

Mapping of EU projects, policies, programmes and networks

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Mapping of EU projects, policies, programmes, and networks: a policy report to support Cultural and Creative Spaces and Cities

Dr Miranda Iossifidis, May 2020

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Introduction

This report maps the recommendations, best practices, and key case studies of twenty previous EU-funded projects, programmes, initiatives and networks related to the policy issues of CCSC. It builds upon the indicators developed during the project and the CCSC charter, to compare the ways in which previous projects have explored themes of culture as a common good, urban commons, participation at the local level, and bottom-up decision-making.

Keeping in mind CCSC's draft recommendations of a citizens lab/house of commons and value-based network, this report:

- thematically analyses each project
- focuses, when relevant, on a case study (boxes) using secondary academic literature
- provides a critical comparative summary chapter
- makes recommendations, contributing to and building on the dialogue around the CCSC draft recommendations as of 8 May 2020.

Some key findings:

- There are many overlapping concerns between the policy concerns of previously and currently funded EU projects and CCSC, but this should be considered in terms of a radar spectrum; rarely do initiatives approach the themes of the commons, bottom-up policymaking, and urban labs at the same time.
- The projects and programmes analysed, whilst interconnected through various EU funding streams, do not make rigorous or explicit connections to each other.
- It is possible to see EU cultural policy trends move from explicitly advocating participatory approaches to emphasising notions of social innovation and engagement.
- Commons-based projects are more visible in the form of relatively small networks, or nodes within bigger projects.
- The urgent need to move to digital platforms is being responded to most quickly by agile networks, but a new Digital Europe Programme fund is gearing up towards creating European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs)
- Culture as a shared common resource is often noted, but with wildly different operationalisation of what this might entail: there is slippage between culture as a shared social resource, its ability to bring people together in contexts of socio-economic disparity and community tensions; and culture as an economic resource, tied to culture-led development. Culture is often put forwards unproblematically as a relatively cheap magical solution to fix all urban problems.
- Similarly, diverse notions of participation are mobilised. When critically interrogated through different case studies, more rigorous and thoughtful policy recommendations are generated.
- Tensions between or within project partners are rarely mentioned, despite the generative role of agonistic deliberation.
- Creating toolkits for dissemination is very popular, but project findings and resources are rarely made accessible in a coherent manner.
- Creative and innovative evaluation methods are recommended, but rarely detailed.

Indicators used for thematic analysis

Culture as a common good

1. Is there a plurality and diversity of actors involved?
2. Public sector as a facilitator
 - How do they share power?
 - Steering process but not top down, opening it up.
 - Did institutional roles shift?
 - Participatory processes?
3. Culture and social rights, social issues, quality of life
 - Culture beyond 'right to the city'

Urban commons

4. Pooling of resources
 - How to use funding – interesting alternative funding mechanisms?
5. Mission
 - Social inclusion
 - Open access and transparency
 - Democratic decision making
6. Accessibility and inclusivity
 - What measures are being put in place?

Participation at the local level

7. Citizens' function
 - Agenda/impact of citizen participation at the local level?
 - More long-term or sustainable involvement?
8. Attention to and awareness of systemic problems
 - Political corruption
 - Urban-rural

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

9. Organising
 - Changing roles
 - Decision-making; bottom up?
10. Use of EU projects/other tools to foster participation and gain legitimacy?
 - How do the recommendations/policies/learnings explicitly speak to/refer to other EU projects?

Discussion of best practices and challenge

- How are cultural tools (products, processes etc) measured, how do they engage with these? Education?

Labs

Networks

11. Development of networks at various scales (originally under 'more democratic bottom-up policy making')
 - Examples of scaling up from local to EU, between different locales

Culture for Cities and Regions

Funded by the EU's Creative Europe Programme, Culture for Cities and Regions (CCR hereafter) aimed to examine existing practices of culture as a key element in local and regional development strategies, focussing on three areas:

- Cultural heritage as a driver of local economic development and urban regeneration
- Culture and the creative industries as a motor for urban regeneration and economic vitality
- Culture for social inclusion, social innovation and intercultural dialogue

The project looked at these overlapping practices in different sized cities and regions with the aim of fostering exchange of information and promoting peer-to-peer learning, and helping local and regional authorities to understand and make more of the positive impacts which investments in culture can have on economic development, social cohesion and urban regeneration (2017:4). As part of its activities, it provided expert coaching for ten selected cities/regions and undertook 15 thematic visits.

Culture as a common good

Echoing European policy trends of mainstreaming culture into other policy areas (see Urban Agenda for the EU) CCR recommend that participatory approaches to culture and 'strong community involvement in policy-making' can foster intercultural understanding and will build strong social values and help combat xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, gender discrimination and extreme nationalism' (2017: 7). This strong statement comes with some critical reflection on the 'threat of instrumentalising cultural workers to deliver on social cohesion objectives,' reminding policy-makers that cultural workers are 'artists and creative talents, not social workers' when designing policies and programmes. Importantly, the implication is that 'investing in culture should not come as a systematic trade-off for additional social and economic impacts' (2017: 23).

Highlighting the economic impacts of culture-led urban regeneration projects, with the social benefits somewhat secondary, CCR emphasise a "partnership mindset" where the city administration acts as a 'trusted partner and facilitator' letting go of how things are usually implemented, to allow the cultural and creative sector to 'champion initiatives across the city'. Central to CCR's policy recommendations are notions of cross-fertilisation, experimentation and innovation to create "villes des possibles" which 'empower cultural workers and creative initiatives' (2017: 22-23).

They recommend that this interdisciplinary collaboration comes about through accidental encounters for innovation which can be encouraged by local authorities acting as facilitator:

- Setting up networking opportunities (matchmaking, training session, conferences, workshops, cultural cafés, etc.) that facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and ideas between various actors, entities and disciplines by favouring an environment of sociability and conviviality.
- Dedicated places are also key for people to work on joint projects, collaborate and share equipment (co-working spaces, hubs, innovative cultural infrastructures and spaces, clusters, incubators, etc.) (2017: 24).

Urban commons

In a context of widespread austerity measures, CCR recommend a variety of alternative funding mechanisms to ‘convince politicians that investing in culture is smart’ (17). They argue for the importance of flexible policy approaches, looking at alternative sources of funding, reframing perspectives of culture as innovation and rethinking the way cultural policies are delivered. This includes:

- Flexible contracts between the city and cultural institutions which have full independence if working towards key public policy objectives (2017: 14)
 - For example, allocation 1% of real estate investment to CCS projects
- diversifying funding for culture, working with private stakeholders and developing relevant match-funding schemes (e.g. Creative Wallonia, 2017: 23);
- providing non-financial support to the cultural and creative sectors (such as advice, use of buildings)
- Smart use of low budgets – smart actions such as the Incredibol! programme in Bologna, which inspired the KRACH programme in Chemnitz’ (2017: 19).
- Opening up new avenues for funding and investment in experimentation and innovation through shifting perspectives of what constitutes RDI for arts and culture (2017: 23)

Following on from their policy recommendations of encouraging accidental encounters for innovation, they offer some policies for financial incentives, which include:

- Encouraging inter-clustering - between CCIs and ICT or health sectors for example;
- Making public subsidies dependent on minimum interaction efforts with urban or economic projects;
- Providing grants through calls for projects requiring interdisciplinary skills;
- Establishing innovation vouchers, namely small grants to encourage companies to access creative services (design, advertising, artistic intervention etc.). (2017: 24).

Participation at the local level

Having identified inter-disciplinary collaboration, driven by encounters, as central to economic and social innovation, CCR suggest the need for disruptive connectors, or “creative mediators” who are intermediaries or brokers between creative people and professionals from other disciplines, not necessarily related to CCIs. They are people able to work across disciplines with an open mind, people that bring their knowledge of a sector (often culture) into another area. They could be civil servants, social workers, entrepreneurs, associations, large or small companies, universities, artists, designers or politicians. Disruptive connectors’ role is to trigger new processes and projects that facilitate fruitful interactions between disciplines, departments or people, instilling new ideas in organisations and a disruptive influence on traditional and routine thinking. (2017: 24-25).

Peer-learning was central to the CCR project, and they recommend that more activities should be organised and/or encouraged in future initiatives. They also recommend opening up the participants (without considering what this might entail) to ‘newcomers (refugees); attracting ‘new and more diverse audiences’ and ‘bringing culture outside city centres (including in “difficult areas”)’ (2017: 18). They recommend additional activities could

include study visits; coaching visits; training for cities and regions experts, i.e. capacity building workshops, development of shared practical tools (e.g. toolkits & guidelines with practical advice); networking events for cities' and regions' politicians (2017: 21)

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

They recommend cities and regions deliver co-creation approaches through the notion of “cities as a service” - making city policies more fitted to the actual needs of inhabitants; and prototyping projects and test ideas with citizens, thus avoiding heavy expenses and tailoring policy delivery. This implies:

- Developing ownership and participatory approaches to culture-led development: co-design of cultural agendas;
- Identifying the right tools and methodologies to involve citizens;
- Ensuring the right stakeholders are involved and stay involved – managing expectations and ensuring opinions are properly accounted for in policy-design.’ (2017:17-18).

They do not go into much depth about what this might entail, but they are adamant that this also involves prioritising the representation of cultural and creative sectors and creative SMEs in decision-making processes and consultation (2017: 23)

Networks and hubs

CCR recommend that cities should encourage the cultural and creative sector to find new models of co-operation to overcome the smallness of most entities, by facilitating structuring of local networks and by building collective representation through sector associations when relevant. (2017: 23-24). They also recommend that mainstreaming culture in other policy areas could be encouraged by linking digital and tech hubs with cultural and creative hubs, in order to promote links between innovation and cultural policy (2017: 7). They suggest hubs can act as third spaces as linking pins, connecting bottom-up initiatives with decision-makers. They highlight the importance of flexibility and openness in spaces to allow for the diversity of roles that cultural workers are taking on in city life today.

Sharing best practices and challenges

CCR developed tools – templates, coaching methodology – that they believe should continue to be used, promoted and updated. In their final report they suggest that the Culture for Cities and Regions website could be updated and transformed into a general tool to update cities and regions about local and European cultural policy making (21). However, the project website now takes you to a new project, Cultural Heritage in Action.

While a major policy recommendation of CCR is interdisciplinary collaboration, they note that it was a challenge to develop new partnerships between CCIs at local and regional level and public authorities, working across sectors and maintaining good relationships between stakeholders. In particular, it was difficult to nourish and retain creative talent in partnerships between culture and education, and improve connections between cultural organisations, including museums. (2017: 18).

Similarly, another recommendation around generating funding for “spillover effects” of CCIs – related to accidental encounters – was a challenge during the project, as there is little funding earmarked to test and pilot projects. They note that this is due to:

- Low financial support targeted at CCIs.
- Little capacity to stretch local authorities’ human resources beyond their investment in current organisations and institutions.
- A lack of systematic involvement of economic departments in CCI policies, despite more local authorities developing transversal working groups or task forces (2017: 20).

BOX: IncrediBOL!, Bologna, Italy

Every 12-18 months IncrediBOL! launches an open call for innovative projects in the CCI Sector. There are 23 partners in the network who select the projects that present long-term visions and sustainable approaches to benefit from support in the start-up phase. The winning cultural and creative practitioners receive from the partners

- Tailor-made advice on managerial and legal issues
- Training and consulting assistance to cope with general lack of entrepreneurial skills in the sector
- IncrediBOL! provides regular feedback and evaluation to the winning projects throughout the incubation phase
- The municipality of Bologna has set up a helpdesk which coordinates the project and supports the winners.
- Former winners join the network.

The city-level project was integrated into the city council’s programme for 2011-2016 mandate. Since 2013 it’s been supported by the Economic Development Department of the Emilia-Romagna Region, through an agreement that identified it as a key cluster organisation for the region’s CCI ecosystem. IncrediBOL! is able to work on a limited budget, as it provides mostly non-financial support. Private partners contribute up to 30% of the budget and provide in-kind support in training and consulting.

The Civic imagination office - a space completely dedicated to citizens participation and focussed on the scaling up of previous experimentation towards a more integrated system of co-designing urban actions - was borne out of the Urban Innovation Foundation, and is trying to build a new approach to urban policies called ‘District Laboratories.’ The initiative seeks to activate and manage structured collaborative processes useful to map, listen, consult, co-design, report and measure what is happening in Bolognese neighbourhoods, using participatory methods and digital tools. When projects are set up all residents can vote for one winning project in each district. The Labs also help citizens apply to the IncrediBOL! bid with their ideas. This processes helps the Civic Imagination office understand neighbourhoods more closely, ‘changing the relationship between the urban administration and citizens’ (d’Alena et al, 2018)

The OMC (Open Method of Coordination) Working Group on Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage

Following the 2014 Council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage (2014/C 463/01) and the adoption of the Work plan for Culture 2015-2018 in 2014, this particular OMC working group had a mandate regarding participatory governance of cultural heritage. Its mandate was to (1) identify innovative approaches to multilevel governance of heritage (tangible, intangible, digital) involving the public sector, private stakeholders and civil society, and (2) cooperation between different levels of governance and the addressing of policy areas. The working group identified key challenges that affect cultural institutions and SMEs at national and European level, and the resulting handbook builds on a report mapping European practices undertaken by the European Expert Network on Culture (EENC) commissioned by the EC. The EENC report notes that at a European level, despite there being a variety of participatory practices, very few could be labelled as practices of “participatory governance” and as such the challenge for cultural heritage organisations is to change their institutional habits, learn to work together in partnership, and move from ‘being leaders to becoming facilitators’ (Sani et al, 2015: 4).

The two main ways in which the working group recommend that policymaking on participatory governance of cultural heritage could be improved is through (1) in-depth, comprehensive research on the impact of participatory processes; and (2) the importance of a collaborative, cross-sectoral approach in developing policies for cultural heritage. These recommendations are taken up by the Urban Agenda Partnership for Culture and Cultural Heritage, and Horizon2020 projects OpenHeritage and CLIC.

Culture as a common good

The working group takes two cues in recommending that cultural heritage be treated as a commons: (1) the Communication of the European Commission (2014) which considers cultural heritage as a ‘shared resource’ and ‘common good’ held in trust for future generations, whose care is a ‘common responsibility’ for all stakeholders (2014 in 2018: 12), and (2) the Heritage Commons, Towards a participative heritage governance in the third millennium conference. They recommend an interdisciplinary and collective approach to participatory governance. Starting from the basis that cultural heritage be treated as a commons, they recommend that this requires a framework of collective governance operating on multiple levels and involving multiple stakeholders, ‘where all actors are actively involved in the maintenance, management and development of common heritage’ (2018: 17). Adopting a commons perspective for them means that all heritage categories (whether tangible, intangible or digital) can be addressed using an interdisciplinary approach, able to tie together themes and approaches to cultural heritage that are often treated separately, and thus bring to the fore the issue of governance (2018: 17).

The group base their recommendations on the impact and changes (their interpretation of best practice) that have taken place because of implementing a participatory approach in cultural heritage governance (2018: 40) – many of which resonate with CCSC indicators as highlighted below.

- Better protection, enhancement and safeguarding of cultural heritage

- Pooling resources, different points of view, innovative approaches, establishing effective networks, impacts on economic and social sectors
- Increase appreciation of cultural heritage and increase quality of life/well-being of people
 - Reinforce participants' connections and relationship with cultural heritage
 - This increased interest leads to increased activity, interest in processes and inclusiveness on a long-term basis, which leads to positive cycle whereby value of cultural heritage increases for all involved
- Participatory approaches to cultural heritage contribute to building a stronger civic society
 - Helps with community-building, can lead to increased social cohesion
 - Personal and emotional level: increased sense of ownership, creates involvement and empowers stakeholders and individuals.
 - Increased sense of shared responsibility, shared identity and pride in cultural heritage
- Additionally, to developing sustainable communities, these effects
 - Help participants understand the value of cultural heritage for society
 - Create new ambassadors for cultural heritage
 - Contribute to the willingness of future generations to protect and safeguard cultural heritage.
- Participatory approaches help cultural heritage professionals gather knowledge and develop skills and competences.

Urban commons

They recommend that it is important for projects to have external motivations for taking a participatory approach to cultural heritage governance, for example having 'wider societal impact as their goal' – around democracy, sustainability, and cultural, economic and social responsibility. Establishing dialogue with neglected groups or getting a more nuanced view of history is another motivation. The best practice examples show that there is genuine motivation to (i) foster engagement, (ii) support active citizenship and social revitalisation, (iii) promote social inclusion, (iv) strengthen identities and (v) develop public ownership of cultural heritage and create a sense of shared responsibility for it. (2018: 37)

Participation at the local level

Addressing the slippage of the term participation within different European projects, the group draw on definitions for access and participation developed by a previous OMC working group on better access to and wider participation in culture.¹ As such, they make distinctions between understandings of participation in terms of access - enabling new audiences to use available culture on offer, and participation as involvement in decision-making, creative processes, the construction of meaning. This 'recognises the audience as an active interlocutor to be consulted or at least involved in planning and creating the cultural offer' (2012: 7). It is interesting to note that in the current European Framework for Cultural Heritage (2018), participation has been taken forwards in terms of access rather

¹ A report on policies and good practices in the public arts and in cultural institutions to promote better access to and wider participation in culture, 2012.

than more active and democratic notions of participation, as argued for by this OMC working group.

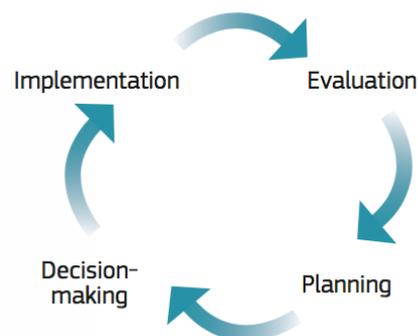
The distinction between different mobilisations of “participation” allows the group to identify obstacles to participation as gaps in capacity, incentive and/or power, and they draw on the Voices of Culture structured dialogue report to note that ‘only shared governance, shared power could be thought of as such’ (2015).²

The working group makes a series of key recommendations for organisations to provide support and back-up. They ask organisations to ‘always remember and stress that common good means common responsibility’ and that it is essential to inform the relevant stakeholders that participation in the project/process is not only about the right to participate but is also about taking on a shared responsibility for the care and management of cultural heritage. They also note that feelings of belonging can lead to the exclusion of others, and the importance of remembering that disputed cultural heritage exists in all societies. Here, “common responsibility” means not only forwarding your own interests or the interest of a group/community (either majority or minority) but also paying attention to the interests of others by giving equal importance to different values attributed by diverse communities (2018: 51).

More democratic bottom-up policy making

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

The working group recommend identifying which part of the policy cycle is being worked on, in order to design appropriate participatory methods (2018:23).



Based on mapping of the member states and Norway taking part in the OMC group, they state that a suitable legislative framework is in place for the participatory governance to take place in various ways. However, the challenge is to raise awareness in civil society of existing opportunities and developing the attitude and willingness of professionals and their organisations to implement them (2018: 49-50). As such, they recommend creating the right pre-conditions, which consists of identifying representative stakeholders beyond the usual suspects or majority voices and developing a common vision for the project or process before providing an environment where knowledge can be shared, and participants can learn from each other.

² Voices of Culture, Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector, 2015, Brainstorming report. Participatory Governance in Cultural Heritage (2015).

The working group's recommendations centre on the sustainability of the process, and they provide a checklist for ensuring this (2018: 54):

- How and by whom will the process be monitored?
- How and by whom will it be evaluated?
- How will the intrinsic motivations be strengthened in the long term?
- How will the results be published and promoted?
- Is there a clear idea of the target groups who will benefit from participatory governance of cultural heritage?
- How to ensure that the benefits of the project will last?

They recommend that participants should be involved in every aspect of the decision-making process, as a bottom-up approach also involves communities' participation in decision-making about the strategy and the selection of priorities. Furthermore, they argue that the idea of a bottom-up approach shouldn't be considered an alternative or in opposition to top down approaches from national and/or regional authorities but combining such approaches (2018: 43). In this way, the OMC recommendation is in line with many other calls for multilevel policymaking.

Sharing best practices

A key recommendation made by the working group aimed at EU-level policy makers, is to support the development of methodological tools (i.e. benchmarks) on how to run a participatory governance of the cultural heritage process. This will guide the development of standardised methods of measuring and reporting outcomes, thus creating an evidence base for the respective policies.

The handbook has a particularly strong section discussing the obstacles and barriers to analysis of best practices, as valuable parts of the process of creating a best practice itself. They note that 'the point itself is to be aware of which obstacles are deal-breakers, i.e. can be detrimental to the project or mean that it never actually gets off the ground (2018: 39). Here, it is important to distinguish between obstacles, barriers and challenges, as most projects will include challenges. They identify practical obstacles and process-related obstacles to participatory governance of cultural heritage (2018: 39).

Box: The Parco di Centocelle

This site in Rome was chosen as the first site of experimentation for the LabGov 'co-city protocol' (see p.34 of this report). The co-city protocol here aims to reconceptualise culture and cultural heritage as a commons. The aim is to generate commons-based participatory governance of cultural heritage by applying the principles of the Faro Convention.

The site's specific characteristics make it particularly suitable for a participatory and collaborative governance process. The neighbourhood presents a series of critical issues on which it is important to work, involving environmental, social, economic and technological divides. This project can be seen as an example of public-private-community partnership (involving knowledge institutions, civil society organisations and members of the public), which brings together different urban actors to collaborate in the governance of a culturally and socially relevant site.

Urban Agenda

Adopted in May 2016, The [Pact of Amsterdam](#) launched the Urban Agenda for the EU, an EU-wide urban policy initiative concerned with multi-level governance: an “umbrella” for all urban policy initiatives. It enables cities, Member States, the European Commission and other key stakeholders to come together to jointly address urban issues within the regulatory framework of the EU and provide the EU with more on-the-ground data.

Most actions under the Urban Agenda for the EU are delivered through partnerships, each made up of a variety of members. The fourteen partnerships have brought together 23 Member States, 96 cities and/or metropolitan regions, 10 regions, 17 DGs of the European Commission, and 33 institutions, ranging from European umbrella organisations, programmes and networks, civil society organisations and private companies. (EC, 2019: 7)

It has various objectives, and the most pertinent to CCSC are outlined below. Ministers responsible for urban matters affirmed that they will

- strive to establish a more effective integrated and coordinated approach to EU policies and legislation with a potential impact on urban areas and also to contribute to territorial cohesion by reducing the socioeconomic gaps observed in urban areas and regions
- strive to involve urban authorities in the design of policies, to mobilise urban authorities for the implementation of EU policies, and to strengthen the urban dimension in these policies. By identifying and striving to overcome unnecessary obstacles in EU policy, the Urban Agenda for the EU aims to enable urban authorities to work in a more systematic and coherent way towards achieving overarching goals. Moreover, it will help make EU policy more urban-friendly, effective and efficient.

The Urban Agenda for the EU focuses specifically on three pillars of EU policy-making and implementation: better regulation, funding and knowledge. At the core, it is about cost-effective urban implementation of existing EU policies and legislation. Rather than creating new regulations, it is regarded as an ‘informal contribution to the design of future and revision of existing EU regulation, in order for it to better reflect urban needs, practices and responsibilities’. As such, it will not create new sources of funding for urban authorities, but identify, support, integrate and improve ‘traditional, innovative and user-friendly sources of funding for urban areas at the relevant institutional level, including from European structural and investment funds (ESIF)’. In terms of knowledge, the Urban Agenda aims to contribute to ‘enhancing the knowledge base on urban issues and exchange of best practices and knowledge for evidence-based urban policy making, as well as for providing tailor-made solutions to major challenges’.³

The initiative has also created an information hub, “[One Stop Shop for Cities](#)” which provides an entry point to other EU policies with an urban dimension. Evidence-based policies in the EU are enhanced by the [Urban Data Platform Plus](#), which offers a wealth of information on European cities and regions. (EC, 2019: 6).

Urban Agenda: Culture and Cultural Heritage Orientation Paper

The orientation paper is from one of the most recent partnerships and comprises of EU governmental bodies, member states, regional and supra-municipal bodies, cities and other members: EURO CITIES, URBACT, Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural heritage, ICLEI

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/urban-agenda-eu/what-urban-agenda-eu>

Local Governments for Sustainability. The Partnership also aims to address cross-cutting issues in the Pact of Amsterdam related to the New Urban Agenda (HABITAT III) (2019: 7).

Culture as a common good

The orientation paper argues that cities and towns of Europe should be considered cultural resources requiring preservation and further development, and that their potential for sustainable development has ecological, economic and social dimensions (2019: 7). This is broken down into analysing urban development ecological, economic, social and governance and planning (2019: 9-18). The Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage intends to focus on seven topics, with reference to the three pillars of better regulation, better funding and better knowledge. The seven topics are:

1. cultural tourism
2. creative and cultural sectors
3. transformation, adaptive reuse and urban reconversion
4. financial sustainability and funding
5. resilience of cultural and natural heritage
6. integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for governance
7. cultural services and culture for inclusive cities

There is discussion of commons, participatory processes, and bottom-up initiatives woven throughout the paper. For example, in positing cultural heritage as a social resource, key issues for the partnership are the possibility to test out and anchor participatory processes in urban society, and bottom-up involvement in neighbourhood development in order to rehabilitate cultural heritage sites (2019: 15).

Given their remit, an interesting factor here is their promotion of culture and cultural heritage as a commons using existing EU legislation: ‘the principles of the urban approach (i.e. participation, integration, bottom-up) promoted by the intergovernmental processes under the urban *acquis Communautaire* are the basic reference of the Partnership’ (2019: 16) and they list all relevant references, including the Florence Convention (2000), the Faro Convention (2005), Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (2007), Berlin Call to Action (2018) and Davos Declaration (2018).

Public sector as facilitator

The orientation paper makes a series of proposed recommendations for cities to be developed, around integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for governance (topic six). This includes the reversal of the government-citizen relationship as a provider-customer model, in order to establish a more open, horizontal relationship with clear, mutually-agreed upon roles in cultural heritage decision-making processes (2019: 51).

Implicitly acknowledging the role of culture and cultural heritage in processes of urban gentrification, the Partnership seek to develop toolkits, impact indicators, and hospitality policies as mitigation strategies to minimise the effects of gentrification. They argue that these should include clear and transparent prioritisation criteria and avoid a situation where financial factors prevail over the cultural value of the asset or over citizens' preference or needs (2019: 51).

Urban commons

Under the topic of financial sustainability and funding, the partnership has identified key challenges and possible actions to implement, which will become more relevant and pressing as budget restrictions continue during the pandemic. They argue that the problem of defining and adopting innovative management models appears to be one of the main challenges when it comes to projects funded by European structural funds. A critical issue is the ‘limited diffusion and poor adoption of evaluation processes in the selection of projects to be supported, in the selection of private partners and in the evaluation of the effects of the investment’ (2019: 42). They highlight that involving the private sector to a greater extent could be of use to culture and cultural heritage projects, but that current instruments to attract the private sector are limited, and the issue could be further tackled at the European level. An objective they identify, is ‘the need to make culture and cultural heritage more “profitable”, where profitability refers to a new “cultural value” shared by public, private and local community actors and takes into account both economic and social benefits’ (2019: 43).

Some possible policy actions here include (2019: 44):

- Developing guidelines for the adoption of evaluation models in the context of financing processes in the cultural sector. Identifying a visible cultural heritage label for financing purposes (cultural heritage impact assessment).
- Developing, in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB), a concept for a pilot blending facility that could address the specific needs of cities in terms of investment in culture and cultural heritage (e.g. by combining financial support from the EIB with EU grants to raise the attractiveness of specific financial instruments or loans).
- Developing ‘culture bonds’ specifically earmarked for use by culture and cultural heritage projects. The culture bond could come with tax incentives such as a tax exemption and tax credits, making it an attractive investment.

The partnership also want to develop recommendations for cities to be able to help public buildings to become financially self-sufficient, identifying potential enterprises for adaptive re-use as well as investors and instruments to attract them (2019: 51).

Participation at the local level

Across the six topics of this Partnership, governance issues are identified as a key challenge, in terms of lack of multi-level, multi-stakeholder governance. As such, they recommend creating frameworks in order to enable shared decision-making among relevant areas such as cultural and natural heritage preservation, spatial planning, tourism management, mobility, infrastructures and the involvement of civil society organisations. (2019: 22)

In order to facilitate greater participation at the local level, the Partnership suggest having forms of common management in compliance with possible EU regulation or guidelines.

The first steps of this could include:

- organising architectural and urban workshops with the population to share information about projects;
- organising counselling for contracting authorities;

- creating dedicated places or structures dedicated to sharing information and debate about intervention projects, in order to share knowledge with all concerned stakeholders, raise awareness and inform the general public. (2019: 51)

In addition to such information-sharing activities, they recommend creating models and practices that increase the responsibility of caring for heritage by the local community (e.g. by connecting local actors to vacant available spaces) and suggest that this practice has been proven to generate jobs and inputs for productivity (2019: 51).

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

A key concern for the Partnership is staying connected to relevant actors and initiatives: this indicates an EU-level concern with becoming ‘closer’ to citizens through the Urban Agenda and urban projects.

The orientation paper recommends ‘integrated and participatory approaches’ in the early stages of urban planning and development programmes, bringing together actors ‘from all levels of governance and relevant fields’ as a necessary requirement for ‘embedding culture and cultural heritage dimensions’ in urban planning/development (2019: 50). Echoing the OMC 2018 working group handbook (which they do not reference) they state that ‘participatory and bottom-up processes are believed to be needed to enable local stakeholders to bring out the identities of urban places’ and this is outlined as:

- Community approach, mobilising citizens – a key factor in creating cultural heritage
- A systematic support of association-managed urban places, promoting social and cultural activities, including temporary use of spaces

This community approach extends across different topics, and in relation to cultural tourism – relevant to CCSC with regards to culture-led development – the partnership recommends promoting governance frameworks that enable shared decision-making among all relevant policy sectors and the participation of stakeholders and civil society representatives. This is with the aim of developing strategic and sustainable planning. This leads onto their recommendation around ensuring the well-being of local communities: involving residents in participatory processes (2019: 25).

Under their remit of bringing together integrated urban/rural/territorial development, the Partnership want to promote culture and cultural heritage as one of the elements that can bring them together. This could involve, for example, linking cultural aspects with integrated development via the Leipzig Charter II, and working to improve existing regulatory and legislative frameworks at the local level to favour sustainability measures (2019: 51).

Discussion of best practices and challenges

Throughout the orientation paper, the Partnership identifies key issues and challenges, through which they then design actions and policies to develop. This is an organic and informative way to share challenges in a report.

In terms of sharing data, they argue that an integrated approach should also apply to access and exchange of knowledge and data, including data collection mechanisms, experiences of

developing and using indicators for guidance-based planning, sharing of know-how and best practices, keeping up to date with research, support mechanisms and opportunities (2019: 50).

Urban Agenda for the Inclusion of Refugees and Migrants

Created in 2016 under the Urban Agenda for the EU, the Urban Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees enabled EU institutions, Member States, and local authorities to develop new forms of direct and proactive multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation. Partnership members helped to identify central integration “bottlenecks” regarding education, housing, labour market, reception and vulnerability. The Partnership created an Action Plan covering eight Actions; authors of the Partnership evaluation report Heimann and Sturmer note that a ‘special feature of the Urban Partnership on Inclusion is its determination to move beyond knowledge exchange and work on actual policy advice and implementation of pilot Actions’ (2019: 4).

Urban commons

In terms of pooling resources, the Partnership’s recommendations on improving local authorities’ access to integration funding proved to be an important contribution to the EU negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) (2019: 4)

Participation at the local level

The Partnership initiated the Urban Academy, which provided a new strategic learning and experience-sharing environment for practitioners and policy-makers focusing on collegial advice and dilemma-based exchange, while the European Migrant Advisory Board (EMAB) sought to bring the voice of refugees and migrants directly to the EU level.

The Partnership recognised that integration policies can lack the desired impact because they are made for a target groups rather than with them (Heimann and Sturmer, 2019: 14) and so they sought to bring the voices of migrants and (former) refugees to the EU level in a structured (rather than one-off) way, through the European Migrant Advisory Board (EMAB). In the evaluation report, the authors note that ‘the actual expertise and experience the EMAB contributed to the Partnership exceeded most expectations’ (2019: 14). This seems somewhat condescending in tone, and without more in-depth accounts of the experience of different actors’ participation, it is difficult to assess. However, the authors state that members of the EMAB ‘observed a change of mind on the part of Partnership actors, becoming increasingly aware that migrants and refugees should not just be selectively engaged, e.g. as speakers at conferences, but need to be integral partners in shaping integration policies’ (2019: 26). This provides some hope for value-based cross-sectoral encounters but again, awareness doesn’t necessarily lead to action.

Participation of local actors also highlighted the urgent need for adequate data at the local level, and through cooperation with the Action on Urban Indicators, Eurostat was motivated to focus more strongly on local level integration data which would support more rigorous evidence-based policy-making (2019: 4).

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

The Urban Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees enabled local-level actors to work with EU institutions and Member States on questions of integration ‘as equal partners. As a city representative puts it – a new seat was pulled up to the table of multi-

level governance' (2017: 43). The notion of equality here is questionable, and is not interrogated within the evaluation report, but nevertheless the Partnership has made some concrete actions through participatory approaches to policymaking.

Due to its ability to initiate concrete projects at the local level, and make policy recommendations and advocacy to local, national and EU levels, Heimann and Sturmer argue that the Partnership could play the role of an advisor with a multi-level governance perspective, providing a space for constructive discussions on policy proposals and recommendations for the European Commission, MEPs, the JRC and other think tanks, which offer policy advice at EU level (2019: 26). A particular strength of the Partnership, according to Heimann and Sturmer, is the membership of strong multipliers such as EUROCITIES, CEMR and ECRE as well as actors representing central nodes in the EU migration governance such as DG HOME. Thanks to their high level of connectivity and reach, these actors could contribute to creating an expert pool (2019: 32).

By drafting recommendations to improve local level access to EU funding in the next MFF, the Partnership has contributed to structural processes and policy development at EU level. In this context, Heimann and Sturmer argue that the Partnership could benefit considerably from more targeted cooperation with specific actors and benefit from a more structured networking effort to increase its coherence of outreach and its impact on EU policy debates. They outline a number of ways in which the Partnership could do this, including tightening links with the European Parliament, reaching the Council through the national level – which requires a clear-cut mandate to be more strongly involved. Joining forces with the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) (2019: 38-39).

Through the partnership, Brussels-based actors (members of DG HOME and DG REGIO, the JRC and European think tanks) have been able to establish connections with local authorities as well as migrants and refugees. These formal and informal exchanges allow them to learn about 'the practical fit of European policies on the ground, which enabled them to (re)focus their actions at EU level' (2019:26).

In terms of impact, there are issues around scale. For example, while the Partnership formulated concrete recommendations and requests to EU institutions and Member States to support cities in the protection of unaccompanied minors (2019: 4) it is unclear that without the involvement of relevant actors in the Partnership, what impact such recommendations could have. None of the Actions were led by national representatives; this highlights the issue of what happens when national ministries asked to participate are those responsible for urban affairs, and not necessarily those working on policy fields related to the different topics of the various Partnerships (2019: 22). This means that well-intentioned urban policies will not be able to be implemented. Indeed, the authors note that 'even though the feeble engagement of the national level was at times deplored, both EU and local actors acknowledged that the pilot project had not created a specific role for national representatives' (2019: 31).

Sharing best practices and challenges

Despite its high level of activity, the Partnership on Inclusion still lacks visibility outside its circle of members and cooperation partners according to interviews undertaken by Heimann and Sturmer. With a more outreach-orientated communication and advocacy strategy, the Partnership could strengthen its potential to influence policy-making at EU, national and local levels (2019: 5).

They recommend that the Partnership would need to define which target groups should be addressed by the respective communication strategies, and target them differently for example, local authorities, city networks, NGOs working in urban areas, migrants and refugee organisations active in cities, research institutions focusing on migration and urban integration, national integration/migration ministries as well as a wide range of EU level actors (2019: 41).

How culture and the arts can promote intercultural dialogue in the context of the migratory and refugee crisis

This OMC working group collated and analysed over 200 existing policies and practices relevant to the integration of refugees and migrants through the arts and culture, presenting 46 in the handbook. They make a number of recommendations addressed to cultural policymakers at EU, national and local level, as well as to stakeholders/cultural institutions around key themes of empowerment, inter-sectoral working and evaluation.

Participation at the local level

A general conclusion they make is that participatory arts practices are particularly conducive to integrating refugees and migrants, and that the arts and culture provide unique opportunities to bring together refugees, migrants and host populations. They recommend that policymakers are sensitive to the different needs, interests and abilities of individuals and groups, including those experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage and discrimination. Their recommendations go in the right direction but are incredibly broad and somewhat generic, not addressing the complexity and problematic nature of involving refugees in projects, aside from the necessity of being 'sensitive'. They use a definition of participation from the Oxford English Dictionary (2017: 17) rather than engaging with the wealth of empirical research on participation, and explicitly participatory projects with migrants and refugees.

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

Around the theme of empowerment, the working group recommend policymakers to support and fund networking, self-organisation and active participation of refugees and migrants in the arts and culture. They also recommend they provide spaces and opportunities for refugees and migrants to lead as well as to participate in arts and culture, including new museums and new exhibitions dedicated to migration (in line with a recent joint recommendation by UNESCO and the International Organisation for Migration).

There are a cluster of intersectoral recommendations for policy-makers, around proactively connecting and sharing information with policy-makers in other areas, to the extent that they should consider intersectoral cooperation as a main criterion for funding cultural projects for refugees' integration.

Networks

They recommend policymakers should support and fund networks (formal and informal) with publicly funded cultural organisations, civil society and other stakeholders, to contribute towards policymaking processes.

Sharing best practices

The working group recommend involve refugees and migrants in the project design and evaluation activities. They recommend broadening and deepening evaluation of publicly funded culture projects, beyond financial and quantitative aspects, to assess their societal impacts and their effectiveness in promoting intercultural dialogue (2017: 61).

European Capital of Culture

The ECoC programme has received a lot of attention, and at the heart of recent critical urban and cultural policy literature on the topic is the tension between the two main criteria of the ECoC: ‘the European Dimension’ and ‘City and the Citizens’. The first criterion requires cities to foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from other Member States, highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe, and bring to the fore the common aspects of European cultures. The second criterion places emphasis on the cities to foster the participation of citizens living in the city and its surroundings, raise their and foreigners’ interest in the city and its activities, and promote the long-term cultural and social development of the city (Decision 1622/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006). It is clear that under the ECoC programme cities are asked to do a lot of work within a set of quite restrictive and burdensome bureaucratic mechanisms. The ECoC years, the cultural profiles of the designated cities and the management and financing policy of them, have all caused tension, severe debate, objection and even counter-movements in several cities, as various studies indicate (Lähdesmäki, 2013: 600). This is partly due to the multiple objectives of the ECoC programme not being mutually reinforcing, and often contradictory (O’Callaghan, 2011). The events have to simultaneously incorporate economic and cultural objectives, introduce both local culture and cultural heritage and European cultures and identities, stage international arts events, and simultaneously advance the local cultural sector and social inclusion objectives. Such tensions are apparent in the cities that this section looks at: Turku, Finland (2011), Košice, Slovakia (2013), Umea, Sweden (2014), and Timisoara, Romania (2021).

Turku 2011

The Turku ECoC presents an interesting case study of bottom-up initiatives and participatory approaches to urban culture, but just not in the way that the ECoC programme intended. An independent Turku 2011 Foundation was created to ‘activate local people to participate in preparing and implementing the ECoC events,’ including a broad voluntary programme in which more than 400 voluntary citizens worked during the cultural year. They launched an open project call in which everybody could suggest cultural projects to be funded and included in the official programme of Turku 2011.

The final report of the Turku 2011 Foundation describes the bid being born in a broadly inclusive community action which encouraged participation. The vision, mission, and aims presented in the “Turku on Fire” bid book were compiled from the extensive material accumulated during vision days, workshops and open public events. ‘Later on, the multi-voiced and bottom-up approach materialised in the Turku 2011 programme, as well, and especially in the way different population groups participated in the year of culture both as creators of the cultural programme and as people experiencing it’ (Saukkolin et al, 2012: 5). Special features of the Turku 2011 programme were the strong, successful community-orientation and the objective of cultural well-being. The principles used in the preparation of the programme, active participation and ability to provide experiences, were also realised in the implementation of the programme as extensive communality, interaction and resident orientation’ (Saukkolin et al, 2012: 15).

The account of both the Foundation and the ex-post evaluation omits some quite significant criticism of the ECoC and substantial cultural activism in response to the programme; neither mention the European Capital of Subculture project. The criticism began with local cultural political decisions which cut resources from local cultural operators and cultural institutions. Furthermore, young artists who had started an independent art association in

the face of lack of resources and space from the city began to squat empty city-owned buildings, and run cultural activities in them; the city responded by imposing zero tolerance towards squatting (Lähdesmäki, 2013: 605) After Turku won the ECoC designation, the same local artists and cultural workers interested in establishing an independent cultural centre in the city launched an activist project titled “Turku – European Capital of Subculture 2011” as a response to the ‘culture-hostile attitude’ of the city, and to the unwillingness of the Turku 2011 Foundation to intervene in the above-mentioned local cultural issues. In addition, the high budget of the Turku 2011 programme and the plans to use money to invite foreign artists to perform in the city during the cultural year were criticised: activists emphasised the importance of supporting local artists, cultural operators and small-scale cultural activities. Criticism also focused on the concept of culture and the audience-participant-artist relationship mobilised in the official programme. (Lähdesmäki, 2013: 605)

This is not to say that the two programmes were entirely opposed: many participated in events organised by both initiatives, but the Capital of Subculture produced a channel for alternative and unofficial culture to be promoted in the city and had diverse local impacts. While it succeeded in raising public attention and critical interest in the implementation of the ECoC year and brought to the fore the active alternative (youth) cultural scene in Turku, it also brought its protagonists public criticism.

The ‘heavy’ structure of the ECoC programme necessarily influences the planning, production and management of the cultural events of the ECoC year, and as such has an effect on notions of culture, cultural production and cultural consumption within the frame of the initiative, regardless of whether the aims are explicitly participator. As the case of the Capital of Subculture indicates, the activists wanted to criticise the ECoC implementation and produce an alternative to it, not to be ‘swallowed up’ by the initiative. For Lähdesmäki, the case of Turku indicates that not all cultural actors in designated cities necessarily want to be involved in implementation of the ECoC year. The ex post evaluation found that the ECoC process in Turku generated ‘the feeling that there was a lot of secrecy, a lack of transparency and mistrust. Some cultural operators felt that they had contributed to receiving the title but were then excluded from the preparations to host it’ and that a lack of information on the selection process of the projects alienated the local as well as national media and cultural organisations in Turku which proved challenging to change (Rampton et al, 2012: 42).

In terms of participatory practices and bottom-up decision making, Turku 2011 Capital of Culture and Subculture both aimed to activate local people to participate in cultural production, increasing their interest in the local environment and its uses, emphasising diversity of cultural expression and valuing small-scale cultural projects and everyday cultural experiences. (Lähdesmäki, 2013: 614)

Košice 2013

The Košice ECoC aimed to support the creative economy, community development (and activation of citizens), destination management and development, artistic mobility and a new cultural infrastructure for the city. Key projects included “laboratory of living culture”, “open public space” and “built on tradition, built on roots” as well as 21 collaborative activities with Marseille-Provence 2013. Košice 2013 also involved local citizens in the periphery of the city through the SPOTS programme, which involved the regeneration of a

number of disused heat exchanger stations and a programme of cultural and community development activities around these new facilities, which provided a legacy for the ECoC.

The Košice city council saw ECoC as an opportunity ‘to use culture as a transformational force, helping to raise the city’s profile and put it on the European map, but also to strengthen and diversify the local economy through support for creative industries, building on the strong university base’ according to the ex-post evaluation (2014: 39). The Košice application project, “Interface” drew on the city’s historical role as a multicultural city and a crossroads between central and eastern Europe, while recognising the city’s developing creative sector. Formed and prepared by a small group of local young people associated with cultural scenes abroad, Hudec and Džupka argue that this pipeline of young cultural facilitators who had studied abroad and returned to Košice, initially caused resentment among older the generation, provincial cultural institutions and media (2016: 533).

There were some challenges: after the application process, a new mayor came into power, and this resulted in a greater emphasis on the local potential of ECoC at the expense of the European dimension (McAteer et al, 2014: 41). Furthermore, McAteer et al note that there was tension between the Interface concept’s focus on newer, more experimental forms of culture and creativity and the interests of traditional cultural operators. They suggest that some of the larger cultural operators were not sufficiently involved in, or supportive of the ECoC project in the early stages, and often did not appreciate how their organisations could contribute to (or benefit from) ECoC’ (2014: 41). Indeed, Hudec and Džupka (2016: 535) recommend that getting the balance right between expectations and events is vital, to avoid overpromotion of regional cultural production as well as disappointment among consumers who might have been expecting mass cultural activities in the 2013 project year.

In 2012 the monitoring panel advised more evidence of the European dimension in the city and amongst participants; clearer and more consistent branding of Košice 2013 as an EU initiative; as well as to address weaknesses in the involvement of the local population and artists, including the need to reach new audiences. Furthermore, they wanted assurances that involvement of major corporate sponsors took the form of corporate social responsibility activity, rather than over commercial marketing. (2014: 42). This suggests that Košice 2013 at that point was neither European enough nor participatory enough for the ECoC programme, and blatantly pursuing a culture-led development approach. In addition to these issues around monitoring and evaluation, and the lack of the European dimension, the project also had significant issues around funding. As a result, McAteer et al recommended that in future, the Commission should ensure that the selection panel and the monitoring and advisory panels provide recommendations that relate specifically to these criteria in Article 14 of Decision 445/2014/EU (McAteer et al, 2014: 7).

Umeå 2014

An ex-post evaluation by the European Commission of Umeå2014 considered that the co-creation and open approach Umeå2014 used gave the cultural sector great opportunities to shape the programme in a way that was authentic, reflecting Umeå, its context and its character. The authors noted that on the whole, it was not developed by “outsiders” that had been “parachuted” into the city for the title year and who then left – a risk that many ECoC face. (Fox and Rampton, 2015: 39) Umeå aimed to achieve broad public participation and involvement, with co-creation at the centre of its bid and its programme. All project applications had to describe how the project aims to empower people. The city

implemented numerous measures to encourage citizens' involvement and participation in the beginning of the bidding process in autumn 2007. These included open meetings, Open Source discussions and workshops to discuss and collect ideas.

Although there was an explicit aim to achieve broad citizen participation in Umeå, in practice, Hudson et al argue that the ECoC simply recognised citizens' rights to engage in the cultural spaces of the city, and enabled engagement within the planning or implementation of individual events rather than influencing or instigating broader social change or power dynamics (2017: 1551). They argue that this is due to several issues:

- the framework for co-creation was initiated from above and effectively disregarded the unequal terms on which different actors participate.
- the limitations placed upon projects which could be involved (co-funding, see below)
- an overemphasis on recognition: focused on the access to and acknowledgement of people's right to be part of decision-making at the expense of the process itself

Co-funding was one of the requirements to be eligible to receive funding from Umeå2014 – this meant that small groups could not participate. The municipality did not compensate non-profit organizations financially for their engagement in the work with Umeå2014 (Hudson et al, 2019: 1545) which caused inequality in terms of the co-creation process, fears of appropriation, and public backlash from participants as well as in local press.

Co-creation became part of the description of its success, and the same jury that had awarded Umeå the ECoC title sent advice to the next ECoC, Leeuwarden 2018, to contact Umeå2014 with regards to the co-creation part of the programme planning in order to learn from their experiences.⁴ As such, we can see that complexities and criticisms around the implementation of participatory processes are effectively swept under the carpet, inevitably allowing for the same mistakes to take place in the next city. In addition, we can see that the narrative of co-creation was used as a marketing strategy, using an image of the role of culture in contemporary society as a way of selling the city; Umeå becomes the co-creation city. On the other hand, Fox and Rampton note that Umeå was one of the smallest ECoC cities and the most northerly to date. The fact that it won the nomination and implemented a successful cultural programme is a considerable achievement. They state unironically that 'geographical remoteness did not prevent this ECoC from being innovative, contemporary and European; Umeå2014 was no cultural backwater' (2015: 39).

Timisoara 2021

Timisoara was designated European Capital of Culture 2021 in October 2016. Drawing on the Second Monitoring Meeting Report by the Expert Panel (June 2019) it is clear there are several issues, mostly political and financial, which are plaguing the project at present. The TM2021 team was asked to send a report back to the Expert Panel in February 2020, so some of the analysis and recommendations from the June 2019 report may be out of date.

The Expert Panel note that the investment programme for 2017-2023 is in line with the commitment described in the bid-book and includes Multiplexity, which is one of the flagships of the city's cultural strategy. There does not seem to be an issue around community engagement in the abstract, which is fully integrated in the design of the programme, with many meetings with diverse stakeholders enabled establishing

⁴ <http://umea2014.se/2015/06/together-we-created-the-european-capital-of-culture-year/>

partnerships and engaging with different audiences. The main platforms for widening the audience are 1) the Stations, 2) the main events that focus on opening the cultural programme to a large range of citizens, 3) the Trails of cultural programme aiming to deepen the cultural experience of participation by targeting local and regional communities. TM2021 has commissioned MetruCub to carry out a study about audience development in Timisoara (2019: 7).

In terms of their capacity to deliver, the Expert Panel seem quite worried: it appears that getting funding from the Ministry requires additional procedures on top of the ECoC selection process. Getting to the bottom of TM2021's financial problems led to an "intense discussion" where it was revealed by the State Secretary that the budget for ECoC2021 was not included in the State budget plan, and that the Romanian government had not yet put in place the appropriate legal and financial basis to allow a multiannual funding of TM2021 by public authorities (2019: 6-8). The Expert Panel tersely write that 'it is hoped that an upcoming Emergency Ordinance will ease the releasing of funding so as to make the State's commitment a reality'; until June 2019, TM2021 worked with as little as approximately 25-30% of the budget promised in the bid-book: only 353.782 euros had been made available until now from the Ministry of Culture (2019: 8). The Ministry reiterated that there were no objections to the State's contribution of 12 million euros, and the issues around transferring money to the Association, a stalemate at the County level, should be resolved by a new regulation was expected to come into force at the national level (2019: 8). There are also concerns that the obstacles faced by the Association to involve international partners due to the unstable financial situation, undermining international collaboration and therefore the European dimension of the ECOC 2021 (9).

There are many recommendations made, including urgent ones around legislation and finances. They recommend TM2021 to introduce measures to improve communication at all levels and ensure the spirit and the progress of the project is well understood by all stakeholders. They recommend defining and integrating a new programme production plan as soon as possible, ensuring a constructive relationship with all members of the team, and adapted to the financial and time framework of the ECOC (9-10). The report ends with the Panel stating they will decide at the end of the third monitoring meeting whether to give Melina Mercouri Prize to Timisoara 2021, and reiterate the conditions for the payment of the Prize for the benefit of the TM2021 team, which seems mildly threatening.

European Networks

European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)

Initiated in 2004, [The European Urban Knowledge Network \(EUKN\)](#) is the 'only independent Member State driven network' (in their words) in the field of urban policy, research and practice. As a network of national governments, EU Member States, cities, EU institutions and networks, the EUKN is 'deeply involved in EU policy-making'. Their narrative places them at the centre of European urban knowledge production. It operates on a membership basis, but it is unclear what the cost of membership is.

The Network brings together resources contributed by 15 member states, the EC and the Urbact programme. EURO CITIES is a member. Payne (2010: 267) notes that this knowledge production is tied above all to lobbying activity, and as such follows a model that is fairly traditional at the European level: expertise becomes a resource for representing interests. The EUKN considers itself a 'top-level influencer, and a connector between a multitude of

urban networks,' and a 'strategic knowledge partner' involved in research projects, providing services to EUKN members, EU council presidencies and external activities.

The [EUKN Policy Labs](#) are a 'key delivery instruments for tailor-made knowledge support' and are regularly organised as events where stakeholders and experts discuss concrete urban topics relevant to an EUKN member country such as urban mobility, retail policy and functional urban areas, integrated planning, housing, or the European and global urban agendas. They provide a rich [e-library](#) containing selected documents on shared standards, EU policies, best practices and up-to-date research. Whilst the EUKN is clearly interested in participatory methods, having done some policy labs on the issue, it looks like there's very little participation at the local level taking place in the events themselves.

The Policy Labs could be of interest to CCSC, and they take a variety of forms, such as expert meetings, panel discussions, site visits, case study presentations, workshops, and even small conferences with side events. Audiences may vary between 30 and more than 100 participants. They note that "speedboat method" has proven to be an effective brainstorming tool in numerous Policy Labs, fostering discussion and exchange in small, heterogeneous groups of experts.

European Creative Hubs Network

The European Culture Hubs Network was initially a two-year project (2016-2018) co-funded by the European Commission, with the British Council leading the partnership. The project ran with six creative hubs across Europe: Bios (Greece) Roco and Creative Edinburgh (UK) betahaus (Germany) Nova Iskra (Serbia) Factoria Cultural (Spain) and the European Business and Innovation Centres Network. The first edition of the European Creative Hubs Forum brought together 140 creative hubs, with more than 180 participants from 32 countries in Europe and elsewhere. As of the project end in 2018, it had a community which includes 75+ registered creative hubs from across Europe, with hundreds participating online. The ECHN was valued by its participants as an umbrella organisation that had the ability to achieve critical mass and a coherent voice to the sector. The project evaluation report notes that the network managed to raise the profile of creative hubs, advocate for policy support at all levels and gain support of key influencers (ECHN, 2018: 6)

Participation at the local level

The ECHN was appreciated by those who participated as a platform for knowledge exchange and peer learning, and for building a sense of community by expanding networks. Forty-one P2P exchanges provided in-situ experiences for hub leaders at their host's venue. In terms of the hubs themselves, policy recommendations coming out of the project include social hybridisation: keeping freelancers, creatives and innovative companies active and anchored within their local communities; as well as the importance of creative hybridisation and crossovers: supporting the development of (and interact with) these diversified creative communities is important. (Dessein and Faini, 2018: 16).

Urban commons

Through bottom-up approaches, Dessein and Faini argue that creative hubs identify needs that can be met by the pooling of different resources in order to secure individual careers and consolidate small businesses. They recommend governance hybridisation, for example engaging creatives hubs in hybrid governance models to co-manage publicly owned buildings, a move which would 'benefit both individual workers and urban regeneration:

the bottom-up approach is an effective way to experiment with tailor-made solutions for specific communities and environments' (2018: 16). Here we see current European cultural heritage trends around adaptive re-use come into play, combining participatory approaches (self-management) with processes of gentrification.

Sharing best practices

A number of toolkits were produced over the course of events hosted over the two years. A research report was published in 2016, written by Dovey, Pratt, Moreton, Virani, Merkel, and Lansdowne, *The Creative Hubs Report* (2016). The British Council has since developed a new learning programme, Creative Hubs Academy, with Hivos and Nesta, specifically for emerging and established creative hubs globally. The British Council took what they learnt with ECHN and are now applying it globally: South Africa, Taiwan, the Phillipines, and are undertaking the Creative Hubs Exchange programmes: hosting hubs from non-European countries. The Creative Economy team has also worked with policy makers and researchers to help map and understand this sector.

The British Council commissioned three policy papers based on the ECHN, which make a series of recommendations around sharing best practices, which include developing innovative evaluation systems to fully comprehend the scope of a hub's impact, and its social benefits. They all argue for the importance of communicating the success of hubs experiments to public (local) authorities.

BOX 3: Transitioning to an independent network

The ECHN is now an independent network, and acts as a partner in the consortium of five projects: Creative FLIP, CENTRINNO, CREATION, Makers eXchange and CCSC. They are a lead partner of the pilot project Makers' Mobility. In 2019 50 P2P exchanges between hubs around Europe took place. The Creative FLIP opening conference took place with 120 participants, hub professions, stakeholders and policymakers. In order to transition to an independent network (based on a membership fee) the original core hubs involved wrote and circulated a document to other hub leaders who'd been involved in the project, addressing them as prospective members of a new network, a "family". In this document 'Network Membership Presentation and Invitation' they stated the case for taking the "community" to the "next level": the moment has come to act, to go bottom-up, and together to set the ground for the future of the European creative hubs eco-system, for the future of our organisations (2018: 2). They continue:

We believe the time is right to invest our strength and skills into building our own network - by hubs for hubs - a network that will empower each one of our organisations, open many opportunities to advance our communities, and act beyond borders. ... now is the time to build structures that will enable us to do all this more efficiently and with the help of peers from across Europe.

It is interesting to note which aspects the network continue to emphasise, in particular the peer-to-peer mobility scheme, through which creative hub leaders spend time in another creative hub in Europe and learn from each other. The ECHN's involvement in multiple multi-partner projects (e.g. Creative FLIP led by the Goethe Institut) demonstrates a canny ability to operate as a node within other big projects, with different members of the ECHN leading.

Practical steps in transitioning to a network

- administrative closure of the ECHN project
- development of a business plan for the future network by an external expert
- legal registration of a non-profit association (union) based in Athens, in consultation with lawyers
- Numerous consultations

Peer-led network

With a 'mission to enhance the creative, economic and social impact of hubs' the ECHN is now a peer-led network with around sixty members, involved as a partner in different research projects, and as such undertakes different activities.

In the context of COVID-19, ECHN are now holding "monthly ECHN online brunch" as 'it seems now that we are all struggling to create a new reality for our communities and hubs. During this process, we would like to retain an open space of communication with the contribution of all members' with the next meeting in June.

European Network of Living Labs

The European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) is a network of ‘open and citizen-centric innovation ecosystems’ which strives to ‘create an open innovation infrastructure that empowers everyone to innovate, co-creating means and value with and for European citizens’.⁵

The European Commission has long been strategically supporting living labs to strengthen innovation in the European Union (EC, 2009, 2010) and the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) was constituted in 2006 with the aim of connecting living labs for knowledge exchange, following the experience of the European Commission-funded CoreLabs and Clocks, to co-ordinate, promote and advance a common European innovation system based on Living Labs (EC 2009, 25-60). The ENoLL was launched following the Helsinki Manifesto (2006) which was written in response to the perceived limited impact of the 2006 Lisbon strategy, and argued for ‘an urgent need for strong EU-wide actions and advancing LLs as one key solution’ (Dutilleul et al, 2010: 63-64). The aim of ENoLL is to fill a void in the European innovation system (EC, 2009: 8) through the establishment of structured and organised networks of innovation stakeholders, articulated at the regional, national and European levels (Dutilleul et al, 2010).

Network

The network operates at multiple levels (EU, regional, local) and has different objectives at the different levels. At the European level, the aims are to harmonise approaches methods and tools and intensify knowledge exchange and mutual learning, with the goal of fostering inter-regional collaboration (Santoro et al, 2009: 2) and standardising regional technological infrastructure (Ericsson et al, 2005: 10).

ENoLL counts over 150+ active Living Labs members worldwide (440+ historically recognised over 14 years) and is present in five continents in addition to Europe. They state that they provide co-creation, user engagement, test and experimentation facilities targeting innovation in many different domains, and as such, they are well placed to act as a platform for best practice exchange, learning and support, and Living Lab international project development. (ENoLL, 2020) There are four different memberships: Accepted to Grow member, Adherent member, Effective member and Innovation Partners. Each has its own membership fee.

ENoLL, as in the case of ECHN, is involved as a partner in a number of projects, listed on their website under distinct themes. For example, under “creative industries” they list one active project, TALIA, and their role being to scale-out (dissemination), scale-up (to Brussels and beyond); help develop Quadruple Helix structures and be part of a liaison team developing multilateral coordination frameworks.

ENoLL holds an annual gathering of the ‘global living lab community’, OpenLivingLab Days⁶ (OLLDD) which had its 10th edition was in 2019. This is the flagship event of ENoLL and this year for the first time in September it will be a digital event.

⁵ <https://openlivinglabdays.com/about-us/>

⁶ <https://openlivinglabdays.com/>

Participation at the local level

Early research on the network found that the LLs were not sufficiently participatory (Mulder and Stappers, 2009) and were not exploiting the ‘potential of a community-driven open innovation approach’ with LL practices at the time emphasising the lab - i.e. traditional methods of evaluation, rather than the living part - i.e. methods of participation and co-creation (2009: 5). Mulder and Stappers argue that while co-creation is “hot”, actual long-term or deep involvement of users in project development is limited within industry and academia, as the main forms of user participation are still after-the-fact testing, rather than involving users in earlier phases of development (2009: 5). While the LL approach has been introduced as a methodology for experimentation and co-creation, they argue that current LL practices demonstrate reactive users rather than active co-creators (Mulder and Stappers, 2009: 7) and they suggest making use of LL infrastructure to undertake continuous evaluation, using generative tools and context mapping (2009: 8).

As different LLs use different methods and tools, the Harmonization Cube was adopted (initially developed within the CoreLabs project) as a way to establish and define shared references and perspectives regarding methods and tools (Mulder and Stappers, 2009: 3). The six sides of the cube correspond with the six dominant Living Lab perspectives, i.e., user involvement, service creation, infrastructure, governance, innovation outcomes, and methods & tools. Each side of the cube facilitates interoperability between the co-creative Living Labs. An image of the harmonisation cube from Mulder et al 2008 is below, with the different sides of the cubes illustrated on p.31.



Challenges:

Despite the importance given to citizens and users in Living Lab publications, no mention of their involvement in the co-creation or governance of the system could be found at European level. At the regional level, a single mention of user’s “representation” was found in Santoro et al’s paper (2009: 5)

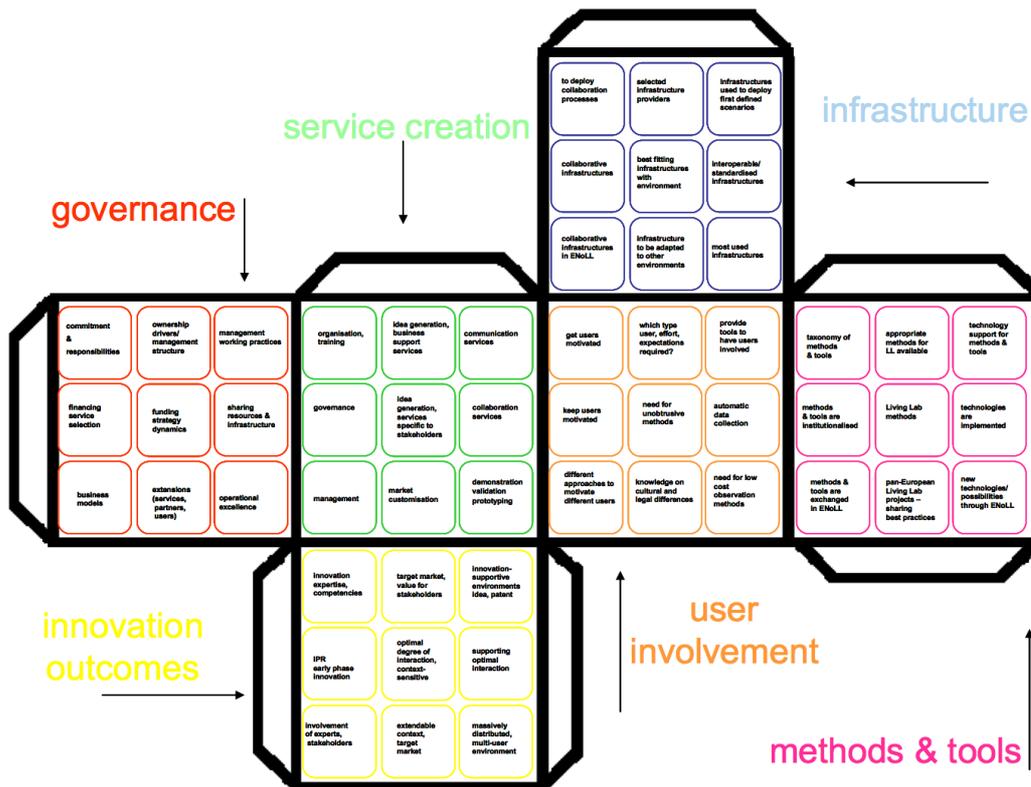
Established living labs experience difficulties in assuring continued financing over time to make the living lab sustainable (Schaffers & Turkama, 2012). These issues call for developing a better connection between living labs and broader policy frameworks (cf. Cleland et al.,

2012). (Dekker et al, 2019: 7).

BOX: SISCODE

SISCODE aims to understand co-creation as a bottom-up and design-driven phenomenon that is flourishing in Europe (in fab labs, Living Labs, social innovations, smart cities, communities and regions); to analyse favourable conditions that support its effective introduction, scalability and replication; and to use this knowledge to cross-fertilise RRI (responsible research and innovation) practices and policies. Following a European comparison of co-creation ecosystems, the project will experiment with design-based system of competences capable of supporting the development of implementable RRI and science, technology and innovation solutions and policies.

ENoLL’s role in SISCODE is to collaborate with the other networks in the project (international network of fab labs & European network of science centres and museums) to build a transnational system of co-creation laboratories, and experiment with design-driven approaches to co-creation.



Generative European Commons Living Lab

This Horizon 2020 project, running from 2019-2022 is coordinated by Università Delgi Studi di Torino. It comes under the rubric of H2020-EU.3.6.2.2: to 'explore new forms of innovation, with special emphasis on social innovation and creativity and understanding how all forms of innovation are developed, succeed or fail'.

The gE.CO Living Lab aims to create a platform for bringing together and supporting formal groups or informal communities of citizens who manage fab-lab, hubs, incubators, co-creation spaces, social centres created in regenerated urban voids. They state:

These innovative practices are considered generative commons, because they are based on sharing and collaboration between citizens and establish a new partnership between Public Institutions and local communities, setting forth new models of governance of the urban dimension based on solidarity, inclusion, participation, economic and environmental sustainability.

This project is in quite early days, but they note challenges which they seek to address:

- The different experiences across Europe encounter quite different legal and economic models, and scalability is extremely difficult without appropriate tools.
- Traditional forms of public support (the implication here being non-participatory state practices) runs the risk of compromising their participatory character.
- Through the creation of a digital platform, they seek to connect generative commons and Public Administrations in a new network able to promote the exchange of good practices and legal solutions.

Urban Commons

The gE.CO Living Lab aims to support generative commons around Europe in three ways:

- **Build a digital platform** for collaboration that will map citizens' initiatives as well as the public Institutions engaged in new forms of partnership with local communities.
- **Share experiences** by evaluating a group of pilot cases in order to understand which socio-economic, cultural and legal factors make self-organised experiences sustainable and Public Institutions helpful for their development;
- **Make a toolkit** using the results of the evaluation for scaling up sustainable generative commons and innovative local policies: best practices, recommendations as well as legal solutions will be developed for supporting the emergence of new generative commons through shared, public and open access contents.

Participation at the local level

The gE.CO Living Lab has put up a suite of software (gE.CO tools) for communities to use during COVID-19 'to increase your community's productivity, are mostly free, secure, reliable and for the best part easy to use'⁷ – a move which demonstrates some form of commitment to on-the-ground activities at best, or performative solidarity at worst.

Commons Network

The Commons Network is a civil society initiative and think-tank working on a local, national and European level, seeking to promote access to knowledge and other social and ecological causes from the perspective of the commons. They engage in policy formulation as well as public debate, promoting the common good through commons-based solutions. They cooperate with civic initiatives, translating ideas into broader policy initiatives.

They argue that there is support for the commons to be found in many different spheres of society, and the challenge is to create political will and institutions that facilitate and allow for this. They state:

The city or the neighbourhood should be seen as a commons: a social system with a dedicated community that owns and manages the city or the neighbourhood according to inclusive and democratic rules. That's how we can re-claim the Right to the City. That's why we work on sustainable and social food systems, value-based feminist economies, democratic data commons, guerrilla gardening, energy cooperatives and other solidarity networks.

Commons Network works with activists, thinkers and policy makers to tell stories, build networks and influence policies to support commoners and defend the commons. They believe the world 'urgently needs a new narrative and that the commons represents the socially and economically sustainable paradigm for this. We believe communities, cities and regions, rather than nation-states, are the backbone of the new trans-local consciousness'⁸

⁷ <https://generative-commons.eu/2020/05/05/ge-co-digital-tools/>

⁸ <https://www.commonsnetwork.org/programme/urban-commons-and-empowered-cities/>

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

They argue that the EU should devote time and resources to creative institutions of participatory democracy, learning from innovative practices taking place in many European cities. They make the following recommendations:

- The European Citizens' Initiative needs to change in order to become a useful, accessible tool for citizen participation with real possibilities for stimulating and influencing European legislative debates.
- The European Parliament's Petitions Committee needs greater resources, more parliamentary power and more accountable responsiveness from the European Commission in order to effectively channel and debate hundreds of citizens' petitions swiftly, effectively and in a transparent way.
- New digital technologies can facilitate and simplify the democratic participation of European citizens in the formulation, amendment and consideration of new EU legislation (Bloemen and Hammerstein, 2017: 13).

LabGov

LabGov⁹ – the LABORatory for the GOVERNance of the City as a Commons – is an international network of platforms engaged in exploring and developing methods, policies, and projects focused on the shared and collaborative management of urban spaces and resources. Situating their work within recent policy debates around the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, LabGov aligns itself with movements that criticise public institutions for commodifying collective urban resources and seek to develop alternatives.

Urban Commons

LabGov have developed the Co-City protocol, which has been trialled in different Italian cities, including Bologna (see the box on p.8). The concept of the Co-City situates the city as an infrastructure enabling cooperation, sharing, and participatory approaches to peer production, supported by open data and guided by principles of distributive justice. A Co-City is based on collaborative and polycentric governance of a variety of urban physical, environmental, cultural, knowledge and digital resources, which are managed or co-owned through contractual or institutionalized public-community or public-private-community partnerships (the so-called commons).

Several municipalities participated in developing Co-City projects and Co-Cities emerged in various European and North American cities, and in the Global South. LabGov created a [Co-Cities database](#) which collects 130+ cities implementing 400+ commons-based projects and urban policies LabGov and closely track their progress to run empirical analysis. Using the knowledge acquired through observation of experimentations in the Co-Cities projects and the database, the first version of the Co-City Protocol was codified. This protocol is a methodology aimed at guiding urban policy makers, researchers, and communities willing to be involved in co-governance experiments. It focuses on urban commons transitions, including patterns, processes and public policies where local communities committed to

⁹ <https://labgov.city/about-people/>

sustainable urban growth and fair resource management play a key role in partnership with other political, economic and institutional actors.

Participation at the local level

LabGov is based on the idea that in order to achieve social and institutional regeneration, it is necessary to create collaborative relationships between citizens, administrative authorities and businesses so that they can share scarce resources and take care of the commons, whether tangible or intangible, in urban and local communities. Christian Iaione (director of LabGov) has suggested that polycentric governance of the commons could be the lever for a governance strategy for urban commons, based on collaboration between citizens and administration on a large scale, with three possible applications: 1) everyday commoning, 2) wiki-commoning, and collaborative communication, and 3) collaborative urban planning and policy making (Iaione, 2016: 433).

Digital Innovation Hubs

Building on a [European network of Digital Innovation Hubs](#), the Commission aims to help companies improve their processes, products and services through the use of digital technologies.

Future Financial Framework (2021-2027): European Digital Innovation Hubs in Digital Europe Programme

The European Commission has proposed the creation of the first-ever [Digital Europe Programme](#) which will invest €9.2 billion to align the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027 with increasing digital challenges. In [a series of workshops](#), the Commission together with the Member States have developed the how European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) will be implemented within this programme.

Grant opportunities will focus on improved hub facilities and employment of personnel. This will allow EDIHs to deliver services that stimulate a broad uptake of Artificial Intelligence, HPC and Cybersecurity, in both industries (in particular SMEs and midcaps) and public sector organisations. The selection of EDIHs in DEP will follow a two-step process:

- Member States will designate potential hubs
- The Commission will launch a restricted call for proposals that these hubs need to apply for

Existing hubs, either funded to run experiments under Horizon 2020 or originating from other initiatives such as a local technology transfer institution, can also qualify to become EDIHs, provided that they pass all the steps of the selection procedures, both at Member State and European level

In the current context, developing digital platforms for existing participatory and commons-based initiatives will become a higher priority, and although this scheme is interested in companies and SMEs focusing on technology, the Digital Europe Programme states that Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) ‘can help ensure that every company, small or large, high-tech or not, can take advantage of digital opportunities’ with DIHs as ‘one-stop

shops that help companies become more competitive with regard to their business/ production processes, products or services using digital technologies’.

Again, language of experimentation and innovation reigns, as they state that ‘DIHs provide access to technical expertise and experimentation, so that companies can “test before invest”. They also provide innovation services, such as financing advice, training and skills development that are needed for a successful digital transformation’. Nevertheless, this could be a good source of alternative funding to ensure that commons-based projects have a sustainable and meaningful online presence.

Civic E-State

The purpose of the URBACT [Civic E-State](#) Transfer Network is to transfer (through adaptation) the Good Practice of the City of Naples, Lost & Found. URBACT state that this transfer network aims to guarantee the collective enjoyment as well as collective management of urban essential facilities conceived as urban commons. This public-community governance approach will secure fair and open access, participatory decision-making, sustainability and preservation for the benefit of future generations.

This project is one of 23 transfer networks. 25 countries are represented in the 23 networks which gather a total of 161 individual partners. About 37% of partners are newcomers to URBACT, meaning that they have never been involved in an URBACT II or III network before. The project consists of two periods: a Transfer Learning period, during which partners focus on transfer exchange and learning activities within the network, and a Transfer Sharing period, which is about disseminating this transfer experience to a wider audience. A list of all the [Transfer Networks](#) is available on their website.

In January 2020 URBACT published Five Early Recommendations from the URBACT Transfer Network which includes:

1. From the start, agree what success looks like.
 - a. Good practice transfer can be a messy business. Just because a solution works in one place doesn’t mean it can be neatly applied elsewhere. This isn’t a matter of copy and paste. The transplant process is often complex, particularly when the Good Practice in question is deep and systemic. One approach is to focus on specific elements of the Good Practice, which each city can more easily adapt and implement. This acknowledges that although the original model may not – or cannot – be replicated in its entirety, elements within it have universal potential.
2. Identify quick wins
 - a. Concepts imported from other places can meet local resistance. In the case of large-scale strategic solutions, it may be hard to discern the potential results. To address this, networks have found it helpful to identify tangible quick wins that can be rolled out in each participating city.
3. Start with the end in mind – and utilise tools to help chart progress
 - a. Partners agreed at the outset what a minimum level of transfer would look like. Each URBACT Transfer network produced a Transferability Plan, which each city partner complemented with its own statement of anticipated transfer progress.
4. Jump in with small-scale experimentation

- a. Prototyping new approaches is important and some networks have a specific framework to support small scale experimentation.
5. Make sure you understand what's going on – and explore different ways to tell the story
 - a. Transfer network cities have been doing this through a variety of channels – including transfer diaries and short videos.

Comparative Summary

Culture as a common good

In the years following the 2008 financial crisis, alongside widespread austerity measures, there have been trends in European cultural policy towards projects which mobilise notions of inclusion, participation and multi-sectoral collaboration. Under the related rubric of innovation, there is an emphasis on labs, networks and co-creation. A wide array of social, economic and political issues at the local level are sought to be addressed through culture and cultural heritage.

The [2015-18 Work Plan](#) for Culture focused on accessible and inclusive culture, cultural heritage, cultural and creative sectors (creative economy and innovation), promotion of cultural diversity, culture in EU external relations and mobility. Since then, the New European Agenda for Culture has provided the framework for the next phase of cooperation at EU level, which started in 2019. The [2019-22 Work Plan for Culture](#), adopted on 27 November 2018, defines three strategic objectives: harnessing the power of culture and cultural diversity for social cohesion and well-being by promoting cultural participation, the mobility of artists and the protection of heritage; boosting jobs and growth in the cultural and creative sectors by fostering arts and culture in education, promoting the relevant skills, and encouraging innovation in culture; strengthening international cultural relations by making the most of the potential of culture to foster sustainable development and peace (13948/182).

It sets out five main priorities for European cooperation in cultural policy-making:

- Sustainability in cultural heritage
- Cohesion and well-being
- An ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- Gender equality
- International cultural relations

The European Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 (2018/C 460/10) builds on the New European Agenda for Culture. The three strategic objectives of the New Agenda for Culture are 1) harnessing the power of culture and cultural diversity for social cohesion and well-being by promoting cultural participation, the mobility of artists and the protection of heritage; 2) boosting jobs and growth in the cultural and creative sectors by fostering arts and culture in education, promoting the relevant skills, and encouraging innovation in culture; 3) strengthening international cultural relations by making the most of the potential of culture to foster sustainable development and peace. (Veldpaus et al,

2019: 14). As such, while CCSC concerns around the commons, bottom-up policy-making and participatory approaches are not explicitly included in the main priorities, we can anticipate these issues being addressed through the first strategic objective, while a network of citizens labs could be conceived of as an innovative ecosystem, addressed in the second objective.

From these new trends in European policy-making, we can see that considerations of cultural participation and thriving cultural and creative industries are imagined to be part of different strategic objectives. It is clear that within less flexible initiatives – big, bulky ones such as ECoC – here are real tensions on the ground between policies of cultural participation and culture-led urban development that jostle up against each other every year. In the 2010s, we see references to the ECoC being ‘used as a shaper of creative economies’ (Comunian et al. 2010: 7) with different ECoCs expressing a desire to replicate a “Liverpool model” of regeneration. This focus on creative industries is repeated in future bids, and ‘represents the current iteration of policy orientation toward both ECoC specifically and urban cultural interventions more generally’ whereby ECoC is a catalyst or driver for creative industries (Campbell and O’Brien, 2020: 278).

However, it is possible to see that in currently-funded projects, particularly networks, there is a lot more scope and flexibility to pursue a commons approach to questions of culture, in sometimes quite radical ways. These projects are able to react more quickly to the current COVID-19 situation and are well-placed to promote co-creation and a commons approach through providing real support in local settings, should they take the initiative. In larger projects, I cautiously suggest that mobilisation of “innovation” as a policy buzzword may be replacing “participation”. Furthermore, it is possible to anticipate more policy recommendations around digital culture and digital commons being higher on the agenda in the near future.

The relationship between local authorities, citizens, and the cultural sector more broadly is reconfigured in several policy recommendations. These include city administrations moving to a ‘partnership mindset, where the city acts as a trusted partner and facilitator’ (CCR: 2017:22) which is echoed in the Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage recommendations for cities to ‘reverse the government-citizen relationship as a provider-customer model, through establishing a more open, horizontal relationship with clear, mutually-agreed upon roles in cultural heritage decision-making processes’ (2019).

Interdisciplinarity and cross-sectoral collaboration

Inter-disciplinarity and cross-sectoral collaboration emerges as a central theme across policy recommendations. The EC’s Communication Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe (2014) emphasises cooperation and collaboration between the different administrations responsible for each sectoral policy and cross-disciplinary teamwork as essential to fully exploiting European cultural heritage.¹⁰ From the different projects, we can see that such policies can be mobilised for very different aims and have vastly different expressions in diverse contexts. Inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral

¹⁰ The Commission now invites all stakeholders to jointly look into how public policies at all levels, including the EU, could better be marshalled to draw out the long term and sustainability value of Europe’s cultural heritage, and develop a more integrated approach to its preservation and valorisation’ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe (COM/2014/0477 final).

collaboration is recommended by all projects, but without being grounded in notions of social justice, democracy and the commons, this buzzword becomes quite hollow. For example, while CCR is keen to convince politicians that investment in culture is smart and leads to economic development, and most innovation comes from interdisciplinary collaboration, the OMC working groups' recommendations are more geared towards a participatory approach to cultural heritage and inclusion with the ultimate goals being for social benefit.

Urban commons

Social inclusion

Fostering social inclusion through culture and cultural heritage is often central to European cultural policy albeit addressed in quite different ways across different projects, initiatives and programmes. Social inclusion considered in relation to the commons – that 'every community has the right to their own culture' (CCSC Charter 2i) – means something quite different than social inclusion considered in relation to the trajectory of the concept of "participation". Of course, this is because the history of the commons lies in social justice movements, and it is harder to co-opt for creative city strategies, urban branding, and regeneration goals. As such we will see different uses of participation throughout projects, understood in terms of access to new audiences, recognition, engagement, and very rarely: actual direct involvement in setting the priorities, decision-making, and evaluation criteria (both OMC working groups; ENoLL).

There most interesting and potentially radically democratic projects seem to be in networks, focusing on the commons. As such we can see that the EU is funding projects which seek to connect like-minded projects, initiatives, public institutions and authorities, organisations and local community groups in a more organic way (LabGov, Commons Network, Generative European)

It seems that at one end of the scale – the level of networks and projects that don't involve powerful stakeholders, such as Voice of Culture – we see the Faro convention being invoked as a way to establish the notion of commons as a common language. For example The Voices of Culture Brainstorming Report, Promoting Intercultural Dialogue and bringing communities together through culture in shared public spaces (2016) argue for mobilising the Faro Convention as an 'innovative tool in linking the concept of the "common heritage of Europe" to human rights and fundamental freedoms,' in the sense that it 'provides an original contribution to the issues related to "living together quality of life and the living environments where citizens wish to prosper, all those ideas are deeply connected to the idea of building "shared public spaces"' (2016: 3). On the other end of the scale, we'll see later in the chapter that the European Year of Cultural Heritage Objective 9 seeks to invoke the "spirit" of the Faro Convention, which seems somewhat watered down.

Alternative funding

Across the projects analysed, different kinds of approaches to funding, and alternative funding mechanisms were discussed.

- The Urban Agenda for the EU seeks to identify, support, integrate and improve traditional, innovative and user-friendly sources of funding for urban areas at the relevant institutional level, including from European structural and investment funds

(ESIF) (in accordance with the legal and institutional structures already in place) without creating or increasing EU funding for urban authorities.

- The Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage recommends developing, in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB), a concept for a pilot blending facility that could address the specific needs of cities in terms of investment in culture and cultural heritage
- The Partnership also recommend developing “culture bonds” specifically earmarked for use by culture and cultural heritage projects. The culture bond could come with tax incentives such as a tax exemption and tax credits, making it an attractive investment.
- Match-funding is recommended in many reports, as part of the need to diversify funding for culture, this could involve working with private stakeholders and developing relevant match-funding schemes; providing non-financial support to the cultural and creative sectors’ (CCR: 2017: 19). A key programme is Incredibol! in Bologna which is a featured case study in the mapping.
- Cities could provide grants through calls for projects embodying interdisciplinary skills; establishing innovation vouchers, namely small grants to encourage companies to access creative services (design, advertising, artistic intervention etc.) (CCR: 2017: 24).
- Digital Europe Programme funding for Digital Innovation Hubs could be a good source of alternative funding to ensure that projects have a sustainable and meaningful online presence.

In addition, there are some interesting projects on alternative financing which I have not gone into in depth in terms of mapping, but are worth sharing:

- As part of the [European Crowdfunding Network](#) initiated a 22 month project, Crowdfunding for Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) – Kick-starting the cultural economy which made recommendations towards a plan of actions at European level, and an evaluation of different scenarios to optimize the connections between existing crowdfunding platforms. They created a report of case studies (Crowdfunding4Culture, 2017) a [website](#) with resources and a [Platforms map](#), showing platforms that host crowdfunding campaigns for cultural and creative projects.
- [Goteo](#) aims to develop social network for free culture microfinancing based on the notion of community profit introducing the possibility of returning money in the form of packets of "training" and educational methodologies.
- The OMC working group on access to finance for the cultural and creative sectors produced a handbook (2016) which recommends:
 - Test and implement new and innovative financing schemes.
 - Improve access to finance through better business support. Encourage partnerships with companies in other sectors.
 - Improve access to finance through investor awareness.
 - Provide better data on the CCS and companies in those sectors.
 - Harness the use of IP rights as assets and collateral (2016: 106)

Participation at the local level

A critical analysis of all the projects analysed would involve understanding the power dynamics at play in the kinds of “participation” taking place, which lies beyond the scope of this report. Criticism around the ways in which socio-economic, gender, class and racial

inequalities in society do not magically disappear within participatory approaches has been levelled at such policies since their popularity in the early 2000s (see Cooke and Kothari, 2001). The European Expert Network on Culture (EENC) report found that there are ‘obvious gaps between the realities of participatory practice and its presentation and safeguarding in for example staff training, publicity documents, organisational plans and in grant applications’ (Sani et al, 2015: 70). Analysis at European level shows that there is a variety of participatory practices, although there might be a high level of involvement of citizens or communities, such practices do not necessarily foresee a system of “shared responsibility” for the cultural resources at stake. Nevertheless, they sometimes pave the way for future true participatory governance practices (Sani et al, 2015: 3).

Depending on the initiative, project or programme, this is due to the multiple and sometimes conflicting objectives of EU cultural policy. The greatest disjuncture between stated aims and on-the-ground experiences lies in the experiences of ECoC host cities. Here, policies that seek to include different stakeholders inevitably do not go far enough. The hopes and ambitions for more a sustainable local engagement with culture rub up against culture-led regeneration projects seeking to emulate famous successes. For initiatives such as ECoC, the multiple objectives of the ECoC programme are not mutually reinforcing, and are often contradictory (O’Callaghan, 2011). The events are supposed to incorporate economic and cultural objectives, introduce both local culture and cultural heritage and European cultures and identities, stage international arts events, and simultaneously advance the local cultural sector and social inclusion objectives. Such mutually antagonistic discourses and policy objectives create inevitable fragmentation, anxiety and dissonance in the host cities, and such tensions are apparent to different extents in all ECoC cities analysed in this report. Across the different ECoC cities, strikingly different accounts can be found in academic literature and the ex post reports. This is partly due to the wide range of activities that take place during the ECoC year, but there is definitely a wide gulf between the stated aims of the programme – which speak to themes of participation and co-creation – and the experiences of different actors in the host cities.

The example of Turku Capital of Subculture is interesting, as it is a form of grassroots cultural activism, “culturejamming” the “heavy” ECoC, with its programming at times an explicit counter-discourse, at others a dialogue, with the ECoC. It leads Lähdesmäki to ponder how the ECoC initiative could be more open and flexible to diverse cultural attempts and interests in the local cultural scene. Could grass roots and bottom-up initiatives be involved more effectively in the planning and implementation of the ECoC year? The renewal of the whole ECoC initiative by deconstructing its controlled, management ideas, top-down policies and aims for coherence and clarity in the structure of the cultural programme might enable a broader participation and involvement of local citizens, bottom-up initiatives and grass roots-level cultural activities in the implementation of the ECoC year (2013:614).

All projects mention the important role of local and citizen participation at some level in terms of policy-making. Co-creation is outlined as an approach in CCR, and is the brand of Umeå2014 ECoC, but it is the OMC working groups and Urban Agenda Partnership reports that go into more depth about the pre-conditions necessary for such policies, and the messiness of what it might mean to have different actors take leading roles in decision-making processes. In terms of what sustainable involvement of participants might entail, there is not much detail in recommendations, which could be due to the length of such EU-funded projects, which in themselves are not overly sustainable.

Here, Hudson et al's discussion of co-creation (Ind and Coates 2013 in 2017: 1549) in their research, might be useful

- 1) Co-creation: people working together to create cultural events
 - a. this raises the question of whose culture is being created and whether what is created serves to reinforce the status quo or whether it has the potential to alter existing power relations towards greater equality
- 2) Co-creation: people coming together physically, emotionally and existentially
 - a. Here, dialogue is stressed as a way to enhance public participation in conversations about culture and society at large.
 - b. What is created here is not necessarily 'culture' in a narrower sense but rather a conversation or encounter that enables a dialogue to be shaped that transgresses social and cultural boundaries. By creating encounters, new relations are initiated which allow people to share experiences and emotions. Although some projects express ideas about how to create a more inclusive city, it is not clear in what way these temporary, transient meetings will influence the social relations and power structures of the city. There is thus, we argue, a danger of over-emphasizing the revolutionary potential of people occupying the same physical space (Schmauch & Giritli Nygren, 2014)
- 3) Co-creation: creating together to change power relations in society
 - a. Here the focus is on the actual participation of the public and co-creation is described as an active exchange between the cultural actors/practitioners and the participants/audience beyond the cultural event itself. (Sandberg et al, 2017: 1549)

Bearing this in mind, how are the types of encounters that take place through participatory projects presented in the reports, evaluations, handbooks and empirical studies? The accidental encounter becomes a somewhat mythical entity for CCR, leading to interdisciplinary innovation, and facilitated through policies that bring people together in spaces, or through disruptive mediators. For ECHN, peer-led learning, visiting different hubs around Europe allows for new relationships to be forged, with invaluable experience of different forms of governance, place-making and working conditions. In the Urban Agenda on inclusion, we can see that encounters have gone beyond "one-off" meetings, to a more systematic engagement with the EMAB. However, here there is a risk that participatory approaches will not lead to any redistribution of power and that dissenting voices may be marginalized. Furthermore, due to the lack of relevant national ministry members, it is hard to see whether the learning from these encounters will travel to the appropriate level and as such may be pointless. Even if EMAB members note a change in the Partnership actors, who realise that migrants need to be 'integral partners in shaping integration policies,' it is important to note that participatory practices can be undemocratic and destructive if decontextualized and disconnected from crucial concepts such as democracy, empowerment and equality (Carpentier & Dahlgren, 2011 in Sandberg et al, 2017). Thus, while Heimann and Sturmer argue that the Partnership could play the role of an advisor with a multi-level governance perspective, providing a space for constructive discussions on policy proposals and recommendations for the European Commission, MEPs, the JRC and other think tanks (2019: 26) we must recall that its legitimacy partly arises because of the EMAB, and we must be careful to not make policy recommendations that instrumentalise already marginalised people.

More democratic bottom-up decision-making

All projects, initiatives and programmes pay lip service to participatory and bottom-up processes as a way to involve local stakeholders and achieve a level of community involvement. This could be due to the position of participatory approaches to cultural policy-making on the European agenda, having been proposed in the Council conclusions on Cultural Governance in 2012.¹¹ An EU-level concern with becoming ‘closer’ to citizens through the urban projects is a key motivation behind the 2016 Pact of Amsterdam, which created a new model of multilevel and multidimensional cooperation for urban policy stakeholders, through the creation of voluntary Partnerships to undertake analysis of the priorities of the Urban Agenda. The partnerships of the Urban Agenda address key urban issues by utilising EU regulatory mechanisms, and a participatory approach: within EU regulatory framework, multi-stakeholder involvement, partnerships and wider public participation are mentioned as key principles in a series of policy documents. The European Code of Conduct proposes a strengthened partnership approach in planning and spending and lays down a common set of standards to improve consultation, participation and dialogue with partners during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds. The urban dimension of Cohesion Policy ensures a participatory approach through the involvement of relevant stakeholders, now and in the future (EC, 2019: 7)

The key question around the Urban Agenda Partnerships is the extent to which they can make an impact at urban level without the involvement of relevant actors. The Urban Agenda is all about cities making best use of European regulation, funding and knowledge. However, this can cause some issues around questions of scaling up and practicalities of implementation. If an initiative, programme or policy focused on urban issues, yet the actions need to be addressed at a national level, this can create obstacles. In the Urban Partnership on the inclusion of migrants and refugees, Denmark, Greece, Portugal and Italy took part, but none of the Actions were led by national representatives. According to Heimann and Sturmer, this could be because the national ministries asked to participate in the Urban Partnerships under the Urban Agenda were those responsible for urban affairs, though not necessarily those working on policy fields related to the different topics of the various Partnerships (2019: 22). This means that however well-intentioned urban policies are, there might not be the political will to follow through at a national level.

The OMC working group on culture and cultural heritage built on the council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage (2014/C 436/01)¹² and recommend that cultural heritage, as a common good, requires developing a framework of collective governance (operating on multiple levels and involving multiple stakeholders), where all

¹¹ council conclusions of 26 November 2012 on Cultural Governance: the Council conclusions of 26 November 2012 on Cultural Governance that underlined the importance to make cultural governance more open, participatory, effective and coherent and invited Member States to promote a participatory approach to cultural policy-making;

¹² The Council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage (2014/C 436/01) recognises that participatory governance of cultural heritage seeks the active involvement of relevant stakeholders in the framework of public action — i.e. public authorities and bodies, private actors, civil society organisations, NGOs, the volunteering sector and interested people — in decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cultural heritage policies and programmes to increase accountability and transparency of public resource investments as well as to build public trust in policy decisions/

actors are actively involved in the maintenance, management and development of common heritage' (OMC, 2018: 17) The Urban Agenda on Culture and Cultural Heritage extends this notion a bit further, recommending the integration of participatory approaches and embedding of cultural dimensions in the early stages of urban planning and development programmes (2019).

However, in the European Agenda for Culture (2018) participatory governance isn't headlined in the ten European initiatives following the European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018), and we see that themes around participation have been translated into "engagement (shared heritage)" and "innovation". There is one EYCH Initiative, 9 – Heritage for all: citizen participation and social innovation, which 'seeks to continue the spirit of the Faro convention':

Objects, places and traditions are important not by themselves, but because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent. Heritage is a common good, it does not only belong to professionals, but to communities and people in general. In the spirit of the Faro convention of the Council of Europe, this initiative promotes a wider understanding of heritage, placing people and communities at the centre and involving them in making decisions about heritage. Research, experimentation and practice will engage and empower a large number of actors to care for heritage. New models of participatory governance and management of cultural heritage will be tested; social innovation and links with other sectors are also being encouraged.

As such, I want to cautiously suggest that we can see a shift at the EU and national level from considering participatory approaches as a move to more democratic and collective forms of governance and meaningful co-creation, to broader policies encouraging experimentation, innovation, and testing out ideas – which are found across all the projects in any case. Further evidence supporting my claim is that participatory governance and the commons approach of the OMC report is listed within the new European Framework for Cultural Heritage (2018) under "innovation" and considered as social innovation, alongside digital innovation. This is interesting, considering that "innovation" as a buzzword is hardly new, and neither are participatory approaches.

Use of EU projects/other tools to foster participation and gain legitimacy

A major trend within the Urban Agenda and OMC reports is recommending progressive cultural projects and initiatives to take advantage of already existing EU funds or programmes, including those outside the field of culture. The precondition for cultural projects to be able to do this, is having knowledge of such programmes. Taking advantage of existing EU initiatives is likely to become more relevant as a policy, as budgets are further restricted during COVID-19. The OMC working group on intercultural dialogue: Prioritise funding for cultural and artistic projects for the integration of refugees and migrants under national and EU programmes, including those outside the field of culture (e.g. at EU level under the Europe for Citizens programme, Asylum & Migration Fund, and Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, as well as Creative Europe) (2019: 60). Furthermore, improving local authorities' access to EU-level funding is an incredibly useful impact of the Partnerships for inclusion created by the Urban Agenda.

For networks, being involved in European projects is not only a vital source of income, but allows for a greater scope of influence, activity and community-building. The ECHN definitely gained legitimacy and fostered participation because of the European nature of

the project, and this is something that the current independent network, alongside other networks such as EUKN, capitalise upon to attract membership. Research on living labs recommends that at a regional level, governance institutions can stimulate networking, provide support through facilitating strategy processes, joint opportunity creation, and develop the legitimacy of the lab (Katzy, Mensink and Sikkema, 2007).

Sharing best practices and challenges

While there is a wide array of interesting projects and initiatives taking place, sharing knowledge and best practice seems to be a challenge across EU-funded projects. Even with the Urban Agenda, whose goal is partly to tackle this, visibility has been an issue: the Partnership is little known by relevant organizations outside the Partnership' (Heimann and Sturner, 2019: 22). As such, it is important to delineate two inter-connected issues: good documentation and evaluation practices, and good sharing and dissemination practices.

Documentation and evaluation

There are calls across the projects for “creative evaluation systems” and in the case of ECHN, the importance of communicating the practices of creative hub experiments to public local authorities is highlighted. Dessein and Faini argue that creative hubs could help identify emerging needs and new ways of managing welfare, health-care, work environments (2018). The CCR report recommends that regular feedback should be ‘built into the policies and programmes to ensure the right data is collected from the get-go, and complemented with punctual external evaluations,’ with the aim of demonstrating the long-term effects of policies and programmes, and with an eye towards raising additional funding from third parties (CCR, 2017: 25). The OMC CCH report similarly recommends supporting the development of methodological tools (i.e. benchmarks) on how to run participatory governance of the cultural heritage process, to guide the development of standardised methods of measuring and reporting outcomes, creating an evidence base for respective policies. For them, highlighting obstacles, barriers and challenges is an important part of this. The Partnership for Culture and Cultural Heritage seek to develop toolkits, impact indicators, and hospitality policies as mitigation strategies to minimise the effects of gentrification.

While the living lab approach has been introduced as a methodology for experimentation and co-creation, Mulder and Stappers (2009) argue that current living lab practices demonstrate reactive users rather than active co-creators and they suggest making use of living lab infrastructure to undertake continuous evaluation, using generative tools and context mapping (2009: 8).

Sharing best practices and tools

Examples of practical documents alongside reports, handbooks and recommendations shared include:

- Cards (ENOLL)
- Toolkit (ECHN)
- Policy papers (ECHN)

There is widespread emphasis on sharing tools for future projects, yet few do this in a clear straightforward manner. ECHN has many interesting outputs (policy papers, toolkits) which are not all online. The CCR website transformed into another project website, with the content held on one partner's website only.

Aside from sharing knowledge between different stakeholder and governmental bodies, groups etc, the Partnership for Culture and Cultural Heritage argue that citizens themselves can be mobilised through access and exchange of knowledge and data, including data collection mechanisms, experiences of developing and using indicators for guidance-based planning, sharing of know-how and best practices, keeping up to date with research, support mechanisms and opportunities.

The Partnership on Inclusion recommend addressing different groups with different communication strategies: for example, local authorities, city networks, NGOs working in urban areas, migrants and refugee organisations active in cities, research institutions focusing on migration and urban integration, national integration/migration ministries as well as a wide range of EU level actors (2019: 41).

The most innovative diffusion of best practice following a project is the case of the ECHN. Since the end of the ECHN project in 2018 the British Council has developed a new learning programme, Creative Hubs Academy, with Hivos and Nesta, specifically for emerging and established creative hubs globally. They are doing a similar project, Creative Hubs Exchange Programmes, taking what they learnt with ECHN and applying it globally in South Africa, Taiwan, and the Phillipines. However, it may be that this case is so powerful merely because it is visible to an outsider: the same project partner has used the same terminology and a clear chronology. In the case of other projects, there is perhaps similar learning that carries on to the next project, but it is not as clearly delineated – for example, the relationship between Culture for Cities and Regions and Cultural Heritage in Action has not been explored, yet from a cursory glance at the website it is clear that peer-learning remains central to the project methodology.

Labs and hubs

Within academic debates, living labs are considered useful in terms of developing new policy and governance related to grand societal challenges such as democracy and participation, urban development and sustainable energy. Living labs have been considered in relation to 'collaborative' or 'open' processes of innovation and experimental governance in which co-creation of products or services is key (Dekker et al, 2019: 6).

The notion of the encounter as previously mentioned, is incredibly potent amongst cultural policymakers who push for creative hubs and labs. This is because as spaces they are able to bring together inter-disciplinary actors (as promoted by EU policy), can foster cross-fertilisation of ideas (to use the jargon), and do so through facilitating encounters between different actors. Policy recommendations around the encounter, and its importance, are sprinkled across the reports analysed. CCR recommends an urgent shift in perspective in terms of investment, and in terms of what constitutes RDI for arts and culture, framed in terms of "innovative encounters" – which I argue could be considered in terms of a citizens' lab. Creative hubs as "collective intelligence laboratories" connecting individuals and organisations from a variety of sectors, 'encounters' which encourage new opportunities, cross-fertilisation of professional and personal experiences (Dessein and Faini, 2018).

The notion of a hub (or lab) as a working eco-system is put forwards by Dessein and Faini, who argue that hubs adapt their environment to the needs of its participants, and that the specific forms of collectivity this generates ‘enhances the individuals’ resilience’ (2018). This chimes with current Work Plan for Culture, which has creative ecosystems as a priority, with debates around neoliberal resilience of the individual, and the fragility of CCS during COVID-19.

Living labs are often associated with the notion of open innovation (Chesbrough 2006) and there is growing research on “urban living labs” of local governments in which citizens and local actors are collaboratively developing solutions to problems in their own neighbourhoods (cf. Voytenko, McCormick, Evans, & Schliwa, 2016). However, as many ULL related projects are emerging, Voytenko et al argue that there is no clear understanding of the ultimate role ULLs could or should play in urban governance, whether they represent a completely new phenomenon or if they are replacing other forms of participation, collaboration, experimentation, learning and governance in cities. (Voytenko et al, 2015: 4). Furthermore, as can be seen from the role of participation in different projects analysed in this report, there are many issues to consider concerning participation in living labs.

There have been various ethical issues around participation in living labs raised in scholarship on the subject. For example, there is ambiguity around “user-centred” or “user-driven” processes. The European Commission (2009:8) argue that living labs ‘put the user in the driver’s seat’ of the innovation process, which can be somewhat problematic in the sense that “user-driven” innovation processes requires quite labour-intensive activities, including the coordination of stakeholders. As such, even if users are able to occupy this position, they are unlikely to be willing or able to do so without compensation or formal involvement with organisations (Duttilleul et al 2010: 78). Furthermore, a user-centred or user-driven process implies that systematic attention is given to users’ priorities and evaluation criteria, but this in itself requires substantial organisational, managerial, and quality control devices to guarantee users’ interests (Ibid). The lack of clarity around ‘whether users’ perceived potential benefits will outweigh the real cost of participation’ (Duttilleul et al. 2010: 79) highlights the necessity of a shared commons framework and approach from the outset.

The governance of such spaces is incredibly important, taking into consideration the ethics of participation as previously discussed. Dessein and Faini call for self-management of institutionally-owned professional spaces (in this case creative hubs) through hybridisation of governance models: bottom-up approaches offering ‘tailor-made solutions for specific communities and environments’. Overall, living lab literature has given little attention to participants’ interests, operating on implicit assumption that they are cheap or unpaid contributors, motivated by the anticipation that their participation will solve their problem or lead to “better” designs’ (Mulder and Stappers, 2009: 2). There are currently many urban living lab projects taking place at the European level, and if their infrastructure is used to undertake continuous evaluation, using qualitative methods of participant observation, then it will be interesting to find out what kinds of practices and processes take place.

Networks

Networks of living labs are clearly attractive to policymakers: they accelerate knowledge transfer to practitioners. Collaboration in public-private partnerships spurs early dissemination of knowledge to practitioners (Van Geenhuizen, 2013). In turn, stakeholders

in the living lab diffuse knowledge in their networks (Almirall & Wareham, 2011). There are several networks of labs, and there have been different approaches to thinking about how labs could be connected through shared values. ENoLL developed the harmonisation cube, taking the form of a Rubik's Cube to connect living labs with shared values around issues of governance, service creation, user involvement, infrastructure, innovation outcomes and methods and tools. Another mode of comparison is to consider the 'driver' of the lab. Leminen et al (2012) propose four different types of living lab, based on their analysis of 26 labs: utiliser-driven, enabler-driven, provider-driven, and user-driven, as detailed in the table below, which shows different kinds of characteristics of living labs (2012: 8).

Characteristic	Type of Living Labs			
	<i>Utilizer-driven</i>	<i>Enabler-driven</i>	<i>Provider-driven</i>	<i>User-driven</i>
Purpose	Strategic R&D activity with preset objectives	Strategy development through action	Operations development through increased knowledge	Problem solving by collaborative accomplishments
Organization	Network forms around an utilizer, who organizes action for rapid knowledge results	Network forms around a region (regional development) or a funded project (e.g., public funding)	Network forms around a provider organization(s)	Network initiated by users lacks formal coordination mechanisms
Action	Utilizer guides information collection from the users and promotes knowledge creation that supports the achievement of preset goals	Information is collected and used together and knowledge is co-created in the network	Information is collected for immediate or postponed use; new knowledge is based on the information that provider gets from the others	Information is not collected formally and builds upon users' interests; knowledge is utilized in the network to help the user community
Outcomes	New knowledge for product and business development	Guided strategy change into a preferred direction	New knowledge supporting operations development	Solutions to users' everyday-life problems
Lifespan	Short	Short/medium/long	Short/medium/long	Long

Peer-learning is a key feature of networks, with many types of peer-to-peer activities, such as study visits and coaching visits, skill sharing, conferences and so on. The importance of building a community in a wider European context is valuable for different stakeholders in terms of (1) sharing knowledge and experience (2) learning best practice (2) expanding networks, and (3) putting different approaches into perspective.

Transnational city networks are increasingly recognised in academic literature as a specific form of governance for the global distribution of knowledge, and as a new type of foreign policy of cities and increasingly, regions (Zimmermann, 2020: 99). While networks such as EURO CITIES and URBACT are important platforms for European policy transfer, Zimmermann argues that 'we do not know much about the effectiveness of these networks or about the question of which policies travel and which do not,' and that the few existing empirical studies 'have raised doubts with regard to the optimistic view that transnational city networks facilitate learning and the diffusion of policy innovation' (Caponio 2018, in Zimmermann 2020: 102). He notes that knowledge exchange, a crucial aspect of

transnational city networks, has received little attention in empirical research (an exception being Straßheim 2011, 2013).

The supposed horizontal and non-hierarchical character of relations within networks leads to mutual exchange of knowledge and best practices at comparatively low costs (Zimmermann, 2020: 104). However, there are some critical aspects to consider in relation to the 'cost' of participation, which will be useful to consider in relation to the networks discussed in this report. The following summary of critical issues from the literature (Straßheim 2013; McGuire and Agranoff 2011 in Zimmermann, 2020: 104-5) has been amended.

- 1) network members have to invest in the network – continuous participation, membership fees, tasks and duties (see the case of ECHN)
- 2) network members need to be able to manage redundancies (redundant information) and cope with abundant information (see the case of CCR and numerous documents)
- 3) city networks often have unbalanced membership regarding size, wealth, territorial representation and can be dominated by members that are resourceful global policy leaders (e.g. Lyon and Barcelona) (see Civic E-State; each Transfer Network has a lead city which inevitably creates hierarchies)
- 4) trust and norms of reciprocity are the most important mechanisms for the functioning of networks. They are very fragile and can be difficult to negotiate (gE.CO Living Lab have already noted this in relating to public authorities).
- 5) Networks, while easily transecting national borders, does not guarantee that the ideas and knowledge produced, shared, distributed will be effectively used in different national institutional frameworks. (see the Urban Partnership on the inclusion of migrants and refugees).

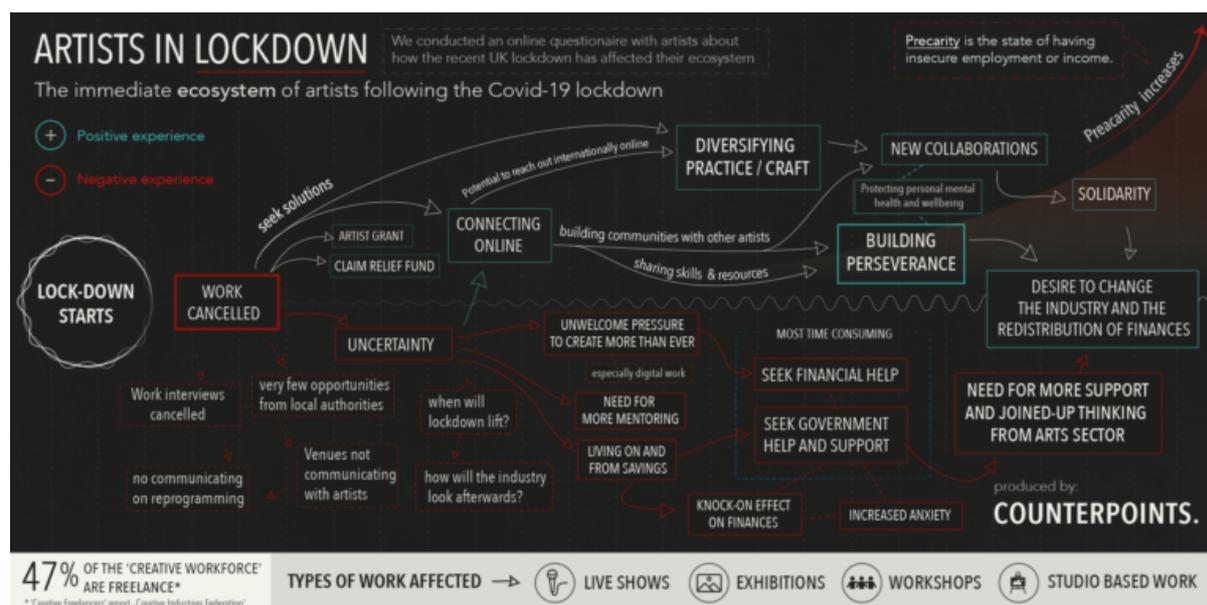
Within the EU there are an increasing number of active urban networks, many operating with a commons-based approach. Their relevance can be anticipated to increase, as networks become coping strategies in 'times of crisis when the quest for new policy solutions and external support for local solutions is at stake' (2020: 104). Such networks have high levels of expertise, but are more agile with regards to deliverables, and possibly have access to different kinds of funding that could be diverted to urgent and emergent needs during the pandemic. Through dynamic and democratic processes, there is a possibility that such labs and networks could make proposals together with citizens in their local setting, for new inclusive and participatory solutions that react quickly to the current situation to provide real support to communities on the ground.

Recommendations

These recommendations are written in response to and building on the dialogue around the CCSC draft recommendations as of 8 May 2020.

Experimental pilot project as a continuation of exploring CCSC themes

- The pilot project will require contextualised understanding of how the urban labs work in practice, how the specific local circumstances interact with the larger institutional and regulatory framework, and how this interaction influences the outcome of the specific projects. This research and evaluation should be undertaken before the project begins.
- The impact of COVID-19 on the project members should be undertaken before the pilot, through doing a survey with current participants of urban labs. For example, see the work done by Counterpoints.¹³ There is some work that is being undertaken to collate the impact of COVID-19 on the arts and cultural heritage that could inform this¹⁴ including a very recent article by Mark Banks on the work of culture and C-19 (2020).¹⁵



¹³ <https://counterpointsarts.org.uk/artists-in-lockdown-a-counterpoints-arts-online-survey>

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic_on_the_arts_and_cultural_heritage

¹⁵ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1367549420924687>

Citizens Lab/House of commons

- Establish links with ongoing European projects committed to the commons, for example LabGov and gE.CO living lab, to foster collaboration around participatory methodologies such as a legal toolkit.
- Reframing the commons and participation under innovation and notions of creative ecosystems might be a way of securing additional funds. This is a trend within current European Framework for Cultural Heritage and the New European Agenda for Culture.
- All members should undertake critical training around diversity and diversity work, drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed (2012)¹⁶ in order to grapple with the CCSC internal draft recommendation of ‘inclusion of all subjects and groups’ and notions of ‘positive discrimination’. Ahmed’s work explores the gap between symbolic commitments to diversity and the experience of those who embody diversity.
- Build trust-based relationships through collectively writing ground rules, and safeguarding policies (see below).
- Consider the role of democratic accountability structures: a board of trustees could be initiated, including local community members. Their meetings and feedback could also be used to develop qualitative indicators to “measure” and study the lab, and as a tool/ barometer of the social values emerging.
- Using open source and accessible tools will become even more important, and a recent resource could be useful: <https://etherpad.wikimedia.org/p/online-tools-for-the-pandemic>

Participation

- Consider the different kinds of impacts COVID-19 will have on the participation of different actors, including the working conditions of cultural workers, gig and freelance workers, during the pandemic. The Fairwork report on platform workers has useful and transferable policy recommendations.¹⁷
- Addressing the power dynamics at play, acknowledging existing societal inequalities of different contexts, and taking explicit steps to address them is of paramount importance.
- Consider how such dynamics might change during the current period, due to exacerbating socio-economic inequalities, different caring responsibilities, disabilities, grieving and trauma.
- It is not always clear to see where participation will lead. In order to ensure sustainable participation of different actors, different kinds of assurances could be made for example around expectations, boundaries, length of the project, a roadmap of actions
- The cost of participation needs to be addressed. Participatory processes are labour-intensive, and as such necessitate some kind of compensation, which could be in the form of in-kind support in training and consulting.
- Accountability and safeguarding frameworks and processes need to be in place and could be collectively written at the policy events.
- Ensure systematic attention is given not only to participants’ ideas and experiences, but their priorities, and their evaluation criteria as well.

¹⁶ The introduction is available to read for free: <https://read.dukeupress.edu/books/book/2209/chapter/251698/IntroductionOn-Arrival>

¹⁷ <https://fair.work/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2020/04/COVID19-Report-Final.pdf>

- Identify the motivations behind different stakeholders' involvement in participatory processes and build on these.
- Support and contribute to new digital platforms that are seeking to bring people together. For example, existing networks ECHN, as part of Creative FLIP, have started a new digital platform: <https://creativesunite.eu/>
- Setting up informal gatherings online could foster conviviality.

Networks: a shift from quantitative-based approach to value-based approach

- In terms of sharing knowledge, resources (including funding) and collaborating on ideas, networks clearly still have great relevance during this pandemic. Depending on the activity of the house of commons, this period could allow for closer connections to be made with local communities and local authorities. We can see that this has taken place through mutual aid initiatives across Europe which have organised structures, accountability, shared values which are collectively negotiated.
- A house of commons could play a key role in such networks, as a link or mediator between EU-level resources and local issues.
- The current situation entails rethinking the kind of peer-learning activities that have been popular for the last decade. However, there has been a rise in online learning and knowledge sharing, which could take place using open-source digital tools.
- There could be a shift towards more focused, strategic encounters, which could include one-to-one mentoring, very specific seminars and skill sharing for example.
- In order to have a more open networks rather than consisting of only those listed in the application, there are different options to consider. Membership could be on a rolling basis, could involve curation of an email list (see ICA daily email). British Council's PLATFORMER is establishing new communities through giving up their online platforms to cultural and creative workers.

Culture of Commons at the EU level

- Support existing initiatives in their goal to have a commons perspective. For example, the new European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage mentions the OMC report on participatory governance with only one reference, and it is clear that there needs to be more input regarding participatory approaches.
- Forging strong connections with ongoing EU projects which have a commons perspective could lead to a stronger evidence base for EU-level policy-making.
- Multi-dimensional and sectoral encounters: reconsider sustainable engagement during pandemic – more focused workshops between different stakeholders.
- Link up with Horizon2020 projects which are focusing on cross-sectoral projects, for example OpenHeritage, CLIC and gE.Co living lab, to build a more solid base for case for restructuring the Creative Europe programme.

Alternative funding mechanisms

- Use the network to share knowledge to take advantage of EU-level funding schemes and projects around alternative funding, for example the Digital Europe Programme, microfinancing initiatives (Goteo) and crowdfunding (European Crowdfunding network).

- Ensure flexibility around the releasing of funds. For example, a collective pot through which different members of the network can periodically apply, or a collective unofficial interest-free “loans” between different members.
- Crowdsourcing and skill-sharing through network-sponsored timebank activities could be pursued.
- Around inclusive participation: there could be sponsoring of labs which are run by marginalised groups. This could be collectively decided upon, akin to Edgofund and other similar social justice-oriented funding initiatives.¹⁸

Sharing best practices / documentation:

- Ensure ongoing qualitative research with and through the urban labs, and the future citizens lab/house of commons.
- Acknowledging the messiness and contingency of co-creation as something working both towards and against democratizing culture (cf Walmsley, 2013) and address this through ongoing critical reflection of the process.
- Ongoing critical reflection around the process of the urban labs can lead to a well-developed collective benchmarking and transferability.
- This qualitative research should emphasise ways in which different actors are experiencing the process, with critical reflection on experiences of participation in the project, which can inform future policy.
- Such research should use mixed methods, creative and audio/visual methods, which could involve:
 - Analysis of audiences through surveys
 - Interviews and focus groups
 - Oral history
 - Ongoing diagrams of governance structures and decision-making processes
 - Auto-ethnographic methods of journals, video and image diaries
- It is important to generate documentation that the stakeholders themselves would find useful, generative and nourishing. For example:
 - Impact studies that could generate future funds.
 - Descriptions that could be used for website, community campaign.
 - Materials or website design to communicate their services/etc.
- This could be a way to incentivise participation, through small organisations, labs, groups being paired with a researcher, grant writer, graphic/web designer, illustrator or copywriter. The idea being that they self-identify a specific skill they lack, which could be matched.
- Expand visibility through targeting different communication for different groups.

¹⁸ https://www.edgofund.org.uk/other_funders

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