongst others, from South Sudan who invited us for tea. We were impressed by everything we saw in those dunes close to the harbour. Back in the Netherlands, we decided to take action and collected useful items that people left behind at the music festival Lowlands, like tents, (air) mattresses, sleeping bags, and canned food. There was an outpouring of response from people who wanted to participate and open their own houses to collect things from their neighbours. They joined our initiative and the foundation Doneer je Deken (Donate your Blanket) was born. With a large truck filled with materials to hand out, we drove back to The Jungle. >>

>> Throughout the Netherlands and Europe, many initiatives like ours popped up. Many of them aimed to address and meet the basic needs of refugees. But how can we provide a sustainable solution not only for the desperate situation in Calais and other places, but also move towards a more inclusive society in general? Besides residing in a poor situation and being in need of a blanket, these are also people with talents, knowledge and skills. Wouldn't handing over a blanket just emphasise the disparity of the situation, highlighting the differences between the haves and the have-nots, instead of focusing on our similarities and the possibilities for mutual exchange and growth? We realised that the situation people are living in does not necessarily say anything about who you are or what you wish for in life. We were so struck by the suffering of those who have been displaced and how everyone tries to cope. In the muddy dunes of Calais, these musings changed our perspective and from then on we decided to focus more on equality. >>



DONEER JE DEKEN UTRECHT

Doneer je Deken evolved from providing basic necessities, towards a more sustainable way of helping, by focussing on creating awareness. From our journey, we have learned that equality and creativity are needed to connect refugees and local citizens with each other. With equality as a starting point, we had people take photos with a postcard that read 'I am just like you' in Dutch and Arabic, inspiring people to start a conversation or share a story.

doneerjedeken.nl

MIGRATION HUB NETWORK

BERLIN

We can all learn from the Migration Hub Network: they want to join forces and include everyone moving forward. These co-working spaces organise get-togethers for all projects that are concerned with acting on the migration challenge by providing architectural or design solutions. With StartupAid, they welcome changemakers to discuss and test viable solutions for challenges linked to mass migration before they are implemented.

startupaid.io



AS A REFUGEE, YOUR STATUS DOES NOT REFLECT YOUR HUMANITY

>> This change of perspective was also noticeable on a larger scale. Initiatives born out of a sudden emergency situation evolved towards building long-term sustainable solutions to encourage integration and building awareness within society. For example, entrepreneurs built bottom-up models to help with what some people consider a crisis. Currently headquartered in Amsterdam, non-profit foundation DELITELABS aims to fight youth unemployment in the European Union by promoting entrepreneurship. Founder Christof Hawle, who is originally from Vienna and started DELITELABS in Valencia, saw opportunities in Amsterdam to create new ideas to help refugees integrate and get to work. Now, they help refugees start their own business by offering free courses and even scholarships.

With this process, the objective changed from giving a blanket to someone in need, to seeing a person for what he or she really is and using their potential. A new strategy of ownership, equality, inclusion, agency, and innovation was born. It's great to see a flexible society and how innovatively we can respond to change. We do not have to wait for governments and aid agencies to come up with a solution. We need creative and innovative citizens,

entrepreneurs and companies who are able to think in possibilities, which is not only desirable but essential. Of course, we need the government, but they also need us: at the moment they are still struggling to meet the basic needs of the current refugees. But we - as a society - can think beyond that. We need to make sure that these newcomers can get on with their lives, so they don't waste away in shelters and camps. We, as Europeans, can do better and react faster than that! The question is no longer how we can sort out our attics and bring stuff to refugee shelters, but the question has become how we can integrate (former) refugees into society quickly, help them settle, educate them and make sure they find jobs.

WE NEED THE GOVERNMENT, BUT AT THE MOMENT THEY ALSO NEED US

In Germany, for example, there are businesses which view the coming of refugees as an opportunity to help their companies grow, like heating installation company Heizung-Obermeier (Munich). These kinds of jobs will not only help refugees to provide for themselves but will also help them integrate more easily. Although rules differ per country, the problem often times is that policies and bureaucratic rules don't allow refugees to enter the labour market yet. Additionally, people are afraid that the social welfare system and government budgets are facing billions of additional costs. >>



TECHFUGEES LONDON

Moved by the plight of refugees in Europe, a number of people from the technology industry have formed a voluntary team to create a series of non-profit Techfugees meetings, hackathons and work sessions with a global network of collaborators. They look for active and engaged people within the tech industry and entrepreneurial communications to search for solutions to improve the lives of refugees in Europe together.

techfugees.com



DE ASIELZOEKMACHINE AMSTERDAM

Cross-media project De Asielzoekmachine researches Dutch asylum policy. How does it work and how would we like it to work? The purpose is to get everybody - refugees, citizens, policymakers and policy critics - to think about the design of the asylum policy. The project involves exhibitions, a web documentary and meetings throughout the Netherlands. In June 2016, they will present a report of the brainpower of Dutch society to the Government and social organisations.

asielzoekmachine.nl



MAGDAS HOTEL VIENNA

Magdas Hotel is run largely by refugees. Owned by the Catholic charity Caritas, it is serving as a model for how to train newcomers, especially refugees with few resources, to work in European countries where they claim asylum. Hotel experts train the newcomers (in barista or reception skills and language) to become professionals. A good example of a cause-driven business where social objectives are more important than financial ones.

magdas-hotel.at

>> But let's rethink this fear. Many countries that refugees are fleeing to are dealing with ageing populations and a growing labour shortage. It has been forecasted that refugees alone will not fix Europe's long-term demographic problems. According to The Economist in an article from December 2015, the labour force will shrink anyway, irrespective of what will happen with migration and how we embrace it. Therefore, we should consider giving refugees the chance to fill in these emerging gaps in the labour market and come up with retraining programmes at an early stage. What do we have to lose?

It is evident that change is needed, but the system is cumbersome which makes it difficult to implement these adjustments. We seem to live in conservative times, where politicians tend to opt for a policy of discouragement which seems to be the driving force behind their decisions. That being said, it is a step in the right direction that the inclusion of Refugees and Migrants is on the Urban Agenda for the EU. Hopefully, the ones that do have something to say about changing policies will get inspired by all the bottom-up initiatives. I am certain that, with help from (local) governments, we as a society are more than able to include refugees and migrants. Instead of putting up our European wall and feeding into people's fears, let's raise our morals instead of our fences.

Let's go back to the bottom-up power of the people and try to think from that perspective. Whatever work you do, the industry you are in, or talents you have: try to share them and give newcomers an opening to join our society. Not out of pity, but because everyone deserves a chance to find their way and be an active citizen with agency. We do not want to strive for a closed society, we should keep fighting for an open one which fits our European ideals: let's be tolerant, curious and courageous! ••

delitelabs.com

heizung-obermeier.de

urbanagenda.nl



Simone van den Akker

intern programme maker Social City at Pakhuis de Zwijger & co-founder Doneer je Deken Foundation

Pakhuis de Zwijger is organising monthly Eat to Meet dinners where professionals - locals as well as newcomers - can meet each other and share a meal together. If you are interested in joining, you can find information at: dezwijger.nl/eattomeet



STOCKHOLM JAN RYDÉN

'I WANT TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO ORGANISE LIFE DIFFERENTLY.'

Next to writing and painting, artist Jan Rydén also works with urban projects at Färgfabriken, a former paint factory that has been transformed into an exhibition centre and platform that works with art, architecture and urbanism. 'By raising different discussions, visualising ideas and capturing imaginations, you can make people feel that it is possible to organise life differently', he believes. At Färgfabriken, he strives to create and provide the conditions for new thinking, innovative ideas and unusual exhibition projects that address Stockholm's urban issues. 'With its large-scale urban planning and building culture, that has gone from a social democracy to a neoliberal one, the Stockholm region is facing the challenge of finding a new functioning urban model: a mix of individual self-expression and consensus to fit the Swedish mind', says



Jan. He hopes to see within this model a movement towards diversity, incremental growth and multilevel co-creation. Jan explores these ideas further in his book *Allborgarrätten*, which will be published in 2016. *Allborgarrätten*, a term coined by Jan, is intrinsically linked to the Swedish national identity and the international debate about the right to the city.

Through his work, he inspires readers and audiences to imagine new solutions to common problems. Whether it is an art piece, lecture or writing, Jan's creativity sparks and empowers ongoing debates and dialogues that will shape the future of cities.

janryden.wordpress.com

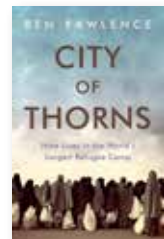
fargfabriken.se



METROPOLIS
MARTIN ROEMERS

According to calculations by the UN, by 2050 around 70% of the global population will be living in cities. What will our urban future look like? Photographer Martin Roemers sets his sights on megacities worldwide with more than ten million inhabitants in which people often live in difficult circumstances in densely populated areas.

martinroemers.com



CITY OF THORNS
BEN RAWLENCE

To charity workers, Dadaab refugee camp is a humanitarian crisis; to the Kenyan government, it is a 'nursery for terrorists'; to western media, it is a dangerous no-go area; but to its half a million residents, it is their last resort. Rawlence intertwines the stories of nine individuals to show what life is like in the camp and to sketch the wider political forces that keep the refugees trapped there.

portbellbooks.com



THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL
KARSSENBERG, LAVEN, GLASER, VAN 'T HOFF A.O.

This extended version, made with 90 contributors from all continents, offers a broad view of placemaking and the entire street level experience. Expect stories about placemaking, the urban soundscape, buskers and markets, methods for changing streets into places and guidelines for action. The book is open source and can be downloaded for free!

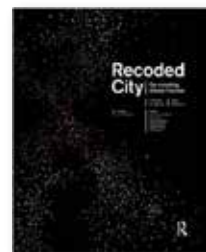
thecityateyelevel.com



CITIES AND THE CULTURAL ECONOMY
THOMAS A. HUTTON

The cultural industries - new media, digital arts, music and film, design industries, as well as allied consumption and spectacle in the city - represents the third-largest sector in many metropolitan cities. How is this new cultural economy reshaping urban labour, housing and property markets, contributing to gentrification and 'precarious employment' formation, as well as to broadly favourable outcomes, such as community regeneration and urban vitality?

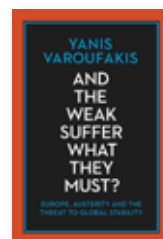
routledge.com



RECODED CITY - CO-CREATING URBAN FUTURES
THOMAS ERMACORA & LUCY BULLIVANT

Recoded City examines alternative urban design, planning, and architecture for the other 90%: namely the practice of participatory placemaking, or 'recoding'. In combining bottom-up and top down means of regenerating and rebalancing neighbourhoods affected by declining welfare or struck by disaster, this growing movement brings greater resilience.

recoded.city



AND THE WEAK SUFFER WHAT THEY MUST?
YANIS VAROUFAKIS

In a dramatic narrative of Europe's economic rise and fall, Varoufakis draws on the personal experience of his own negotiations with the eurozone's financiers and offers concrete policies and alternatives. How did we concoct this mess and how can we get out of it? This book reminds us of our history in order to save European capitalism from itself.

yanisvaroufakis.eu



ATLAS OF THE DUTCH URBAN LANDSCAPE
SAUER, ELSÉN & GARZILLO

The Netherlands is the most densely urbanised country in Europe. This book contains a comprehensive synthesis of a millennium of spatial development in the Netherlands. What do the urbanisation histories of the Netherlands and the rest of Europe have in common, and how do they differ?

thoth.nl



CITIES IN TRANSITION
SAUER, ELSÉN & GARZILLO

What are the key ingredients of a sustainable urban community as a viable concept to address current global financial, environmental and social challenges? With insights gained from sustainability transitions in forty European cities, local potentials for social innovation and new forms of civil society and self-organisation are highlighted.

routledge.com



ALLBORGARRÄTTEN
JAN RYDÉN

'Allborgarrätten' is a newly coined concept by Swedish artist Jan Rydén and promises to be the urban equivalent of the rural, traditional Swedish 'allemansrätten'; everyman's right to roam freely in nature. Through the Nordic lens, Jan explores the right to the city as a Swedish tradition and connects this to the larger global discourse.

arvinus.se



KRUMB

Krumb is a social, local & mobile application that completely changes the way you look at places by adding a storytelling dimension to reality. It allows you to discover or link messages (pictures, texts and drawings) to places and then share these Krumbs with everybody, with your followers or with one specific person.

krumb.eu



LOVE EUROPE

This app helps refugees to find their way through Europe to find what they need most, both on their journey and when they settle. It is about helpful locations like refugee camps, free wifi locations, public transport, hospitals, etcetera, and also shows interesting events for newcomers and helpful videos about language, culture and more.

love-europe.org



CITIZENLAB

CitizenLab is a civic engagement platform on which citizens co-create their city. Their solution is an intermediary and instrument for cities to make decision-making more democratic, more transparent and more collaborative. The platform allows participants to post new ideas, join existing discussions and vote on various topics and conversations.

citizenlab.org



Lijfblad voor kritische geesten

**DE GROENE
AMSTERDAMMER**

**PROBEER DE AANBIEDING
WWW.GROENE.NL/DEZWIJGER**