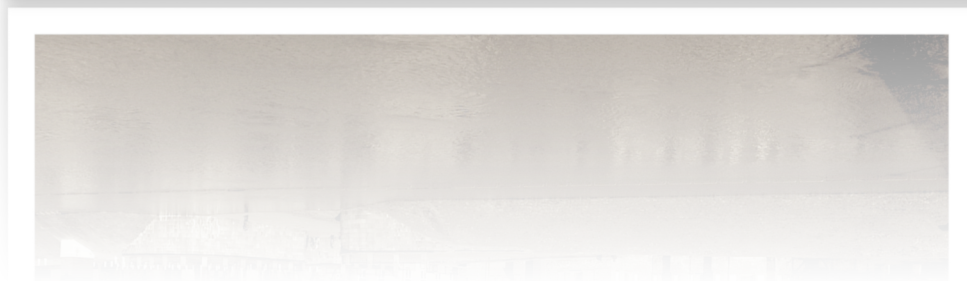


# Culture and Creativity

## in Urban Development

Scholarly papers





# **Culture and Creativity** in Urban Development

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2015



**VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**  
**KAUNAS FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**Culture and Creativity**  
**in Urban Development**

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## Table of Contents

<i>Paul Long, Saskia Warren</i> <b>Exploring the Place of Culture in the Urban Imaginary</b> .....	6
<i>Rita Kéri, Katalin Soós</i> <b>Social Dynamics as Outcomes of a Creative Process</b> .....	15
<i>Monika Inčerytė</i> <b>Understanding Creative Space: A Case Study</b> .....	30
<i>Gilberto Marzano</i> <b>Place Attachment and Place Identity: Their Contribution to Place Branding</b> .....	41
<i>Audronė Rimkutė</i> <b>Cultural Policy in Creative Cities</b> .....	54
<b>About The Authors</b> .....	79



## Exploring the Place of Culture in the Urban Imaginary

Paul Long (Birmingham City University)  
Saskia Warren (University of Birmingham)

### **Abstract**

*This paper presents insights from 'Cultural Intermediation in the The Creative Economy', a UK project that aims to discover how the value of cultural intermediation can be captured and how this activity can be enhanced to create more effective connection between communities and the creative economy.*

*Building on project research exploring the dimensions of cultural governance, the agency and understanding of cultural intermediaries in Greater Manchester and Birmingham, researchers are currently exploring experiences of intermediation with 'hard to reach' communities in order to evaluate their relationship with cultural work and sense of what this entails.*

*Questions emerging from this vista of work concern the visibility/invisibility of intermediation projects how these are recognised amongst communities deemed to be beneficiaries of such work as well as their own sense of cultural 'needs' and local assets. Such issues (and their definition) extend to considerations of relationships between professionalised interventions and 'organic' cultural projects in the context of the specificity of demands, histories and experiences of communities in each location.*

**Keywords:** cultural intermediation, creative economy.

### **Introduction**

This paper emerges from the research project 'Cultural Intermediation in the Creative Urban Economy'. With acknowledgements to the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) on this subject, we proceed with the suggestion that cultural intermediation can be understood in terms of processes that connect different kinds of communities into the creative economy. Our research takes a historical approach to understanding the development of cultural intermediation, examining the governance of policy and relations between different actors in the contemporary landscape. These actors include the objects of intermediation practices: community members themselves.

The project aims to inform current practice through an empirical focus on the UK cities of Manchester and Birmingham. In this paper, we set out a context for thinking about the creative economy before outlining a methodological approach to the exploration of culture in the urban landscape of inner city Birmingham. Here, we offer some initial findings from our work with communities in which interim conclusions look forward to an innovative approach to co-commissioning creative work.

### **A Creative Economy, a Connected Ecology**

From a UK perspective, the creative economy is taken to incorporate 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (Bakshi et al 2012, p. 6). This year's UK government statistics claim that the creative industries are worth £71.4 billion per year to the country's economy, accounting for 1.68 million jobs or 5.6 per cent of all UK jobs, with growth in the sector outperforming all other sectors of UK industry.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the commercial imperatives behind the advertisement of such figures, an idea of a creative economy might be productively conceptualised in ecological terms. This ecology incorporates a domain of relatively non-commercial and publicly supported activities and institutions such as museums and theatre companies, so inflecting the nature of the connectivity and assessment of the value of culture beyond the ready reckoning of the treasury's balance sheet. For instance, broad claims have been made for the prodigious virtues of culture, that it can also connect disadvantaged, disenfranchised and over-looked communities with wider society, raising aspirations, developing skills and building confidence and enhancing citizenship (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007; 2010; Holden, 2004; Jowell, 2004). At the local level, such ideas are writ large in the cultural policy produced by Birmingham City Council. For instance, the value of culture is an article of faith in the 'Big City Plan' for urban redevelopment and revivification which posits that:

Participation in culture is inherently a good thing - it challenges perceptions, prompts feelings of happiness, sadness, anger and excitement, creates moments of personal reflection and enables people to understand the world they live in, its possibilities and the cultures of others more profoundly. Cultural activities

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<sup>1</sup> Data from <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/creative-industries-worth-8million-an-hour-to-uk-economy>

encourage self and group expression and provoke reactions at an emotional, spiritual and intellectual level, improving the quality of life in the city and a sense of identity and belonging. Cultural activities can also deliver a range of other outcomes including health and wellbeing, social and community cohesion, civic engagement, economic impact, development of transferable skills and improved environment.<sup>2</sup>

While the creative industries are presented as a potential panacea for economic and social malaise of post-industrial economies, they present particular barriers to entry. A disproportionately large number of people working within the sector are educated to degree level and in spite of a much vaunted quality of ‘tolerance’ and diversity (e.g. the work of Florida, 2012), the sector presents a questionable module for social connectivity (Oakley, 2006). Furthermore, the foundational attractions and central concept of the cultural industries is neither transparent nor universally understood. Thus, cultural intermediaries have a role of connecting communities with a cultural economy while inculcating in them a sense of what creativity and culture are. Thus far, our engagement with individual artists, professional networks, events, festivals, commissioning bodies, creative businesses, arts and cultural organisations both have captured the nature of their intermediary roles (Taylor, 2013).

### **An Urban Milieu**

The nature of cultural intermediation, its impact on communities comes into focus from our wider research in one case study that concerns the Balsall Heath area of Birmingham. This is an inner city location with a rich history that figures in various ways in the cultural and political imaginary of the city – in media representations or anecdotal reputation – and not always in a positive ways. Balsall Heath is located within the ward of Sparkbrook which has received considerable attention as a result of a moral panic over ‘Operation Trojan Horse’. A full scale investigation has taken place in an

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<sup>2</sup> Birmingham City Council BIG CITY CULTURE 2010-15: Birmingham’s Cultural Strategy, 2010: 3. For the ongoing attention to creative economy and cultural regeneration see, for instance: Birmingham City Council, (2004) *Capital of Culture: Lessons to be Learned from the Outcome of the European Capital of Culture Bid*. Birmingham: Birmingham City Council; Birmingham City Council, (2013); BOP Consulting (2010) *Why the Creative Industries Matter to Birmingham: An analysis of the City’s Creative Economy* Birmingham: BOP Consulting; Brown, J.; Barber, A.; Chapain, C.; Gibney, J.; Lutz, J., Murie, A. (2008). *Understanding the attractiveness of Birmingham and the West Midlands Region for creative knowledge firms: The managers’ view*. ACRE Report 6.3. Amsterdam: AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam.

alleged fundamentalist Islamist plot to take-over 21 schools in Birmingham which has resulted in the publication of a special investigative report.<sup>3</sup>

Nonetheless, Balsall Heath was selected for a number of reasons long before the Trojan Horse, recognising its history of stigmatisation and sensational associations as a place of illicit, threatening and transgressive behaviour by very different kinds of marginalised groups. Firstly, Balsall Heath is a diverse area, in what is now described as a super-diverse city. In the most recent UK census of 2011 60% of the population recorded themselves as Asian and 10% as Arab, with 71% stating their religion as Muslim (Census 2011). The area has been the home of new migrants to Birmingham since Yemeni groups settled in the 1940s, with waves of Pakistani and Syhlet Bengali groups arriving from the mid-1950s, and more recent migrants from Afghanistan, Sudan and Somalia. Secondly, the area faces some of the highest levels of social and environmental deprivation in the UK. It falls within the lowest 5% of neighbourhoods – referred to nationally as ‘Super Output Areas’ – for multiple deprivations (Census 2011; see also: Blackledge, 2002; Hubbard, 2002). Accordingly, Birmingham City Council has named the area as one of its ‘Priority Neighbourhoods’. Thirdly, Balsall Heath has an unstable recent history of inter-community dissonance, which was visibly evident in public clashes between local vigilantes and prostitutes in the former red-light district (Hubbard and Saunders, 2003). Fourthly, Balsall Heath has an infrastructure of trusts, charities, neighbourhood forums, schools and places of worship which serve as local nodes and networks for different resident communities. Lastly, Balsall Heath has been the object of cultural policy and the neighbourhood has seen a rise in arts programmes which have sought to engage disadvantaged and ‘hard-to-reach’ communities whether defined in terms of education, employment or cultural activity (for a summary, see Jancovich and Bianchini, 2013).

## Walking and Talking Culture

Given changes in the area in terms of governance, demographic and cultural initiatives, Balsall Heath is a signal place in which to investigate the experiences of recent and second-generation migrant groups in cultural activity at the local level. The aim has not been one of evaluating particular intermediations but to garner a wider sense of the

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Report of Ian Kershaw of Northern Education for Birmingham City Council in respect of issues arising as a result of concerns raised in a letter dated 27 November 2013, known as the Trojan Horse Letter’, Eversheds, 2014. Several schools in Balsall Heath were subject to investigation. Waseem Yaqub, former Head of Governors at Al-Hijrah school (outside of the area), called it ‘a McCarthy-style witch-hunt’ and that the letter was used by councilors ‘to turn on [Muslims] and use Muslims as scapegoats’.

lineaments of cultural life into which intermediation has tried to connect. In fact, given the instrumentalism of contemporary cultural policy, of how creative interventions are tied to paradigmatic performance indicators, it was important to 'step outside' habitual frameworks designed to capture the 'impact' of a whole host of initiatives.

Thus, insights into the cultural life of Balsall Heath emerge from qualitative 'walking interviews' with local residents. Trying to reach those whose attendance at a local biennale or arts centre may not be recorded, various techniques were employed to recruit participants in the area. Adverts were placed in a free community newspaper; researchers attended local meetings and spoke with local shopkeepers; letters were written to school, colleges and places of worship; social media was used to invite participation, publicise our presence and generate dialogue.<sup>4</sup> Tellingly, whilst walking with a community intermediary during a pilot interview we were mistaken for the police. Clearly there is local sensitivity to unfamiliar outsiders coming into the area that might be reflected in a relative lack of response to formal communications. The most effective mode of recruitment was building relations face-to-face. To begin establishing trust, researchers visited places or nodes in Balsall Heath involved in community-facing work and introduced the project.

It has been argued that 'walking in the street (as against, say, being driven around in a car) means that both researcher and participant are more exposed to the multi-sensory stimulation of the surrounding environment rather than cocooned in a filtered 'blandscape' (Evans and Jones, 2011, p. 850). As Evans and Jones suggest, it is possible that 'walking interviews generate richer data, because interviewees are prompted by meanings and connections to the surrounding environment and are less likely to try and give the 'right' answer. Indeed, it seems intuitively sensible for researchers to ask interviewees to talk about the places that they are interested in while they are in that place' (Evans and Jones 2011, p. 849). The methodology has allowed researchers to explore the area, guided by locals who are expert in their own lives and preferences, pinpointing people, spaces and places that are currently or historically significant for their own consumption and perception of intermediations and indeed of the very meaning of culture. Seeing the area from ground level leads to an evaluation of the political and cultural boundaries of the local geography as well as the psychic and practical boundaries of what counts as the creative economy and engagement with it, as well as the very recognisability of cultural work and its intermediaries.

One perspective on this milieu is captured in comment on the relationship of migrant groups to the possibility of cultural engagement and its role culture for

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<sup>4</sup> Social media includes a project blog - [www.culturalintermediation.org.uk](http://www.culturalintermediation.org.uk) - a Twitter account @cultintermed and a Facebook group *Culture Crowd Balsall Heath*.

citizenship: 'There are people ... who have come over from Pakistan to visit who have said that the communities here are more closed than they are in the cities in Pakistan where they have a wider understanding of what is going on in Pakistan itself, that they have a [...] sort of ghettoization'. This account is useful in highlighting some of the issues that arise in cultural intermediations; reflecting on the utility of a project designed to explore Balsall Heath's neglected history of a colony of surrealist artists, this interviewee opines that: 'I don't think that that is going to work. It is such a lovely idea but really in a way you have to be educated to what surrealism/dada is to know what the possibilities are and to open up your mind to that sort of thing'.

The pursuit of culture in interviews was supplemented by a mapping of the routes upon which individuals took or described to the researcher and which aided in understanding the temporal and spatial topography of engagement. On one hand there are specialised cultural spaces: the Midland Art Centre (MAC) at the edge of Balsall Heath, overlooked by the new and unforgiving floodlights of Edgbaston Cricket ground which provide a particularly invasive kind of illumination. And yet whatever the creative sound and colour emanating from such sites, much of this appears to go unseen and unheard, sometimes wilfully ignored. One interviewee seems typical in recalling the interesting nature of activities organised in the streets around her home during one cultural festival, resisting their appeal as they did not seem to be 'for me'.

Of course, there are also those other spaces where culture of one form or another can be encountered: restaurants, religious sites, the home itself and of course the digital nowhere and everywhere of the Internet. Whether attributed to ethnicity, familial ties or economic status, the realities of engagement and of categorising individuals and particular groups as 'hard to reach' is problematized by the understanding and validation of culture as 'a whole way of life', not least of all for its creative aspects, for the way in which meanings are produced and directed by people as social agents. Thus, the area reveals a variety of activity independent of the sanction of policy maker or qualified intermediary which emerge from a wide set of precepts and conventions. Graffiti murals, online rap videos or the nature of clothing stores and hairdressers play their own part in highlighting the work of organic creative workers and intermediaries which do not immediately suggest themselves *à priori* but are identified in our peregrinations and discussion.

In walking, we have taken our time, accounting for the hour of the day: for some interviewees their contribution has been given in between household duties, in and around the school or working day. In this process, the habitual becomes a site of re-evaluation and as this method reveals, along with questions about engagement and consumption, practical issues of mobility and access – sometimes circumscribed by one's social identity or physical being – make the very fact of walking with us a challenge. For one particular group of female muslim migrants, their routines in the area

of Balsall Heath were characterised by fleeting and cautious engagements with public space. Orientating oneself to the neighbourhood on foot without a practical purpose – such as going shopping, or dropping children to school – was beyond the routine experience for many female participants. To ask these interviewees to take us on a tour of local places where they experience art, cultural or creative activity, broadly interpreted, was to take many of these women beyond their comfort zone. It was also to enter into public space where the social codes the interviewees experienced were distinct from those of the interviewer. A number of the interviewees ‘covered’ (that is they wore facial veils) and half chose to do the walking interview in pairs. The social-spatial qualities of talking whilst walking required a leisurely traversing of public space which revealed its exclusionary non-sacred and gendered dimensions.

Behind linguistic barriers or behind doors, sometimes, the under-engaged appear in a different light to their portrait in deficit models of culture when understood outside of habitual paradigms and expectations. We have viewed things from the pavement, under skies blue or grey, accounting for the seasonal shifts in people’s lives and activities, noting the alterity of spaces like public parks or side streets, of boarded-up public houses which register the mutability of community character, its needs and expression. We have encountered people en route who interrupt talk and make a contribution to the general orientation; mobile phone calls taken en route prompt a recollection of a place or person, or something seen online, or a poster serves to remind that so many leaflets and invitations to cultural events that come through the door go straight in the trash.

In tandem with interviews there is also a wide array of cultural material to account for – and individual accounts and practices might be accessed online and through new forms of media where digital modes of ‘participation’ do not map easily onto familiar forms. Certainly, the culture of local life is one that has to account for the interactions of the local with the global through the medium of satellite television, the Internet as a medium that supports communication and the extension of community through Skype or social media apps such as Viber or Whatsapp. We ourselves have begun to capture a range of online activity by setting up a You Tube Channel and Facebook group which are then available to the wider community for input. The digital offers a texturing of activity and creativity to be apprehended in which the everyday nature of urban culture, creativity and identities emerge. Further strong global networks are evident in creative consumption experienced at the local level: for instance, clothes and jewellery bought by extended family in Yemen and sent to Birmingham; and Asian TV programmes received by the satellite dishes that line the rows of terraced housing in the area. Here, the topography of culture, across time, space, subjective and objective perspectives, offers to give a rich sense of its place in the quotidian wherein the connectivity of policy and creative interventions might be understood.

## Conclusions and/or Legacies

Culture, encounters and memories of the activities of intermediaries wax and wane in importance in relation to narratives about how life has been lived and how communities are understood. In such instances, how does culture matter? Does it matter at all? For instance, 'the best that has been thought and said' might appear to be a distraction when set against issues of safety on the street, of social deprivation and opportunities for simply getting by which in itself might take up all of anyone individual's creative talent or interest. Furthermore, the nature and value of culture might be as hard to recognise as those labelled 'hard to reach'.

Correlations between the cultural lives of participants point towards a rethinking of our traditional institutions as cornerstones of cultural engagement, that is the museum; the gallery; the theatre; dance studio and concert hall. The research process and our early findings highlight the limited engagements of the case study group from Balsall Heath with conventional and publicly funded arts and cultural provision. Based on the 'hard-to-reach' people we have encountered, we need to account for the gendered and religious spatial dimensions of place-based experiences of cultural and creative activity to better understand the creative economy in the diverse city and indeed how the latter is sometimes employed to celebrate the virtues of the former. Instead this research serves to emphasise other kinds of nodes which require a broadening of the cultural criterion that is currently represented and publically funded by bodies such as Arts Council England and City Councils under the aegis of contemporary paradigms of engagement and uplift.

In this context, it is useful in finishing to give some sense of where our research leads next, mindful of how projects large or small, creative or academic, have a tendency to make connections and then disappear overnight. Thus, one means of addressing the complex circumstances presented in an urban milieu like Balsall Heath is to sidestep the exigencies of current intermediations and to ask community members themselves to formulate their own cultural policies. The next stage of our project is a form of action research that asks community members to commission their own cultural projects. A panel of local people will be recruited and offered training and given control over a generous budget from which projects might be commissioned based on their needs and consultations within the community. What this work will look, sound or feel like - if indeed there will be work to show at all - or who will be engaged to produce it we don't yet know. Inherent in this process is a great deal of risk, particularly in the context of a field of cultural intermediation squeezed by an austerity economy. Yet risk that starts from an organic base and respect for participants acting as co-creators of culture. The degree to which any commission will be inflected by the kinds of narratives and habits revealed in our interviews or the histories of cultural activity unearthed in secondary



research is a further risk. At best, such activities will produce something significant for the community in which we are based and which we seek to speak about. Perhaps a creative work will enable some means of enabling a form of articulation of the imagination of the community, for itself and in a way that will be meaningful and lasting to itself and for those who look at it with varying degrees of interest.

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## Social Dynamics as Outcomes of a Creative Process

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### Abstract

*The paper presents a project that initiated and implemented art practices with small groups of immigrants and Hungarians living in Budapest. On the practical side, the project aimed to go one step further from creating critical works of art in a joint process, and instead it creates social situations, dynamics, connections and modes of communication that reshape the existing social settings and networks and opens up new possibilities for interaction and cooperation. On the theoretical side, the project aimed to identify the principles at work and generalise good practice. The paper presents the analysis of the action with migrants and Hungarians in Budapest: the process and its outcomes, with the focus on the theoretic foundations. The authors highlight the connection between the communication strategies and visual art practices used in these actions and the evolving social dynamics and present an account of how these dynamics reinforce the findings of earlier studies on migrants in Hungary and to what extent and in what ways some common patterns and social strategies are disrupted in this particular situation. The paper is based on the data gathered through the method of participant observation and action research, and it presents qualitative results in an interpretative framework, synthesizing the findings for more general theorising and further field study analyses.*

**Keywords:** migrants, communication, visual methods, participatory art practices, joint creativity.

### Introduction

The authors of the paper have implemented a civil project targeted at a well-defined issue concerning migrants from mostly non-EU countries living in Budapest. At the same time, this project was the field of a research study using the interpretative anthropological method for analysing the evolving community processes in light of the artistic and communicative aspects of the process. While working towards the pragmatic goal of generating supportive social ties between participants, the authors aimed to answer theoretic questions as well as ones relating to the specific social setting in question. In the paper, the authors present an analysis of the resulting process and its

outcomes with a focus on the theoretic foundations, and reflect on the possibilities of planning future processes informed by these results.

The practices that the authors implemented respond to the social problems by utilizing theoretical insights and innovative methods based on their previous theoretic investigations and field research. While continuously alternating between the stance of reflection and practice, the authors have gained new insights on the social issues that are tackled. In the meantime, these actions aimed to exceed the level of description and analysis, and of generating good practice. On the research side, the authors engage in deriving generalizable aspects of analysis and observation for further studies as well as methods transferable between different fields. On the artistic side, these actions aim to take one step further from creating critical works of art in a joint process and instead create social situations, dynamics, connections and modes of communication that reshape the existing social settings and networks and open up new possibilities for interaction and cooperation.

On one hand, the project presented in the paper was one of many other initiatives in the civil sector aimed at improving the conditions for the integration of migrants into Hungarian society. The specific issue targeted was the difficulty of forming loose, informal supportive social ties. The achievement of the pragmatic goals of the project was measured by personal communication and observations, interviews and questionnaires. On the other hand, the project was implemented in the spirit outlined above and involved research conducted with the method of participant observation and action research, relying strongly on the planned joint art activities. This emphatic reflective element and the resulting qualitative analyses were channelled back to inform the partially planned and to a great extent open ended process, while they also yielded new insights both about the strategies of migrants in Hungary and about the possibilities of conducting such actions with methods of fine art and social research.

The main focus of the research was how the reflective communication strategies and visual art methods applied during the project interfered with spontaneously evolving social dynamics, the formation of hierarchy, roles, leadership and following, expert identities, group identity, normative expectations, shared meanings, common ground, the creation of social ties and movement in the social space during and outside these joint activities. These questions are relevant for the practical side due to the possibilities of forming informal, supportive ties and generating trustful relationships between Hungarians and migrants. On the research side, they provide new insights on the relationship between the characteristics of communication and the evolving social dynamics and on the potential of visual art practices for shaping these dynamics.

In the present paper, the authors introduce the project outlining the social problem addressed together with the most important data and methodological considerations. Then, the authors analyse the events from the two aspects mentioned above. In the first

part, the insights yielded through participant observation on migrant strategies are presented, together with reflections on how these came to light and changed during the course of the creative process and related activities. The second part comprises the analysis of the creative and communicative processes implemented during the project, in light of their relationship with the emerging social processes and dynamics.

### **1. The Social Problem Addressed by the Project: Background and Pragmatic Outcomes**

It is important to make a clear distinction between the pragmatic aims and results of the project and the research questions, methods and results. However, the two aspects are inseparable; therefore, the authors found it essential to present the pragmatic results briefly in order to provide a backdrop for the presentation of the research findings.

The pragmatic aim of the project was to catalyse the generation of informal, supportive networks with ties between migrants and Hungarian residents living in Budapest. This was the main goal kept in mind both in deciding on the composition of participant groups and in designing the creative process. As demonstrated by several sociological studies conducted among migrants in Hungary (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009b; Göncz et al., 2009), strategies vary widely regarding the degree of integration and the strength of migrants' ties with their own diaspora. Groups that sustain stronger ties with the diaspora may have difficulties in forming supportive social ties outside their own network. Targeted migrant programs in the civil sector often address burning pragmatic issues like language learning or achieving better chances in the labour market. Soft areas like trust and informal relations are rarely targeted by them. In the meantime, migrants often report difficulties in these areas, as explored by Örkény and Székelyi (2009a). Therefore, exploring the possibility of disrupting social dynamics that evolve naturally within this setting, generating trust, forming new supportive relationships, creating informal ties can be a key to handling problems relevant for some migrant groups in Hungary.

The project activities consisted of 4 series of workshops, with 8 sessions in each series. The series were planned to run with the same group of participants, but a certain degree of fluctuation within and between the groups was expected. The authors worked with mixed groups, and initially recruited about 5 Hungarian and 5 migrant participants to each group. As a result of the flexibility allowed for fluctuation and participant numbers, a total number of 64 people were involved in the project activities. Among the participants, there were migrants from Iran, Russia, Georgia, Afghanistan, Australia, Vietnam, China, Mexico, the US and Greece. A small number of the

participants were artists themselves. The workshop teams were highly diverse both in terms of the cultural and the social backgrounds of the participants, and the migrant groups that the participants represent are characterised by different integration strategies and face different problems resulting from their migrant status and experience.

The authors relied on questionnaires, personal interviews and observations to measure the pragmatic outcomes of the workshops in terms of the goals set at the beginning of the project. By the end of the project, altogether 23 migrants and 41 Hungarian participants were actively involved in the activities.

The participants reported diverse motivations for attending these events, ranging from meaningful spare time activity and engaging in creative work to forming new connections and learning about other cultures. Artist participants stressed the informal nature of the workshops, and they found it to be a great experience to be able to create without the pressure of external expectations and deadlines. The majority of the participants had a motivation of forming social connections, and only a small proportion (less than 10%) said that artistic activity was their sole motivation for attending the workshops.

As a by-product of the events, Facebook groups were created, and many of the participants connected with each other on the site. More than half of the participants reportedly met other participants outside the workshops, and some of them also formed second level connections, that is, they made acquaintances with friends of people they met at the events. A lot of the acquaintances made there have lasted beyond the scope of the workshops. The interactions during the joint creative activities have also been a momentum for learning new communication strategies, and provided the participants with skills that are transferable to their everyday lives.

The local, micro level practical results described above are not generalizable, and any implications on macro level social dynamics would require a study of a much larger scope.

## **2. Focus of the Research**

The present research focused on micro level processes, using an interpretative qualitative method. This comprises two main parts. First, an analysis of some processes from the communicative aspect aiming to explore connections between the characteristics of visual and verbal strategies and the nature of meaning making and the complex social dynamics evolving during the process. Second, some case analyses of individual and group strategies, micro level dynamics that either have evolved or surfaced, came to light during these joint activities.

The most general question driving the research is how methods of visual art and reflective communication design combined with the anthropological method can be used in field studies involving social action. In turn, the authors were also interested in how the results of such a research project inform theorizing about participatory art practices and communication theories.

In this particular project, the enquiry had a unique focus that was specific to the social issue at hand, namely, the possibilities of visual methods in promoting the formation of social links and new ways of connecting in the social realm for migrants living in Budapest. The authors wanted to see how roles and integration strategies evolve in light of the participants' motivations to get involved in the project and the art practices designed with the project aims in mind and implemented during the process. The authors were aiming at a qualitative, interpretative analysis based on participant observation, exploring the characteristics of the visual art activities and the communicative aspects of the project and their relationships to the formation of common ground, common knowledge and social relations during these activities. The authors present a systematic description of both verbal and visual aspects of communication during the events and establish general connections along these lines and then go on to explore further aspects of social movements and dynamics in light of these observations. Some migrant strategies that were both brought to light and affected in the process are also presented together with some more complex issues that surfaced and can be meaningfully grasped with the aspects of observation and analysis that are outlined.

As regards the analysis of the communicative aspect, the observations were guided by some specific questions focusing on the phenomena that are relevant for the formation of social relations: narratives, shared meanings, common ground, common knowledge and norms, common values, hierarchies, leadership and other roles, group boundaries, identities – the building blocks of complex social dynamics. Strategies of presenting private worlds, tendencies towards generalization and common ground, the use of visual signs and verbal communication, the nature of the evolving common representations in this social space were analysed in order to explore their relationship to the formation of social dynamics in terms of the above mentioned aspects.

### **3. Planning the Actions: Participatory Art and Communication Science Combined**

The explorations made and the findings presented in this paper rely on a research method that is a combination of participant observation and action research. Each action was characterised by some degree of interference and reflective planning of the process along the lines of the considerations presented in this section. This interference served

the double purpose of guiding the process towards the pragmatic goals and addressing the research questions outlined above.

The processes that the authors generated rely on the intuitive, spontaneous attitude that comes naturally from the artist's standpoint (a more detailed account of this approach can be found in Soós, 2011) and the analytic, reflective approach that draws on communication theories, anthropological methods and theories of creativity (for a brief summary of this background, see Kéri, 2012). These were converted to fit the special community contexts that the project addressed. The result is an exploration strategy that is both systematic and intuitive, and is often part of an open ended process and points towards new practices and strategies of reflection.

While it is possible to distinguish between two distinct approaches guiding the planning of events in the process, both strategies are based on the conceptualization of the process as a transitional situation. Roles as determined initially in a natural way by the disciplinary backgrounds (or lack thereof) of participants and leaders of the process are dissolved, broken down, subverted. These situations are characterised by a high degree of uncertainty, and during the planning phase, the authors reflect on and mobilise the dynamics of creativity (see e.g. Boden, 1994; Csíkszentmihályi, 1998; Weisberg, 2006) to catalyse the generation of new ways of connecting. During some of the activities initiated, only a common goal is set, and it is jointly realized by the participants with no intervention. In other cases, communication about the subject at hand is guided with close attention to coordinating the perspectives of the participants.

Some of the events were planned with relatively rough outlines and no strict script or plan to follow based on an idea enabling and catalysing the free flow of interactions. These events engaged participants in joint activities that are easy for them to grasp, pragmatic to some extent, and this approach relies on the assumption that interpersonal and social dynamics emerging spontaneously in these situations are momentum for learning transferable interpersonal skills that foster collaboration in other contexts. Such events included the joint design of an object, e.g., a lamp made from a wide variety of new and recycled parts and raw materials or a new interior of an actual teahouse run by one of the participants.

This intuitive approach is complemented by an alternative, more analytic strategy. The design of these workshop elements is informed by theoretic considerations rooted in communication theories and theories of cooperation and creativity as well as new insights on these themes based on field research observations. While some activities of the workshops relied on a flexible framework, spontaneous action and continuous reflective adjustments, others were carefully planned and adopted conscious reflective communicative strategies.

When it comes to practice, the scripts and carefully composed processes are complemented by continuous reflection, flexibility and spontaneity in the analytic approach as well.

#### **4. Results**

As a result of the interplay of the different approaches to the practice described above and the continuous reflection and adaptation of the process to the aims defined at the outset, a complex and unique dynamic unfolded, which is analysed in the following sections.

##### **4.1. Characteristics of the Communicative Aspect**

Two focal concepts that guide the reflections and analyses presented here are the way connections are created and meanings are structured throughout the process by a tight framework with continuous adjustments or through a strategy that has high tolerance for loose ends and uncertainty, and any other dynamics in between, and the main question asked is how such dynamics affect the evolving meanings, common ground and possible patterns of cooperation (for a more detailed treatment of the theoretic background, see Kéri, 2015).

A general characteristic of the processes is that they overwhelmingly operate with fluid, malleable meanings and rely on an intense interaction between the participants' private worlds, experiences and public, mostly visual presentations. Three main broad characteristics of the communicative aspect are that it relies on abundant visual production and recycling of these products; the verbal communication avoids generalisations and both rely on direct personal experience or abstract concepts a lot of the time. As a result, the meanings generated and the actions initiated fall on the second end of the above described axis: the processes operate with lots of loose ends, complexity and sustained uncertainty, where adjustment to a common horizon is sporadic (the latter concept is treated here in the same sense as used in Horányi, 2009).

Avoiding generalisations and keeping discourse at the level of first person accounts of experiences characterised both the verbal discussions and the dialogues accompanying the visual productions. During one of the mediated discussions, participants were reflecting on their preferences in connection with art. They talked about instances of appreciating artworks of others and their own experiences of the creative process. The questions asked in both themes were targeted at private experiences. Instead of asking them what constitutes good art (in general) or what marks the end point of a creative process, or what attributes should a work have to be



complete or finished (in a normative sense), they were asked what it was, when visiting art exhibitions or events, that made them feel or think (personally) that the art they saw was good and when in a creative process they felt that they reached the point when the work was finished (again, from a personal perspective). This has allowed for sharing a variety of different views (e.g. a preference for craftsmanship, expertise and time invested in a work of art, direct psychological impact, complexity or simplicity, etc.) and value orientations, and for accumulating and aligning these without seeking common ground or turning the discourse in a normative direction. A spontaneous discourse on the same topic, as it happened on several other occasions during these sessions, takes a very different course. Those who do not consider themselves competent or particularly eager about the theme will withdraw, become passive listeners. A competition of opinions tends to develop among the discussants, and those who hold studied expert opinions tend to take a leadership role. Whether or not one opinion becomes prominent, a need to adjust horizons and reach a common consensus characterises these debates. This latter strategy does not support the accumulation and sustenance of different points of view. The former strategy goes against the formation of a hierarchy of opinions or roles within the group, and supports the creation of a wide and diverse horizon of knowledge without convergence or synthesis.

A lot of the works created covered abstract concepts of sensual experiences and preferences for certain tastes and textures, or general values. These were also approached from a personal perspective. Instead of using representational methods, the artworks produced were mostly abstract; symbols and diverse materials were used in collages and assemblages created individually or in a joint process. The materials and objects were deprived of their pragmatic values and were just used for their aesthetic attributes (colour, texture) or as symbols for raw concepts. Building this way from the bottom up and relying on primary experience mobilised deeply personal levels of experience, where cultural determinations are not expressed in terms of identities: participants presented themselves as private individuals rather than representatives of a cultural group. Even if culture is deeply embedded in these preferences, tastes and experiences, this process deconstructed this syntax of the experience, and instead of opinions and ideological standpoints, it brought person to person relations into focus. The new shared meanings that were generated in this way were rooted in raw experiences rather than determined by cultural constructs.

Breaking down experience to this very personal level alternated with different strategies of working towards common or joint perceptions and goals. However, meanings were kept indefinite and these processes were disrupted from time to time, which again resulted in the sustenance of some group cohesion with loose organisation, that is, without landing on roles, hierarchies or a new group identity. During these processes, there was continuous reflection on or implicit playful engagement with the

difference of perspectives. Some of the works were created in a joint process, in a consecutive or simultaneous manner. Someone started a piece, and another participant continued the work; participants worked on large pieces together and discussed sensual experiences like textures or flavours during the process; in some cases, one participant played the role of the eye and instructed the work of another participant verbally, while the object was concealed from the person who was painting or drawing it.

In the long term, a lot of the works were taken out of their context, distanced from their original authors and became part of a joint narrative or a temporary installation placed in a new context enabling new personal and joint reflections. Individual pieces were continuously recycled and integrated into new combinations and installations by their makers or other groups of participants. Thus, they provided a basis for continuity and familiarity, while they also started a life independent from their makers and became part of a flexible and open ended network of meanings.

As a general tendency, meaning making pointed towards the accumulation of content with personal relevance to the participants and the ordering and reordering of that content along aesthetic principles and through alternating perspectives. In practices involving visual production, sustaining complexity without converging on a common horizon of perception was supported by the aesthetic ordering and a special characteristic of visual signs, namely, that they can condense content while allowing for diverging interpretations and uncertain meanings due to their non-propositional nature (for a more in depth account, see Kéri, 2015). The structure of the abundant content was kept flexible, malleable in this way, and hierarchical orderings and taxonomic or rational relations could be avoided. This in turn supported participants' involvement on equal terms; the jointly created content had points of reference with personal relevance to all the participants, and the relationships set up were complex but network-like and not resting on rational considerations.

The large number of open ends within this accumulated content proved difficult to maintain. On the other hand, common narratives were encouraged to evolve from time to time. One of the workshop series was centred around the themes of food and the kitchen. This launched as the kind of open process described above, starting from raw concepts directly linked to sensory experiences, and the boundary between these and the process of making art was blurred during the activities. While working with sensory experiences like tastes, smells and textures, spices and other raw materials were used together with pigments and art mediums to create abstract works. In the meantime, personal stories and culinary experiences were shared, and uncommon connections were sought among these based on the explorations at the abstract level. Participants were asked to share new associations about each other's abstract pieces, and this resulted in a new network of meanings enmeshing with the individuals' personal meanings, which had their boundaries loosened up by then. The ordering of the content

was associative and aesthetic, not rational. The recurring themes of this discourse were then used in compiling the menu of a closing cooking event. In this meal, which was prepared together, participants' contributions: colours, taste preferences, comments, stories, observations, were present in new combinations and in highly abstracted form. This is also an instance where some degree of coherence and community of the presented private worlds and meanings was achieved on merely aesthetic bases, without rational ordering or converging on shared opinions.

The possibility of creating joint works of art and an exhibition at the end of the workshop series was also raised from time to time. These initiatives gave rise to joint thinking and planning, with alternating leadership roles among the participants. However, the ideas often remained divergent, and sharing, accumulating, recycling and aesthetically ordering and reordering content remained more emphatic than working towards a common goal and roles that could serve that goal within the context of the workshops. Instead of reaching common ground, this facilitated the creation of loose social ties with abundant but not strictly or rationally structured common knowledge. Aesthetic means of ordering content along the way helped the anchoring of experiences without converging on shared values and norms. At this level, many participants were willing to take the initiative simultaneously, and instead of encouraging leadership and follower roles, an atmosphere of mutual curiosity was kept up. Instead of working towards a common language or agreed interpretations manifested in a final joint work, the communication strategies described above minimised the sources of conflict and at the same time maximised the potential for new connections.

As a result of these communication strategies combined with visual creation, the evolving social dynamics was that of loose connections, a network was created where no hierarchies, roles, leadership and following or a common group identity was formed. At the same time, given cultural identities were somewhat disrupted by the strategies that stressed personal levels without reference to their rootedness in culture, and the continuous playful questioning of individual perspectives. Relationships that were formed could be sustained and evolve outside these events.

This combination of communication and creative strategies also helped mediate specific cooperative relationships that were forming spontaneously during the workshop process and extending beyond the scope of the project. Some examples of these will be presented in the subsequent sections.

## **4.2. Subverted Roles and Initiative**

The communication strategies and the subversion of leadership and follower roles had the pragmatic outcome of empowering participants to break away from their follower role, which in some cases followed naturally from their migrant status, and to assume

authority and initiative. In the context of the workshops, migrants were generally less inclined to take the initiative, as this often seemed to be in conflict with their self-identification as a minority. Differences of attitude or expectations were sometimes expressed as criticism at this level. With those who did not immediately have the confidence, this situation changed later on, and they were willing to take charge of the situation. In their own existing social networks, several participants took new initiative roles connected to their spare time art activities with ease. During and after the workshops, some of them began to share their artworks on social networking sites and use this hitherto latent artistic side of their identity as a means of connecting socially. One of the participants, who is not an expert photographer, actually assumed a leadership role outside the workshops and took the initiative to organise photography events similar to some of the workshops with new groups of people that he himself recruited.

Overall, diverse and sometimes mixed strategies have been observed in assuming leadership roles in art related activities. While no hierarchies evolved within the groups based on the initial levels of expertise, and assumed leadership roles were temporary during the project activities, some participants were more reluctant than others to take initiative both during and outside the project activities.

The authors have explored the dynamics of changing, transforming, fragmented or open identities in the conflicts evolving spontaneously and in the moderated communication. Different patterns of migrant and local identity were revealed, and migrants' backgrounds and relationships (or lack thereof) with their families as well as other social ties affected their participation and the depth of their involvement in the events. However, the overall picture shows that the ways in which participants could engage in the workshop processes, and the way in which this affected their integration strategies depended more on their personalities and less on the background or migrant group they belonged to. In this section, the authors present some examples of the types of conflicts and dynamics that emerged, and how these were handled during the course of the project.

As studies relating to this aspect of migrant strategies in Hungary have demonstrated (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009b; Göncz, B. et al., 2009), strong ties with the migrant group often go against successful integration. This phenomenon was also felt to some extent in the project. Those who had weaker ties with their traditions, families or ethnic groups had a tendency to participate more intensely in the joint activities. Some with stronger ties with the diaspora had a more supportive background, and they could also become core members of the teams. A more complex dynamic evolved where the ties with the family were stronger and more limiting. Another important factor in these cases was the fact that the workshop had no immediate pragmatic use, e.g., a certificate,

some kind of marketable technical skill or a primary focus on language learning (though language practice could of course be an indirect immediate benefit of participation).

One such complex case was that of a Vietnamese participant, with whom the authors had a more intense cooperative relationship both within and outside the framework of the workshops. A summary of the relevant aspects of this case is presented in this paper (for an in depth analysis, see Soós, 2014). The cooperation was mainly related to the design of their teahouse, a small family business in a prominent location in downtown Budapest. The design of this interior was chosen as the theme of one of the workshops, and the artist leader of the project also collaborated with this participant on the design outside the workshops. She also featured in a short film directed by the artist leader as part of another project. The adaptation strategies of this woman were radically different from those of her husband and his family. While the husband followed a pattern of maintaining strong links with their own diaspora and taking only economic efficiency into account when planning their business, the woman had a more open attitude, and found it important to learn about the habits of Hungarians and consider the environment, the style of surrounding buildings in the design of the teahouse. She also saw the film as a positive opportunity in extending her network, beneficial both in her private life and for the business. While she maintained strong links with the family, she still managed to represent her own personal preferences. Despite the resistance, suspicion, conflicts and opposition she experienced with her husband's family, she kept up and strengthened this strategy of openness in the long term.

Artist participants had a special status in the project, and the dynamics evolving around artist roles in the process have yielded some of the most interesting research findings during this action. For the most time, the role of artist participants was no different from that of the lay participants. They had the same motivation of making new social connections and meeting new people. In addition, as mentioned earlier, several of them emphasised the liberating experience of creating art without the pressure of external or self-imposed expectations. Some of them also drew new inspiration from the joint activities.

Despite the dynamics of merging and subverting expert and lay identities and roles during the project and the impact of this dynamics in catalysing different initiatives, the dividing line between experts and lay participants remained sharp when it came to presenting their works in an institutionalised art setting. After the workshop activities were over, active participants were presented with the opportunity to exhibit artworks in a gallery setting in Budapest. This exhibition was curated by the artist leader of the workshops, and the process leading from the initial ideas to the final concept and actual realisation was their joint effort together with the researchers. Several of the participants were offered the opportunity to take part in the exhibition;

however, those who did not consider themselves artists of any kind in their civilian lives unexceptionally refused to take this opportunity. Most of those who finally exhibited were canonised artists, and those who were not had had ambitions to create and exhibit artworks as self-taught artists independently from the project. A detailed account of this afterlife of the project can be found in Soós (2014).

The curatorial concept of the exhibition was basically to exhibit works by migrants. The curator did not want to set any other requirements or interfere with the content or realisation of the works in any way. A number of the works reflected on the migrant status or the surrounding social issues and theoretic approaches. A general tendency characterising one part of the exhibited works was that they did not aim to break away from canonised forms of expression. They used methods that deliberately blend in with European traditions or reflected on a theme from a known and accepted perspective, using artistic expression to make a strong point. One of the exhibiting artists was a Chinese art student, a painter who admittedly aimed to adapt his work to the European tradition, create pieces that met perceived quality standards of this tradition, and his primary aim at this stage was to perfect his skills towards this end. An Iranian team exhibited an installation using digital images, computer applications, video and physical objects. These mediums were subordinated to conveying a story and an emotionally charged and clear cut message about the refugee experience. The creators of both of these works assume a strategy of integration in the European canon as artists aiming at mastery of their media for the sake of works that will be well received and understood by a European audience, expressed according to canonised norms of a long tradition, sometimes even applying didactic methods characteristic of the mass media. This strategy oddly counteracts the 20<sup>th</sup> century European tendencies of subverting traditional modes of perception and importing new modes of artistic expression. An exception from this tendency is the work of an American artist living in Budapest: an interactive installation with very simple tools that puzzles the visitors and aims to face them with a surreal situation with no definitive interpretations, which is both in line with a certain aspect of the migrant experience and an artistic trend that relies more strongly on the unexpected element.

During the preparatory phase of the exhibition, several issues arose that needed to be mediated due to the different perceptions of the artist's role and the artist-curator relationship, expectations regarding responsibilities and independent action. This was partly due to the dual role of the curator-project leader, and partly to different past experiences (or lack thereof) in the local art scene and foreign contexts of the people involved. In mediating these situations, the same approach was employed in the verbal communication as during the workshops: instead of relying on the roles taken for granted in a familiar setting, expectations were clarified at a person-to-person level, and the moderators allowed for a great deal of spontaneity in the planning of the joint

exhibition. As it has been observed earlier during the workshops, this strategy enabled great flexibility and potential for the collaboration, and expectations were adjusted to the possibilities on both sides.

## Conclusions

The project has created a unique social dynamic. The most prominent overall characteristic of social dynamics in this setting was that roles and patterns of action that participants were accustomed to got disrupted, and this has catalysed the formation of new links and lasting relationships among them. A change in their willingness to take initiative and new modes of collaboration and communication evolving during and following the process have also been observed.

As regards the integration strategies and the participating migrants' dynamics of movement in the social space, the present study partly reinforced the findings of former studies on the subject (Örkény and Székelyi, 2009b). On one hand, participants with stronger ties to their family background and the wider diaspora found it more difficult to engage in the activities and find the desired social ties there. On the other hand, the study explored some tendencies that divert from general patterns, which was due in part to the different perspective offered by anthropological participant observation and in part to the fact that the communication strategies and art methods used in the project induced unique dynamics and disrupted general patterns evolving spontaneously in group situations.

Lay and expert opinions and approaches and even conflicting realms of expertise have been presented and kept up without debating legitimacy and adjusting views to a common horizon. This was also the case with presentations of private worlds, and a vast amount of conflicting viewpoints and divergent experiences could be presented along an aesthetic ordering. As a result, no hierarchy has evolved along expert and lay roles or preferences and experiences that are better or poorly adjusted to some normative common horizon. However, the extent to which participants felt competent in presenting content in a professional art setting or assume a leadership role in art related activities still varied.

The elements of the communication strategies and visual art tools have been explored in the project as flexible basic parameters that can be used in diverse ways to meet different pragmatic needs and ends. It is possible to adapt them to a less diverse group, and the findings of the present research can inform a more specialised action designed with artists or migrants representing a specific diaspora or professional background. The framework can be more or less structured according to these needs.

Creating publicly presented artworks with lay participants would be a special challenge, in which the results of the present research could be utilised.

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# Understanding Creative Space: A Case Study

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## **Abstract**

*The paper analyses the idea of the creative city through the concept of the creative space. Apparently, not the whole city is creative; some places in the city are recognised as more creative than others. The issue is to understand how the creative spaces are constructed in the creative cities, especially those that are “out” of the creative city policy. Aiming to understand the nature of creative spaces, a specific methodology is needed. The aim of this paper is to examine the methods how creative spaces in the creative cities are analysed, and how they could be better understood. In the beginning of this article, the context in which the idea of creative space emerges is presented. Then, the case of Birmingham as a creative city and its creative spaces are analysed. Further, the methods how those creative spaces are and can be researched are discussed by illustrating with research results of a particular creative space in Birmingham. Finally, the conclusion summarises the methodology discussed before and the relevance of understanding the creative spaces in the development of the creative city.*

**Key words:** creative city, creative space, research methods.

## **1. The Context of Creative Space**

The idea of the creative city has been widely researched by academics and examined in policy documents during the last decades. It has been noticed that cities tend to become more creative as an alteration to economic changes, faced at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and related to de-industrialization (see Landry, 1995; Florida, 2002; Cunningham, 2006; Pratt, 2008; Kong and O’Connor, 2009). As there are many ways to approach creative cities, in this paper, the idea is analysed through the concept of creative space. Apparently, not the whole cities are creative, but some places are recognised as more creative than others (Cooke and Lazzaretti, 2008). This raises questions *how* and *why* those creative places function, *what* could they mean for the wider idea of the creative city, and *how* they should be researched to understand them better.

There is an ongoing discussion how creative cities are or should be developed in order to keep the growth of the creative economy. Supposing that there are no entirely creative cities, the notion of creative spaces would become more important to understand them. There has been noticed a relation between the space and creativity.

According to Drake, the clusters of creative enterprises in particular places can promote creativity (see Drake, 2003). While it has been concentrated to the spatially and temporally bounded political, economic and social environments and their impact on collective processes of creativity (for example, Hall, 1998), Drake argues that more focus should be made on the minds of individuals.

Meanwhile, Kristensen (2004), when analysing how creativity takes place in a physical context, argues that physical space affects the well-being of people, the channels of information, the availability of knowledge tools and sets the stage for coherence and continuity, which may contribute to the competitive advantages. By using the choice of place and space, the creative processes may be facilitated. Hence, the matter is to understand particular attributes of places that could be considered as stimulating the creativity.

Looking for the features of creative place, Florida argues that cities should attempt to attract bohemian types of people who like funky, socially free areas with cool downtowns and lots of density (Florida, 2002). Hospers notices that in Florida's concept, creative people are looking for attractive urban amenities rather than just slavishly following jobs (Hospers and Dalm, 2005, p. 10). They prefer attractive, stimulating and vibrant environments to live and work (Hospers and Dalm, 2005, p. 12). Zimmerman agrees that in Florida's conception, creative class is associated with its own unique lifestyles, values and cultural practices. He also finds that they are much more likely to be geographically footloose and are "more willing to move to the specific places that offer them a 'thick' labour market; ones dense with opportunity in their fields" (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 232).

However, Glaeser critiques that most of creative people like what the most well off people like - "big suburban lots with easy commutes by automobile and safe streets and good schools and low taxes" (Glaeser, 2005, p. 594). In addition to this, Markusen (2005) notices that the urban spaces are not the only preference of the creative class: "Florida's super-creative core - engineers and scientists, managers, and business operations specialists - disproportionately work and live in suburbs where homogeneity and low density are highly value" (Markusen, 2005, p. 1923).

Thus, according to Vanolo, which agrees that creative people prefer "cool places", they are not simply motivated by material rewards (salaries) but want to live in "quality", "creative", "tolerant" and "exciting" places (Vanolo, 2008, p. 370). As Markusen responds to Florida's creative class concept, the definition involves different groups of people, which are strongly distinguished from one another. For example, artists as a core of creative class, tend to be politically active citizens. However, super-creative groups like managers, lawyers and accountants have different economic and political preferences. With reference to diversity of the creative people, it becomes more

complicated to identify what are creative people's preferences, and how more stimulating environment could be created.

## 2. Nature of the Creative Spaces in a Creative City: A Case of Birmingham

Exploring creative spaces, Birmingham as a particular city is chosen in this case. This city is the second largest in the United Kingdom, where usually Jewellery Quarter and Custard Factory with its surroundings (Digbeth or Eastside) are determined as creative milieus in Birmingham. Further, two mainstream creative areas in Birmingham are discussed aiming to understand more about those places; how they are studied, and what features of Birmingham as a creative city can be identified through the main creative places.

Birmingham is the second largest city in the West Midlands, the United Kingdom, and it is identified as a creative city in both political and academic discourses. The idea of Birmingham as a creative city is presented in the *Big City Plan* produced by Birmingham City Council (2010). There are identified three areas of development in order to maintain Birmingham as a creative city. These are Jewellery Quarter, Digbeth and Southside and Highgate. All those creative spaces identified in the policy are located in the city centre. This poses a question whether it is because Birmingham's urban strategy, *Big City Plan*, is concentrated on the development of the city centre, or because the Council recognizes Birmingham's creative spaces only in the city centre.

The idea of Birmingham as a creative city is as well explored in the academic discourse. Bonthé and Musterd identify it as a creative city in the European context (Bonthé and Musterd, 2009). While Clifton and Cooke, in a comparative research between Europe and North America, recognise Birmingham as one of the top-20 countries as being "open" and having a high concentration of bohemians (Clifton and Cooke, 2009). Exploring Birmingham's creative spaces, the earlier mentioned two areas are dominant: Jewellery Quarter (Pollard, 2003; Davis and Daly, 2004; Propris and Wei, 2007, 2009; Propris and Lazzaretti, 2009), which history lasts for more than two centuries and Eastside or Digbeth (Porter and Hunt, 2005; Porter and Barber, 2006; Lombardi et al., 2010; ISSUES, 2011). As it has been shown previously, usually, Jewellery Quarter Digbeth or Eastside is determined as the creative milieus in Birmingham. However, there may be significant creative places in other parts of the city as well.

There are emerging academic articles arguing that creative spaces tend to expand from the inner city. Champion (2010) analysing Manchester as a creative city found that even though creative activities remains highly concentrated in the city centre, some creative production is decentralizing in order to access cheaper premises. While Flew (2012) investigated whether creative workers demonstrate a preference for inner cities or

suburbs, it has been found that significant creative workers are living and working in the suburban areas and are satisfied with that.

### **3. Methodological Tools to Understand the Creative Space**

When analysing the existing research about creative spaces, it has been noticed that different methods and combinations of them are used to explore the spaces. The interview seems to be the most common method (Chang and Teo, 2007; Comunian, 2008; Champion, 2010; Granger and Hamilton, 2010; Harvey et al., 2011; Flew, 2012); however, the data collected by interviews are supplemented by a wide range of both quantitative and qualitative methods. New ways, such as relational mapping (Granger and Hamilton, 2010) and walking interviews (Jones and Evans, 2012) have been found when analysing research about creative spaces. Moreover, the importance of ethnographic aspects, such as observation and participation, are emphasized especially when analysing smaller areas (Chang and Teo, 2007; Harvey et al., 2011). Interestingly, most of the research papers are illustrated by maps or pictures of the places. It is an open discussion whether the main method of the data gathering should be ethnography, which includes interviews (Harvey et al., 2011) and observations, or it should be interviews supported by ethnographic participation (Chang and Teo, 2007), as it is presented differently in similar research. Thus, according to the research where the creative spaces have been explored, the combination of several qualitative methods has been used. Further, the methods discussed in this part are applied further by researching a particular creative space in Birmingham.

#### **3.1. Methods Used to Understand the Old Print Works as a Creative Space**

*The Old Print Works* is located in the Balsall Heath area, which is between the city centre and Moseley. It was a printing-house in the building before, but currently, there are units, which can be used as studios, galleries, workshops, meeting spaces or for other needs of both artists and community. There are people working in a wide range of fields: photography, music, visual arts, furniture, welding, felt making, etc. (The old print Works, 2015). Opened in April 2010 and working for more than four years now, it has become a space for artists and community. It has already been compared to Custard Factory, which is considered one of the main creative places in the city.

The main data collection method has been conducted through direct, personal, semi-structured interviews. In addition to interviews, the author's, as researcher's, personal experience is used in the research-data gathering and analysis. As observations

and interpretations might be subjective, it has been attempted not to make an influence on the findings, but it is written additionally in order to give some more insights for the reader and hopefully make a more genuine picture of the place. The observations are combined with the material from interviews, notes and memories taken during the visits to the place.

Firstly, the implementation of the research has been started aiming to gain basic information about the organization, activities, artists and organizations ongoing there. At the very beginning, the analysis of virtual spaces has been done (organization's and tenants' websites, *Facebook* pages, etc.). Secondly, the exploration of the tenants has been made. Thirdly, personal participation and observations have been included in the research. The data collected by interviews is supplemented by material gathered from "hanging out" and "small talk" as well as during the visits to the place and events (Harvey et al., 2011). The recorded notes and photo records are used as well.

### **3.2. Features of *The Old Print Works***

The findings of the research related to the location are presented in this section to illustrate how the creative place has been researched. The issues related to the location, the approach to surrounding areas and the physical building and its relevance to the tenants are analysed there.

*The Old Print Works* is located on the main road, in the middle of Balsall Heath, next to the former Arts School, in front of the library, swimming baths and mosque, in the area between the city centre and Moseley, Kings Heath. *The Old Print Works* announces that, according to the government, Balsall Heath is one of the 25 identified priority neighbourhoods, and the close surrounding area belongs to 4% most deprived in the UK, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Thus, the analysed creative space is located in challenging surroundings. Second, tenants define the area as densely populated by the immigrants, mainly Asians and South Africans with Islamic background from countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Somalia and Ethiopia. Tenants recognize that residents from those cultures bring a strong sense of community for the neighbourhoods. In addition to this, tenants mentioned that historically there have been living artists and musicians for some time, which cannot afford accommodation in the nearest area Moseley that is known as an artistic hub and as more posh district too:

But it's quite mixed, like that's the difference. It has got people in that background and then it's got people like us, who artists and musicians, and I think students, and we are living here because it is cheaper than Moseley (T8).

Thirdly, a few mentioned that the area is very busy, as there are always a lot of people and traffic, or that it is relatively close to the city centre and convenient. Thus, despite the fact that some of the tenants live in the surrounding areas, and others just come there to work, they all tend to contradict with the predominant opinion that the area is deprived and dodgy. Other challenges like being in a dense Muslim community or poor place are seen positively as well, as bringing a sense of community, giving more vibrancy or even generating an atmosphere that stimulates creativity.

When examining the actual space of *The Old Print Works*, it has been noticed that the tenants value the physical place a lot. The author of the paper was honestly surprised when exploring *The Old Print Works* website and saw that the building is described as beautiful. At first, it was thought that word was written unconsciously, but later on during the research, it has been realized that people really think it is beautiful. While from the author's point of view, it is dark and dangerous with its falling ceilings, unstable floors and unpainted walls. It feels like constructions are just starting, and you should not actually be there. However, all tenants describe the building as beautiful and historical. They appreciate the historical value of it, which is, as they say, a heritage and rareness that have to be protected. Moreover, tenants enjoy the chance to make their input and shape but not really change the place by its physical look as well as function:

I like that it was my studio here a month ago, and now it is an art gallery, which I mean, I still can use as a studio (T3).

Like no matter what you want to do, you can probably find the place to do that in the building. And the fact that each person can make his or her own space <...> it's nice that we can decorate it and make a little bit, a little bit nicer (T4).



Illustration 1.  
The stairs used to show the video during the opening of Ort Gallery.  
Source: Ort Gallery



Illustration 2.  
The same stairs used for the fashion photography.  
Source: Silver Halo Photography

It should be mentioned that the building is not completely finished physically: there is no heating, electricity does not work in some places, and there is no security. However, tenants seemed to accept those conditions, as they mentioned that they are just freezing and wearing more clothes in wintertime, some volunteers are repairing electricity and just trust being in the space:

If I want to get into this building, I could do it with a hammer. <...> Well, I have been here for about a year and a half and no one has ever broken in. <...> Most of the times, you know we leave all the doors open. And no one cares. <...> You can't get in and walk out with someone else tools (T6).

Despite the fact that the place is not finished physically, and it does not fulfil some main needs like electricity, heat and security, the tenants do not refer to that. Conversely, they appreciate the specialness of the physical building, the fact that it had a story before them and probably an opportunity to remain it alive by transforming and adapting to themselves but not really changing it substantially.

The establishment of the organization in a deprived and multi-cultural area predominant by Muslims is seen as an inspiring advantage and connection between the city centre and further more developed areas as well as the link between people in different cultural and social backgrounds. Therefore, the tenants tend to feel familiar with the area, even though it is challenging by its deprivation and different cultural backgrounds and see that as an advantage, more inspiring atmosphere. They especially appreciate the physical building because of its historical value, uniqueness and potential as well as allowance to transform to their needs. But more than the location, building, organization's value, flexibility or cheap rent they appreciate the other tenants, the variety and probably nearness of people based in the building. Thus, it is seen as a connection of physical areas as well as people and communities.

## Conclusions

The particular place of *The Old Print Works* seemed to take a significant role by its nature, i.e., imperfection and freedom. People are allowed to create the space by themselves and value that a lot. They approve that the place is both physically and ideologically unfinished, and they can make the studios, workshops or any other parts by themselves as well as offer ideas for the development of it or take initiatives. This reflects the ideas that creative people prefer "unfinished" spaces and likes adding new work to old. The process of creating the space happens organically as people strongly identify themselves with the place; they feel as ambassadors of it, start doing business there, etc. It seems that the space enables people to create it.

The empower and desire to be free benefits in the previously mentioned aspects, such as resilient community, business starts-up and civil responsibility, but it also

causes some challenges. Facing the lack of financial and human resources, the problem of sustainability occurs. The matter is how long the maintenance of the place could be based on the goodwill. Related questions are how the organization could be developed having more resources or collaborating with other, especially governmental institutions, and how that would affect its nature.

*The Old Print Works* evokes discussion what role it actually plays in the city and what role it could play. The matter is whether *The Old Print Works* is going to remain in a periphery, and if not, how would it “fit” in the perception of Birmingham as a creative city. Generally, there remains a question how geographically and ideologically peripheral creative spaces could be more relevant to the development of creative cities that are usually concentrated on the “central” creative hubs.

Additionally, the study raises the questions about the preferences of the creative people, the creation of creative spaces as well as organizations and creative cities. It is an issue of cultural and urban policies how creative spaces could be developed in order to support creative economy, cultural and creative industries, entrepreneurship, communities’ initiatives in order to maintain a sustainable city. It becomes crucial for cities developing creative economy to understand where the creative workforce chooses to live and work.

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# Place Attachment and Place Identity: Their Contribution to Place Branding

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## Abstract

*Attachment to the place is generally considered to be a complex emotional set of feelings about the geographic location. The personal dimension and experiences of life seem to play a fundamental role in place attachment. "Wild Strawberries", the film written and directed by Ingmar Bergman (1957), is one of the most known icons of the personal and sentimental value for a place. This article aims to explore the multiple dimensions related to the notions of place attachment and place identity focusing on their relationship with place branding. Recently, many researchers have been persuaded that place attachment and place identity influence place brand, intended as a network of associations (visual, verbal, behavioural) concerning the place in the people's mind. In this regard, a clarification of place identity notion represents a meaningful point for the advancement of refining place branding theory.*

**Keywords:** place identity, place attachment, place marketing, place branding, participative branding.

## Introduction

The appeal of a place not only reflects the subjective emotional attachment of an individual, but it is the result of multifarious elements that form the place perceived identity. *Place identity* is a moot notion, which encompasses a large heterogeneous set of components including personal cherished aspects, physical facets, such as an environmental condition and landscape, social aspects, such as lifestyle, social attribution, social status, and other less precise terms, such as spirit of place, soul of place and cultural landscape.

The identity of a place often presents remarkable and sometimes contradictory discrepancy among groups of individuals and local communities living in the same place. In this regard, a recent research (Górny and Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 2013) not only

indicates, as one might expect, that migrants do not demonstrate strong attachment to their new city of residence, but sometimes, in certain areas, it seems that they tend to be more strongly attached to their neighbourhood than were the natives.

*Place attachment* has received recently some attention in social science literature and is considered strictly interrelated with place identity. Place attachment is claimed to be both a functional and an affective relationship. In fact, there are utilitarian and practical bonds to the place, but, at the same time, the relationship to the place goes beyond people's cognition, preference or judgment (Riley, 1992).

This paper discusses the notions of place attachment and place identity as factors which contribute in forming the place brand. In particular, some findings from recent researches on the place identity and place attachment are analysed. The author's opinion is that in contemporary society the elitist idea that a place is a holistic entity that should be valued as an end in itself no longer makes sense. Place identity is the result of an interactive process, which involves many actors and is culturally sensitive.

Exploring the multiple dimensions related to the notion of place identity (Williams et al, 1992; Giuliani and Feldman, 1993; Dallago et al., 2009; Scannell and Gifford, 2010; Mihaylov and Perkins, 2013), it is focused on the relationship among place attachment, place identity and place branding (Hernández et al., 2007; Ashworth and Larkbam, 2013; Flint, 2013). The aim was to clarify the role of place identity in the place brand construction, intended place brand as a network of association (visual, verbal, behavioural) in the people's mind concerning the place (Zenker and Braun, 2010).

## 1. Place Branding

Some years ago, Keith Dinnie carried out an overview of the literature about place branding by highlighting its multifaceted nature (Dinnie, 2004). The author identified three principal landmark texts which have made a major contribution to the place branding literature:

- First, *Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition* (Morgan et al., 2002). The key argument of the book is the notion that the places currently offer the greatest untapped brand opportunities. Written by an international mixture of marketing professionals, branding consultants and leading academics, this book argues that "marketers must be in the business of delivering impactful experiences, not merely coordinating media relations and constructing media brand identities" (Morgan et al., 2002, p. 6).
- Second, the special issue on nation branding that appeared in the April 2002 edition of the *Journal of Brand Management*, comprising ground breaking articles

on nation branding by some of the world's most eminent academics and practitioners.

- Third, Simon Anholt's (2003) seminal text *Brand New Justice: The Upside of Global Branding*, in which the author addresses the issue of how emerging market economies can brand both their exports and their countries in order to compete more effectively in the global economy.

It prompts from Dinnie's literature analysis that the nature of place branding appears complex, transcending the narrow confines of any single industry sector including that of tourism.

In recent years, the interest on place branding is growing both in academic and marketing field. The proliferation of place branding studies (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011) and the rising number of place branding consultancies indicate its popularity. New investigations have enriched the place branding concept presenting positive and negative factors which influence place promotion (Braun, 2008; Kavartzis, 2008).

The lack of clear political priorities for place marketing has evidenced one of the main obstacles in big cities and underlining that it could get worse by the lack of financial resources (Popescu and Corboş, 2010; Lennon, 2014).

The literature on place marketing highlights the conflicts between the particular nature of places and their users, since the interests of non-residents often conflict with those of residents. It is well-known that in big historical cities, the tourists' interests are not the same of the ordinary travelling people. The interest on local communities and their role in economic development is mainly shared by the researchers studying the rural area development and social business.

Many authors who are engaged in sustainable development and social researchers and educators who are following the *critical tourism* ideas (Ateljevic et al., 2013) argue that the application of market rules to improve the place attractiveness can produce disastrous results, especially if one does not take into account the environment and social sustainability. Tourist marketers often ignore the resident needs and the environmental limits that they would strive to attract tourists in a place without worrying about ecological effects and local communities deterioration. A quick investigation about tourism business in the Third World shows that it is set up by the agreements between foreign image-makers/investors and the local elites excluding local communities and generating leakages (payments made outside the destination economy) (Hampton, 2014; Lacher and Nepal, 2010).

Nevertheless, in a globalized world, the strategic application of place branding is supposed to provide a mandatory means to nations, regions, provinces and cities for competing among them and attracting business. Place branding is presented as a new general container of strategies aimed to promote a place in the global market, an umbrella term which encompasses place marketing and place promotions.

Municipalities and regional authorities, which aim to increase their competitiveness and attract target groups, such as tourists, new residents and investors, hire the place branding experts and consultants (Bennett and Savani, 2003; Braun, 2008; Hospers, 2006).

Place branding may include either positive image promotion of a place, exploiting and valorising its peculiarities, e.g., historic heritage, arts, spectacle offers, etc., or the promotion of commodities and services that responds to the demand (proven or expected) of specific target groups (Kotler and Gertner, 2002; Greenberg, 2008; Kavaratzis, 2004). The phenomenon of place branding is generally considered an organic process of image communication which combines marketing strategies and governance objectives finalized to allure investors, tourists and valuable human capital. It also appears as a business opportunity for marketing companies, which claim themselves specialized in helping small urban, rural and coastal cities, resorts and regions and promise to transform their tourism and economic development performance.

Media, either traditional or new, play a remarkable role in place branding. Cultural products such as films, books and music seem to have a major part in determining the country's reputation and image, although this is surprisingly ignored by the academic researchers in the vast majority of their place branding investigations. However, something is changing in place branding, and new forms of representation of places transcending the mere advertising could be handy (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010).

It is quite clear that all people are more and more conditioned by and dependent on the new technologies (Genco and Sorce, 2010). Nowadays, they enter in everyday life by connecting people to worldwide networks and allowing peer communication. It is also clear, that new media have an extraordinary ability to create and maintain a favourable/unfavourable reputation and competitive position of a place in the international marketplace. It can be easily seen how new media are globally transforming tourist habits. Web-based communities, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Tripadvisor and globally diffused services of online booking for flights and hotels, have changed market conditions by influencing the strategies of tourism agencies and destination marketing organizations. Accordingly, these changes are affecting the destination branding process itself (Buhalis et al., 2011; Leung et al., 2013).

## **2. Place Attachment and Place Identity**

In the investigation of collective memory among inhabitants of two twin cities, Lviv (Ukraine, previously Lwów, Poland) and Wrocław (Poland, previously Breslau,

Germany), Polish psychologist Maria Lewicka argues that place attachment and place identity are two different although related phenomena (Lewicka, 2013). Other researchers, especially in the past, claim on the contrary; namely, they consider that place attachment, and place identity expresses the same concept and use both terms synonymously (e.g. Brown and Werner, 1985). These divergences depend on that the people-place bonding is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon. Indeed, the factors, such as emotional bonds, affiliation, behavioural commitment, satisfaction and belonging, are loosely associated in several theoretical studies (Pretty et al., 2003).

The distinction of place attachment and place identity is not an easy question. It is doubtless that these notions express the people's bonds with places. However, these bonds can be the result of different factors and their combination.

Studies about place attachment and place identity are mostly restricted to the neighbourhood (Casakin et al., 2015). The deep-seated familiarity with the environment has been always considered as a crucial attribute of place identity (Rowles, 1983), and place attachment has been operationalized in terms of place identity (Stedman, 2002). About the relation between the place attachment and place identity, it has been suggested that place attachment focuses on evaluations of places, while place identity focuses more on the way in which places form part of one's identity (Moore, 2000). Many researchers share the Setha M. Low and Irwin Altman opinion (Low and Altman, 1992) that the place attachments may not only be landscapes solely as physical entities but may be primarily associated with the meanings and experiences in place, which often involve relationships with other people (Moore, 2000; Manzo, 2003; Casakin et al., 2015).

Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, authors of the interesting tripartite model of place attachment, claim that place attachment occurs at both *individual* and *group levels*, although definitions of the term tend to emphasize the "personal connections one has to a place" (Scannell and Gifford, 2010). The tripartite model is based on three dimensions. The first is the *actor dimension* that represents who is attached (an individual or collectivity). The second dimension is the *psychological process* through which affect, cognition and behaviour occur in the attachment. The third dimension is the *object of the attachment*, the place, including its social and physical characteristics.

There is, however, a need for a more general model, which would encompass individual and collective relationships. In this direction moves the *Place entity* model of the author. *Place entity* is a complex entity which includes physical and social attributes/properties. Place entity is an abstraction from the real world that can be uniquely identified and represented by its attributes/properties. Place entity can be seen as a mosaic of physical and social settings, these latter consisting of individual and collective meanings (Figure 1).



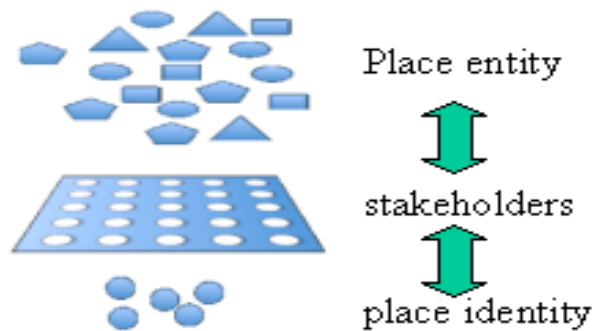
Figure 1. *Place entity*



Social settings should include individual and collective knowledge and experiences too. Place entity should be viewed as the result of stratified interactions among human beings, a specific physical space and the physical and social settings related to this space. The author agrees with the broad idea that the place is a “space endowed with meanings” (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Low and Altman, 1992; Cresswell, 2013), although these meanings are not given once for all and are layered along the time. It must be noted that Place entity properties are not static, since they are continuously modified either by *Human beings* (that is another entity representing an individual, group, community, nation or other people aggregations) or sometime by the nature itself.

*Place identity* is a coherent subset of properties/attributes which more than others distinguish a Place entity-type instance under a specific view. Place identity expresses the physical and social settings, included positive and negative appreciations, which more than others characterize the Place entity-type instance. Place identity can be considered as the result of a sort of casting performed on the whole property set of a Place entity-type instance deciding on its properties peculiarity (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *The place identity process*



From the above assumption, it follows the issue of how the casting criteria should be decided and may the choice of different criteria produce different place identities. In this regard, Proshansky et al. claimed that place identity would be theoretically conceived as an individual's strong *emotional attachment* to a particular place or environmental setting (Proshansky et al., 1983). Although, the author of the paper does not agree with the above provided interpretation, it is accepted that there could be different place identities for the same Place entity-type instance associated with the different Human being entity-type instances. Accordingly, the place attachment is one of the possible relationships that a Human being entity-type instance can establish with a place identity belonging to the Place entity-type instance. However, affirming that place identities are subsets of the Place entity remains a generic assumption, since subset components are not detailed, and their membership rules are not given. The model is only preparatory, rough and operative, it is a first preliminary attempt to depict a complex phenomenon enfolding in a whole heterogeneous components (emotional, cultural, physical, personal, collective, etc.) related to the physical space (or a virtual one, since there exist many places that are the outcomes of legends or even have been destroyed along the past centuries).

If this idea that all the possible place identities of a place are part of its corresponding Place entity-type instance is accepted, the complexity of the problem is not reduced, but, at least, there is a way to try to tackle it. In fact, Place entity was introduced to underline that the place is a whole of physical and social settings and that, as a consequence, the efforts should be focused on representing and labelling these settings.

Finally, it should be noted that many questions raised by researchers about place identity and place attachment result from a dualistic conception of the *place* notion, where physical and social settings are separated. It justified that place-identity has been theoretically conceived as clusters of "positively and negatively valenced cognitions of physical settings" (Proshansky et al., 1983, p. 62). This and other similar assumptions does not take into account that place identity is influenced not only by the physical settings related to the physical space, but also by its related social settings. Nowadays, social settings should include virtual images, impressions, advices, comments, posts and rumours circulating on the Internet. It is very likely that the changes in social communication are now affecting the place identity and place attachment dynamics, and accordingly, the new dimensions of place identity and place attachment could influence the place branding dynamics too (Govers and Go, 2009; Arora and Khazanchi, 2014).

### 3. Place Branding Dynamics

In general, the cultural heritage and tourism bid get people to visit the place. Many efforts are made to reinforce the place brands by building warm and charming cultural images and promoting place identities, which encounter the consumer expectations.

However, behind the official identity of a place, the less virtuous identity of a sexual tourist destination can hide. It could be the real cause of the attractiveness of a place. This is the case of many East European capitals. On account of international tourism and business trips, prostitution has become extremely well-paid in most poor countries, and the girls who prostitute themselves in the hotels of famous historical cities earn twenty times more what a university professor or the head physician of a hospital earns each month (Jaurand and Leroy, 2011; Möller, 2010; Campani, 1998). From long time, sex tourism is a flourishing, prosperous industry, especially in places where the prostitution is legal. Cultural and historic heritage is a secondary factor of attraction.

Of course, the above mentioned dark and prurient aspects cannot be present in the official place branding of a city, but they are a part of its whole real image. It is well known that Amsterdam is a beautiful city filled with historic buildings and an abundance of culture, but many tourists are attracted by the city's reputation for the sex, drugs and the famous Red Light District.

Another interesting aspect of place branding is how the marketers employ the place identity. They sometimes try to exalt the place through the place identity competitive comparisons: "Riga has a stronger visual identity than Latvia - Riga looks like itself. It is more internationally - minded than Latvia. It is more modern than Latvia. It is a place of acknowledged international consequence - by historical and geographical right" (Dripe, 2012). However, the brands that stakeholders attempt to manage or at least influence escapes from their control. In fact, the idea of a manipulating holistic brand for a place is unlikely.

In the previous paragraphs, it was argued that place identity depends on many factors, and accordingly, the place branding construction should take into account the multifarious nature of place identity and the different target groups expectations and habits. Furthermore, if it is accepted that place identity results from a dynamic process; then, the traditional place marketing approach could be inefficacious. In fact, it presupposes that place identity is something of static that can be uniquely defined and manipulated. For this perspective, the place branding essentially consists in communicating the place identity in an easy and manageable way.

In their identity-based approach to place branding, Mihalis Kavaratzis and Mary Jo Hatch observe that place identity and place branding are complex processes that encompass partial sub-processes. The authors claim that place brand is the result of a

process, which involves groups of stakeholders. They argue that brands are built out of the 'raw material' of identity and identity emerges in the conversation between stakeholders and what brings them together. Although practitioners and policymakers continue to spend time, money and effort on traditional place marketing, recent studies are demonstrating the relative insignificance of traditional marketing view applied to place branding. The irrelevance of logos and slogans in place branding is often asserted in the literature (Mayo, 2013), while the role of stakeholders and their participation in co-creating the place brand have been recently shared by many researchers (Aitken and Campelo, 2011; Zenker, 2014).

However, technologies are changing the nature of stakeholders and prompt towards new forms of participative branding. Many on-line organizations, such as Amazon and e-Bay, and social networking sites encourage people to express their opinions about products, while travel websites Tripadvisor and Bookinkg.com publish peers evaluations providing reviews of travel-related content and host interactive travel forums.

On account of social media, new online brand builders are present on the Internet, and they have largely eschewed traditional forms of marketing communication. They increase their power through a seemingly transparent approach, the opinion sharing and word of mouth engagement.

## Conclusions

The basic clarification of moot, arguable concepts, such as place identity and place attachment, is a fundamental task of the cities investigations and essential for the advancement of research in this social field.

Nowadays, many researchers share the opinion that the place identity and place branding are closely related. They agree that place branding links place identity with projected and perceived images though communication and experience and they are largely persuaded that place brands are representations of place identity building a favourable internal (public, private and civil society stakeholders) and external (tourists, investors, traders, migrants) image.

This paper provides an attempt to manage the complexity of such concepts as *place* and *place identity* through the *Place entity* model that might have the advantage of a more detailed analysis of the multiple and heterogeneous factors underlying these notions.

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## Cultural Policy in Creative Cities

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### **Abstract**

*Cultural policy is one of the factors that determine the conduciveness of a city to the creativity of social groups and individuals. It is directly linked to several dimensions measured almost in all the Creative City Indexes: access to culture, cultural offers and facilities, cultural/creative industries development. Indirectly, it impacts other important dimensions of the creative city: openness, tolerance and diversity.*

*The paper aims to summarize the main features of cultural policy of five cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for urban development and lay in top 10 creative EU countries, according to the currently existing creativity indexes. The scope of the analysis is an institutional framework of the cultural policy formation and implementation and the mechanism of the municipal financing of culture. The analysis is based on the publicly available online information: data from the official websites of cities, statistical sources, communications and publications of the cities' councils, projects' reports.*

**Key words:** local cultural policy, creative city.

### **Introduction**

The notion of “creative city” was coined by Charles Landry in the late 1980s, and when introduced, it was seen as an aspirational concept. Its author aimed to “spread confidence that creative and innovative solutions to urban problems are feasible, however bad they may seem at first sight” (Landry, 2008). Since then, the concept of creative city has evolved into many-shaped city planning strategy that also encompasses the concepts of the creative and cultural economy (Howkins, 2001, Scott 2010), creative and cultural industries (Pratt, 2008, Hartley 2005) and creative class (Florida, 2002).

Analytical tools, i.e. the creative city indexes, developed for measuring various aspects of the city supplement these concepts. The indexes and their methodology vary

widely<sup>1</sup>. *Creative City Index* developed by Charles Landry and Jonathan Hyams, evaluates the “creative pulse of places” by exploring their urban dynamics, processes and achieved projects. The index encompasses ten domains: 1) political and public framework; 2) distinctiveness, diversity, vitality and expression; 3) openness, trust, tolerance and accessibility; 4) entrepreneurship, exploration and innovation; 5) strategic leadership, agility and vision; 6) talent and the learning landscape; 7) communication, connectivity and networking; 8) the place and placemaking; 9) liveability and well-being; 10) professionalism and effectiveness (Landry, 2014). The index was applied for 20 cities worldwide, and Helsinki has received the highest rating.

The *Creative City Index* constructed by John Hartley, Jason Potts and Trent McDonald for the Beijing Research Centre for Science of Science (BJSS) and Beijing Academy of Science and Technology comprises seventy-two indicators grouped into eight dimensions: 1) creativity industries scale and scope; 2) micro-productivity; 3) attractions and economy of attention; 4) participation and expenditure; 5) public support; 6) human capital; 7) global integration; 8) openness, tolerance and diversity (Hartley et al., 2012). The index has been tested on six cities from three different countries (Brisbane and Melbourne in Australia, Berlin and Bremen in Germany and London and Cardiff in the UK).

Florida’s *Creative Cities Index* evaluates the attractiveness of the city to the creative class. The index is based on the creative class theory and the argument “that regional economic growth is powered by creative people, who prefer places that are diverse, tolerant and open to new ideas” (Florida, 2002, p. 249). The index measures “3T’s” of economic development: technology, talent and tolerance. It has been applied for the regions of USA and 139 nations worldwide (Florida et al., 2015).

KEA European Affairs developed *European Creativity Index* that measures the dimensions important for “culture-based creativity” (KEA, 2009, p. 31). The index is based on the idea that creativity of individuals depends on the social context; thus, the index should focus on the social and economic factors that influence individual creativity. These include: education in art schools, cultural employment, cultural offering, cultural participation, technology penetration, regulatory and financial support to creation and economic contribution of creative industries. These factors are grouped in six pillars of creativity: human capital, openness and diversity, cultural environment, technology, institutional environment, creative outputs. The index comprises 32 indicators of these pillars (KEA, 2009, p. 193–195).

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<sup>1</sup> An overview of various creative indexes is given in Correia and Costa, 2014; Hartley et al., 2012.

The importance of cultural factors to creativity is stressed in some other indexes of creativity too: *Creative Community Index* (Kreidler and Trounstone, 2005), *Hong Kong Creativity Index* (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, 2004) and *Creative Space Index* (Correia and Costa, 2014). Like the *European Creativity index*, these indexes also encompass indicators of cultural participation, cultural offering or infrastructure, cultural expenditure and public funding for cultural organizations. They share the ideas, that cultural institutions make a city more attractive for creative individuals, they form creative milieu and give places for debate and networking, and that cultural activities increase people connections to each other and to the place.

Cultural policy of the city is related to all these factors. It is obvious, that the course of city's cultural policy, its formation and implementation patterns may be more or less conducive for creativity. That depends not only on the city council, but also on the longstanding city and state traditions. The city government may support, ignore or suppress the creativity of citizens by political means and actions, but the entrenched bureaucracy, rigid and closed formation procedures of city programmes, unmotivated public sector personnel and non-organic, "top-down" set city development strategies may suppress creativity as well.

The aim of this paper is to describe common features of the cultural policy of the cities, which have identified creativity as a strategic factor for urban development and lay in top 10 creative EU countries according to the currently existing creativity indexes. The cities with the strategic aim to be creative could be identified through the *Creative Cities Network* initiated by UNESCO in 2004. It should be noted, however, that city's decision to take part in the *Creative Cities network* does not mean its high scores on various creativity indexes. Nevertheless, some of them are rated very high (for example, Helsinki and Ghent on Landry's Creative City Index).

Two most recently completed creativity indexes are *Creative Space Index* (CSI) (Correia and Costa, 2014) and *Global creativity index* (GCI) (Florida et al., 2015). According to the CSI, top 10 countries in EU are Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Finland, Ireland, Austria, Belgium and France. According to the GCI, top 10 EU countries are Denmark, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, France, Slovenia and Belgium. Nine countries in both indexes overlap: Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, Ireland, France and Belgium. None of the cities of Denmark and the Netherlands belongs to the *Creative Cities Network*. Thus, for the analysis, there were chosen five cities that are registered on the *Creative Cities Network* and are approximately similar in population size and status: Helsinki (Finland), Hannover (Germany), Edinburgh (Scotland, UK), Dublin (Ireland) and Lyon (France). The table below summarises the key facts about these cities.

**Table 1. Population, status and membership in the UNESCO *Creative Cities Network***

City	Member of the UNESCO <i>Creative Cities Network</i> since	Creative field	Population	Status
Edinburgh	2004	Literature	482640 (2012) <sup>2</sup>	Capital of Scotland
Lyon	2008	Media art	496343 (2012) <sup>3</sup>	Capital of the Rhone-Alpes region
Dublin	2010	Literature	527612 (2011) <sup>4</sup>	Capital of Ireland
Hannover	2014	Music	519 942 (2014) <sup>5</sup>	Capital of the federal state of Lower Saxony
Helsinki	2014	Design	612664 (2014) <sup>6</sup>	Capital of Finland

The scope of the analysis is formation and implementation patterns of the cities' cultural policy. Policy formation and implementation are considered as two stages of the overall policy cycle that encompass formulation of strategy, institutions and means established for its implementation. The analysis is based on publicly available online information: data from official websites of the cities, statistical sources, communications and publications of the cities' councils, projects' reports.

## 1. Cultural Policy Strategies and Its Formation in the Creative Cities

Cultural policy formation agents are quite similar in all the five cities. The highest decision making bodies are city councils elected in local elections. The City of Edinburgh Council is made of 58 elected councillors, which are elected in local government elections every five years. They represent 17 wards within the city. The Lyon City Council consists of 73 members representing nine districts. Councillors are elected by direct universal suffrage for the term of six years and can be re-elected. Dublin City Council is a unicameral assembly of 63 members elected every five years from 9 Local Election Areas. The citizens of Hannover elect City Council for five years. Members of the Council are the 64 Aldermen and Alderwomen elected into the Council

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<sup>2</sup> Data from *City of Edinburgh Council Key Facts and Figures, 2014–2015*, [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/3786/key\\_facts\\_and\\_figures\\_booklet\\_2014-2015](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/3786/key_facts_and_figures_booklet_2014-2015)

<sup>3</sup> Data from *Institute national de la statistique et des etudes economiques*, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/ppp/bases-de-donnees/recensement/populations-legales/departement.asp?dep=69>

<sup>4</sup> Data from *Central Statistics Office*, <http://www.cso.ie/multiquicktables/quickTables.aspx?id=cna23>

<sup>5</sup> Data from *Wirtschaftsförderung Region Hanover*, (2015) *Alles im Blick. Trends und Fakten*, <http://www.wirtschaftsfoerderung-hannover.de/Downloads>

<sup>6</sup> Data from *Statistical Yearbook of Helsinki, 2014*, [http://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/julkaisut/pdf/15\\_02\\_20\\_Statistical\\_yearbook\\_of\\_Helsinki\\_2014\\_As\\_kelo.pdf](http://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/julkaisut/pdf/15_02_20_Statistical_yearbook_of_Helsinki_2014_As_kelo.pdf)

and, by virtue of office, the Lord Mayor. The Helsinki City Council has 85 permanent members and an equal number of deputy members. The council is elected in municipal elections every four years.

The responsibilities of all five City Councils include the definition of city strategies and other important objectives, setting the annual city budget, adoption of local development plans, etc. Local cultural development also falls under the competence of City Councils. All five cities' councils have special council committees dedicated to cultural affairs. Edinburgh City Council has the Culture and Sport Committee, Hannover – the Committee of Culture, Helsinki – Cultural and Library Committee, Dublin – Arts, Culture, Leisure and Community Strategic Policy Committee, Lyon – Culture, Heritage, Citizens' Rights, and Events Commission. These committees, however, differ in their responsibilities and roles. The table below summarizes key data about the five cities' cultural policy formation bodies.

**Table 2. Roles and areas of responsibility of cultural policy formation bodies**

<b>City</b>	<b>Cultural policy formation bodies</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Areas of responsibility</b>
Edinburgh	Culture and Sport Committee (Decision making body)	The City of Edinburgh Council has executive committees that make decisions on distinct areas of responsibility (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2015b).	Arts and Museums, most sports and recreation including Edinburgh Leisure, libraries, festivals and events and cultural development (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2015a).
Lyon	Culture, Heritage, Citizens' Rights, and Events Commission (Advisory body)	The Lyon City Council has 11 specialized standing commissions composed of elected representatives. The commissions examine all projects and expenditures that are submitted to the vote of the City Council (Ville de Lyon, 2014a, p. 9).	Museums, archives, events and animation, libraries, theatres, orchestra, citizens' rights (Ville de Lyon, 2014a, p. 9).
Dublin	Arts, Culture, Leisure and Community Strategic Policy Committee (Advisory body)	The role of the Strategic Policy Committees is to formulate policy proposals, evaluate and report on policy implementation, for consideration and final decision by the full council (Dublin City Council, 2014b).	Area partnerships, Archives, Arts, Casual Trading, Community Development, Control of Horses and Dogs, Culture Events and Festivals, Galleries, Higher Education Grants, Libraries, Museums, Music, Parks and Open Spaces, Natural Environment, School Meals, Social

			Inclusion/Integration, Sports and Recreation Centres, Sports Development, Youth Policies (Dublin City Council, 2015a, p. 5).
Helsinki	Cultural and Library Committee, City Art Museum Board, City Museum Board, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra Committee (Decision making bodies)	The City Council has transferred some of its authority to other bodies with ordinances, including the City Board, committees, boards and City officers (City of Helsinki, 2015a).	The Cultural and Library Committee decides on subsidies and grants and outlines cultural policies, and other functions include, for example, presentation of the annual City of Helsinki Culture Award (City of Helsinki, 2015b).
Hannover	Committee of Culture (Advisory body)	The Committees are intended to improve the performance of the City Parliament, by the particular Councillors' systematically attending to specific matters and hence being able to work on these more intensively and with higher expertise (Hannover.de, 2015a).	Cultural institutions (theatres, museums, libraries), extracurricular education, promotion of art and science, cultural projects, the Herrenhausen Gardens (Hannover.de, 2015b).

All the five cities have publicly available cultural policy strategies. The cultural policy strategy of Edinburgh is the most elaborated. It was created in 1999 and supplemented in the following years by a number of studies and action plans devoted to different cultural domains: city cultural venues, dance, Gaelic arts, moving images, music, theatre and festivals (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2015). The strategy states ten objectives or priorities identified by the Council: “to enable all of Edinburgh’s citizens and visitors to participate in, and enjoy, the widest cultural experience, including targeting initiatives to combat social exclusion; to encourage the highest standards of creativity and excellence in all aspects of cultural activities; to foster partnership working with organisations throughout the city which are involved in working within, or supporting, cultural activities, such as higher and further educational establishments, national institutions, museums and galleries, the commercial and private sector; to develop lively and sustainable cultural industries, among which should be those evolving with the emergence of new technologies; to develop and support the infrastructure which sustains Edinburgh’s cultural industries and activities; to recognise and promote the importance of culture for children and young people; to acknowledge and support the contribution of cultural activities to the

lifelong learning process for the wider community; to preserve and interpret Edinburgh's heritage; to promote locally, nationally and internationally the expression of Edinburgh's diverse cultural identity, and to recognise the reciprocal benefits of widening cultural experience through international contacts; to support and develop those cultural activities which enrich and extend personal and community development" (Towards the New Enlightenment. A Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh, 1999, p. 5).

The strategy foresees changes in the way, how these objectives will be implemented: "while the Council will continue its role as a direct provider, through arts provision in schools and community education, the operation of venues, and support through its grant funding, it must also look at new ways of working. This will involve a more enabling role for the Council. It will build upon existing work with external agencies and develop support through partnership. It will further develop joint working with external organisations and the private sector, consider the establishment of charitable trusts to operate facilities and deliver services, and maximise external funding opportunities" (Towards the New Enlightenment. A Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh, 1999, p. 7).

The cultural policy of Edinburgh is currently under review. Edinburgh's cultural community together with City Council tries to answer the question "what makes Edinburgh a culturally successful city?"<sup>7</sup> The question is posted on a special website with possibility to comment and read the comments of others.

Lyon's cultural policy strategy is published on the official Lyon City website (Lyon site officiele, 2015). It comprises three areas: make Lyon a metropolis of creation, promote access to culture for all and support the transformation of the city and promotion of heritage.

The first area encompasses the support for art creation and the establishment of professional art education institutions (art schools and conservatories). It also aims "to create a vibrant cultural scene and a real breeding ground for the young artists" (Lyon site officiele, 2015). Thus, the actions of the city are primarily intended to create workplaces for artists and companies and support theatres and grand cultural events. In this area, the City works in cooperation with the Greater Lyon (Biennales, Light Festival, Heritage Days) as well as partner cities of Lyon: Leipzig, Barcelona, Turin, Yokohama, Montreal and Canton.

The second area encompasses three aims: create for Lyonnais access to knowledge and arts, enrich the quality of life of the citizens bringing culture closer to people and allow visitors to access the diversity of the Lyon cultural offer. In accomplishing of these

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<sup>7</sup> Online discussions: <http://desirelines.scot/>

aims, the city relies on rich cultural offer, diversity and proximity of all the areas of culture (museums, theatres, dance, music).

The development of the UNESCO world heritage venue, the renovation of the major sites and the enhancement of Lyon memory are the main aims in the area of preservation of Lyon's heritage.

Lyon's cultural policy is prominent through the *Charter Of Cultural Institutions Cultural Cooperation* (Charte de coopération culturelle des institutions culturelles 2012 – 2015) that is a part of the overall city policy strategy expressed in the *Urban Social Cohesion Contract* (CUCS) (Avenant Au Renouvellement Du Contrat Urbain De Cohesion Sociale De Lyon 2011–2014). The *Charter for Cultural Cooperation 2012/2015* is a working document designed for all cultural and artistic institutions, social and educational organisations working in the context of the urban policy. The Charter calls for cooperation and joint actions aimed to revitalise “sensitive” districts of the city and guarantee everyone the right of access to culture and art, especially disabled people, prisoners, hospital patients, the elderly, people with social or economic difficulty (Charte de coopération culturelle des institutions culturelles 2012–2015, p. 9). The Lyon's way to use culture for social cohesion and revitalisation of urban districts became a model for other creative cities (e.g. see City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2011).

Dublin's cultural strategy is laid out in the *City Development Plan*. Dublin City Council aims to “develop leadership and partnership in developing the cultural life of the city; promote the enhancement of existing cultural assets and the development of emerging cultural clusters and character areas; support the development and location of cultural facilities, including integrated artist accommodation and working space, across the city and make the city's cultural life accessible to all; create a city that is attractive to international talent and that continues to be recognised as a hub of vibrant culture; improve the quality of the public realm to build on the character of the city's built heritage and provide opportunities to bring culture into public spaces” (Dublin City development Plan 2011–2017, p. 105).

The strategy is complemented by *The City Arts Plan 2014–2018* elaborated by the City Arts Office (Dublin City Council 2014a). The Arts Plan of Dublin encompasses three areas of work and three main objectives: assist the public to access the arts, facilitate artists' development and enrich cultural experience of the city (Dublin City Council 2014a, p. 13–15).

Helsinki's cultural policy strategy is elaborated by the Cultural and Library Committee and Helsinki Cultural Office and “seeks to develop a culturally rich and diverse Capital Region in which culture is a universal right” (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015b). Cultural policy of the City of Helsinki also aims “to improve the quality of life of Helsinki residents, promote community spirit and well-being, prevent social exclusion and develop a diverse city” (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015b).



City of Helsinki Cultural Office complements city’s cultural policy strategy by developing a model for participatory local cultural work. The model is named *The Helsinki Model. Towards a more equal city* (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015a). The aim of the model is to diversify and create a balance between the arts and cultural activities offered in various parts of the city. The Helsinki Model “aims to reinforce community spirit and the positive profile of districts, while enhancing the cultural inclusion of residents. It also enables arts organisations to reach new audiences” (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015a).

Hannover’s cultural strategy associates the notion of culture with “value consciousness, orientation, quality of life, identity, dispute and communication. Culture is always an interaction for and with people. Therefore access to culture and greater cultural participation should be made possible for all inhabitants” (Hannover.de, 2015).

The table below summarizes common objectives of the cultural policy strategies of the five cities.

**Table 3. Common objectives of cultural policy in the five cities’ strategies**

City	Objectives
Edinburgh	<i>enable all of Edinburgh’s citizens and visitors to participate in, and enjoy, the widest cultural experience, including targeting initiatives to combat social exclusion;</i> <i>encourage the highest standards of creativity and excellence in all aspects of cultural activities;</i> <i>foster partnership working with organisations throughout the city</i> which are involved in working within, or supporting, cultural activities, such as higher and further educational establishments, national institutions, museums and galleries, the commercial and private sector.
Lyon	<i>make Lyon a metropolis of creation;</i> <i>promote access to culture for all;</i>
Dublin	<i>develop leadership and partnership in developing the cultural life of the city;</i> support the development and location of cultural facilities, including integrated artist accommodation and working space, across the city and <i>make the city’s cultural life accessible to all;</i>
Helsinki	develop a culturally rich and diverse Capital Region in which <i>culture is a universal right;</i> improve the quality of life of Helsinki residents, promote community spirit and well-being, <i>prevent social exclusion</i> and develop a diverse city.
Hannover	<i>enhance access to culture and cultural participation.</i>

Cultural policy formation procedures are open and transparent in all five cities. Cities’ residents are constantly informed about Council meeting agendas and have possibilities to express their opinions and participate in decision making.

Edinburgh city website has a special page *Have your say* where the citizens may read and respond to all Council’s consultations, see results from past consultations, may

start or support petitions, comment or complaint about Council services. The Council and Committee meetings are webcasted on the Council's website, meeting agenda and the reports are available six days before the meeting. Groups or organizations may send a representative to speak at a Council committee meeting on a subject of their choice.

The Council of Edinburgh makes annual citizen survey by measuring satisfaction with the Council and its services, identifying areas for improvement and gathering information about residents which is not available in other sources. The survey is undertaken through face-to-face interviews with around 5000 residents each year, conducted in the street and door-to-door. Summaries of surveys are available on the Council's website.

In Lyon, information of citizens about municipal life has a century-long tradition. The official municipal bulletin was set up in 1896. Today, the City Council publishes municipal journal *Lyon Citoyen* that comes every month in all mailboxes of 9 districts and is available on the website: [www.lyon.fr](http://www.lyon.fr). There is also a weekly official *Bulletin Municipal* that informs about draft versions of the City Council's decisions, publishes reports about Council's meetings including debates and deliberations. Council's meetings are broadcasted live on: [lyon.fr](http://lyon.fr) or [tln.fr](http://tln.fr). Contact centre *Lyon en direct* answers all the questions about the city via phone or e-mail.

Besides the communication arrangements, Lyon also has institutions for the participation of citizens in the city policy matters. Councils of Neighborhoods, District Committees for Initiatives and Consultations, Local Concerns Committees – all these institutions were established in Lyon to involve citizens in political life of the city.

Dublin City Council offers possibility to attend council meetings. These meetings are convened in the City Hall or other locations around the city. Everyone may attend any of these meetings by contacting local councillor. Meetings are also webcasted on City Council website. Citizens may comment on Dublin City Council services or make a complaint via email and post.

Currently Dublin City Council is preparing a new City Development Plan 2016–2022 and encourages people, communities and organisations to read the Draft Plan and make observations. For this purpose a special website was created with possibility to make an online submission: <http://dublincitydevelopmentplan.ie/>.

The Hannover City Council publishes on its website meeting agendas and their transcripts that could be downloaded as pdf files. Almost all Hanover political bodies have “residents questions hours”, where everyone may express opinions and ask questions about the agenda matters.

Like Dublin City Council, the Hannover City Council discusses with city community development concept “My Hannover 2030” that highlights goals and strategies for future action in the city. The Hannover City Council initiated public dialogue with city management, community and politicians. As a starting point of the

dialogue, the city administration prepared a status quo report of the central themes of urban policy and published it online. For more than six months, city residents have been working on visions, ideas and wishes for Hanover 2030. The dialogue process culminates in spring 2016, when the city administration presents development concept to the City Council.

The Helsinki City Council website has a special section *Participate and influence* where the citizens may see current city affairs related to the participation and participation channels. City Council prompts participation of the citizens in city affairs, especially in the planning and preparation stages. The future of the city is discussed at resident meetings and online. The Mayor's resident evenings are held in different neighbourhoods of the city four times a year. The evenings are hosted by the Mayor, and they are joined by City experts representing diverse fields. The themes of the evenings are local conditions and the future of the neighbourhood. City planning resident events are used to present and discuss current plans. Discussion continues online on the city planning forum – the KSV Forum. City planning is also the theme at events held at the Laituri city planning meeting place in Kamppi.

Interactive pages *Kerro Kartalla* (tell it to us on the map) are used to gather citizen opinions and observations posted on the map. Surveys are organized on current topics and plans. The ideas and observations are utilized in further planning. The *Ruuti* participation system allows 13- to 20-year-old Helsinki residents to formulate ideas, participate in the general discussion, comment and support the ideas of others, get help for their own activities and join new groups. Ruuti operates both online and in schools.

Helsinki City Council's meetings are webcasted on the Helsinki-channel and are available on demand. The meetings can be watched on the cable channel Stadi.TV (channel 93) as well. The meeting agendas are available on the Council website.

All five city councils publish annual reports, plans and programmes in national and other language (mainly English). Hanover and Helsinki Websites have versions in national, English and several foreign languages.

## **2. Cultural Policy Implementation Patterns**

The Edinburgh City Council acts in two ways: as a direct funder and cultural services provider and as an enabler. Council operates 26 libraries, 10 museums, the City Art Centre, the Usher Hall, 147 parks, 157 play areas and four community halls (Audit Scotland, 2007, p. 66). The Council has a special executive committee devoted to cultural affairs, i.e. the Culture and Sport Committee. The main service areas of the Committee are arts and museums, most sports and recreation, libraries, festivals and events and cultural development.

There are also external organizations delivering cultural services. A number of arm’s length companies have been set up in Edinburgh to implement cultural objectives, specifically in relation to the promotion of arts. These companies are generally the companies limited by guarantee and registered charities: Edinburgh Festival Centre Limited, Edinburgh International Festival Society Limited, The Edinburgh International Science Festival Foundation (formerly the Edinburgh Science Foundation Limited), Edinburgh International Science Festival Limited, Festival City Theatre Trust, and Festival City Theatre Trading Limited (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2013, p. 5).

Edinburgh’s council arts team awards cultural grants. There are currently two funding opportunities: Edinburgh Visual Artists and Craft Makers Awards. These schemes award grants to individual artists/makers living or based in Edinburgh for developing new work. There is also a scheme for emerging artists.

Unique organization, The Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust initiated by the four “enthusiasts and story lovers” was the cause why Edinburgh became the world’s first City of Literature (Edinburgh City of Literature, 2015). The Trust works now “as a development agency for Edinburgh as a City of Literature, sharing Edinburgh’s astonishing literary legacy with the world, telling the story of the city’s history, and shouting its thriving cultural scene from the rooftops. The Trust advocates literature as a civilising influence globally, and curates literary listings to show you what’s on” (Edinburgh City of Literature, 2015b).

In 2013, in Edinburgh’s arts, entertainment and recreation sector worked 16500 employees that amounts to 5,4% of all the enterprises employees (Edinburgh by Numbers, 2015). City of Edinburgh Council co-founds creative business incubator *Creative Exchange* and membership organization *Creative Edinburgh*. Cultural and creative industries are actively supported at the state level. The national public body *Creative Scotland* supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all the parts of Scotland. *Cultural Enterprise Office* supports Scotland’s creative businesses. It is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and supported by Creative Scotland, Dundee City Council, the City of Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council. There is also Scottish national agency for craft *Craft Scotland* that promotes a wide range of crafts.

**Table 4. Cultural policy implementation bodies of Edinburgh**

Cultural policy implementation body	Role and activities
Culture and Sport Committee	The Culture and Sport Committee is an executive body of City Council that is responsible for arts and museums, most sports and recreation, libraries, festivals, events and cultural development ((The City of Edinburgh Council, 2015a).
Arm’s length bodies	Festival City Theatres Trust, Festival City Theatres Trading Limited, Edinburgh

	<p>Festival Centre Limited, Edinburgh International Festival Society Limited, The Edinburgh International Science Festival Foundation, Edinburgh International Science Festival Limited.</p> <p>Arm's length bodies organize cultural events, operate cultural venues and support informal education (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2014, p. 12).</p>
Independent body	<p>The Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust</p> <p>The Edinburgh City of Literature Trust is a development agency for Edinburgh as a City of Literature that supports and organizes literary events (Edinburgh City of Literature, 2015).</p>

In Dublin, the day-to-day management of services is carried out by the City Manager and his staff. The City Manager performs the 'executive functions' of Dublin City Council. He works with elected representatives (councillors) and council staff and has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the local authority operates smoothly and carrying out policy decisions of the elected council (Ganon and Kiernan, 2011, p. 24).

Culture, Recreation, Amenity and Community Department provides cultural services for the city and is responsible for a number of key projects. The department is also involved in the promotion of tourism, festivals and events. One division of the Department is the City Arts Office that carries out arts funding programmes and projects and works as an "adviser, curator, producer, partner, asset developer and manager, evaluator, advocate and broker" of the arts (Dublin City Council 2014a, p. 9). The Office collaborates with other Dublin City Council services to support artists in the provision of affordable live-work units and studio workspaces. It also facilitates the change of use of vacant commercial units that can become publicly accessible cultural workspaces. In 2014, the Dublin City Council awarded grants for the art, the total sum of which is 530000 EUR.

Dublin City Council's public library service and Dublin City Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Arts, Culture, Leisure and Community supports the Office of Dublin UNESCO City of Literature that organizes educational programmes, festivals and projects focusing on preservation, promotion and dissemination of domestic and foreign literature. One of such festivals has been recently launched as Bram Stoker festival inspired by the Dublin author of the gothic classic Dracula. It takes place in the city over the October Bank Holiday weekend. In 2014, the programme of the festival, which included many gothic inspired entertainments and a strong literary strand, attracted Irish and overseas visitors from 20 countries, i.e. more than double in previous attendances (Dublin UNESCO City of Literature, 2014, p. 7). The festival is a good example of "sticky culture", the place-rooted cultural industries that is difficult to replicate: "by grounding the event in Dublin, the home town of the author, and focusing

on place and content, the festival manages to maintain an authentic connection to the city” (Doyle, 2015, p. 117).

In 2010, the Dublin City Council commissioned creative industry study *Defining and Valuing Dublin’s Creative Industries*. The report stated the needs to agree on a definition for creative businesses within the emerging innovation economy of Dublin, develop the communications and broadband infrastructure within the Dublin region and provide a workforce with the necessary skills and competencies to fuel the sector and bring innovation and creativity to more traditional jobs and sectors (Curran and van Egeraat, 2010, p. 3–4). Employment in creative industries in Greater Dublin Area was 77026 that amount to 10% of employees of all enterprises.

**Table 5. Cultural policy implementation bodies of Dublin**

Cultural policy implementation body	Role and activities
Culture, Recreation, Amenity and Community Department	The department is an executive body that provides cultural services for the city and is responsible for a number of key projects. The department is also involved in the promotion of tourism, festivals and events (Dublin City Council, 2015b).
The City Arts Office	The Office is cultural policy implementation body that supports artists, arts organisations and the city’s communities in delivering cultural activities (Dublin City Council, 2015c).
Office of Dublin UNESCO City of Literature	The Office is cultural policy implementation body working under the auspices of Dublin City Council’s public library service. It promotes literary events and activities, grants literary awards, supports writing and reading programmes and projects (Dublin UNESCO City of Literature, 2014).

The administration of Helsinki differs slightly from Edinburgh and Dublin. The Helsinki City Council elects the Lord Mayor, and he acts as the municipal manager and as a speaker of municipal council.

The Mayor of Helsinki and 4 Deputy Mayors each manage, supervise and develop the city administration in their respective fields of responsibility, ensuring that the objectives defined for the operations are achieved (City of Helsinki, 2015c). One of the Deputy Mayors manages education and cultural affairs. He is responsible for the administration of City Library, City Museum, Cultural Office, Helsinki Art Museum, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and some sports and educational departments.

The Cultural Office is the main cultural policy implementation body of the city. It consists of three departments: the Cultural Services department, the Cultural Policies department and the Shared Services department. The Office serves both the residents and the art field of Helsinki. Services for residents include cultural events, shows, exhibitions, courses and arts education. Services for the art field of Helsinki include the

distribution of grants and subsidies, offering of art studios and performance venues. Each year, the Cultural Office distributes more than 17 million EUR in grants and subsidies to artists and cultural arts organisations and societies (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015c).

In 2008–2011, Helsinki took part in the Interreg Europe project *Creative Metropolies: Public Policies and Instruments in Support of Creative Industries*. The project report summarizes the attitude of Helsinki towards creative industries policy as follows: “The role of the City of Helsinki is to offer targeted services to CI that complement the infrastructure and services offered by national and regional actors. Rather than creating new projects concentrating on CI, the idea is to create synergy between different (already existing) measures at the national, regional and local level. One challenge is to coordinate the different local measures somehow supportive of CI but not necessarily aimed exclusively at CI. But besides complementing the services offered by the others, Helsinki also offers its own consulting services, especially to start-up companies” (Creative metropolis, 2010, p. 61).

The main national institutions responsible for the development of creative industries in Finland are Ministry of Education and Ministry of Employment and the Economy. ELY centres (The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) work at the regional level. ELY centres are responsible for the regional implementation and the development of tasks of the central government. In the domain of creative industries, the ELY centres aim “to help actors in culture and the creative economy to improve their competence, provide them with more employment opportunities and a better operating environment and to develop arts and cultural services” (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, 2015).

The city of Helsinki supports creative industries through urban spaces as additional cultural infrastructure and combines the creative industry development more with cultural and social components of urban policy. An example of such policy is the Design District Helsinki at the centre of Helsinki, which is an area with design and antique shops, fashion boutiques, museums, art galleries, restaurants and showrooms (<http://designdistrict.fi/en/>). In November 2009, the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) chose Helsinki as the World Design Capital for 2012. In Finland, this nomination “received considerable media attention and gave most welcome support to the city government in its efforts to create an image of a design city” (Anttiroiko, 2010, p. 12).

In 2012, in Helsinki’s cultural enterprises worked 25684 employees that amounts to 10% employees of all enterprises in Helsinki (City of Helsinki Urban facts, City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2014).

Table 6. Cultural policy implementation bodies of Helsinki

Cultural policy implementation body	Role and activities
Deputy Mayor for Education and Cultural Affairs	The Deputy Mayor for Education and Cultural Affairs is an executive officer that manages, supervises and develops the City administration in his field of responsibility, ensuring that the objectives defined for the operations are achieved (City of Helsinki 2015c).
City of Helsinki Cultural Office	The City of Helsinki Cultural Office is an cultural policy implementation body that supports culture (issues grants to art facilities, institutions, organisations and artists, and provides exhibition and work space for artists), offers cultural activities and promotes culture (takes initiative in cultural matters and acts in a goal-oriented fashion with regard to cultural politics on a local, national and international level) (City of Helsinki Cultural Office, 2015d).
Regularly funded organizations	City Library, City Museum, Helsinki Art Museum, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (City of Helsinki, 2015d).

The administration of Lyon is somewhat similar to Helsinki. The mayor of Lyon, elected by the City Council, is the president of the deliberative assembly and the head of the municipal administration. As the head of the city administration, the Mayor manages municipal services; he is responsible for City Council decisions' implementation and also acts on behalf of the state (civil status, elections, census, etc.). The Mayor may delegate some of his powers to one or more assistants and managing directors, where applicable. Elected by the list system with male/female parity, the number of deputies to the Mayor may not exceed 30% of the workforce of the municipal council or, in Lyon, 21 deputies (Ville de Lyon, 2014a, p. 5).

In the domain of culture, the Lyon City Council acts as a direct funder and cultural services provider. City's cultural policy is implemented through the Department of Cultural Affairs. In 2014, the Department supported about 30 cultural organizations by an annual operating grant that amounts approximately to 13 million EUR (Ville de Lyon, 2014b, p. 33). Each year about twenty percent of the city's budget goes to the cultural institutions and events. As a UNESCO creative city of media arts, Lyon has implemented several grand projects. The creation of the Digital Library of Lyon (NUMELYO) and the establishment of the digital platform Numeridanse by the *Maison de la danse* are among the main projects that were carried out. The city's museums also committed to the development of digital strategies, including interactive heritage point projects across the city. In the theatrical field, the *Théâtre nouvelle génération* and the *Théâtre des ateliers* are opening up to the digital creations interacting with other forms of art.

For the Media Arts, the city supports various initiatives from the Festival Mirage dedicated to the Media Arts to the Festival *Nuits Sonores*, or the *Fête des lumières*, the



city’s major event with more than 3 million visitors to each edition, which for the last few years has hosted the works of digital artists.

The city of Lyon and the Lyon Metropolis invest in the development of the digital economy and creative industries. With nearly 17000 jobs in the creative industries, the urban area of Lyon is the second French area, in front of Marseille (12300 jobs), but far behind the urban area of Paris (Les industries créatives dans l’agglomération lyonnaise 2011, p. 3).

**Table 7. Cultural policy implementation bodies of Lyon**

Cultural policy implementation body	Role and activities
Deputy Mayor for Culture, Events and Citizen’s Rights	The Deputy Mayor for Culture, Events and Citizen’s Rights is an executive officer that plans and implements cultural policy of the City (Ville de Lyon 2014a, p. 12).
Department of Cultural Affairs (Direction des affaires culturelles)	The Department is an executive body that supports art education (The Regional Conservatory of Lyon, The National School of Fine Arts in Lyon), international structures (in 2014, about 45 associations and arts and cultural organizations have been supported in their international projects in cooperation and parity with the French Institute), heritage, creation and dissemination of the arts, activities under <i>Urban Social Cohesion Contract</i> and invests in acquisitions and restoration of heritage and works of art for Lyon’s museums, municipal archives, and Public Library (Ville de Lyon, 2014c, p. 55)
Regularly funded organizations	Lyon Museum of Fine Arts, Resistance and Deportation History Centre, Musée Gadagne, The Museum of Printing and graphic communication, Automobile Museum Henri Malartre, The National Orchestra of Lyon, Municipal Archives of Lyon, Archaeological Service, Libraries, Théâtre des célestins, Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art, Opéra de Lyon (Ville de Lyon 2014c, p. 56–68).

The Hannover city administration has seven divisions: six directorates and operational division of the Lord Mayor. One of the divisions is Directorate of Culture and Education. It takes all the responsibilities of curricular and extracurricular learning as well as continuing education and cultural activities. The directorate has a special office called The Culture Bureau that is responsible for the support of culture and plays the major role in city’s cultural policy implementation.

The Hannover Culture Bureau promotes the arts and culture by its own institutions and programs, festivals and events, and, by a differentiated system of financial support that subsidizes certain cultural institutions, it gives project grants to artists’ associations and supports collaborative projects with artists of various sectors of the local and regional cultural scene, especially the visual arts. The Culture Bureau also administers the newly established Arts and Culture Innovation Fund. The advisory board of the Fund consists of 7 members representing the cultural community.

The Hannover Culture Bureau is responsible for the UNESCO programme *City of Music*. The initiative in the application of Hanover for the UNESCO City of Music came from the community of city and was supported by 100 partners (Hannover.de, 2015e). The application itself was coordinated by a steering group, composed of the initiators (association Kre|H|tiv Netzwerk Hanover), the administration of the city, the Academy of Music, Drama and Media Hanover, the Hannover Marketing und Tourismus GmbH, the society Hannoverimpuls and Hannover Concerts.

The association Kre|H|tiv Netzwerk Hanover and society Hannoverimpuls promote creative and cultural industries in Hannover region. In 2013, the industries had 18900 employees (4,3%) in around 1400 enterprises (music, books, art, films, radio, performing arts, design, architecture, press, advertising and software) (Wirtschaftsförderung Region Hanover, 2013, p. 30).

**Table 8. Cultural policy implementation bodies of Hannover**

Cultural policy implementation body	Role and activities
Directorate of Culture and Education	The directorate is an executive body of city administration that is responsible for curricular and extracurricular learning as well as continuing education and cultural activities (Hannover.de, 2015d).
The Culture Bureau	<p>The Culture Bureau is a cultural policy implementation body that is responsible for the support of cultural organisations, cultural projects and events.</p> <p>The Culture Bureau advises, coordinates, organizes and promotes musical associations, choral associations and choirs, artists, filmmakers, literary associations and writers.</p> <p>The Bureau also operates Arts and Culture Innovation Fund (Hanover.de, 2015c).</p>
Regularly funded organizations	Museum August Kestner, Historical Museum Hannover, Museum Schloss Herrenhausen, Sprengel Museum, the City Archive, the Music School of the Regional Capital, City Library and 23 Cultural Centres in city's districts (Hannover.de, 2015c).

## Conclusions

All five creative cities treat culture as an essential element for the quality of life. In contrast to expectations emanating from the concept of “creative city” that is mainly the strategy of successful economic competition, culture and creativity in the five cities are related not with economic activities, but with the quality of life and well-being of individuals. Cultural and creative industries are mentioned in the strategies of

Edinburgh and Dublin, but the main claim that all the strategies have in common is “access to culture for all”.

Cultural policy formation procedures are transparent and open in all five cities. Cities’ residents are constantly and comprehensively informed about Councils meetings’ agendas and have possibilities to participate in the policy affairs. In all the cities, the residents may visit Council and/or Committees meetings and express their opinions.

All five cities’ Councils act as direct funders of cultural institutions and cultural services providers. They regularly fund a considerable number of cultural organisations and events and grant cultural projects. The most significant differences of cultural policy in the five cities are seen on the policy implementation level.

Three cities have more or less independent cultural policy implementation institutions (Hanover’s Culture Bureau, Dublin’s City Arts Office, Helsinki’s Cultural Office) that design their own work strategies. The Offices are supervised by the cities’ administration bodies and implement Councils’ strategies and decisions; nevertheless they have a considerable amount of freedom to act on their own understanding.

Edinburgh and Lyon follow more traditional way in the cultural policy implementation, where the officials of city administration make all decisions. Edinburgh’s Council, however, entrusts some implementation functions to the external arm’s length organizations, so, it could be assumed, that the Council works not only as a direct funder of the culture, but also as an enabler, and that members of cultural community also take part in cultural policy implementation.

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