Human Cities
Challenging the city scale
2014-2018
Investigation
Since 2014, and thanks to the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union, the Human Cities_Challenging the City Scale project has been exploring the new and different ways urban dwellers can reclaim their urban space. Through the study of local actions initiated by communities, it promotes the development of an urban public space based on sustainability, conviviality, and solidarity. These values are shared by all the partners of a network that has kept growing since its creation: Cité du design Saint-Étienne [FR]; Politecnico di Milano, Milan [IT]; Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana [SI]; Clear Village, London [UK]; Zamek Cieszyn [PL]; Design Week Belgrade [RS]; Pro Materia, Bruxelles [BE]; Aalto University, Helsinki [FI]; FH Joanneum, Graz [AT]; Association of Estonian Designers, Tallinn [EST]; BEAZ/Bilbao-Bizkaia Design&Creativity Council, Bilbao [ES]; CultureLab, Bruxelles [BE].

After Celebrating the Public Space in 2006 and Reclaiming Public Space in 2010, the new project of the Human Cities programme, Challenging the City Scale questions urban scale and urban co-creation. Human Cities, a 12-partner network led by Cité du design Saint-Étienne since 2014, is a European project whose aim is to study how civil society, through community action, organises itself to regenerate the urban common space—a square, a street, or a neighbourhood, etc.

As more and more people in the world live in urban areas 1, cities must cope with many socioeconomic and environmental issues. Challenges such as rising social inequality, social segregation, housing and energy crisis, a global economic crisis that limits the financial involvement of public authorities, unemployment and climate change... These are systemic issues that question the livability of future cities. At the same time innovative socio-technical opportunities have developed in the world and have stimulated large-scale alternative systems of organization based on collective or individual initiatives. This raises the question of preserving or creating the best lifestyle conditions for urban dwellers. Or in other words, is it possible to reconcile economic development, respect for environment, urban densification, and well-being?

These issues encouraged some city-dwellers to transform their environment through the actions of neighbourhood committees, associations or com-
The first part, written by the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (Ljubljana) lists various collaborative and co-creative tools used by communities to transform their public space. It presents new ways of involving residents and users in the conception phases of a transformation project. The second part, written by the Politecnico di Milano tackles the aims and issues of urban space: how can cities become more inclusive, attractive, playful, or comfortable? The third part, written by Saint-Etienne Cité du design, analyses these initiatives in terms of durability: can a balance be found between community projects and public authorities? What roles can the institutions involved play?

This publication relates specific case studies to theoretical concepts. Each of the twelve partner cities contributed to this collective work through a paper on a chosen subject or case study. The result is an instructive and detailed collection highlighting the ideas and experiences of those who work to enhance the livability of European cities.

2 The State of the Art is a research tool developed by the Research Pole of the Cité du design. Its aim is to list the most innovative projects initiated by creative actors (designers, artists, architects, engineers, etc.) and to describe, categorize and problematize them according to a chosen theme. The description process requires the project to be presented in a fully documented text with numerous examples and the general principles involved in the creative process. This methodology is based on an approach that requires an objective description of the projects rather than a value judgment on what they are. Once listed, the projects are organized to identify recurrent themes. The different facts, measures, actions, etc. that are an essential part of the project, are described in a way that goes beyond illustration in order to dialogue with these. The aim is to identify research fields from what already exists, from what is missing, or from what is in progress the dimension of a state of the art that is in a way being researched, what works as a chance to list future possibilities and the questions left unanswered by the numerous projects consulted so far.
Active citizens eager to change urban environments for the better utilising their own ideas and activities are good news for any future oriented city. The knowledge, abilities and other resources that individuals or groups of citizens hold, are a precious resource for the functioning and social cohesiveness of a contemporary city. Unfortunately these attributes are often overlooked or not fully taken advantage of by the official mechanisms in top-down urban management approaches. Only wise governing and administrative bodies fully incorporate citizens into city making procedures to reach better final results. At the same time the grass-root and self-organized movements that are completely independent from the representations of official powers are on the rise.

This paper focuses on both types of participatory practices in the field of public space provision– initiated and led by some forms of power in a rather top–down manner as well as completely self-organized and sustained initiatives based on bottom-up approaches, which all have one common goal– to achieve places that will better respond to the needs and reflect the aspirations of the users.

The case studies collected during the Human Cities project illustrate the different ways the active participation of citizens is making urban public spaces better. More than the kind of the improvements that the initiatives across Europe seek to implement, this first part focuses on the tools utilised in getting citizens on board with the particular process of participative public space improvement.

For decades, the active participation of citizens in city planning has been an established concept, or at the very least a desire, in all levels of urban planning documents—international, national, and local. Many internationally approved documents stress the importance of democratic approaches to city planning issues in general (Habitat Agenda, 1996; UN, 2005; EC, 2010; Adopted Draft of the New Urban Agenda, 2016) and point out the specific role that the co-creation of public spaces plays in achieving better living environments in particular (UN Habitat, 2015).

These participatory approaches have gained additional attention with the rapid spread of information technologies that have reframed and reconfigured the relations between the players and the receivers in the reconceptualisation of the city (Brabham, 2009). The spread of personal devices that allow individuals to express their own points of view on urban design issues and instantly share it with wider communities is the new reality that city officials are still trying to make sense of (Campagna et al, 2013). There is a common understanding across the disciplines that making use of possibilities offered by new technologies is an opportunity for strengthening the participatory approach to urban planning, not only because it helps to achieve a more just solution in the end (Michell, 2003), but also because including users into the processes can bring about true innovation (Von Hippel, 2005).

Even if the political agendas and technological means develop in support of crowdsourced information for participatory urban planning, it still does not happen as often as one would expect. Research shows there are still major concerns related to the legislative aspects of the approach, data and identity protection, data processing, and issues related to the reliability of the information gathered this way (Buddhadeb, 2014, Correia de Freitas and Amado, 2015).

Active citizens eager to change urban environments for the better utilising their own ideas and activities are good news for any future oriented city. The knowledge, abilities and other resources that individuals or groups of citizens hold, are a precious resource for the functioning and social cohesiveness of a contemporary city. Unfortunately these attributes are often overlooked or not fully taken advantage of by the official mechanisms in top-down urban management approaches. Only wise governing and administrative bodies fully incorporate citizens into city making procedures to reach better final results. At the same time the grass-root and self-organized movements that are completely independent from the representations of official powers are on the rise.

This paper focuses on both types of participatory practices in the field of public space provision– initiated and led by some forms of power in a rather top–down manner as well as completely self-organized and sustained initiatives based on bottom-up approaches, which all have one common goal– to achieve places that will better respond to the needs and reflect the aspirations of the users.

The case studies collected during the Human Cities project illustrate the different ways the active participation of citizens is making urban public spaces better. More than the kind of the improvements that the initiatives across Europe seek to implement, this first part focuses on the tools utilised in getting citizens on board with the particular process of participative public space improvement.

For decades, the active participation of citizens in city planning has been an established concept, or at the very least a desire, in all levels of urban planning documents—international, national, and local. Many internationally approved documents stress the importance of democratic approaches to city planning issues in general (Habitat Agenda, 1996; UN, 2005; EC, 2010; Adopted Draft of the New Urban Agenda, 2016) and point out the specific role that the co-creation of public spaces plays in achieving better living environments in particular (UN Habitat, 2015).

These participatory approaches have gained additional attention with the rapid spread of information technologies that have reframed and reconfigured the relations between the players and the receivers in the reconceptualisation of the city (Brabham, 2009). The spread of personal devices that allow individuals to express their own points of view on urban design issues and instantly share it with wider communities is the new reality that city officials are still trying to make sense of (Campagna et al, 2013). There is a common understanding across the disciplines that making use of possibilities offered by new technologies is an opportunity for strengthening the participatory approach to urban planning, not only because it helps to achieve a more just solution in the end (Michell, 2003), but also because including users into the processes can bring about true innovation (Von Hippel, 2005).

Even if the political agendas and technological means develop in support of crowdsourced information for participatory urban planning, it still does not happen as often as one would expect. Research shows there are still major concerns related to the legislative aspects of the approach, data and identity protection, data processing, and issues related to the reliability of the information gathered this way (Buddhadeb, 2014, Correia de Freitas and Amado, 2015).
In 2013, the municipality of Saint-Gilles in Brussels decided to form a pedestrian area in Saint-Gilles Esplanade. Parallel to this political decision, there was a vote calling for projects to renew and reclaim the potential public space area, which was there but needed to be transformed. The local public authorities went through a long process of selection to finally decide in 2014 to select the project of the Brussels-based landscape architecture Bureau Bas Smets. This studio developed their idea and presented it via an exhibition of sketches, which were then the basis for the consultations with the wider public.

Workshops are a more interactive form of a participatory process. They demand active input from the actors. In a workshop an idea or product is normally not only discussed and debated, but is also taken to a new level. Oftentimes workshop activities seek to solve an initial problem and aim to deliver a concrete result, either in an intellectual, non-material form or as a physical product.

Another tool consists in organizing competitions and public calls for ideas. Competition is a participatory practice that demands less organizational management in terms of direct involvement with the public. This may be one of the reasons for its popularity in top-down participatory approaches. Entries are not usually interrelated as they are developed separately. It is up to the management authority of the call to merge the valuable ideas and thus make this approach qualify as participatory. An important issue is also the reach the public call has—if it does not reach a considerable volume of the potentially interested public, its participatory dimension is additionally threatened.

The initiative is managed by Bilbao Ekintza, the local development agency of the Bilbao City Council with a public service mission to improve the quality of life of the citizens and the city of Bilbao. It ensures that development maintains a socio-economic balance among the city’s districts and their residents. One of the tools is holding international and interdisciplinary public tenders, open to any individual or group, that seek new ideas for the urban recovery of greater Bilbao. The proposals are submitted anonymously which allows citizens to compete with professional bodies on an equal basis. This provides a venue for true citizen participation. All the received proposals must estimate the implementation budget. They are ranked according to a series of criteria, such as artistic quality (contribution to local identity), particularity (ability to address the requests and demands of the local population), viability (capacity for social and economic invigoration), innovation, visibility, sustainability of materials and techniques, and robustness and interdisciplinarity (ability to integrate diverse
Tools for participatory provision of urban public spaces

The organization of various interventions in local public spaces by citizens themselves is a grass-root approach that embeds many essences of true participative practice. The occasions and activities that inspire people to come out of their private homes and be active in the public space vary. They are for example developed around the topics of food production/delivering/preparing/sharing, socializing opportunities. Urban walks are a popular tool used in raising awareness of local public space issues. Walking, an obvious daily activity, is upgradeed to focus on a theme and enriched with additional activities (such as play and creating, solving a quest, etc.). It is a handy way to get people on board in developing their own and active attitudes towards public space. With some adaptations, the tool can be used with any generational group which also makes it fully implementable in intergenerational communities.

Bazilikijada
IZOLA, SLOVENIA

Izola is a small town in coastal Slovenia, where the historic tradition of a vivacious street life has started to vanish with the development of modern society, even when the social ties stay relatively strong. A group of locals recognized the problem of diminishing street life for the quality of daily life. They self-organized an Izolani association with the main mission to facilitate the conditions and events that will animate their local public spaces. They also strive to inspire other citizens to organise events and meetings that will get local populations to spend more sociable time outside their homes. One of the best known and widely recognized events is Bazilikijada (Basil street-event). It was born when one of her neighbors placed basil in the pots in front of her entrance door. More neighbors followed and soon the street was filled with pots planted with basil. This completely changed the appearance of the street and made it more inviting. Some inhabitants got the idea of organizing playful walks around places, different techniques are implemented such as photographing, video-recording, and sketching along the walks; each activity is adapted to the topic and the specific public involved.

Pazi!park
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

One of the association’s goals is raising the general awareness of the importance of good public spaces for the quality of urban life. They try to achieve this by organizing playful walks around places, different techniques are implemented such as photographing, video-recording, and sketching along the walks; each activity is adapted to the topic and the specific public involved.

Space as a three-dimensional physical category is hard to measure. Even though we know that it is very important, how can we really make it tangible? To reactivate the public space, it is necessary to take it on a different scale, and to show basil and other local products.

Place It! U.S.A.

Place It! is a design and participation based urban planning practice using model-building to involve the wider public in the planning and design processes. From his experience as an urban planner for the past 20 years, James Rojas realized just how difficult it was to get average citizens to participate in the urban planning of their city. Urban planning is a field that remains relatively inaccessible to nonprofessionals because of abstract language, and challenges reading maps and plans, etc. From this observation, he set up a participative planning methodology. Through workshops, James Rojas wants to understand how to change the planning process and make it more open so that everyone can become an actor in the planning of the urban environment. The approach is built on the conviction that everyone is an urban planner because everyone has a relationship with a city—simply by using it.

In relation to public space participatory design, collective mapping is often used as a phase of the creative process. It aims to build a common, collectively approved record of the state of the art in a definite space. At the same time, it may envision the possible futures. The method of collective mapping is most often based on pre-defined, self-evident icons that are understandable to everyone and become a basic means of expression and communication. The icons can also be developed jointly through the collective process. In some cases, the mapping is closer to an artistic act as the language of expression is entirely dependent upon the producer.

The initiative developed mapping into a Joint creative act that aims to construct the collective visualization of a certain place. The specifics of their approach are in a creation of self-evident icons that enable communication without a common spoken language. This is in line with, and contributes to, the belief that everyone who participates is an expert—no extra skills are needed for expression about urban matters.
The three main modes of interactions within the group are:

1. To support urban Helsinki through networking and online discussion, which affects the political climate regarding city planning and the results are already visible in the execution of ideas in some areas.

2. Circles, it also gained the media's interest and formed itself into a group of people established on Facebook, which is a group of people established on Facebook acting as a universal contemporary tool of communication. Thus, it makes sense that social media is a point for their activities, while the interactions in the offline world may remain a side activity. Social media is especially handy to facilitate discussion, debates and awareness raising campaigns.

3. As a tool for participatory provision of urban public spaces.

Digital mapping is not merely an extension of collective mapping into the virtual world—more than an one-time exercise it is a continuing process that can have visible effects on many public areas along the way. It is a flexible tool that can be quickly adjusted to new directions in the debates. It allows accumulation of extensive data-sets and requires good data management for sensible results.

Social media as a universal contemporary tool of communication can be easily leveraged in participatory processes related to public spaces, as both public spaces and social media are a platform for people’s interactions. Thus, it makes sense that social media be an easy entry point into the sphere of public space reclamation. Some initiatives may use social media as a starting point for their activities, while the interactions in the offline world may remain a side activity. Social media is especially handy to facilitate discussion, debates and awareness raising campaigns.

More city to Helsinki
Helenski, Finland

More city to Helsinki is a group of people established on Facebook to support urban Helsinki through networking and online discussions. The aim is to create an easily approachable forum for people with the same interest in developing the urban fabric of Helsinki. It’s main motto is “We are creating a better city for everybody”. The group quickly became popular in city planning circles, it also gained the media’s interest and formed itself into an important movement with over 7000 members. From the beginning the discussions in the group have been actively moderated, keeping threads clean of provoking and off-topic comments. Many experts in the field, such as architects, city planners, and urban researchers, participate in the discussions. A large number of participants are engaged in an interest with city planning. The group has overcome the hurdle of digital to physical, the intellectual content of the group is digital or could even be described as Intellectual capital. The group has the ability to affect political climate regarding city planning and the results are already visible in the execution of ideas in some areas.

The three main modes of interactions within the group are:

1. The interaction of the members who take part in the discussions.

2. The participants’ ability to participate and act on the ideas in the group. The fourth one is participation by attending. The level of involvement varies from individual to individual, but the group is not as influential, nor as popular as it is today.

3. As a tool for participatory provision of urban public spaces.

The form in which a certain tool manages to encourage (or not encourage) a single citizen or a wider group of citizens to participate in improving public space is crucial. The level of involvement of citizens varies considerably from case to case. Based on the way citizens contribute to a public space reclamation initiative, two distinguished types of participation and corresponding tools can be identified. The first one is participation by acting. In this type of participation, the actor is alert and actively invests their knowledge, skills, ideas, time and resources in making things happen. The second type is participation by attending, where the actors hold a more passive position, i.e. a position of a follower or observer.

A typical approach used to facilitate participation by acting is volunteering. Volunteer activities have a strong driving force in people’s self-determination for changing things for the better. Volunteering as a participative tool in improving public space has many forms. It is often related to improvements of the physical layout of a place or its environmental conditions.

Zlinska Uzenja
Maribor and Ljubljana, Slovenia

The winter cleaning of courtyards, access paths and public walkways from snow is performed by young volunteers as part of the activities within their students’ organisations. The City of Ljubljana has identified this organised action as a contribution to the revitalization program of the Ljubljanica river, and partly financed the activities. After several years the competition still inspires many young and young at heart, as it promotes quality, healthy and socially responsible expenditure of leisure time, as well as offering an unforgettable experience of the “water” public space.

In order to get to know the Urbari neighborhood of Bilbao from the perspective of its citizens, a collective mapping was organized based on the usage of new technologies. Through this broad database of various public space issues specific to local inhabitants was established. The activities were based on a digital workshop aimed at acknowledging, sharing, and communicating the characteristics of the Urbari neighborhood with a new, alternative approach closer to the needs of the people. By introducing this form of digital mapping, insights not often evidenced in official mappings were revealed. This form of crowdsourced information-collection is also an important tool for the activation of social relations within the neighbourhood, as it encourages people to share location-based information. Moreover, the dynamic form of this approach has high economic potential as a platform for the stimulation of the urban economy through the collaboration of business clusters, start-ups, and entrepreneurs.

Zlinska Uzenja
Maribor, Slovenia, 2014

Learning by doing is a superb long-term tool, at its core it encourages participants to become active not only during the course of the activity but afterwards as well. It has the capacity to pass on knowledge, skills, and abilities to a greater number of people. Once acquired, participants can keep utilising them on their own. In relation to urban public spaces, the activities are often related.
In 2011, the public urban planning agency of Saint-Étienne (EPASE) opened a public call for a redesign of a 670m² left over space in Châteaucreux area. Won by Collectif Etc, an association of students of architecture, the call eventually developed into a truly participative design process—as a number of local players and associations were invited to redesign the site. Three types of workshops have been set up and were fully open to anyone: a carpentry workshop to build all the urban furniture; a landscape and gardening workshop to create a shared garden; and a graphic design workshop to work on imaginary housing. The main aim was to teach people to take an active role in the maintenance of their public space while also socializing.

Some initiatives use nutrition as an incentive for people to pause and socialize in the public space. Building on one of the basic human needs it hardly fails to get a response. Nevertheless, it normally has to be combined with other approaches to achieve some more considerable and long term public space improvements.

**Odprta kuhna**, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2017 © Odprta kuhna

This is how Fridays look like at the lovely Pogačarjev trg square in the heart of Ljubljana.

The embellishment of public space by different forms of art can entice people into a space. When designed in a co-creative way or when conceived in a way that enables the passers-by to modify and interact with it, public art may not only act as a generator of the passive presence of people in public space, but a generator of new social bonds and activities.

**Bus with us**, Gdynia, Poland

The placement of interactive boards that can be altered by the manual intervention of passers-by, changed the bus stands into more than just a place to wait. They have attracted local children and their parents from neighboring housing estates to spend their time playing there, and have transformed their time waiting for the bus into a playful experience.

They are juxtaposed against the modern tendency to commercialise street furniture with billboards featuring advertisements. By transforming the bus stops into places which encourage creative activities, they now remind residents of the importance of art and playfulness in everyday life. The bus stops that underwent the transformation were chosen according to their frequency of use and their proximity to the neighborhoods located along the main communication route; their impact also reaches all the users of public transport in the city. This case study notes the role of public art in achieving sustainable urban planning goals—it is a form of encouragement for the citizens to use public transportation more often.
In essence this participative project aims to address the conflicts in public space by the usage of an artistic intervention. The central art object is an oblong curved table placed into public space, which acts as an attraction in and of itself, but also encourages citizens to sit along it and talk to each other in an effortless way. The curved form of the table encourages the changing of conversational partners by simply turning one’s body in another direction—and through this enables the possibility of interactions amongst people from different walks of life. The role of the artistically designed table is not merely to arouse someone’s attention, or to make him/her pause in space by sitting along the table, nor does it just improve the visual attractiveness of space, above all it inspires people in the public space to get active, to participate, and to play a role. As such it can be declared as a new genre of public art.

4. Discussion

In practice, formal and informal approaches are often combined, proving to be a recipe for success. Oftentimes the first step towards the participatory approach is initiated by an official body as a part of the prescribed public-involvement procedures demanded by law. Nevertheless the review of the participation tools that are used in formal approaches shows that true participation is rarely achieved this way if not linked with other actors skilled in moderation of truly bottom-up approaches. For example, public hearings might be a good step towards opening the discussion of urban planning matters to a wider public but not a sufficient step to a truly participatory public space design.

The main strength of the formal tools lies in their embeddedness in the official frameworks which gives them legitimacy from the start. Some bottom-up initiatives may face a shortage in this field. This can be a problem when the activities must be linked to some formal procedures to reach optimal results. Therefore some completely informal and spontaneous initiatives get formalized at some point and to a certain degree (e.g. registering as a society, interest group, civic club, etc.) in order to profit from the resources that are available within formalized procedures. This gives them the legitimacy to take the advantage of acquiring public funds or communicate with official structures more easily.

In the future the questions of how to support the fruitful balance between formal and informal approaches must be exhaustively addressed. This would be beneficial for both—formal and informal approaches. Formal approaches would among other things benefit by getting a closer insight into what is going on in real life situations, while informal approaches would benefit by gaining some official and institutionalized support, which might be crucial to make their activities sustainable in the longer term.

Contemporary participation has not been limited to real space and time encounters as virtual interactions among actors are on the rise. The Human Cities inventory however shows that many classical participation tools built around face-to-face gathering of people are still an essential part of urban public spaces reinvention. Rather than being a competitive threat to classical approaches, virtual technologies are an important support.

So more than a question of which tools—face-to-face or virtual—have more potential to strengthen the participative approach to public space design, the issue of how to combine them in a most fruitful way must be addressed. Another important question is how any of them could instat participation, i.e. make people enthusiastic to join and take part in participatory practices. Here the choice of the right tool seems to be crucial and depends on the audience it addresses—while younger crowds would most likely easily follow any digitalized approaches, older generations would prefer more classical ones.

Initiatives often start their activities by using the tools that support the participation of wider crowds by their mere attendance. Only when they grow in their experience, competences, and self-esteem do they try the tools that support participation by acting. This appears to be a well-reasoned approach on one hand as participation by acting is more demanding in organizational terms. On the other hand, the initiatives that do not integrate tools for
An “open” city is hospitable; diversity and differences are appreciated. Is Graz an “open” city in that sense? Do the inhabitants of Graz deal with their conflicts in an open way in public space? To explore these questions, a unique and clearly visible table sculpture was designed by the Austrian artist Markus Wilfling.

The sculptural installation displays on the main square of Graz.
participation by acting in their work may risk keeping superficial players in a participatory approach arena.

It is important to note that both groups of participatory citizens are needed for a reclamation of public space to be successful—with out active players the activities would not happen, at the same time without people who come and make use of what is offered, the goal of organizing an activity to enliven public space would not be reasonable.

In practice the same tool used in participatory processes can involve both crowds—the one that contributes actively and the one that plays the role of a passive observer, follower or consumer of what has been offered. The roles are often blurred and changeable. It is important to understand these dynamics, namely the triggering factors that make people switch from a passive to an active role. This opens another important perspective—operating with the two groups of actors (active and passive) gets too superficial at some point. Each of the two groups is very heterogeneous within itself and includes actors with diverse characteristics. In order to really understand them, sub groups must be identified and even personal approaches undertaken.

Concluding thoughts

The Human Cities inventory has revealed the existence of a wide range of tools for the participatory provision of urban public spaces in Europe. They have proven to be an important means of sensitizing citizens to their local environment, but even more than that, they give them a chance to make local environments better through their own contribution.

Such an approach is beneficial for citizens as it gives the chance for their aspirations related to their local environments to be fulfilled. It also makes the social ties within the community stronger. In addition, it is hugely beneficial for the governing structures as well; not only in terms of making use of the local human resources available, but also by contributing to a truly inclusive society which is the goal of any democratic authority. Implementation of participatory tools in public space design bears an even greater importance as a bridge between all the stakeholders whose interests often compete in urban environments. An early and consistent implementation of participatory tools can help reduce the tensions and channel the discussions into a more constructive direction.

As such, these tools ought to be implemented regularly and developed even further by leveraging new technology, legislative advancements, and any other means at society’s disposal. It is crucial, however, that by doing so the fundamentals are not undermined; it is human beings who are the real tool that makes a city a pleasant and habitable place.

References


Human Cities State of the Art Inventory at www.humancities.eu


This paper was partly made possible with a support of COST action program TD1008 Interdisciplinarity in research programming and funding cycles (INTREPID) currently running in a joint effort of 27 European countries. Some of the contents have been presented within the EU’s Klabs project (Creating the Network of Knowledge Labs for Sustainable and Resilient Environments) dissemination activities in 2017.
Prototyping the city:
goals and issues

Design Department,
Politecnico di Milano
Public spaces mirror the complexities of urban society” (Madinapour, 2010) in the contemporary age public places become fluid spaces (Baumann, 2000) of exchange and participative action, not only as contexts but as scenarios able to embody new meanings, contributing to the creation of community identity (Borlini, Memo, 2008). Public space, forgotten by years for industrialized society, is regaining its traditional importance in our contemporary consumer and service society. However, below this veneer of conformity something is moving in the opposite direction: public spaces are becoming places of social innovation, offering a context where creative communities act (Meroni, 2007) to bring original solutions to everyday problems that the current economic system is no longer able to provide.

The bottom-up actions of these active groups of citizens who find their own answers combine with the top-down actions of institutions (Mulgan, 2008). This creates opportunities for social transformation and sustainable growth that is modifying the existing pattern, replacing the old individualistic values with a new sense of community, sharing, exchange of knowledge and information, and mutual support. The reclaiming of public spaces allows people to come together in an inclusive way—opening roads, squares, and the city itself to free enjoyment by all. This happens when people become fully aware of their rights and responsibilities, opening horizons to endless opportunity objectives.

There are two main aspects to public space: one social and the other relating to its shape and form. The social aspect is the true essence of society and it affects the aesthetics and form of the urban site. As pointed out by Manzini (Manzini, 2010) a contemporary designer must be able to interpret the city as a place of “social laboratories where new ideas and new solutions are being invented and experimented within all fields of daily life”, where culture leads to new forms of citizen participation and a deeply renewed sense of community.

The first chapter analyzed the tools used by the various communities to set up the public space projects that were investigated during the research work carried out by the international Human Cities team. This chapter will analyze the prototyping processes used in the various projects and how they were carried out. An aspect central to all the case studies is the way in which the reference communities brought the spaces/services into being. It is this that makes it possible to analyze and evaluate the cases themselves, but also how they come to be enjoyed by a wider public.

Not all the projects are characterized by the same time frame: some are temporary, others are one-offs, others are ephemeral – lasting only a few days or hours– and are never repeated (Fassi, 2012). The duration of a project depends on various factors: the characteristics of the local area, the community running the project, the aims to be achieved by the reappropriation of public space. Some ephemeral actions often have a longer-term impact on the surrounding area because they raise questions forcefully with the communities living there and often also with the governing and administrative bodies.

However, above and beyond the varying duration and aims of each case, all the examples analyzed are tangible projects that have, over a longish period, been accomplished or prototyped. The prototyping process allows the ideas, projects and solutions adopted to be tested, for and with the users and those who will benefit from them at the times and in the ways envisaged. It thus serves as a sort of provisional run-through of the project. Prototyping is a tool that comes from the ambitions of product design and is also used, in different forms, in service design. In the projects illustrated here it has also been applied to space design.

The tools used for service prototyping tend mainly to be evocative simulations, but they may also be very realistic descriptions: ranging from rudimentary acted-out scenarios with hand-drawn sketches or improvised props to detailed mock-ups of the system, the environment and the staff. (servicedesigntools.org)

The main goal of prototyping the solutions is to make the ideas immediately tangible by focusing on the people at the center of them. It also allows different ideas to be explored in parallel (Brown, 2008). Prototyping public spaces means designing and creating installations, events and strategies that lie somewhere between the design of spaces and of services. Public spaces offer an ideal context for testing and prototyping bottom-up projects and actions with the local communities. (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011). Appropriate timing is vital to the expert designer’s role in these processes of involving people in developing social innovations, because the initiatives must become self-sufficient and the community independent of professional expertise.

The selection of projects presented in this chapter shows how the strategies enacted in urban space may have different durations, and may lead to different characteristics in different places. For this reason each paragraph heading contains an adjective that characterizes the public space in question: attractive, inclusive, well-equipped, playful, domestic. The main aim of the cases described in each paragraph will be to make the space attractive or inclusive, or to equip it better, and so on. This does not mean that the only aim of the community was the objective stressed in the paragraph in question, it is simply a way of classifying the cases, which helps to highlight the goals and the main issues in the designing of public urban spaces.

1. Make the public space attractive

Public space is full of possibilities, but the way people make use of it depends on what it is like. The capacity to bring a number of people together in a given place is strictly linked to the attractiveness of its form, use and structure. But what is it that makes a public place attractive?

Sometimes it is the perceived characteristics of the space itself or the presence of a scenario that differs from the surrounding context: a green space, a beautiful panorama, a quiet secluded spot within the city. More often however the attractiveness of a place does not depend only on its appearance, but also on how it can be used: a group of people come together there because they are attracted by the possibility of enjoying the particular situations, structures or services it offers.

Over time the attractiveness of its services, in particular, has contributed to determining one of the characteristics of the contemporary city: its fragmentary nature, which has turned some city areas into mere places of transit, or into deserted spaces where people never stop or even pass through (think for example of ex-industrial areas). With this in mind, there are many documented initiatives that seek to combine the demand for convivial places in the city with the need to reconnect certain areas with their surrounding urban fabric. These projects often develop around a strong theme that is able to stimulate the interest of a wide range of potential users: art, design, music, trade, social participation.
The main promoter of the initiative is the Esterni group, in collaboration with the Municipality of Milan which is responsible for the bureaucratic side. Esterni is a cultural enterprise that has been designing public spaces since 1995, if design community services, projects and events to bring people together and develop the required participatory communication campaigns. We particularly owe Nicolò Bini and Anna Spreafico, off-line communication people are encouraged to discover new capabilities of anticipating, interpreting and responding to the new everyday community, enabling them to see themselves as a community.

Esterni sees public spaces as the starting point from which to design the city of tomorrow and design as an instrument capable of anticipating, interpreting and responding to the new needs of contemporary living by analyzing the various aspects of public places. By means of an ongoing process of on- and off-line communication people are encouraged to discover new places in their city, which has been temporarily invaded by design interventions, inviting them to experiment with urban furnishing solutions and make public places more sustainable and fun to go to. The places and activities change each year, so the event is always stimulating.

Art as renews the Bilbao Art District continues along the path of the transformations that took place a decade ago with the opening of the Guggenheim Museum, which has proved to be the winning option in giving the city a new identity and attracting visitors, as well as creating jobs. The main sponsors are the Bilbao City Council and the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, in collaboration with the most important museums: the Guggenheim, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Bilbao Kursaal Exhibition Room, the Maritime Museum and the shops of the Ensanche district.

Now at its third edition, the initiative takes place during the week end in May and offers a rich programme of art events, exhibitions, musical performances and other activities until late in the evening in galleries of the city. The Bilbao Art District is a project that is the best time to find a high concentration of design professionals in the city and to trigger a design mentality among citizens, and to guard against the city becoming a community.

Esterni sees public spaces as the starting point from which to design the city of tomorrow and design as an instrument capable of anticipating, interpreting and responding to the new needs of contemporary living by analyzing the various aspects of public places. By means of an ongoing process of on- and off-line communication people are encouraged to discover new places in their city, which has been temporarily invaded by design interventions, inviting them to experiment with urban furnishing solutions and make public places more sustainable and fun to go to. The places and activities change each year, so the event is always stimulating.

The appeal of design and art is capable of inspiring events with high resonance and of acting virtuously, but another important attraction is music. The Flow Festival in Helsinki and the Urban Project in Tallinn are examples, both focusing on the potential of attraction of music, but different in terms of aim and the way the public space is used. The Flow Festival reappropriates urban places and places outdoors of the 2012 project to create working and/or commercial situations (new connections and collaborations, Romero in the South East of Europe. In subsequent years it has successfully woven numerous intercultural and commercial relationships between the world design scene and the regional industries of Belgrade. The initiative falls into many different cultural festival tradition, acknowledging and filling the gap created by the total lack of creative industries in Belgrade and Serbia and bringing them into the world design scene. This was an important mission in spite of the absence of a adequate design sector in the country such as to justify a fair of this size. Serbia the creative community falls victim to the dominating values of popular culture and the Belgrade Design Week holds among its objectives the challenge of indicating a new direction so far it not by chance that Brand New World was the motto of the 2014 edition. As far as regards the urbanistics of the city, with the disappearances of the industrial river port that is until the seventies, it has become a green, human-friendly city with a new atmosphere, its art and decorations and the food and drink available. The general mood fosters comparison and exchange between different subcultures and although Flow has become one of the most important music festivals in Finland, it has kept its Indie/underground identity which creates a feeling of community among its participants.

In Italy, one such initiative, which seeks to revitalize little-used public spaces in the city of Milan and appeal to large numbers of users, is the Public Design Festival, Milan, Italy. In 2010, a project that promotes research and the development of virtuous collaborations and innovative solutions capable of changing the way public space is seen and used, thus facilitating the meeting of design professionals with ordinary citizens.

The main promoter of the initiative is the Esterni group, in collaboration with the Municipality of Milan which is responsible for the bureaucratic side. Esterni is a cultural enterprise that has been designing public spaces since 1995, if design community services, projects and events to bring people together and develop the required participatory communication campaigns. We particularly owe Nicolò Bini and Anna Spreafico, off-line communication people are encouraged to discover new capabilities of anticipating, interpreting and responding to the new everyday community, enabling them to see themselves as a community.

The event takes place during the Milan Design Week, and Toll, one of the most important public space is used.

Public Design Festival MILAN, ITALY

The main promoter of the initiative is the Esterni group, in collaboration with the Municipality of Milan which is responsible for the bureaucratic side. Esterni is a cultural enterprise that has been designing public spaces since 1995, if design community services, projects and events to bring people together and develop the required participatory communication campaigns. We particularly owe Nicolò Bini and Anna Spreafico, off-line communication people are encouraged to discover new capabilities of anticipating, interpreting and responding to the new everyday community, enabling them to see themselves as a community.

The event takes place during the Milan Design Week, and Toll, one of the most important
The participants are 75 students from the faculty of Fine Arts at the University of the Basque Country, guided in their projects by professionals in the art sector from the Bilbao Arts Foundation. Finally, the Innovative Trades di Bilbao (CIB), a platform promoted by Lan Ekintza, seeks to reunite traders in an innovative spirit to make the city's commerce a benchmark for creativity and innovation. Bilbao Arte Shop is 50% funded by the European Social Fund: the project was presented on 29th June 2011 and is now, at its 5th edition, well-consolidated in the panorama of city events. The Bilbao Arte Shop experience is organised in guided visits and trails through the 13 city districts, in groups of 8-10 people previously booked by email or phone.

The Arte Shop is an innovative collaboration between young artists and the traders of Bilbao and an enriching opportunity for both. Students can take up the challenge and try out their creativity outside the academic environment, without limits of form and materials, focusing on the commercial aspect of the product. The resulting trail through the shops is as attractive and stimulating as a true exhibition, of a kind and unpredictable. To conclude the event, a prestigious jury selects three winning works and the public awards a special prize for the work it considers the best. The idea of the Bilbao Arte Shop is an example of how design can support the commercial activity in a city, offering a different environment in which people can enjoy a new purchasing experience.

Bilbao Arte Shop is an initiative involving art schools that turns the city's shops into a showcase for the students by offering a unique experience for the discovery of art and commerce in the city. The organisers and promoters of the venture are the Bilbao City Council through Lan Ekintza, a local public company. The participants are 75 students from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of the Basque Country, guided in their projects by professionals in the art sector from the Bilbao Arts Foundation. Finally, the Innovative Trades di Bilbao (CIB), a platform promoted by Lan Ekintza, seeks to reunite traders in an innovative spirit to make the city’s commerce a benchmark for creativity and innovation. Bilbao Arte Shop is 50% funded by the European Social Fund: the project was presented on 29th June 2011 and is now, at its 5th edition, well-consolidated in the panorama of city events. The Bilbao Arte Shop experience is organised in guided visits and trails through the 13 city districts, in groups of 8-10 people previously booked by email or phone.

The Arte Shop is an innovative collaboration between young artists and the traders of Bilbao and an enriching opportunity for both. Students can take up the challenge and try out their creativity outside the academic environment, without limits of form and materials, focusing on the commercial aspect of the product. The resulting trail through the shops is as attractive and stimulating as a true exhibition, of a kind and unpredictable. To conclude the event, a prestigious jury selects three winning works and the public awards a special prize for the work it considers the best. The idea of the Bilbao Arte Shop is an example of how design can support the commercial activity in a city, offering a different environment in which people can enjoy a new purchasing experience.

Bilbao Arte Shop
BILBAO, SPAIN

The Arte Shop is an innovative collaboration between young artists and the traders of Bilbao and an enriching opportunity for both. Students can take up the challenge and try out their creativity outside the academic environment, without limits of form and materials, focusing on the commercial aspect of the product. The resulting trail through the shops is as attractive and stimulating as a true exhibition, of a kind and unpredictable. To conclude the event, a prestigious jury selects three winning works and the public awards a special prize for the work it considers the best. The idea of the Bilbao Arte Shop is an example of how design can support the commercial activity in a city, offering a different environment in which people can enjoy a new purchasing experience.

In Italy, one intervention that uses art to relaunch the local economy is the Farm Cultural Park, an interesting project in which art becomes an integral part of a local context: the heart of Favara, a small historical Sicilian town in the province of Agrigento, transformed into a permanent exhibition of contemporary art.

Farm Cultural Park
FAVARA, ITALY

Farm Cultural Park is located in Favara, a small town in Sicily. The creative idea comes from the grassroots, the local community itself or, more specifically, from two of its members: Andrea Bartoli and Florinda Saleva, who decided to invest energy and money in renovating the centre of Favara and creating an open-air art gallery. As well as themselves, other artists take part in transforming the public space, experimenting with different types of creative residence inside the city, and the residents of Favara welcome visitors and artists and make them feel at home, making sure that their stay in the town is pleasant and comfortable. In particular, there is a group of citizens known as FUN (Favara Urban Network) made up of young volunteers who contribute by animating the town centre. As the project grew and the need for funding appeared, other people intervened in support of the initiative by creating a philanthropic community to back the Farm Cultural Park. The project consists of 7 small courtyards displaying a typical Arabian architecture (known as “Cortile Bentivenga”), which form the backdrop against which artists can create their temporary works.

At the present complex counts three art galleries and a series of exhibition spaces: Farm-young-art, the Bartoli-Faifer Foundation, Arteloviana Sicilia, the Terry Richardson Fan Club and the low Saftish Museum. There is also a centre for contemporary architecture, which curates the temporary projects, a library, spaces for meetings, parties and events, language laboratories and educational departments for adults and children. Various fringe services are provided associated with catering (unconventional restaurants like “Nzemmula”), accommodation (a diffuse hotel and transport (bike hire).

The importance and courage of this great venture can be appreciated even more if we look at the political context in which it has emerged: an area of Italy characterised by its lack of institutions and dominated by the local mafia. The town also has a high unemployment rate and little attention is paid to urban planning. This great project was made possible by the private initiative of Andrea and Florinda and the philanthropic community, who purchased the buildings in the town centre with their own investments and set up a private, community venture in the public interest of the entire community and its visitors. Currently, with its intense cultural programme, Favara has become a new centre of contemporary arts in the south of Italy and an example of how innovative, bottom-up drive can generate attraction, revitalising the social, participatory dynamics of a community.

The ambits of intervention were designing public space (redesgining buildings through the original use of the courtyard and designing interiors to stage exhibitions there are permanent and temporary exhibitions, but each space has been designed to display something). The result is fascinating: the Farm Cultural Park has become a place of visitor flows, of social and artistic interaction, a hybrid environment in which residents and visitors live...
Another fundamental activity was the “Ideas Sharing Stall”, which leads ordinary citizens to take part in the co-designing of new, short-chain, food and catering services, and in understanding people’s needs and wishes. Thanks to this activity varous services have been tested, among which the "Farmers’ food box", the "Local Distribution System" and "Fas week-end", the last of these relates to a zero kilometre tourism system in the Parco Agricolo Sud Milano.

Earth Market

Earth Market is the agricultural market that recreates the atmosphere of traditional Italian markets, recuperating old values and experiences thanks to the power of conviviality, and launching spaces and relations with specific actors in the city of Milan. The project is organized through a co-funding agreement subsequent to a memorandum of understanding signed by Slow Food Italia and Parco Agricolo Sud. The main sponsors are the Milan City Council and the Fondazione Cariplo in the ambits of the "Feeding Milan Project - Energy for Change", a research and development programme promoted by the academic Institutions (Politecnico di Milano, Design department and the University of Gastronomic Science) and Slow Food Italia. The main actors involved in the initiative are around 40 producers of a wide range of products, mostly from Parco Agricolo Sud Milano. Both the producers and ordinary citizens are beneficiaries: the first because of the opportunity to sell directly to the client, the second for the opportunity to purchase high quality products at good prices.

Another fundamental activity was the “Ideas Sharing Stall” animated by a group of design researchers at the Politecnico di Milano. It was run from the start of the activity until 2014 and consisted of a series of co-designing activities. The idea was to have a physical space in which to make contact with the potential users of the services to be developed and with whom to co-design, prototype and try out the food services before their actual implementation. Earth Market started as a simple farmers’ market, but it went on to become a new public space, in which the conviviality created by the combination of food, Initiative and entertainment is the fundamental characteristic. An important role is played by service design with the ideas Sharing Stall, which leads ordinary citizens to take part in the co-designing of new, short-chain, food and catering services, and in understanding people’s needs and wishes. Thanks to this activity various services have been tested, among which the “Farmers’ food box”, the “Local Distribution System” and “Fas week-end”, the last of these relates to a zero kilometre tourism system in the Parco Agricolo Sud Milano.

Conviviality, music, art and design; fun and social participation; the creation of new synergies; the search for specific services or experiences; many are the components that contribute to making public space attractive. In this panorama design possesses a characteristic. An important role is played by service design with the ideas Sharing Stall, which leads ordinary citizens to take part in the co-designing of new, short-chain, food and catering services, and in understanding people’s needs and wishes. Thanks to this activity various services have been tested, among which the “Farmers’ food box”, the “Local Distribution System” and “Fas week-end”, the last of these relates to a zero kilometre tourism system in the Parco Agricolo Sud Milano.

2. Make the public space inclusive

Inclusive is an adjective that means “having or embracing other things within”, it evokes an image of unity in which a larger part contains smaller components within it. When associated with a public place this is a quality which indicates that the possibility of enjoying that space, and taking part in the activities carried out there, is extended to as many subjects as possible. For this to occur it is essential that the right decisions be taken at the design stage, particularly at the conceptual stage, so as to create projects (for products, services, spaces etc.) that can be used by everybody, not only by people with disabilities but also by other sensitive user categories such as mothers with babies and toddlers, the elderly, children. From this we can deduce that the term is strictly connected with design for everybody (DIA, Design for All), indeed it is part of the definition itself: “Design for All is design for human diversity, social inclusion and equality".

To understand the importance of adopting a DIA method it is enough to look at some statistics: according to the EIDD - European Institute for Design and Disability, Stockholm 1993—there are 150 million people in Europe with disabilities, at least 15% of the total population, without considering that anyone may become temporarily disabled. The percentage of the elderly population is also significant: again in Europe, 100 million in 2000 and with an increase to 113 million in 2025, an 30% of the total population (source istat - the Italian National Institute for Statistics). This is a vast user sector for which design is called to intervene to make it easier for the elderly, such as limitations to mobility and access to public places, access to technology, need for health care and/or access to specific services.

The initiative partly owes its success to the working methodology used: designing effectively for diversity requires a close acquaintance with the users for whom the product or service is being designed. The best way of achieving this is to involve them in the creative process. Information plays a fundamental role, which means teaching professionals, students and institutions about the DIA approach and the benefits to be derived from inclusive design. The role of the designer is to inform and orientate the public on the importance of this approach, to offer the opportunity to those who want to pursue three objectives: to make Tallinn more accessible and people-oriented. The project started in 2011 with the aim of redesigning Tallinn’s public transport system and making it more transparent, logical and satisfactory for passengers. The reason for this lies in the previous communication system for public transport services, which was created by various different entities (service providers, local authority departments, private ticket issuers and infrastructure management companies) and lacked any visual unity. The scenario to be worked on was restrictive: lack of resources (financial, human and time), bureaucracy and the infrastructure planning led the designers to opt for mainly strategic and graphic solutions because other elements such as lighting and the positioning of shelters could not be modified. Years of disorganised planning had led to visual confusion and a lack of regard for user needs.

The solution in terms of accessibility was made possible by unifying information, standardising and simplifying the message, thus optimising the use experience and making it more pleasant for all kinds of users (tourists, children, the elderly and people with disabilities). More specifically, the design action was to provide those responsible for public transport with the tools by which to manage, assess and create the communication graphics: a Tallinn Transport Design Standard was drawn up containing guidelines for the design and the communication elements (from infrastructure and information signposting to the definition of easily understandable language, coded by typography and layout etc.). The initiative won the 2012 Design Management Award, a significant accomplishment since it was the first time that a design management project of such importance had been awarded to Estonia and the benefits to be derived from inclusive design. The role of the designer is to inform and orientate the public on the importance of this approach, to offer the opportunity to those who want to
This example leads us to reflect on how urban mobility is capable of making public space inclusive, whether or not users have disabilities. Innovations in transportation systems, reducing the number of cars in circulation for instance, is an opportunity for citizens to make use of public space in different and more sustainable ways. Threesome, for example, is the provocative name of an initiative for the promotion of a sustainable form of mobility in the city of Ljubljana and throughout Slovenia.

This project was also advertised on the web through its Internet website, which was subsequently improved to facilitate the user enrolment procedure. The primary objective was to raise awareness of the need to adopt more sustainable mobility solutions, and it owes its success in terms of participation to its contextual nature and to its social component as an opportunity to share an activity with different peoples: family members, work colleagues, friends and groups of the same age. Not only do cyclists benefit from the positive sides of competition and conviviality, but also the whole of Slovenia (especially the citizens of Ljubljana on account of the high level of participation) thanks to the reduction of particular matter in the air and the benefits of cities and countries with fewer automobiles in circulation.

The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project consisted in giving people the possibility of identifying, using design tools, drawing images on a digital tablet which were immediately printed for personal use. Participants could draw, for example, any part of their daily life: the fabric of a city to its citizens and communicates the idea of a newly-emerging creative district. It was created as a temporary experimental public space by the association, Carton Plein, literally "Object Library", and it was constituted on the initiative of EPASE (Saint-Étienne Institution for Public Development). Carton Plein is a multidisciplinary association that supports and promotes the public space projects proposed by its members: it is open to citizens from any sector, and occasionally invites external artists and researchers, hosted in dedicated residences, to bring their contribution to the research project.

A public event of Threesome initiative on No1 troj square in Ljubljana promotes the benefits of using the bicycle for daily errands. Threesome is a competition in groups of 3 cyclists who will cycle to work for a month. The project owes its existence to the British Council in Slovenia, an institution that promotes cultural relations, language, the arts and other British values throughout the world and facilitates relations with professionals and people in general from other countries. In 2008, the British Council in Slovenia formed a group of 5 young professionals from 3 countries, online and offline, as a way to find the way to communication and to make possible a cultural exchange. The first public relations consultant asked them to develop ideas for reducing CO2 emissions by cutting down the presence of automobile on the road in favour of bicycles. Every day the kilometers covered by the group will be recorded, then added together to give the total for the whole month. The group with the highest total will be declared winner of the competition.

The project was also advertised on the web through its Internet website, which was subsequently improved to facilitate the user enrolment procedure. The primary objective was to raise awareness of the need to adopt more sustainable mobility solutions, and it owes its success in terms of participation to its contextual nature and to its social component as an opportunity to share an activity with different peoples: family members, work colleagues, friends and groups of the same age. Not only do cyclists benefit from the positive sides of competition and conviviality, but also the whole of Slovenia (especially the citizens of Ljubljana on account of the high level of participation) thanks to the reduction of particular matter in the air and the benefits of cities and countries with fewer automobiles in circulation.

The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work". The project was transferred to Bike2Work (a European mobility programme) in 2004, and its name was changed to "Bring happiness to work".
3. Make the public space well equipped

Let’s imagine having to undertake an excursion in the mountains: we’ll need to take functional equipment with us that will satisfy all our requirements, but have room for superfluous equipment as well. The same is true for a public space, suitable equipment is required for it to carry out its function. Access to the space does not necessarily mean massive interventions: a completely empty space does not lend itself to many functions and is not very inviting but it is enough to add a bench, for example, and it becomes a place where you can sit and rest or have a conversation. On the other hand there are some cases in which a space has unique, or particularly noteworthy, architectural and environmental characteristics, such that it becomes an attraction in its own right and people invite visitors to gather there, thinking for example of certain medieval palaces to be found all over Europe. Naturally, many communities wish they had public spaces that are attractive in their own right, but if these are lacking then it will be necessary to fit out an area ad hoc to fulfil a prearranged function. One example of this is the Sernavalle neighbourhood in the suburbs of Milan, characterised by its lack of a public square or piazza, an unusual situation in an Italian town.

Inclusiveness as participation: citizens included in public space

Use all elements within the site, including the inside of buildings, is considered a key issue for everyone (Osborne, 2017). By doing this it is possible to create an inclusive space where people with different needs and abilities are included. Inclusiveness is about ensuring that everyone is able to participate in public space, that the space is accessible for all, and that it can be used for different purposes. This can be done by including people with disabilities, people from different cultures, and people with different backgrounds. The purpose of the piazza is to accommodate temporary plaza in an answer to the local population’s request for a public space where they could meet and socialise. The name of the project plays on the double meaning of the word “displace”: “to move” and “this place” from an Italianised pronunciation of “this place in the square” from an Italianised pronunciation of “this place in the sense of the place where you can feel comfortable and build relationships. The aim is to transform a temporary plaza in the suburb of Chiaravalle. The project seeks to create a place for meeting and proposing cultural and social actions, while awaiting the future design of a permanent plaza.

Chiaravalle is situated in the south-east suburbs of the city. It has a population of 1,355 inhabitants and although administratively part of Milan, it feels physically like an independent village. The neighbourhood is surrounded by a protected, green, rural area, the Parco Agricolo Sud, dominated by the mediaeval Abbey of Santa Maria di Rovegnano. An abandoned railway separates the village from the Abbey, contributing to its isolated character. From the outside it is easy to see the place as a functioning rural district, but in reality it is a commuter area, lacking in public and cultural spaces. In answer to this situation Chiaravalle is now living a process of transformation thanks to some active citizens who have decided to move there to enjoy the advantages of living in a country area.

The purpose of the plaza is to accommodate temporary events during the summer and welcome people to a place for relaxing, reading and sharing moments together, and it is intended for the whole community. The aim is to bring a slice of life that is capable of connecting people and overcoming the divide between some of the local associations.

The arrangement plan for the plaza envisaged about ten items of self-built furniture that could be repeatedly tailored to contingent requirements: large wooden archways mark the entrance and can also serve to provide covering chairs, tables, vases, modular furniture and bookshelves can be rearranged to suit the occasion. The new plaza is an attempt to offer the local community an enjoyable place that compensates for the general lack of services, transport and cultural activities. From a design point of view, the empty spaces offered a stimulating opportunity to co-design significant places under the guidance of expert design.
The initiative was then extended to the surrounding area. In order to call attention to other open spaces inside and outside the neighbourhood, walking trails were marked out on the ground linking residents with the surrounding countryside and some local agricultural producers who occupied the area long before the district was built up in the seventies. The aim of the trails is to encourage exchange with these farmers, among whom there is still an attitude of refusal towards the “new arrivals” in the neighbourhood. Breaking down these mental barriers would benefit both sides. The simplicity and generic nature of these marked trails make them an easy way of stimulating residents to explore their surrounding area, one that is applicable anywhere.

4. Make the public space playful

Fun is a well-known concept, anyone can imagine a large number of playful situations and activities: some may involve a lot of people of all ages, others may involve people with certain characteristics (age, sex, personal tastes, etc.). A fun activity triggers pleasant feelings, so public space can be made a fun place, indeed, it should be the place of preference for pleasurable activities and, above all, for social interaction outside the home.

So, a playful fun public space can be associated with a game function, a place equipped with structures that make it suitable for play activities: a basketball court for teenagers, a playground for

prototyping the city: goals and issues

The first gas was when ETC Collective drew up an inventory of neglected or abandoned city street furniture, from which suitable items were subsequently selected for renovation and reuse by Carton Plein. The first prototypes for recycled urban furniture were created during the following months and later exhibited in the International Design Biennale 2015. In addition, the workshop "Croisement", focusing on the production of other kinds of furniture in collaboration with citizens and Biennale visitors.

The objects collected were containers for glass, and school chairs. These containers deteriorate rapidly and when damaged are stored by the Saint-Étienne City Council in considerable quantities. Now, with the ETC project, they return to a new life as "les recycleurs", new street seats that remain faithful to the aesthetics of the initial objects and invite the observer to remember their existence. Although the old school chairs in wood and steel have now disappeared, they constitute part of collective memory and have been recuperated with wooden frames to create "les redoublés". Re-created seats of various types, from benches to rocking chairs. The project is interesting for the relationship between the ephemeral and sustainability: the recycling of worn-out furniture and the arrangement of these elements in public spaces for a month, in the context of an event (la Biennale).

The initiative was then extended to the surrounding area. In order to call attention to other open spaces inside and outside the neighbourhood, walking trails were marked out on the ground linking residents with the surrounding countryside and some local agricultural producers who occupied the area long before the district was built up in the seventies. The aim of the trails is to encourage exchange with these farmers, among whom there is still an attitude of refusal towards the "new arrivals" in the neighbourhood. Breaking down these mental barriers would benefit both sides. The simplicity and generic nature of these marked trails make them an easy way of stimulating residents to explore their surrounding area, one that is applicable anywhere.

4. Make the public space playful

Fun is a well-known concept, anyone can imagine a large number of playful situations and activities: some may involve a lot of people of all ages, others may involve people with certain characteristics (age, sex, personal tastes, etc.). A fun activity triggers pleasant feelings, so public space can be made a fun place, indeed, it should be the place of preference for pleasurable activities and, above all, for social interaction outside the home.

So, a playful fun public space can be associated with a game function, a place equipped with structures that make it suitable for play activities: a basketball court for teenagers, a playground for
Prototyping the city: goals and issues

Bratovševa ploščad, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2016

© Andrej Hudnik
The operation was started in 2011, with a preparatory stage of 1567 hours between the 9th and 13th July. Although the project was not developed in collaboration with the end-users, the participation of local people and citizen associations was considerable. ReNewTown brought together a large number of people with the shared aim of improving the appearance of their neighbourhood, making the transformation process itself fun, not just the end result of the playground reconstruction, and facilitating the creation of new social ties that will bring long-term mutual benefit.

Where does the inspiration for a touch of fun in public space come from? Architecture and design are capable of intervening playfully, varying colours, shapes and perspectives to amaze the observer and break with the dictates of convention. This was the challenge faced by a group of students during an academic design workshop in Austria, in the city of Graz, using as a reference a potentially amusing central theme to be transformed into a project. The idea of creating playful installations in urban space was developed during the "Projektarbeit" course, in the Master programme in Exhibition Design, based on the theme of misunderstanding (Missverständnis in German). Misunderstanding is seen as the result of an interference in communication between the sender and receiver of a message. So, the students analysed possible interferences and developed 11 settings dealing with a wide spectrum of actions from imperceptible changes in common habits to absurd moments when oral signals are taken too literally. The initiative organisers were Anke Strittmatter (architect, town planner and set designer), Erika Thomml (curator and set designer) and students in the Master programmes: Bettina Biglar, Eva Brede, Sabrina Dajdjić, Elisabeth Eichberger, Christin Grabner, Kathleen Gröner, Katja Kralos, Elena Licina, Sabine Pfichler, Stefanie Wiesenerhofer and Astrid Zawodnik. The workgroups dealt with all stages of the project, from the definition of concepts to the technical development of the projects, and the communication of events in the public space. Misunderstanding was set up in June 2012 in various central areas of Graz; every installation proposed a different interaction with passers-by, ranging from digital communication, to analogue communication through cups and threads hanging on a tree. The installations were explained graphically and people were free to interact and experiment with the installations.

ReNewTown pilot project
VELENJE, SLOVENIA

Should the community nucleus be missing, there are projects that intervene on a social level to create new ties between the inhabitants of a city, as well as renewing the urban space. This is the case in Velenje, a town in the north-east of Slovenia which, during the second world war under the socialist regime of Tito, was transformed from a little village into a large mining town. At the time, the urban nucleus was built with the idea of creating "a town in a park" and giving the miners a healthy, green environment after their work underground. In accordance with the socialist spirit, numerous volunteers made their contribution to the construction of housing, infrastructure and administrative buildings. Nowadays, Velenje is a town of about 25,000 inhabitants and was selected by ReNewTown, a European project that deals with urban regeneration in post-socialist cities, to host a pilot project funded by the European Union for the renewal of an old public area. The Velenje pilot project took place in a very precise area of interventions an abandoned playground of about 3386 sq.m, situated between 6 apartment blocks in via Kozeljska in the local community of Gorica, destined to be transformed into a garden with a new playground. The project was designed to involve local residents, recovering the socialist tradition of solidarity and mutual help to bring local people together again in a shared activity.

The project had two main aims: to create a new, multifunctional, public space to be used by people of all ages and all social groups, and to create a strong neighbourhood community, by developing a multi-generational dialogue during the designing stage.

The operation started in 2011, with a preparatory stage of context and target analysis, and completed in the summer of 2012, with 64 volunteers from the neighbourhood working for 1567 hours between the 9th and 13th July. Although the project was not developed in collaboration with the end-users, the participation of local people and citizen associations was considerable. ReNewTown brought together a large number of people with the shared aim of improving the appearance of their neighbourhood, making the transformation process itself fun, not just the end result of the playground reconstruction, and facilitating the creation of new social ties that will bring long-term mutual benefit.

Prototyping the city: goals and issues
Prototyping the city: goals and issues

Everybody’s a Champion, Saint-Étienne, France

Everybody’s a Champion! is an initiative that seeks to build, together with the town residents, the future of physical activities in urban contexts. The idea emerged in a larger, international event called People Olympics, a game with the theme of social innovation based on collective physical competitions, in which every city participating in the initiative enters a team of citizens which may include as many as 10,000 people whose physical activities are recorded on a portable electronic device, and their physiological data monitored. The results of the recordings are then compared with those of the teams from the other cities. The aim of Everybody’s a Champion! (in French, Toux Champions!) is to promote physical exercise in urban areas through both mainstream sports, like football or basketball, and more “underground” ones such as bike-polo and street-golf. At the same time, a further aim is to organise prototyping and co-creating workshops for temporary facilities with the event participants, and together to imagine and explore new scenarios for physical exercise in the city.

Everybody’s a champion has taken place twice a year since May 2014 in the French city of Saint-Étienne, with the participation of over 200 people in the First edition and 11 proposed activities. The event owes its initial idea to the association, Cité du Design, in collaboration with People Olympics, the city of Saint-Étienne, Saint-Étienne metropolitan area, OpenfactorySainte, OpenSCOP, Laboratory of Physiology and Exercise, and the Jean Monnet University. It takes place in the creative district of Manufacture Plaine Achille, where the presence and interaction of a variety of creative figures is useful to the functioning of the workshops: students of design and engineering, start-up incubators, fab lab managers and several agencies. The activities take place outdoors, except for the workshops held at the fab lab and the Cité du Design, and participation is administrated informally: open to all, with the possibility of enrolling for multiple activities. The level of participation is monitored through surveys on paper, Design plays an important role in the success of the events in First place, implicitly through the use of co-design methodology (ideating and prototyping workshops) in which participants are helped by designers and craftspeople both in the elaboration of new sports infrastructure for urban areas, and in imagining and discussing new future scenarios. From a town-planning point of view, the initiative triggers stimulating thought on the way sports activities can influence, or depend on, the urban infrastructure (illumination and street furniture).
The term domestic comes from the Latin word “domesticus”, which was originally used to refer to an open-air library in a city. To facilitate this, Tina and two other women founded a non-governmental organisation called “Dijia misle” (a translation of “La Pensée savouge“). In English, “The Savagge Mind“, a title of a book by the famous French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, which then went on to set up various cultural projects on Slovenia.

Tina’s initiative attracted the interest of the Slovenian Tourist office, which recognised it as an opportunity to develop something in public space that would be capable of attracting new tourists, particularly as recent urban and architectural rennovations in the city centre had led to the creation of many new, but rather empty, public spaces. The support from the tourism office enabled Tina Popović’s initiative to develop and achieve its aim. Library under the Treetops is not merely a library. It has the ambitious aim of spreading a reading culture in Slovenia and attracting users who would not otherwise visit a library of their own accord. The solution lies in the inversion of the norms in taking the library to the people and creating a cosy corner of public space in which to pause, read a book, and socialise. In fact, Library under the Treetops is a library in the vraja and under the trees, but enables people to conveniently enjoy an external environment and encourages interaction among readers.

The libraries keep to the opening hours of the places they are in, and stay open from May to September; the books are donated by the publishers, but a dedicated box is also provided in which people can donate their own books to the project.

The first ‘Library under the Treetops’ was set up in Tivoli Park, the main green area in Ljubljana, followed by four others scattered around the city: at the Castle, Congress Square, Tabor park and along the Ljubljanica river. The initiative was so successful that it led to the creation of several others, such as the Aperitifs under the Treetops, which aims to bring the idea of Library under the Treetops to other cities.

The aim of the ‘Library under the Treetops’ project is to go beyond a traditional setting to a wider cultural area, offering a programme in line with the social changes of the moment. Every year since 1997 the festival has proposed a specific theme, ranging from the film programme, that tackles such urban issues as the privatisation of public space, insecurity, or the sustainability of cities, in the same period as the film projections, a series of cultural and artistic activities are organised in the city in support of the festival programme. In 2014, the programme included debates, guided walks, musical performances and so on.

As mentioned previously, making public space more domestic may involve multiple factors: a physical domestic environment; an activity that usually takes place at home; arousing positive feelings of familiarity and intimacy. For example, we could imagine a space with a homely feel, or the garden or courtyard at home where we can enjoy the dinner in the kitchen at home and serve them to a group of people who wish to share a meal in an informal atmosphere.

The first Restaurant Day was held in Finland on 21st May 2011. It involved 15 cities and 45 restaurants, but it rapidly spread to other countries: the 15th February 2015 edition saw the participation of 1,375 restaurants spread over 43 countries. Altogether, from 2011 to 2015, Restaurant Day attracted 17,400 restaurants, 70,000 farewell events and about 2 million clients. Anyone can take part in the initiative, just enrol on the website and decide on a menu and the number of people you can cater for. After that, give your event a creative title, the names of your restaurant, the furniture and furnishings, how to serve the food, whether to draw in to lend a hand. The location is a key element: in summer, the ideal places are parks, yards and street corners; in winter, houses, offices and other places under cover are preferable. For one day, cooking enthuiasts have the opportunity to open the restaurant of their dreams, moving rapidly from conceiving to achieving.

Restaurant Day is a cultivation that takes place four times a year, encouraging people to open their own restaurant for one day. Many are the people who organise or go to eat in one of these pop-up restaurants just for fun, to share new culinary experiences and enjoy with other people the spaces where five our everyday lives.

The event was conceived by three friends, Antti Tomola, Olli Sirén and Timo Santala, as a revolutionary act to contrast the demanding bureaucratic procedure required to open a restaurant. They had the idea of setting up a bicycle-bar in which to sell drinks and tapas, inviting friends to do the same. To bring the idea of Restaurant Day into being, the first volunteers created an association, with one of the creators, Timo Santala, as managing director.

In the heterogeneous panorama of scenarios dealt with, an idea of multifaceted “playfulness” emerges that takes into consideration various connotations of the term. Playful public space is functional and responds directly to the recreational needs of its users, making play and sports activities possible with a firm eye to social cohesion and with relational benefits for the various components of the community. Playful public space however is also what we think of from a different approach: it is fun and it is able to strike citizens on an emotional level, unmasking positive sensations of emotion and joy and mirth. A playful, fun design action is undoubtedly an effective way of renovating a space and activating new flows towards it.

In the heterogeneous panorama of scenarios dealt with, an idea of multifaceted “playfulness” emerges that takes into consideration various connotations of the term. Playful public space is functional and responds directly to the recreational needs of its users, making play and sports activities possible with a firm eye to social cohesion and with relational benefits for the various components of the community. Playful public space however is also what we think of from a different approach: it is fun and it is able to strike citizens on an emotional level, unmasking positive sensations of emotion and joy and mirth. A playful, fun design action is undoubtedly an effective way of renovating a space and activating new flows towards it.
Knjižnica pod krošnjami (library under the treetops), Nova Gorica, Slovenia

Reading tour around Slovenia.
Making a public space more domestic brings various benefits to the single individual, who finds himself in a place similar in some ways to his home environment, and therefore in a situation that is psychologically and physically ideal: a condition that may also bring benefits to the whole community, if applied to the world of work. This intuition has been understood and applied for a long time in co-working environments: places that offer a suitable space for working outside the home, but that are equipped with many of the comforts typical of the domestic environment, such as a place for cooking and eating meals or a quiet place for relaxing. However, some people have thought of extending their experience of co-working to co-living, giving a team the possibility of coming together to live in a shared space and thus developing projects in a shorter time and a more intensive way. One young couple decided to create such a space in a locality that lacked anything of this kind, but which is very interesting for its historical and social context: the city of Matera in the south of Italy, famous for its “Sassi di Matera”, ancient cave-like stone structures considered to be one of the earliest human settlements in Italy (dating back to 7000 BC).

Casa Natural
MATERA, ITALY

Capital city for the region of Basilicata, with a population of 60,000 people, Matera is a UNESCO Heritage site and has been declared European Capital of Culture for 2019. As well its cultural interest, it is also a sensitive area due to the economic problems and backwardness suffered by many cities in Southern Italy. Given these premises, in 2012 and at their own expense, Andrea Paoletti and Mariella Stella set up “Casa Natural”, a new kind of co-working environment inside the Sassi, which soon turned into a multifunctional public space. Andrea and Mariella also established numerous collaborations with other innovative local and national companies and entities, such as Impact Hub in Bari (another co-working environment), Fred (social book-sharing network), Gnammo (social-eating platform) and many others.

In order to open and manage the space they founded an association and put together a team of 10 young professional designers, photographers, managers and tourist guides: a multidisciplinary group that animates the space and looks after the guests and their needs. Anybody can use the Casa Natural for various purposes ranging from event organisation to work, for teaching or learning. Indeed the space has been designed to be open in the sense of sharing and collaborating, but also to create such a space in a locality that lacked anything of this kind, but which is very interesting for its historical and social context: the city of Matera in the south of Italy, famous for its “Sassi di Matera”, ancient cave-like stone structures considered to be one of the earliest human settlements in Italy (dating back to 7000 BC).
The association set up the project, M3 Unblock it!, a platform for spatial and artistic activities, located inside a typical two-room apartment for three people built in a residential area of Warsaw after the war. The residential apartment blocks were called “Służew nad Dolinką”.

The association symbolically transferred a residential module typical of the seventies to a public space, the structure of which became a frame for numerous public events, exhibitions and meetings linked to cultural, architectural, historical and natural themes. The initiators of the idea presented the history of one of the most characteristic residential complexes in Warsaw and the visions for its future. They started a debate trying to answer the question of whether, 30 years after its creation, it has been possible to create a neighbourhood; they reflected on what the area might look like in 2030, and above all, they concentrated on the present, trying to re-launch the valley area. The interior design demonstrated some possible ways of restructuring a two-room flat, adapting it to the requirements of various generations of residents. In collaboration with the local residents, who provided the books, a neighbourhood library was also created, in the living room.

Exhibitions associated with the architecture of the area and its past were also organised; series of photographs concerning the space and inhabitants of the valley. The presence of the M3 apartment in the Służewiecka valley was also intended to trigger debate about improvements in the quality of life in urban districts and the use of green areas. Local citizens were involved in the development and creation of the pavilion, as well as becoming the main beneficiaries of the creative workshops and the debates proposed. The initiative was important on a social level, offering a medium-long term. Provisional refers to the requirements of designers who steer the process.

Concluding thoughts

As we can see in the case studies presented in this chapter, the strategies used in prototyping the projects vary. They can be classified on the basis of their impact on the place where they occur and on the communities taking part in the realization of the projects themselves. As mentioned in the introduction to the chapter, time is a decisive factor in the relationship between the prototyped projects, their final realization, and the involvement of local communities.

What is interesting is the distinction between the terms temporary, ephemeral and provisional: “Temporary is on the border between provisional and ephemeral. Ephemeral is all that has a short life, generally of one day. The term is very often used in the field of biology to describe what is born, grows and dies within 24 hours, leaving little trace of itself due to its intrinsic nature. Provisional is an event originally intended for a medium-term short but which, for various factors whether external or internal to its provisional nature in itself, moves into the medium-long term. Provisional refers to all that substitutes what is real, appearing as an expedient in the place of reality, which is reproduced, shown, represented. The temporary takes certain characteristics from these two extremes, building its own autonomy: like the ephemeral, it has a time limit, but it might have the opportunity of living longer than initially foreseen, of extending its own life-cycle, dying to be born again somewhere else and leaving traces of its own passage. At the same time, it shares some characteristics with the provisional: although it maintains its own qualities and does not appear as a mere substitute for reality. It generates added value to the existing world. The temporary is developed with a precise, programmed objective, with a scheduled time horizon and with well-identified aims.” (Fassi, 2012)

Some cases represent a sort of test, to generally try out the installation in question, the main objective of which is to involve the local residents and communities who live in those particular urban spaces. Other cases can already be described as nearly complete accomplishments of their projects: they are not just initial tests but almost full renderings in which the communities are thoroughly involved. It is often the end-users themselves who build and set up installations and equipment, maybe under the guidance of facilitators such as individual designers or groups of designers who steer the process.

Finally, some projects may leave an inheritance that is still more important than the initial temporary action carried out in the public space in question. These are projects that can be considered successful: best practices in which the facilitators have focused their task and at the end of the set-up stage has left the project in the hands of local communities who manage to guide and run it. In the next chapter we shall investigate the idea of inheritance more fully, especially the sustainability of public space projects characterized by a bottom-up process.

When talking about temporary installations however, it is important to remember that even when the structure can be physically dismantled the memory of that particular spot may be permanent. Duration is the mark that a project, a place or an event leaves on the memory of the users, even in the case of temporary structures and temporary uses that may be characterized by a longer-lasting permanence. Such is the case of temporary projects, which were created to revitalize and reclaim unused zones of the city but which then trigger long-running processes that end up leaving an indelible mark on the city, on the space and on the uses of the site. For this reason we like to speak of temporary structures and uses but permanent memory.
Sources


Manzini E., (2010) The social construction of public space in Gdansk

Marušic B., Nikšič M., Corieri L., Isedi, Human Cities. Celebrating public space, s.n., Stichting Kunst Boek


Meroni A., Sangiorgi D., (2011) Design for Services, Series Editors Rachel Cooper

Mulgan G. (2007) Social innovations: what it is, why it matters and how it can be accelerated, Said Business School, Oxford


The Cité du design is a platform for innovation, research, advanced education, economical development and promotion of art and design supported by the City of Saint-Étienne, the Saint-Étienne Metropole, the Rhone-Alpes Region, and the State (Ministry of Culture). The Cité du design and the Saint-Étienne Higher School of Art and Design have formed an IEPCC (public institution for cultural cooperation) since 2005, a legal tool combining the cultural and economic aspects of design. At the heart of a Living Lab, the Cité du design focuses on innovation through uses and social mutations. It is the driving force of the local, national, and international development of a territory, Saint-Étienne, UNESCO City of design.

Human communities have tremendous and inherent self-heal- ing abilities. Though usually invisible, the mechanisms of social cohesion enabling them are very powerful and can enable communities to regenerate after a shock through the re- construction of the social structures that foster and support its survival in a new environment.

Public space planning has ceased to be an exclusively specialist’s territory. It has become the subject of citizens’ debates in a large number of European cities. Residents, associations, shopkeepers, urban planning experts, local councillors—all engage together to define a collective space in which individual needs and practices will fuse into a common project. How can these initiatives be made viable? How can communities organise to implement those actions?

The meaning of the French word ‘communauté’ differs from its English counterpart ‘community’, which naturally conveys the notion of ‘empowerment’. While the French term is thought in relation to the concept of ‘nation’, in the sense of national community, the Anglo-Saxon political tradition has given to ‘communities’ that of an organized micro-society.

The French word ‘commun’ refers to the totality of goods shared by a group of people. It actualised into ‘communaux’, communal lands that prevailed in Europe until the 18th century. These communal lands consisted of parts of the village land that were not individually owned. They were de facto communal—that is they were held in common by all inhabitants. Often described as ‘vain and vague’7, they were composed of pastures, ditches, hedges, diverse areas of woods and moors, and sometimes of a river, or even, though more rarely, of a pond. While they sometimes provided villagers with their only source of pasture for livestock and wood for fuel, they were also open to the most deprived people, allowing them to raise a cow or a sheep for their basic food needs. With enclosure conducted by the State these common lands have now almost disappeared. However the concept of the common (in the sense of that which is common) is recently being re-evaluated with the rise of the collaborative economy, also called the sharing economy. In their last book, Common. Essay on revolution in the 21st century 6, Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval re-define the concept of the common in view of the contemporary enclosure of the web and extend its meaning to those of cooperation, co-production, and collaboration.

Economist Olivier Pastre7, who champions bottom-up economy, defends the principle of subsidiarity, according to which the responsibility of a public action—when necessary—has to be handed over/entrusted to the competent authority closest to those who are directly concerned by this action. This socio-political principle was first conceptualised by German philosopher Althusius, who defined hierarchy as support rather than supremacy. The hierarchical order should not intervene unless mobilised by the next lower social body having failed to solve a problem on its own. This ascending organisation of power is in complete opposition with the orthodox model of task delegation controlled by the highest policy-making spheres. It is a principle which not only ensures that those who are concerned are not disconnected from the public decision-making process but which also empower individuals at each social level for their capacity to find the solution that is the most relevant to their needs. In short the principle of subsidiarity aims at determining the level of intervention that is most relevant.

This third part collects projects implemented by civil society actors (residents, students, associations, artists, concept designers, etc.) who have transformed public spaces and contributed to restore and generate social cohesion within them. Challenging the city scale is not only the modification of green spaces, abandoned buildings, or neglected neighbourhoods, it can also mean—in line with the digital common that are the collaborative interfaces or platforms—inventing virtual versions of the city we all live in. Thus allowing the actors of these changes to design the collective services of the city of the future.

1. When local communities take on the requalification of green areas

Urban green areas come first in the regeneration process of public spaces because they allow a more spontaneous and immediate community-based engagement. Perfect for leisure or breaks, they can also be used for actions targeted towards urban sustainable development such as composting, gardening, recycling and sorting, or mulching, etc. Community gardens are spaces where people meet and can get informed on issues related to food and health. The experience of sharing and environmental learning take shape through collaborative initiatives in which communities can reclaim their place within the neighbourhood they inhabit.

Chechtun Park
CIESZYN, POLAND

The redevelopment of Chestnut Park, a town park in Cieszyn in Poland, is an urban renewal project illustrating new design and conception dynamics. Rarely used by people, the park had become an abandoned urban space—most likely because of lack of maintenance and renovation. In order to restore its lost conviviality, the City of Cieszyn initiated a public consultation workshop. And in 2012, an exhibition entitled Where to play? and showing drawings of kids’ playgrounds triggered a series of questions on playground spaces in the city, it also was the occasion to raise awareness of the park’s future. This first event was followed by the creation of a working-group composed of urban residents, town representatives and designers from Procento K studio. In charge of answering the following questions: What and where can we play in Cieszyn? To analyse the qualities of Chestnut Park, residents and consultation workshop participants were asked to draw the site from memory. The aim was to discriminate the most important areas of the park from those that were unacknowledged. To compare

59

---

6 Servigne and Shevchen, Comment tout peut etre fait, Kehrer verlag, cologne, 2014; a book on which the Cité du design collaborated. Althusius defines a ‘common’ as a resource used by all. Communaux are a typical example of commons. 7 Olivier Pastre, French banker and economist, and author of "Réapproprier l'Économie - The bottom-up economy. Crisis, 2013 (in French).
The Walled Garden
LONDON, UK

Carried out with similar community mobilisation, The Walled Garden project is a communal garden in Bedford's Park. It is situated within the grounds of a university campus. It is a shared garden experiment conceived within the framework of research programmes run by POLIMI-DESIS Lab, a research lab at the Politecnico di Milano Design department. The originality of the project lies in its community-centred approach, which involves both university students and staff and the inhabitants of Milano Bovisa district. The project was initiated in Autumn 2011 when students created a garden after a workshop called the Temporay Urban Solutions. The following year three co-design sessions were organised to include other stakeholders and to adjust the proposal. About 100 people kept up, academics and residents participated in the project. One year after the opening of the garden, the Coevoliv project reached 25 to 30 permanent members and an ever-increasing number of visitors who occasionally take part in maintenance activities.

One of the main assets of the project was its capacity to coordinate public and private intervention and local involvement. It has been developed in close collaboration with the Council owning the Walled Garden and through the teamwork of both users and partner organisations—a synergy that offers significant advantages. The project addresses the needs and aspirations of all participants at all levels, whether individual or administrative as for its strategic management. If this collaborative approach has received large support and secured significant funding, its inclusive nature slowed its implementation: developing a thorough understanding of the needs and possibilities of each stakeholder and organising a consensus and convergence of ideas and best practices among the different actors involved in the project at every step of the project requires a lot of time. This questions the organisation of community-based urban regeneration as well as the upstream anticipation of partner contribution. What are the relevant protocols for collaborative actions? How can design interplay with public policy? Can we imagine our authorities being redesigned?  

The convivial garden at Politecnico di Milano Bovisa campus.

How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable?

60

61
How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable?

Coltivando, Milan, Italy, 2014
© Politecnico di Milano

The convivial garden
mixing generations
and populations on the
grounds of Politecnico
di Milano Bovisa
campus.
The project also stresses the importance of a three-level cooperation: the gardeners and the requirements of the projects. The collaboration with local NGOs, Design studio Borek, Swierczek, and a network of urban gardeners in Cieszyn, on a parcel of land that used to be a car park, rapidly became a working and playing space, and the aim was to manage to create a collective meal from community grown products.

The Shrinking Cities concept, which emerged in Germany at the beginning of the 1990s to describe the evolution of some cities in former East Germany. It later encompassed urban areas that have experienced a decline of economic activities caused the increase of commercial vacancy. The shrinking of some cities in Europe, especially in small and medium-sized cities, has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food. Generally, the project collaborates with a network of sociocultural local associations managing the space and the activities provided in the old farmhouse. The main beneficiaries are the residents who gradually organised and joined together to form the Association Cooperative Cuccagna, a cooperative that could engage in a creditable dialogue with institutions and develop a viable programme to rehabilitate the farm. Consolino Cuccagna has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food.

The Shrinking Cities International Research Network is a research consortium of 30 scholars and experts that was founded in 2004 within Berkeley University’s Center for Global Metropolitan Studies. It is pursuing researches on shrinking cities in a global context through notably the consequences of the current housing crisis on the cities already economically weakened by deindustrialisation. Various municipal authorities explore the consequences of regional industrial decline and the issues related to the isolation process of the urban areas that are disconnected from the new economic centres emerging from demographic transformations.

Urban decline features abandoned industrial areas and city centres in many European cities, especially in small and medium-sized agglomerations unable to compete with the driving power of metropolises. While old industrial premises turned into derelict land precluding any economic development, the decline of economic activities has increased commercial vacancy with the disappearance of convenience stores, which shape the maintenance of social cohesion, entire streets and neighbour- hoods have lost their attractiveness.

Abandoned neighbourhoods are economically and socially weak- ened and cannot be managed as once the evaluation of urban development models, which are subordinated to the economic growth paradigm. The initiative developed by the Project Office Philip Dawit aims at understanding the causes and con- sequences of urban shrinkage as well as developing innovative urban policies that could improve the prospects of cities with negative images through strategies based on the development of culture. In his book Notes on the Moire House (or Urbanism for Emptying Cities) Ernesto Onzio shows that citizens have the power to reinvent the organisation of their daily life so as to change and adapt abandoned urban spaces to their needs.

When communities reclaim vacant urban spaces, social dynamics, neighbourhood attractiveness and economic recovery are re-stimulated. The following projects are based on the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings through initiatives designed by and for the population. Associated with various other public and co-ops, bartering, exchanging and recycling, car pooling and sharing, developing soft mobility and promoting energy sobriety. This process is based on the different approaches to build self-reli- ance. For waste sorting to be the first step towards resilience, it has to be followed by its converting into insulation materials.

Garden without borders, Cieszyn, Poland

15 The project also stresses the importance of a three-level coop- eration: local government, NGOs, and citizens. For a project to be durable in the urban public space, Garden without borders was decided by the local government, and participants were fully responsible for the realisation of the garden, in collaboration with local NGOs, Design studio Prokowilo, which monitored the design process so as to create a space meeting the needs of the gardeners and the requirements of the projects. Garden without borders, Cieszyn, Poland, 2016 © R. Oksinska

16 Garden without Borders, Cieszyn, Poland, 2016 © R. Oksinska

17 Growing from seeds, Author: Justyna Kaczmarska, Garden without borders, Cieszyn, Poland, 2016 © R. Oksinska

18 Urban garden in Lucie, Author: Green Worlds, Garden without borders, Cieszyn, Poland, 2016 © R. Oksinska

19 Les Composteurs de quartier (The neighbourhood composters) is the name of a collective urban composter designed by a community of women to encourage city-dwellers to adopt sustainable development practices. In 2011 in Nantes, the members of Les laboises association decided to organise activities that would take place in the public space of their neighbourhood. Their first initiative was a workshop on gardening and a local compost- er. After contacting Farah studio design to help them improve this equipment, a prototype was created in 2013 in partnership with the association Compostii. Farah imagined a collective composter that serves as street furniture offering new functions in terms of urban integration and simplification of composting processes. After an initial phase of negotiation, the City of Nantes agreed to fund the project. Four years later, in 2015, the composter was installed in the Malakoff district in Nantes.

20 This equipment can be used by each and everyone: urban dwellers who do not have a garden but want to compost their kitchen waste, taxpayers who want to reduce their tax incentive when required by their town, conscious consumers who know that composting at source produces ten times less CO2 than waste collection, regional authorities wanting to develop policies of waste reduction at source and to significantly reduce the amount of landfill and ininerated waste at a lower cost, as well as others who want to create a space for knowledge and sharing, and activity establishments, commercial catering establishments, hotels and restaurants, supermarkets and hypermarkets, mini-markets, distribution centres, markets, companies without catering activ- ities but likely to produce organic waste, market gardeners, fio- dats, festivals, or any structure developing shared composting. Les Composteurs de quartier, Nantes, France

21 These initiatives echo the Transition town movement, which invites groups of citizens, NGO networks, and in fine local authorities to step up and mobilise around the common goal of reimagining and rebudding their world. This approach is based on themes such as energy, economy, food and means of subsis- tence, transports, education, health, or even spirituality. Even though it claims its non-political nature, it can impact the political life of a city. Incidentally, the first transition initiative in the city of Totnes in the United Kingdom has promoted knowledge and experience transfer through various study trips with elected officials from other regions. Citizens imagine collectively the solutions adapted to their own context, their own local economy, their own local currency (to encourage re-localisation and boost local trade, including food production), strengthening the relations between residence and territorialised creations. In a joint process of social innovation and co-ops, bartering, exchanging and recycling, car pooling and sharing, developing soft mobility and promoting energy sobriety. This process is based on the different approaches to build resilience. For waste sorting to be the first step towards resilience, it has to be followed by its converting into insulation materials.

22 The increasing number of abandoned buildings in urban areas is one of the main causes of shrinking cities. This expression refers to urban decline in many western cities. The phenomenon appeared in the US in the 1970s following the oil shock and the concept emerged in the 1980s in the 1980s to describe the evolution of some cities in former East Germany. It later encompassed a number of other local populations in the population migration and of industry evolution through Europe and the world.

23 The process of urban decay has both economic and demo- graphic origins, since the deindustrialisation of some regions goes with rising unemployment and depopulation. Urban mutation has become a recurring preoccupation of local elected officials and is an attractive growing media and urban research theme at the same time.

24 The shrinking of some cities in Europe, especially in small and medium-sized cities, has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food. Consolino Cuccagna has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food.

25 The Shrinking Cities International Research Network is a research consortium of 30 scholars and experts that was founded in 2004 within Berkeley University’s Center for Global Metropolitan Studies. It is pursuing researches on shrinking cities in a global context through notably the consequences of the current housing crisis on the cities already economically weakened by deindustrialisation. Various municipal authorities explore the consequences of regional industrial decline and the issues related to the isolation process of the urban areas that are disconnected from the new economic centres emerging from demographic transformations.

26 Abandoned neighbourhoods are economically and socially weak- ened and cannot be managed as once the evaluation of urban development models, which are subordinated to the economic growth paradigm. The initiative developed by the Project Office Philip Dawit aims at understanding the causes and con- sequences of urban shrinkage as well as developing innovative urban policies that could improve the prospects of cities with negative images through strategies based on the development of culture. In his book Notes on the Moire House (or Urbanism for Emptying Cities) Ernesto Onzio shows that citizens have the power to reinvent the organisation of their daily life so as to change and adapt abandoned urban spaces to their needs. When communities reclaim vacant urban spaces, social dynamics, neighbourhood attractiveness and economic recovery are re-stimulated. The following projects are based on the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings through initiatives designed by and for the population. Associated with various other public and co-ops, bartering, exchanging and recycling, car pooling and sharing, developing soft mobility and promoting energy sobriety. This process is based on the different approaches to build self-reli- ance. For waste sorting to be the first step towards resilience, it has to be followed by its converting into insulation materials.

27 The increasing number of abandoned buildings in urban areas is one of the main causes of shrinking cities. This expression refers to urban decline in many western cities. The phenomenon appeared in the US in the 1970s following the oil shock and the concept emerged in the 1980s in the 1980s to describe the evolution of some cities in former East Germany. It later encompassed a number of other local populations in the population migration and of industry evolution through Europe and the world.

28 The process of urban decay has both economic and demo- graphic origins, since the deindustrialisation of some regions goes with rising unemployment and depopulation. Urban mutation has become a recurring preoccupation of local elected officials and is an attractive growing media and urban research theme at the same time.

29 The shrinking of some cities in Europe, especially in small and medium-sized cities, has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food. Consolino Cuccagna has now become a laboratory for civic participation, which runs many activities and initiatives related to sustainability, culture, social cohesion, urban agriculture, and food.
3 St Clements hospital is a historical hospital site of 19,000 square miles that was redeveloped into an affordable housing complex in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. East London has been subjected to major real estate changes in the last ten years, especially near and in the Olympic site of the 2012 Games. An increasing demand for housing has caused the soaring of property prices. The average home cost more than £620k per year in 2014, which had an impact on the local population, and especially on families.

In 2011 the Greater London Authority issued a call for ten properties in East London that had the opportunity to help develop design solutions that were financially and politically helped by different institutions such as Ex-Fadda, Laboratory of Knowledge. The specificity of the project is that twenty-three houses will be made available for ELCLT members and sold at half the market price in East London.

The collaborative aspect has been a central preoccupation during the elaboration phase of the project. As ELCLT says on their website: “if local people aren’t involved in the design process then the expertise of the local area is not capitalised on and people feel alienated by the entire process, often resorting to any form of change that is being proposed. It is their home—they deserve their say.” During the consultation stage ELCLT held a series of workshops. More than 350 people took part and the experiences of these workshops formed the basis of the propositions for the bid. In the next phases the community was consulted several times on specific design ideas. Architects and masterplanners John Thompson and Partners, 36 are junior members under 29. Their activities include urban agriculture courses, managing an urban gardening centre, outdoor kiosks with solar chargers for smartphones, reading groups, walks in the city, and a urban life fair.

Ex-Fadda, Laboratory of Knowledge

Dodo Ry is an environmental association based in Helsinki. Its goal is to promote renewable energy, common spaces and urban gardening. It reclaims abandoned industrial buildings to promote a collaborative design approach through workshops and discussion groups that address issues related to city of the future. Dodo groups have also formed in other major cities such as Lahti, Oulu, Tampere or Turku, but the Dodo Ry site in Helsinki offers an urban farming garden, a café, a greenhouse, and other projects related to food production. Among its 300 members, 36 are junior members under 29. Their activities include urban agriculture courses, managing an urban gardening centre, outdoor kiosks with solar chargers for smartphones, reading groups, walks in the city, and a urban life fair.

Ex-Fadda, Laboratory of Knowledge

DENTICE DI FRASSO, ITALY

Ex-Fadda, Laboratory of Knowledge is a creative and design-led social innovation hub situated in Dentice di Frasso former winery in the Puglia region in Italy.

In the last ten years, the political situation in Puglia has changed radically, with a specific focus on young people. A regional Programme for Youth called “Bollett! Spirit!” was implemented to help young people to realise social innovation projects for local communities. Ex-Fadda emerged from this context, financially and politically helped by different Institutions such as Regione Puglia and the municipality of San Vito del Normanni.

After booming activities until the 1990s, the Dentice Frasso family winery was abandoned, and then bought by public authorities. In 2010 the young company Sandel and five local sociocultural associations won the call for applications for the temporary management of the site, and received 60,000 euros. As this
How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable?

Ex-Fadda

Ex-Fadda now runs several projects and initiatives: a recreation centre, a music school, a carpenter’s workshop, a collective of photographers, a library, a bar and a radio. There is also a social restaurant – X Food - using local food-suppliers and employing 16 disabled people, and an open air space – X Lively – for young people to organise parties and concerts. Ex-Fadda can be seen as a space of flows, the practical application of a new concept of flexible public spaces, whose meanings and uses are defined by users according to their different needs.

Examber

The Grad European Center for Culture and Debate, also known as KC GRAD – was opened in 2009 in the heart of Belgrade, on the banks of the Sava River. It occupies a post-industrial empty warehouse and is the result of a rehabilitation project following the determination of the municipality to regenerate a relatively deprived industrial area of the city. It is a cultural and arts design place which gathers interdisciplinary actors and is open to the population. Project Initiators are invited to cooperate and take part in the dynamic life of the place. It has now become one of Belgrade’s most prominent post-industrial venue with more than 8,000 visitors each month, which adds up to approximately 70,000 visitors a year. The activities offered are diverse and range from exhibitions, festivals, performances, lectures, debates, book presentations, workshops, music events, and film screenings...

Grad European Center for Culture and Debate

The Grad European Center for Culture and Debate - also known as KC GRAD – was opened in 2009 in the heart of Belgrade, on the banks of the Sava River. It occupies a post-industrial empty warehouse and is the result of a rehabilitation project following the determination of the municipality to regenerate a relatively deprived industrial area of the city. It is a cultural and arts design place which gathers interdisciplinary actors and is open to the population. Project Initiators are invited to cooperate and take part in the dynamic life of the place. It has now become one of Belgrade’s most prominent post-industrial venue with more than 8,000 visitors each month, which adds up to approximately 70,000 visitors a year. The activities offered are diverse and range from exhibitions, festivals, performances, lectures, debates, book presentations, workshops, music events, and film screenings...

Sharing and discussion are key factors in the management of this public space based on general assemblies. Public authorities only assume a neutral and supportive role since the management of the common by the community has priority over any outside intervention.

Annenviertel!

Annenviertel! The art of public intervention

Sharing and discussion are key factors in the management of this public space based on general assemblies. Public authorities only assume a neutral and supportive role since the management of the common by the community has priority over any outside intervention.

Consulting people to address their needs (when the project is not community-initiated) is the best way to anchor these initiatives within the social reality of a neighbourhood. However, open and collaborative design approaches and, possibly, a newly defined formal framework that will structure and help implement the collected ideas without losing sight of the initial objectives. The constant presence of a managing body – whether it be a local association, a foundation or an artists’ centre – is necessary to facilitate and create dialogue with the population as well as to act as intermediary with the required public authority.

For these initiatives to be relevant and durable, a balance has to be found between the framing stage of the project, often developed with local governments, and the more informal and natural approach of the local communities involved in its conception. The dialogue with public institutions brings the political and financial support needed to consolidate the initiatives developed.

3. When an artistic community bets on cultural projects to revitalise a neighbourhood

The requalification of a neighbourhood through cultural initiatives is synonym with revitalisation and attractiveness and can help other types of activities to be reintroduced. Many European cities such as Milan, Lyon, Graz, Belgrade, Helsinki or London have supported the creation of arts centres in deprived neighbourhoods. Cultural projects can contribute to restore social cohesion, stimulate local community work, fight against social exclusion, or reconstruct individual and collective identities. How can these initiatives be financed? How can locally empowering cultural projects stand the test of time? In other words, how can such projects be made durable? Should they be made durable? What are the ultimate and actual benefits of such initiatives? The following projects illustrate this will for neighbourhood requalification through different cultural initiatives: incubators for creators and artists in deprived areas, artistic projects organised by cultural centres, or art interventions fostered by local artists.

Grad European Center for Culture and Debate

The Grad European Center for Culture and Debate – also known as KC GRAD – was opened in 2009 in the heart of Belgrade, on the banks of the Sava River. It occupies a post-industrial empty warehouse and is the result of a rehabilitation project following the determination of the municipality to regenerate a relatively deprived industrial area of the city. It is a cultural and arts design place which gathers interdisciplinary actors and is open to the population. Project Initiators are invited to cooperate and take part in the dynamic life of the place. It has now become one of Belgrade’s most prominent post-industrial venue with more than 8,000 visitors each month, which adds up to approximately 70,000 visitors a year. The activities offered are diverse and range from exhibitions, festivals, performances, lectures, debates, book presentations, workshops, music events, and film screenings...

Urban project Incubator

Urban project Incubator is a Goethe-institut project supported by the City of Belgrade and the Municipality of Savski Venac. It is an Incubator involving ten local and international projects in the fields of art, architecture, urbanism and social engagement. These initiatives were present and operational in Savamala in 2013, a historically rich neighbourhood that had lost its attractiveness and dynamism.

Art historians and sociologists were actively involved in the analysis and development of the processes implemented through the Incubator. Aspects of daily life in the neighbourhood and its local collective memory were collected to preserve the authenticity of the place. Through the Independent crowdfunding platform Nextsavamala people were invited to reflect and discuss their ideas for the future development of their neighbourhood. Activities were organised through diverse cultural programmes. Under the slogan We Also Love the Art of Others, the artists’ cooperative Third Belgrade worked jointly with artists who were responsive to the spirit of Savamala. As for the Rotor collective, it is a sound art project implemented to collect old and new sounds from Savamala and feed them back into the same area in formats such as installations, concerts, or radio programmes.

Savamala’s low rents and creative energy encourage alternative life styles, its studios and galleries, its bars and cafes, new start-up enterprises and small shops are fertile breeding-ground for creation. Savamala has thus become an experimental proving ground for a number of projects ranging from urban regeneration to cultural transformation.

Ex-Fadda

Ex-Fadda now runs several projects and initiatives: a recreation centre, a music school, a carpenter’s workshop, a collective of photographers, a library, a bar and a radio. There is also a social restaurant – X Food - using local food-suppliers and employing 16 disabled people, and an open air space – X Lively – for young people to organise parties and concerts. Ex-Fadda can be seen as a space of flows, the practical application of a new concept of flexible public spaces, whose meanings and uses are defined by users according to their different needs.

Ex-Fadda, Bertice 5, Prishtina, Kosovo, 2015

X-Food restaurant

Kooperativa

The same year, Graz City Council initiated the renovation project of a zone near the train station. The communication campaign developed by Rotor revealed the issues at stake in this neighbourhood, proving the project was relevant with the city’s urban. A mapping study was conducted with the different local actors to implement the artistic projects in urban space. A dialogue was held with other European art institutions in order to contextualise a new project framework and to exchange networks right from the start so as to make these initiatives durable.

If Rotor received governmental and EU grants, the success of the programme is first and foremost due to the commitment of stakeholders. The communication tools used allowed artists, theoreticians and activists to meet local people, politicians, shopkeepers, civil-servants, and so on, to build a strong participative network around the project. The inhabitants of an area who live and work side by side are brought together to conduct actions, thus contributing to make their neighbourhood more autonomous.

Annenviertel!
The art of public intervention

Annenviertel! The art of public intervention is a project that has been initiated by the contemporary art association Rotor in 2009 in Graz. Its aim is to involve artists in urban transformation projects so as to confront artistic freedom of expression with the norms and constraints of the public space in terms of living together and services. Rotor directors Margarete Makovec and Anton Lederer, and cultural theorist Elke Krisany first identified and contacted a large number of local associations working on various social subjects (migration, genre, religion, culture, fired people, etc.). Guided tours have also been organised to fully grasp the social context of the Murvorst, a former mining area characterised by a high percentage of socially depopulated population and by an important cultural diversity shaped by successive migratory flows.

The same year, Graz City Council initiated the renovation project of a zone near the train station. The communication campaign developed by Rotor revealed the issues at stake in this neighbourhood, proving the project was relevant with the city’s urban. A mapping study was conducted with the different local actors to implement the artistic projects in urban space. A dialogue was held with other European art institutions in order to contextualise a new project framework and to exchange networks right from the start so as to make these initiatives durable.

If Rotor received governmental and EU grants, the success of the programme is first and foremost due to the commitment of stakeholders. The communication tools used allowed artists, theoreticians and activists to meet local people, politicians, shopkeepers, civil-servants, and so on, to build a strong participative network around the project. The inhabitants of an area who live and work side by side are brought together to conduct actions, thus contributing to make their neighbourhood more autonomous.

Annenviertel!
The art of public intervention

Annenviertel! The art of public intervention is a project that has been initiated by the contemporary art association Rotor in 2009 in Graz. Its aim is to involve artists in urban transformation projects so as to confront artistic freedom of expression with the norms and constraints of the public space in terms of living together and services. Rotor directors Margarete Makovec and Anton Lederer, and cultural theorist Elke Krisany first identified and contacted a large number of local associations working on various social subjects (migration, genre, religion, culture, fired people, etc.). Guided tours have also been organised to fully grasp the social context of the Murvorst, a former mining area characterised by a high percentage of socially depopulated population and by an important cultural diversity shaped by successive migratory flows.

The same year, Graz City Council initiated the renovation project of a zone near the train station. The communication campaign developed by Rotor revealed the issues at stake in this neighbourhood, proving the project was relevant with the city’s urban. A mapping study was conducted with the different local actors to implement the artistic projects in urban space. A dialogue was held with other European art institutions in order to contextualise a new project framework and to exchange networks right from the start so as to make these initiatives durable.

If Rotor received governmental and EU grants, the success of the programme is first and foremost due to the commitment of stakeholders. The communication tools used allowed artists, theoreticians and activists to meet local people, politicians, shopkeepers, civil-servants, and so on, to build a strong participative network around the project. The inhabitants of an area who live and work side by side are brought together to conduct actions, thus contributing to make their neighbourhood more autonomous.
Restoring social cohesion and stimulating local community work, fighting poverty, social exclusion, or contributing to social and professional integration are the intended outcomes. However, a cultural project alone cannot confirm and solve all the socio-economic problems of a neighbourhood or a city, especially when cultural development sometimes tends to become a speculative concern.

Jakomini Quarter
Graz, Austria

The Jakomini pilot project started in 2010 and was also implemented in the city of Graz. It addresses the problem of vacant ground floor retail spaces through street regeneration. The area that was chosen is a depopulated district crossed by two former commercial streets, Jakomini and Elisabeth Koller, has a strong visual impact. Their Jakomini district.

The transfer of the project to other cities can only be possible started in 2010 and was also implemented in the Styria region (Graz City Council and its Department of Economic and Tourism Development in cooperation with Creative Industries Styria). Different actions have been initiated in different cities and, at the same time, a design competition was organised to redefine the identity of the Jakomini district.

The winning project, "Ready, Steady, Go," by architects Sandra Nardini and Eliott Roberts, was chosen. Their proposal takes the form of running tracks painted on the streets and covering an area of 4,600 square metres. It marked the transformation of a significant area encouraging the development of an artistic network. Following this intervention, public authorities offered low rents for the artists who wanted to open their studios in those 2 streets. In one year, about fifty companies have settled in the vacant premises, and Jakomini has become a reality.

The transfer of the project to other cities can only be possible if an artistic intervention sends a strong public signal, its implementation in common public spaces that are not normally used for political support. The initial impulse, based on protest and a social concern.

These locally anchored artistic interventions can contribute to change the image of a neighbourhood and enhance its attractiveness. They use a quite informal and convivial principle, in contrast with the Design Week official events. It was followed by a series of interventions designed to improve the surrounding public spaces: transformation of a weekly local market into a neighbourhood living room, creation of a repair workshop, guerrilla gardening actions on abandoned parking spaces, or creation of an information totem for elderly people who are not able to use the internet.

The aim of the project is to transform an urban zone into a creative district, an area strengthened by its creative and shared place for social exchange.

4. When communities get organised to live together

In the face of globally and rapidly rising land value, more and more people face being shut out of the housing market. Getting access to housing requires measures that include daily practices and uses to allow low-income people to get affordable and decent housing.

This intervention has been found to tackle the housing crisis. Architects work at reducing the cost of housing, lessors propose specific housing schemes, or citizens develop new ways to live together. Alternative experiences become more visible. Even though they are still marginal and independent, some are more evident and rigorous: transforming housing communities, or intergenerational housing are among the new habitats which durably change the relation to housing and neighborhood. These projects raise issues such as land use and housing space sharing since the distribution of common goods and spaces challenges the different uses of living spaces. Housing has to be redefined according to new needs of community life.

The following projects are examples of space sharing approaches that set up new forms of use of post-industrial areas or create community villages. Alternative housing models address current socio-economic issues and fundamentally change our relations to space, property and community.

Harlinge warehouse community

Harlinge warehouse community is a creative community of people who have transformed former industrial warehouses in the city of Harlinge in England. Harlinge Arts is the social enterprise running the warehouse community. It is in charge of curating artistic projects and coordinating the whole warehouse site. It helps connecting all the creative talent in the area, whether they be local artists, local associations or Harlinge Arts, and the City Council. The organisation has implemented a programme to develop the identity of the artistic community. More than 1,500 people are now living in Harlinge's redeveloped spaces.

Harlinge warehouses are former abandoned textile factories, converted into art spaces, community workshops, coworking spaces, cafes, a music venue, a community shop, community food and produce workshops. Harlinge warehouse community is the development of a creative hub and new community activity. The warehouse warehouses were worried and feared eviction, but local people pulled up the story and the community became a re staining subject of local debate. When the Council finally decided to support creative industries, the residents develop initiatives to promote their community, including the InHouse Festival, a film festival which has become a large-scale event. The warehouse community works closely with Haringey Arts and initiated most of the region's artistic projects, arts having an explicit role in the area.

It took time for the warehouse residents to be accepted by the local population and authorities, but they gradually based on their talents and abilities. Today, however, few of them assume full responsibility of the initiatives conducted, even though the future of the community depends on all its members. Similar initiatives should be more than one central point of excellence. As it is the case today, this raises the sensitive issue of a necessity for political support. The initial impulse, based on a social concern, and a will for autonomy, is now being limited by essential financial needs.
A community is said to be virtual when the interactions between
its members are carried out online, through electronic
communication devices such as IT networks. This new mode of
communication is often facilitated by the use of applications and
software that allow for the sharing of ideas and projects, leading to
the formation of online communities that can be temporarily or
permanently linked. A virtual community is defined as a group of
people who are connected by shared interests, experiences, or
purposes, even though they may not have met in person.

How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable?

Lescar Pau is an Emmaüs Village founded in 1982 at Lescar, a
city located 10 km away from Pau, in the South West of
France. As an independent community offering an alternative
way of life, the Village is increasingly sought out by people in
precarious situations or on an ideological quest. Today, it is
home to a motley crew of 130 individuals: companions, employees,
volunteers and trainees. After Germain Sarhy met Abbé Pierre,
he set up the village, a community whose aim is to distance it-
self from consumerist societies. Gradually, the community was
organised as a micro-society based on such values as sharing,
solidarity and mutual assistance, relying on recycling, restoring
decaying buildings and serving various objects. All the members are thus involved in
a variety of activities including waste rehabilitation, eco-con-
struction, fixing and repairing, maintaining the village or working in
the shared garden. They accept, for an allowance, to conform to
the ground rules and values of the community.

Community houses efficiently address the issue of social hous-
ing. However their implementation is often hindered by the ne-
cessity for political and financial support. In order to perpetuate
their implementation, they need to get involved in urban planning,
with for instance the development of cycle lanes along Hämeenkatu Street. Other
neighbourhoods in Helsinki, such as Töölö-liike and Laru-liike, have followed suit.
Kallio-liike’s main asset is solidarity, unifying the local par-
ticipants and consequently capturing the attention of the media. The
participants try to highlight certain local concerns that they
believe are insufficiently taken into account by the authorities. In September 2015, the
Kallio-liike facebook page got 18,833 likes, representing almost half of the neighbourhood’s population.

5. When a project is supported by a virtual community

A community is said to be virtual when the interactions between
the different members take place on IT networks. This new mode
of relationships was first observed by Joseph Carl Licklider and Robert
William as early as 1968. They heralded in the computer as a
communication device the emergence of interactive online com-
munities, not based on geographical closeness but on common
interests. This may be observed in Helsinki or Bologna, where
some projects are supported by social networks. The onset of
these emerging communities raises some questions: what is their
impact on real life? Do they actually allow their members to influ-
ence the social context of a neighbourhood and its residents?

Kallio-liike is a virtual group founded in 2011 in the old work-
ing-class neighbourhood of Kallio. Its up-and-coming residents,
notably young people, living-class families with young
children, Erkki Perälä founded the movement after hearing that
some aid services might get closed and people were threat-
ened with evictions. Arguing that the neighbourhood belongs
to everybody, Kallio-liike is open to everybody and to all sorts
of ideas, organising events for the benefit of the residents. Although
the movement is independent, there is a political in-
volvelement to serve the interests of the local population.
The aim of the members is to maintain the dynamic social diversity
of Kallio in spite of the ongoing process of gentrification.
The main actors in this organisation are local volunteers. Events are organised together with some associations and small
businesses from the neighbourhood, blurring the differences
between the different parties. The structure of Kallio-liike allows
the members to take part in a project or drop out of it very flexi-
ibly, and the volunteers often enrol for only one or two projects.

Kallio-liike usually organise carefully chosen activities in
one street or another, thus encouraging the development of a lo-
calised common identity. The main event every year is the Kallio
Block Party, which occupies a large part of the neighbourhood,
welcoming some 10,000 people. Flea markets, meals and political
debates are organised throughout the year. The members also
get involved in urban planning, with for instance the development of
cycle lanes along Hämeenkatu Street. Other neighbourhoods in
Helsinki, such as Töölö-liike and Laru-liike, have followed suit.
Kallio-liike’s main asset is solidarity, unifying the local par-
ticipants and consequently capturing the attention of the media. The
participants try to highlight certain local concerns that they
believe are insufficiently taken into account by the authorities. In September 2015, the Kallio-liike facebook page got 18,833 likes, representing almost half of the neighbourhood’s population.

The idea of Social Street, set up in Bologna in 2013, originates
from the Facebook group "Residenti In Via Fondazza - Bologna" whose
members wanted to maintain a social link between the
street residents. Federico Bastiani, one of these locals, de-
cided to create a Facebook group in order to meet people
who have the same age as his own son. Three
months later the page had about 500 members. The people at
the origin of "Residenti In Via Fondazza" took up the idea of
Social Street as a Facebook group on Facebook, thus realising their
project without the constraints of setting up a new platform.

The ultimate aim of Social Street is to encourage interactions be-
tween the residents of a same street, using a common platform on
which ideas and projects are shared, leading to film screen-
ings, meals, and so on. One of the specificities is that roles are
not fixed anyone may organise an event or simply participate in
one without contributing to its organisation.

How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable?
Western countries have been going through a thorough economic mutation since the end of the 20th century. With the relocation of industries and the advent of state-of-the-art technologies, workers have largely been replaced by service providers. Services used to be the prerogative of domestic servants and to a lesser extent of low-value work performed by the laws of industry. But they have now found a new place thanks to the new economic models, becoming a crucial source of income in the Western countries.

Services are based on peer-to-peer interactions, and production now no longer a matter of manufacturing and selling, but rather of sharing and exchanging. This new approach of the market has foundations of a market-based economy, Laurent Habib 20, in his book The Force of the ethical, argues in favour of a service-based economy as “the appearance of a more diverse and multi-valor economy, whatever the point of view: economical, social, environmental, or even moral. Value is less and less attached to the material world, but has shifted towards the intangible.”

The success of Brixton Village has also been its weakness. It has become a well-known destination and some critics felt it having turned into a place for “suppliers” from other parts of London, rather than a place for the local community. As was the case in Brixton Village, where a space is owned by a large business, even with commercial interests, it is particularly difficult to maintain the community spirit of a project and keep the risk of gentrification at bay.

Each year a few acres of arable land disappear because of urban sprawl. Responding to this fact, five friends founded the association Omiens (2003) to reintroduce agricultural practices in urban areas. In 2014, Omiens set up a cooperative called Les Bergers urbains (Urban Shepherds), which was meant to build several new micro-farms of urban agriculture. The aim is to help citizens-residents, sponsors, local companies—move on to new ways of managing green spaces, maintaining urban grazing land, vegetable gardens or building hen-houses.

Urban Shepherds can mainly be found around Paris and in Northern France. They advise both private owners and local communities to improve their public parks, neglected squares, wastelands, motorway embankments or roundabouts by installing different services. For instance, a herder can be hired on a budget of between 100 and 300 m², plots from 1,000 m² to 20 hectares may be turned into grazing land, between 2,000 m² and 1 hectare is needed for kitchen gardens, and between 3,000 m² to 5,000 m² for agriculture, transhumance should not exceed 12 milkcows. Only volunteers run the association, which gets financial input thanks to the flock and farming equipment.

These two projects all have led to the setting up of services for communities, whether they are related to food or the maintenance of green spaces. They use the principles of “short-circuits.” Traditionally used when referring to agricultural production, the phrase indicates that the actual distance between producer and consumer or between the producer and the consumer’s table is not spatial or human.

The initiative can be described as a “flow” that overcomes the production, distribution, and consumption processes, and leads to a more collaborative mode of consumption.

How to make bottom-up initiatives viable and sustainable? 74

75
Concluding thoughts

The processes of collaborative design are often resorted to when public spaces (green spaces as well as abandoned buildings) are to be redefined. A community’s involvement suffices to trigger a project, but this study has shown that the support of local authorities is crucial to ensure its longevity. This support may be obtained right at the onset of the project or once things are in place, and it may take different forms, from mere political support to subsidies. These projects have positive effects socially, environmentally and/or culturally, but it remains difficult to assess their actual economic impact. Maybe this study should be continued, integrating assessing tools to take the financial aspect into account. But economic profit is rarely the driving force behind these projects, which are therefore to be evaluated according to other criteria. This is what Ivan Illich suggests in *Tools for Conviviality*:

> I choose the term “conviviality” to designate the opposite of industrial productivity. I intend it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment; and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment. I consider conviviality to be individual freedom realized in personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic ethical value. I believe that, in any society, as conviviality is reduced below a certain level, no amount of industrial productivity can effectively satisfy the needs it creates among society’s members. 

Another example is provided by Bhutan’s famous Gross National Happiness. Evaluation criteria therefore raise questions, which may be tackled by Human Citizens in their design development projects.

This study also underlines the necessity for the different parties involved in a project to communicate, indeed dialogue is necessary between residents, promoters, public institutions, companies, and so on. On several occasions, mapping was mentioned as a useful tool allowing all people concerned to have a common image. Indeed, designing maps or any other visual documents to analyse a site and therefore grasp its strengths and weaknesses is a very effective first step. Such documents show a territory’s experience; they support exchanges between all the actors and include the outlines of a common project.

Finally, the third part of the study tackles projects set up by virtual communities. Information and communication technologies have indeed given rise to a new kind of communities, sustained by social networks and freed from the constraints of the actual physical world. These virtual communities open up onto a different level of understanding and acting in the city. They embody a new way of challenging urban environments thanks to participative facilities and thanks to certain values they defend, notably conviviality and spontaneity.

The development of virtual platforms thus offers new modus operandi to the residents who wish to have an influence on their neighbourhood. One example is MySociety, an e-democracy project based in the UK. The aim of MySociety is to give citizens access to theoretically public documents which are in fact difficult to find. WriteToThem makes communication between elected representatives and citizens easier. FixMyStreet allows people to report urban issues directly. The latter is an open source platform allowing city dwellers to notify the local authorities when they become aware of problems including, broken street lamps, damaged benches or littering. Could these apps and services facilitate exchanges between residents and local authorities? Could they lead to another way of relating to common spaces? Is open sourcing the advent of a new age for urban planning? It is obvious that these new developments are placing users in a new position of power, not as the result of some revolt against public authorities, but thanks to a process granting them freedom and autonomy. If control technologies become the norm in the near future, will freedom of choice be guaranteed in spite of third parties looking into the interface or the proposed services? This question is the main issue regarding the actions of citizens in the long term, and even the official establishment of these actions should be considered.

Human Cities – Challenging the city scale: State of the Art proves the diversity and vitality of citizen-led initiatives in European cities. These projects reflect a common will to create or strengthen urban social cohesion and to open up to others, welcome them and share with them the specificities of a neighbourhood or a city. The challenges cities are to face in the future will test the solidarity and social cohesion of their communities. It is good news that some cities are already working on and experimenting the Human Cities they want for today or tomorrow.

We should however analyse the ambitions and realities of these actions with a critical eye if we want to assess their relevance and reproducibility. The examples studied in this publication have benefited from a combination of favourable circumstances: one or several participants had the skills and resources required to initiate a project which—through its nature and its compatibility with its socioeconomic and cultural context—received the support of the population. The success of these actions indeed depends mainly on high levels of involvement from the citizens they are aimed at. It is therefore essential to encourage exchanges between and feedback from the “initiators” in order to identify common success factors among situations that may be different but close in their intention.

Cities provide a large number of services to individuals (whatever their expectations or their physical, personal and socio-professional situations) as well as to economic actors. The skills required need to be various and interdependent to reach accuracy. Some of these initiatives are deeply rooted on a will to do without institutional rigidity and to involve city-users in a more direct, rapid and pragmatic way than with that of a classical democratic process. These bottom-up initiatives have an impact on the life of the city since they reclaim public space and tackle issues that fall within institutional or political expertise. In some way they give urban citizens the possibility to get pragmatically involved into political actions and to put into practice, as individuals or communities, their beliefs and aspirations. Experimentation is thus made easier and more rapid because of the flexibility and immediacy of this ascendant approach.
That being said, inhabitants cannot be the sole driving forces. Large-scale projects and those tackling important but often unattractive issues can only be initiated by authorities. As for citizen-led projects, their longevity will depend on the capacity to expand the scope of expertise. Whether it be for the project itself—humane and material resource management, communication strategy implementation, public access management—or for its proper and specific interfacing with the city—urban global network and transport management, secourisation of public spaces, temporary or long-term provision of public spaces by authorities, etc.

The projects that already shape and will shape the Human Cities of the future will involve numerous and very different actors: urban citizens from all backgrounds, skilled professionals from diverse fields, local associations with city-oriented activities, public authority representatives… On various occasions this paper has shown that architects and designers had a central role as empathic mediators between citizens, communities and elected representatives. With their knowledge of representation tools and design methods they can synthesize a project input data and transform them into actions within the city. They focus on observation, experimental approaches, and co-creative processes with citizens. As such, they invent new methodologies proving that public space planning is no longer a specialist’s prerogative.

We hope that the results of the Human Cities_ Challenging the City Scale project will help change the perception of European policymakers about the valuable role of inhabitants and creators in reinventing a more humane city—collectively.
Knjižnica pod Krošnjami (Library under the Tree-tops), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2010/ongoing

The Grand Park of Kragujevac, Belgrade, Serbia, 2014

Assemble Me! The art of public intervention, Graz, Austria, 2013

ReNewEart, Velenje, Slovenia, 2010

Coffeando, Milan, Italy, 2014

The Grand Park of Kragujevac, Belgrade, Serbia, 2014

Zusammensetzung, Graz, Austria, 2014

Earth Market in Largo Marina di Italia, Milan, Italy, 2014

Skupaj se zbiramo! (Together to the platform!), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2016

ReNewEart, Velenje, Slovenia, 2010

Knjižnica pod Krošnjami (Library under the Tree-tops), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2010/ongoing

Zusammensetzung, Graz, Austria, 2014

Emmaüs Village Lescar Pau, Lescar, France, 2015

M3 Unblock it! Warsaw, Poland, 2011
## In depth cases studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Étienne</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ljubljana</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cieszyn</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgrade</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graz</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallinn</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilbao</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From a consumer society to a society of salvage: a social and industrial experimentation at the village emmaüs Lescar Pau

By Franck Léard
Through collective representations as well as through common sense, the mentioning of alternative ways of life, that present concrete solutions against the principles of a capitalist economy and a consumer society, receives in many ways numerous positive comments and ratings. Indeed, who would not be enticed by a way of life other than the one proposed by the dominant socio-economic system of western societies which we hear everywhere that it has reached its end because of the economic, social and ecological disasters it generates. It is exactly on this principle of alternative ways of life issued from consumerist societies that is based the Village Emmaüs of Lescar Pau, situated in the south-west of France, around ten kilometres from Pau, head chief of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques County. This community’s project searches to develop and create a “concrete utopia” based on a collective of Emmaüs companions and volunteers. The goal is to be as independent as possible from production and consumption models specific to common ways of life in our societies. In this community, the independence of individuals as well as the autonomy of the collective as a result is seen as a standard principle if not a priesthood since it relies heavily on religious precepts inspired by the Abbé Pierre, its founder who initiated the Emmaüs movement in 1949 leading to the formation of hundreds of communities in France and in the world. If the Emmaüs village of Lescar-Pau, built in 1982 at the initiative of its mentor Germain Sarhy, still currently active, is greatly based on the original precepts of the Emmaüs movement, it has more or less distanced itself by attaching to a strong radical left ideological dimension. In fact, it differs from other communities on this point, the latter being much more neutral from the political point of view are more orientated towards the principles of social economy (housing, social and identity reconstruction of people with marginal trajectories exclusionary or issued from precariousness). The Lescar Pau community distinguishes itself from the latter by literally taking to the autonomy from the consumer society but also from intra governance models (compared to other Emmaüs communities) and outside the community (particularly with public institutions).
From a consumer society to a society of salvage: a social and industrial experimentation at the village Emmaüs Lescar Pau Saint-Étienne

The originality of the Lescar village lies in the experimentation of the organisation of a collective life based on an activity of salvage - recycling, transformation and resale of very diverse donated objects, clothes, furniture and household electrical goods (like other Emmaüs villages) that originate from the generosity of the local inhabitants. This is done by a counter spokesperson that promotes a point of view that is pro-ecological, anti-productivity and anti-capitalist through different cultural events (festivals, debates-meetings and other media activities). The specifications of this experimentation, necessarily imperfect according to its initiators, illustrate the outline of innovative solutions, even if sometimes contradictory, as to collective lifestyles, organizational models of a production activity, governance models and its insertion in an urban environment with activities typical of a consumer society.

An island in a consumerist ocean

The utopia begins in a zone situated a couple of kilometres from the centre of Lescar, its town of implementation and its 10000 inhabitants that belong to the consultation community of Pau, also located 10km away from the Village. The urban composition of Lescar has an important specification it is constituted in "strips", namely a lined alternation of a natural zone, a housing zone and a vast commercial zone called Lescar Soleil which offer the Palois community a centre of commercial activities of more than 320 brands and 10000 parking space (one of the most extensive in France since it stretches across 3 different towns). Access to the Village is via the north of the natural zone of Oussie, directly from the exit of the A64 motorway which opened in 2008. The Village is therefore the first edifice that you see from this motorway exit. The entrance to the town is marked by the visible presence of the Village indicated by the large sign Emmaüs in front of its admittedly smaller car park, but that stands out for the difference with city entrances more frequently observed in French municipalities.

Many projects of implementation of an artisanal or commercial zone in proximity of the Village has been reflected upon since the eighties but the various political mandates have never been able to achieve it mainly because of the existence of Lescar Soleil located below the town. The latter, in addition to its strip configuration, has a historical city-centre with diminished activities apart from religious edifices and ancient buildings ("maisons béarnaises" from the 15th and 16th centuries) that seem to be frozen in time. The feeling of a "museumised" town is present as the activities seem to have been shifted to the commercial zone. Rare cafes, squares occupied by a few tourists, the urban centrality seems to have been recomposed in favour of a new urban centre that is Lescar Soleil. As a testimony to this, the town hall changed place in 2011 and was moved to the Baron d’Ariste’s castle situated outside the city-centre in a 6 hectares estate. The town therefore recomposed in an uncommon way that follows the evolution of its demography (2800 inhabitants in 1968 and 10000 at the last census) but also the evolution of its main activity that represents the giant commercial area one of which’s biggest buildings is called "Quartier Libre".

The Village’s geographical and urban position, easily accessible because of the proximity of the motorway and yet isolated from the rest of the town of Lescar because of the extension of the latter towards the south, gives it visibility and uniqueness. By receiving donations from inhabitants of a zone of 50km in the surrounding areas and benefiting from a privileged implantation, the Village also acquires an important symbolical position. Island of production and alternative consumerism, situated a couple of kilometres from one of the biggest commercial centres of the country, it presents itself as an integral part of the consumerism flows as well as one of the ends of the chain because of its activity of salvage of products coming from this same type of consumption. During the summer, and because of its salvage activity, it therefore receives around 500 vehicles per day (a record of 800 vehicles was observed on one particular day) and close to 400m3 of salvaged merchandise taken in. Irony of the urban recomposition according to the municipal mandates or involuntary subversion of local urban plans, its isolated situation allows it to acquire the image of a more ethical and noble trade based on other values than the one of consumerism, its implementation since the eighties, as well as the acquisitions of adjacent lands, have resulted in its extension into a space of 11 hectares where...
From a consumer society to a society of salvage: a social and industrial experimentation at the village Emmaüs Lescar Pau Saint-Étienne

The relative adherence of members to the community's values.

If the principle of independence and autonomy is proudly proclaimed by the site's manager as well as by the members of the community, they can only partially achieve it. Indeed, this is visible if you look at the fact they have to resort to different commercial companies (for some food products or products that are impossible to make on site) or industrial companies (like the ones that transform clothes into thermic insulations for the companions residences) or even institutional partners (political partners from the community conurbation in order to become the second recycling centre of the town). This contradiction has been recognised by the community's initiators who put forward the structural impossibility of achieving complete autonomy (undocumented people, wayward youths, local press etc.) the agenda of the different cultural events offered by the Village. The authentic effect generated by these communications is not without producing a symbolic and sympathetic capital to Emmaüs users (whether they are clients from different stores or donators or to employees, volunteers working with the companions. But they often obscure the scenes of the activity itself. It organises itself by basing itself on an intellectual community of socially-precarious people. Work is therefore defined by its emancipatory values from a consumers society, it allows the companion to adopt an activation and revision power around his lost dignity in a society of assistance or after a difficult life trajectory. To regain its dignity, the person is encouraged to engage in a collective and supportive activity. Thereafter, the sociological composition of the companions reveals a great number of people that are highly de-socialised with great difficulties of socio-economic insertion into society (undocumented people, wayward youths, local press etc.). The principle of unconditional welcoming that is so specific to this community means that a high diversity of people with different backgrounds and different ways of embracing the community's values meet. However, once taken into this de-socialisation and necessary identity reconstruction spiral, they find themselves obliged to adopt new rules of life. According to the estimations of a companion, only around 20 or 25 companions out of 130 present completely embrace the life project and the community values; the rest are considered like "consumers" of the support and help given to them. If we add to this heterogeneity the volunteers and employees with different kinds of motivations (participation for religious reasons, participation for commitment reasons, employees looking for a salary or political activists, the solidarity and stability of the community can only materialise itself by imposing constraints to collective life centred around a high valorisation of work.

Here, the everyday life is organised around work rhythms that exceed the legal 35 hours a week framework. The 40 weeks hours worked in the community are compensated at around 400 euros a month for the companions present for local press etc.) the agenda of the different cultural events offered by the Village. The authentic effect generated by these communications processes is not without producing a symbolic and sympathetic capital to Emmaüs users (whether they are clients from different stores or donators or to employees, volunteers working with the companions. But they often obscure the scenes of the activity itself. It organises itself by basing itself on an intellectual community of socially-precarious people. Work is therefore defined by its emancipatory values from a consumers society, it allows the companion to adopt an activation and revision power around his lost dignity in a society of assistance or after a difficult life trajectory. To regain its dignity, the person is encouraged to engage in a collective and supportive activity. Thereafter, the sociological composition of the companions reveals a great number of people that are highly de-socialised with great difficulties of socio-economic insertion into society (undocumented people, wayward youths, local press etc.). The principle of unconditional welcoming that is so specific to this community means that a high diversity of people with different backgrounds and different ways of embracing the community's values meet. However, once taken into this de-socialisation and necessary identity reconstruction spiral, they find themselves obliged to adopt new rules of life. According to the estimations of a companion, only around 20 or 25 companions out of 130 present completely embrace the life project and the community values; the rest are considered like "consumers" of the support and help given to them. If we add to this heterogeneity the volunteers and employees with different kinds of motivations (participation for religious reasons, participation for commitment reasons, employees looking for a salary or political activists, the solidarity and stability of the community can only materialise itself by imposing constraints to collective life centred around a high valorisation of work.

Here, the everyday life is organised around work rhythms that exceed the legal 35 hours a week framework. The 40 weekly hours worked in the community are compensated at around 400 euros a month for the companions present for
From a consumer society to a society of salvage: a social and industrial experimentation at the village emmaüs

Lescar Pau Saint-Étienne

The organisation of the industrial activity of the community.

Social experimentation based on an available population allows to largely overcome the principles governing the working activities of the consumerist society. The social and professional status of the companions was left in limbo for many years giving them only a minimal recognition of their status as workers. Thus, the law of the 1st of December 2008 contributed to the creation of a specific status for people belonging to community in-take agencies and solidarity activities. This status gives them guarantees regarding the quality of life in these communities ( decent housing, social and individual support, financial support in the form of a community grant “savings”).

This status distinguishes itself from the status of employees through the disappearance of the subordination link. That being said, what seems like acknowledged from the relationship of dependence on the principle of autonomy, does permit the acquisition of the customary rights of an employee in the general scheme of things. The companions, despite their demanding activities, do not have access to the training courses, professional integration rights that are proposed to employees, job seekers and volunteers. This statutory characteristic contributes to maintaining the companion in a dependence relation in regards to the community and to form a set of professionals, practices at the workshops, the recognition of the diversity of agency to the life project and the implicit stigma of superficial commitment, the freedom to leave the community when the rules are not suitable anymore but no setting up time for reintegration into the socio-economic system to which it is exposed to. These paradoxical opposed couples show that the experimentation at the village emmaüs is autonomous in its way.

The absence of an explicit subordination or a formal hierarchy is justified in order to repair. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing.

In the diversity of the malleable division of work, the activity is therefore minimised, and controlled through a possible position rotation. The adaptive flexibility of tasks, the rotation of job positions, the long-term presence (some are present since 30 or 25 years) there-fore leveraging its know-how and his professional identity recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”. Their expertise recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”. Their expertise recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”.

The weariness in regards to the repeated activities is therefore minimised, and controlled through a possible position rotation. The adaptive flexibility of tasks, the rotation of job positions, the long-term presence (some are present since 30 or 25 years) therefore leveraging its know-how and his professional identity recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”. Their expertise recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”.

This status gives them guarantees regarding the quality of life in these communities ( decent housing, social and individual support, financial support in the form of a community grant “savings”).

The organisation of the industrial activity of the community.

Social experimentation based on an available population allows to largely overcome the principles governing the working activities of the consumerist society. The social and professional status of the companions was left in limbo for many years giving them only a minimal recognition of their status as workers. Thus, the law of the 1st of December 2008 contributed to the creation of a specific status for people belonging to community in-take agencies and solidarity activities. This status gives them guarantees regarding the quality of life in these communities ( decent housing, social and individual support, financial support in the form of a community grant “savings”).

This status distinguishes itself from the status of employees through the disappearance of the subordination link. That being said, what seems like acknowledged from the relationship of dependence on the principle of autonomy, does permit the acquisition of the customary rights of an employee in the general scheme of things. The companions, despite their demanding activities, do not have access to the training courses, professional integration rights that are proposed to employees, job seekers and volunteers. This statutory characteristic contributes to maintaining the companion in a dependence relation in regards to the community and to form a set of professionals, practices at the workshops, the recognition of the diversity of agency to the life project and the implicit stigma of superficial commitment, the freedom to leave the community when the rules are not suitable anymore but no setting up time for reintegration into the socio-economic system to which it is exposed to. These paradoxical opposed couples show that the experimentation at the village emmaüs is autonomous in its way.

The absence of an explicit subordination or a formal hierarchy is justified in order to repair. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing. Ingenuity combined to resourcefulness skills is based on the idea of repairing.

In the diversity of the malleable division of work, the activity is therefore minimised, and controlled through a possible position rotation. The adaptive flexibility of tasks, the rotation of job positions, the long-term presence (some are present since 30 or 25 years) therefore leveraging its know-how and his professional identity recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”. Their expertise recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”.

The weariness in regards to the repeated activities is therefore minimised, and controlled through a possible position rotation. The adaptive flexibility of tasks, the rotation of job positions, the long-term presence (some are present since 30 or 25 years) therefore leveraging its know-how and his professional identity recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”. Their expertise recognises brands and their reputation, which they accumulate “just in case”.
From a consumer society to a society of salvage: a social and industrial experimentation at the village Emmaüs

Lescar Pau Saint-Étienne

Capitalisation in regards to the transmission of competences within this organisation. The idea of capitalisation being, by principle, suspect or ideologically reprehensible means that the work organisation around and by the individual autonomy linked to the contribution to the becoming of the community generates a number of functional incoherencies that, paradoxically, damage the basics of the activity. The idea of a too strong formalisation of the organisation, of an optimisation of the production tools or a rationalisation of the activity would be contrary to the fundamental principles of the community. Here is the sign of an expression of the Christian disdain that inspires the community towards all types of formalisation that ruin the gesture of cooperation and solidarity that characterise members of one community.

Adding to the popular habit of rejection towards anything that is relative of an intellectuality or a formal abstraction of a practice, considered like relevant of a bourgeois or engineer ethos, the know-how skills, competences and innovations actually put into place refer to an action pragmatism that is sufficient in itself and that creates the pride and dignity of the community but also of the companion. Thus, outside of any kind of functional logic or simply outside of the comfort of execution of a task, the companions value a type of virility and abnegation, especially the more strenuous activities. Even in the most repetitive work positions, it is not always well perceived to sit down or to find a comfort of execution that could be understood like a non-chalance or a search for extra ease. Everything linked to a potential improvement in the sense of an optimisation is perceived as a request for profitability. Archaism and anti-productivity in such an organisation, even a productive one, is one of the numerous contradictions present within this organisation that refuses to see itself as it is fearing to keep the flaws.

This fear of technical rationality can also be observed as a kind of productive technophobia and relative suspicion towards the ergonomic ease. Here, nothing replaces the human gesture and they prefer to be active, stay standing, bend down or lift something in short to use human production forces rather than to base themselves of a comfort of realisation. Here, the human takes precedence over the man: by preferring to value the effects of work on men rather than giving him the good conditions and work tools, we reverse what prevails in the contemporary industry in its search for productivity optimisation.

That underpinning of activity could mean that the productivity and consumerist model exhausts human potentials of realisation of common action. The criticism of the technique is based on the hypothesis that it will always be an instrument of subjugation for the profit of capital, leading man astray from their nature to produce by themselves and destroying the environment as well as social relations. The idea of assistance contained in the technical support in human activities is rejected as well as those proposed by the public authorities in regards to socio-economic insertion of marginalised populations. This multiform rejection of assistance illustrates the strength of radical political convictions to which is mixed a residue of religious postulates that is at the origin of the Emmaüs movement.

The Lescar Pau experimentation seen as a crucible for innovation potentials

As fragile and contradictory as is the experimentation of the Lescar Pau Village, it has the merit to highlight many innovation themes and it does so on many different levels: social, industrial and in its relations to existing institutions.

At a social level, it offers a self-management model that contrasts with the existing models that prevail in other types or work organisations. The autonomy implementation, the invitation to take initiatives and the cooperation in regards to common decisions are necessary conditions in order to achieve the community’s human project. The versatility generated by the independent attribution of tasks and by the united rotation of positions represents an advantage in regards of the “un-routinisation” of fastidious manual work that is sometimes done
by the companions. This provokes a certain dy-
namic within the labour team that, in turn, gen-
erates a functional interdependence that has
positive effects on the feeling of belonging to
the community. At a time where current organi-
sational models place a certain weight of excess
rationalisation on the worker (stress, burn-out,
suffering at work...), soft management tech-
niques developed by the Lescar Pau organisa-
tion in order to rethink labour should be tak-
en into account. At the industrial production
level, the demand for initiative, the absence of
a strong hierarchy of social relations like the
malleability of production workshops put into
perspective the fundamentals of the industrial
production models. The desire for independ-
ence in regards to the dominant productive
system and the auto determination of func-
tioning are done in such a way that they avoid
a number of obligations that industrial compa-
nies are confronted to (security norms, quality
of production, work conditions). However, the
centrality of the human project in the produc-
tion process shows that inverting the regular
principles is not counter-productive if we man-
age to make the most of some institutional ob-
ligations and constrains.

The radicalism of the community, could be seen
as an important message in order to think
about the new types of collection action that a
political emancipatory project bases itself on in
regards to the existing types such as the wage
system and, to a lesser extent, those coming
from a social and solidarity economy. On one
hand, this community radicalism is an economic
and territorial actor that takes part in a pro-
duction/consumption cycle in which it says it
plays the role of salvage and on the other hand,
It reaps the benefits of a system that it criti-
cises whilst drawing resources to finance, think
and fulfill a political, social and economic pro-
ject. Through its stability, through permanent
common ways of life as well as its production
model, it presents itself like a landmark for sus-
tainable socialisation in regards to the changing
and unstable contemporary societies for people
in highly precarious situations. Benefiting from
favourable conditions, reproducing at their
own scale some aspects of the socioeconom-
ic system that it criticises, the societal alter-
native that this community pursues is not free
of internal contradictions. Some could point
towards a certain type of circumstance-ambi-
tuousness, some arrangements with legality and
an economic model chosen more than endured
but isn’t that one of the ways to play with the
same weapons than the system that they want
to fight against?
Social innovation initiatives as design actions within the public space: lesson learnt from a number of case studies in Italy

By Daniela Selloni
Abstract

This article discusses a set of Italian case studies about the use of public space, building upon the work developed within the ‘State of the art’, the first part of the EU Research Human City (2014-2018). We start from the hypothesis that these case studies are social innovation initiatives and express a diversified use of design. Here is why, building upon a framework developed by Manzini (2014-b) we attempt to classify case studies as actual ‘design actions’ having different purposes and to understand how expert and diffuse design (Manzini, 2015) are interwoven. Finally we propose a reflection about the use of public space as a ‘prototyping space’ for social innovation, where design knowledge, methodology and tools may contribute in creating a new collective confidence in the possibility of changing things.
The most well-known definition of social innovation is provided by Young Foundation in ‘The Open book of Social Innovation’: “new ideas on creating new social relationships and collaborations that mainly happen in the public space and, therefore, the concept itself of public space, extending its boundaries and increasing the range of activities to experiment.”

In addition, there is another important common characteristic these case studies may be viewed through - a concept of social innovation initiatives because, in way, they attempt to tackle problems that are otherwise difficult to solve. Mulgan (2006, p.8; Murray et al., 2010, pp. 3-4).

The most well-known definition of social innovation is provided by Young Foundation in 'The Open book of Social innovation': “new ideas on creating new social relationships and collaborations that mainly happen in the public space and, therefore, the concept itself of public space, extending its boundaries and increasing the range of activities to experiment.”

As designers and researchers in the field of design for social innovation, we are especially interested in investigating how design contributed in shaping the identity of the considered case studies and if this intervention led to obtain more effective and lasting results.

Taking a step back, Manzini, in his article ‘Making Things Happen: Social innovation and Design’ (2014), attempts to provide a definition of design for social innovation, highlighting the emergence of a new field of design activities.

He points out that designers must use their skills to support promising cases of social innovation, in other words to make them more visible designing their products, services and communication programmes, and thus supporting their scaling up. Manzini refers to a set of new approaches, sensibilities and tools that are transversal and range from product to service design, from communication to interior design, from interaction design to strategic design.

Not by chance, in the considered cases, the boundaries among different design disciplines are indistinct and they blur into each other, all the design contributions pursue the same purpose: making public space a fruitful ground for new relationships and collaborations, regardless of the adopted design approach. In his recent book ‘Design when everybody designs’ (2015) Manzini also discusses the ‘diffusion of the design mode’ meaning that design is facing a great change and is becoming a widespread activity. He argues that “the current context encourages people to design their own lives” (ibidem, p.31) and he observes the emergence of the implicit and diffuse design, which is put into play by ‘non-experts’, with their natural design capacity.

The rise of diffuse design is connected in a way to the development of social innovation initiatives: “Talking about social innovation, we have seen that, driven by necessity or desire to use their ‘natural’ design capacity, and sustained by the diffusion of digital media and the new social networks, many people take active part and collaborate to create new forms of organizations (local communities and collaborative organizations), participating en masse in solving complex problems ...” (Manzini, 2015, p.47)

Many of the considered cases show individuals or groups that are representatives of this diffuse design mode and, in addition, we observe that they are developing design skills that are moving away from the area of diffuse design of that of expert design.

According to Manzini (2015, p.37) expert design is performed by design experts, “people trained to operate professionally as designers, and who put them the skills of designers, professional”. It is interesting to note how both expert and diffuse design characterise the selected cases and sometimes are almost interwoven. This observation, together with the evidence that our case studies deal with designing an ecosystem of products, spaces, services and communication programmes, lays the foundations for starting our analysis in which the various case studies are discussed and classified as ‘design actions’ aiming at improving the use of the public space.

Hypothesis and methodology: social innovation initiatives as design actions

As argued in the previous paragraph, the 15 case studies may be seen as social innovation initiatives that use both diffuse and expert design, this is the starting point to formulate the hypothesis that guides this article: “If the case studies we are dealing with are social innovation initiatives and express a diversified use of design, they may be classified as actual design actions, according to the activity carried out and to the skills applied in carrying it out.”

To verify this hypothesis, we wish to analyse case studies adopting the framework described by Manzini in his contribution to the book ‘Design for Policy’, edited by Bason (2014, pp.106, 107). He classified design actions into 2 main groups: “design initiatives for favourable environments”, aiming at making co-creation processes easier and “design initiatives for enabling solutions”, aiming at supporting specific co-design processes. Within each group he identifies several types of initiatives motivated by results that are most significant and that are synthesized using a verb representative of the design action, such as ‘exploring’ or ‘amplifying’ or ‘triggering’ etc.

Here below the list of design actions proposed by Manzini

Group 1: Design initiatives for favourable environments (Manzini, 2014, p.110)

- AMPLIFYING: Giving existing best practices visibility (applying different communication tools);
- STORY TELLING: Proposing narratives to support best practices and emerging ideas;
- CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: Promoting a new

Social innovation initiatives as design actions within the public space: lesson learnt from a number of case studies in Italy
Social innovation initiatives as design actions within the public space: lesson learnt from a number of case studies in Italy

...
amplifies their visibility and enhances a form of public imagination among citizens and participants. This result is also achieved thanks to the design of an effective communication through online and offline platforms that make the Festival and its activities highly recognizable.

‘Non Riservas’ may be considered as another amplifying initiative, because it provides a map of all the activities of social regeneration and urban participation in Milan. The concept of Non Riservas originated in 2015, when the cultural association Ex-Yoto organized a series of meetings related to citizens’ engagement in the public realm. These events represented the basis to create an information and communication tool able to collect and amplify all the Milanese initiatives in the same field.

Currently, Non Riservas is an online and offline agenda of social events, that allows citizens to become aware and above all power- ful example of design for services on one side it offers to people a tool, a guide and a diary to let them feel part of the community on the other side it provides a space for citizens and associations to promote themselves, their projects and attract new active participants. Hence, Non Riservas may be viewed as an open amplifying tool that is specifically designed to spread initiatives and diffuse a culture of re- designing public space, hopefully preparing the ground for the emergence of new and more disruptive initiatives.

Both case studies selected for the Amplifying cluster combine different design approaches in developing their activities, more specifically cluster combine different design approaches both of them reached their objective of creating a permanent contemporary art exhibition, always accessible for citizens and visitors. They reconceived Favara’s public space in a holistic perspective, designing everything at different scales: from the buildings to the objects, including installations, signage and live events that involve all the inhabitants of the small town, or better, they are active part of the exhibition. This impressive effort creates an actual hybrid environment, built for and with residents and visitors at the same time, without distinguishing the two domains, what is private and what is public and thus, proposing a new way of living the public space able to create a model and share a culture.

‘Orizzontale’ provides another best practice of cultural development. The objective of this architectural collective based in Rome is to make the citizens conscious of the potentialities of common disused spaces through ‘public acts’, in form of semi-permanent architecture or installations. Hence, they support the creation of a new sensitivity acting as ‘cultural provokers’ installing at random places from public acts, public space regeneration – replicable solutions. It has simple but meaningful initiatives, triggering an unprecedented collaboration among residents with visions and ideas felt free to change settings and experiment di- verse solutions. Hence, the square was con- ceived as an interactive place specifically de- signed for ‘triggering inhabitants’ imagination and inviting them to participate in a shared cre- ative process.

The Seasonings’ Garden in Milan is another example of using co-design activities to trigger people’s participation in the creation of a pub- lic vegetable garden. This process is developed in an informal way, designers are not involved and a non-profit association coordinates the initiative. The Seasonings’ Garden was set up because of the will of re-appropriation of a disused park by a group of women passionate in plantations; they wanted to experiment the benefits that people (especially disadvantaged people) could get from being in touch with na- ture by organizing a set of participatory activ- ities in the public space. This group of women was convinced about the social value of their actions and time together is not only a way to foster cooperation and social integration, but also a way for creating a shared vision about the use of public space. Not by chance, the experience in the Seasonings’ Garden makes people feel comfortable to begin other similar processes with other gardens, triggering a form of green activism.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

This cluster collects cases that promote new ways of living the public space, hopefully more sustainable and attractive. Hence, under this category fall those initiatives that are exercising a great influence on the creation of a new culture in re-imagining life in the public space, by offering exemplary initiatives that simply show how different options are possible, developing projects with a high symbolic but also practical value.

‘Farm Cultural Park’ represents a best prac- tice of cultural development: the two found- ers of this initiative were able to transform the heart of a historic Sicilian town (Favara) into a permanent contemporary art exhibition, always accessible for citizens and visitors. They reconceived Favara’s public space in a holistic perspective, designing everything at different scales: from the buildings to the objects, including installations, signage and live events that involve all the inhabitants of the small town, or better, they are active part of the exhibition. This impressive effort creates an actual hybrid environment, built for and with residents and visitors at the same time, without distinguishing the two domains, what is private and what is public and thus, proposing a new way of living the public space able to create a model and share a culture.

‘Orizzontale’ provides another best practice of cultural development. The objective of this architectural collective based in Rome is to make the citizens conscious of the potentialities of common disused spaces through ‘public acts’, in form of semi-permanent architecture or installations. Hence, they support the creation of a new sensitivity acting as ‘cultural provokers’ installing at random places from public acts, public space regeneration – replicable solutions. It has simple but meaningful initiatives, triggering an unprecedented collaboration among residents with visions and ideas felt free to change settings and experiment di- verse solutions. Hence, the square was con- ceived as an interactive place specifically de- signed for ‘triggering inhabitants’ imagination and inviting them to participate in a shared cre- ative process.

Also the experience of the Architect duo Saltinga in Campania may be viewed as an at- tempt to feed a wide conversation about public space. For example, ‘DisPlace’ is a se- ries of co-design sessions to create and build a new public space. DisPlace is an urban regeneration initiative in which citi- zens were involved from the very beginning by the main promoters, a group of local as- sociations together with a class of BSc de- sign students and professors of the School of Design – Politecnico di Milano. The most striking peculiarity of Chiaravalle is the absence of a public square, here is why DisPlace ‘occupied’ a private area, temporal- ly granted, carrying out a seasonal transfor- mation from an empty space into a temporary square. Designing and making together instal- lations and engaging participants in plantation: they wanted to experiment the benefits that people (especially disadvantaged people) could get from being in touch with na- ture by organizing a set of participatory activ- ities in the public space. This is simply a way to foster cooperation and social integration, but also a way for creating a shared vision about the use of public space. Not by chance, the experience in the Seasonings’ Garden makes people feel comfortable to begin other similar processes with other gardens, triggering a form of green activist.

The Seasonings’ Garden in Milan is another example of using co-design activities to trigger people’s participation in the creation of a pub- lic vegetable garden. This process is developed in an informal way, designers are not involved and a non-profit association coordinates the initiative. The Seasonings’ Garden was set up because of the will of re-appropriation of a disused park by a group of women passionate in plantations; they wanted to experiment the benefits that people (especially disadvantaged people) could get from being in touch with na- ture by organizing a set of participatory activ- ities in the public space. This is simply a way to foster cooperation and social integration, but also a way for creating a shared vision about the use of public space. Not by chance, the experience in the Seasonings’ Garden makes people feel comfortable to begin other similar processes with other gardens, triggering a form of green activist.
Social innovation initiatives as design actions within the public space: lesson learnt from a number of case studies in Italy

Social innovation initiatives as design actions within the public space: lesson learnt from a number of case studies in Italy

Also Cascina Cuccagna, an old farmhouse located in the “Sassi di Matera”, defines its space as a “dreams Incubator”, meaning that they offer to people the possibility to experiment and to actually prototype their ideas as. More specifically, Casa Natural creates a co-living project in which “potential innovators” come as guests that live and work within the same space, meeting the local community and trying to align together the possible future for the territory. In this perspective, Casa Natural may be seen as a prototyping space that works as an interconnector between the inside used for co-working and the outside used for communicating and creating new synergies and connections: from virtual to real life, establishing synergies and connections.

CriticalCity is a game for urban transformation specifically designed to gather participants around the same social scope by accomplishing a set of creative and interconnected missions, hopefully turning a fun and exciting time developing a new form of civic activism.

The game connects different people and different areas of the city, establishing various self-generated synergies and new alliances for transforming neglected neighbourhoods. Similarly to Social Street, CriticalCity is a project conceived at a local scale but than able to be replicat- ed and adapted to other cities and situations.

These two initiatives are two powerful examples of how “synergies” may be seen as a “design action” they are developed using simple formats, easily understandable by everyone. In this way every citizen is a node of a wide and interconnected network that combines different scales: virtual/physical and local/global, systematizing different initiatives under a common organization and meaningful frame.

The main idea at the basis of Social Street is to conceive any activity as a good occasion for socialization, and thus as an opportunity to establish synergies and connections: from breakfast to dinner, from movies to exhibitions, from sharing to swapping, each event can be shared with residents in the same street and bring positive implications to the whole local community. The Facebook group is here conceived as a bridge from virtual to real life, establishing synergies among local governance and global levels of inter-actions.

CriticalCity is a game for urban transformation specifically designed to gather participants around the same social scope by accomplishing a set of creative and interconnected missions, hopefully turning a fun and exciting time developing a new form of civic activism.

The game connects different people and different areas of the city, establishing various self-generated synergies and new alliances for transforming neglected neighbourhoods. Similarly to Social Street, CriticalCity is a project conceived at a local scale but than able to be replicat- ed and adapted to other cities and situations.

These two initiatives are two powerful examples of how “synergies” may be seen as a “design action” they are developed using simple formats, easily understandable by everyone. In this way every citizen is a node of a wide and interconnected network that combines different scales: virtual/physical and local/global, systematizing different initiatives under a common organization and meaningful frame.

The main idea at the basis of Social Street is to conceive any activity as a good occasion for socialization, and thus as an opportunity to establish synergies and connections: from breakfast to dinner, from movies to exhibitions, from sharing to swapping, each event can be shared with residents in the same street and bring positive implications to the whole local community. The Facebook group is here conceived as a bridge from virtual to real life, establishing synergies among local governance and global levels of inter-actions.
Conclusions: public space as a ‘prototyping space’ for social innovation?

As stated, our case studies may be viewed as social innovation initiatives, characterized by an interdisciplinary approach that fosters diffuse and expert design. More specifically, they are actual design actions that aim at creating favourable environments and/or enabling solutions for everyday life, ranging from ‘amplifying’, ‘triggering’, ‘prototyping’ etc. (Manzini, 2014/a).

In this final paragraph we want to put a spotlight especially on the ‘prototyping’ action, because we think it is something more than ‘making ideas tangible’ in the described case studies public space represents the ‘stage’ for actual participatory prototypes (Coughlan et al. 2007; Blomkvist, et al. 2012), working as a ‘prototyping’ etc. (Manzini, 2014/b).

We think that to set the proper conditions for prototyping is a crucial design action that means to increase people’s confidence in the possibility of being able to affect their local situation. In other words, people may suppose: “If we are engaging in testing something, it is precisely because we think that we can influence and change things”. Public space is the perfect and natural stage for raising this kind of awareness and prototyping ideas realizing actual ‘mise en scène’. Even if sometimes these prototypes do not lead to solve problems, we think that in any case they enhance public imagination and hope (Salloni, 2014) and this happened also thanks to the power of design (both diffuse and expert design), which is essentially a propositional and inspirational activity (Margarin, 2012), hence making and performing together may have a great educational value for the society as a whole, fostering changes in behaviour and increasing the awareness on the possibility of improving the current situation.

Expert designers should support this process and increase their responsibility putting their methodology, tools and skills at the service of the public interest, fostering the diffusion and replication of prototypes. In this sense we wish that this new stream the Human Cities research might enhance a sort of ‘urban acupuncture by prototyping’ (building upon the theories of Lerner, 2014), observing and experimenting effective and pleasant ways of living public space.

References


Civil Initiatives Improving Urban Public Spaces

By Matej Nikšič
Introduction

Public participation in urban planning has been a well-developed concept within the profession for many decades. It is often regarded as a measure of how inclusive and democratic the urban planning process is, and there seems to be a wide consensus on its advantageous effects for the involved parties in scholarly investigations (Arnstein, 1969, Kaza, 2006, Denters and Klok, 2010, Moore and Elliott, 2015). At the same time a vivid discussion is going on related to what are the definition and attributes of truly participatory processes in contemporary urban planning.

Chattopadhyay (2012) argues that there is still a large gap between constitutional provisions for participation and their actual implementation. His distinction between so-called numerical and effective representation addresses an important question: to what level a general public is able to truly involve in participatory approaches. He argues that most of the citizens, especially from socially and economically disadvantaged environments, are unable to directly raise any issue and/or participate in discussions, so the numerical representation cannot be automatically translated into the effective representation. In the case of urban public space this means that legally binding procedures of public participation are not necessarily culminating in public spaces that would reflect the truly participatory inputs from general, non-professional publics.

This relates to the ladder-hierarchy of levels of participation that Arnstein developed back in 1969. She structured the community participation in eight levels and classified them hierarchically. First two, manipulation and therapy, are regarded as nonparticipation with the reasoning that the main purposes of the two are to educate or cure the community members. Further three levels are informing, consultation, and placation and she describes them as tokenism – the participants act as advisory rather than decision makers. The highest levels are partnership, delegated power and citizen control – they allow the participants to have a stronger voice in the decision-making process. This is particularly important in urban public space design because public space is a com-
mon space of anyone and in one way or another touches the lives of all citizens.

In the last two decades urban public spaces have been given new attention within the urban planning community (Castells, 1994, Madanipour et al., 2014). Scholarly reviews and novel approaches to public space reanalysis, among others the engagement of the civil society that self-organizes to improve urban public space by a direct action in space or indirectly through claiming a say in official planning procedures (Houlstan-Hasaerts et al., 2012). While public space has appeared as one of key topologies in strategic documents that are guiding the future development and qualitative up-grading of urban settlements at a global scale, participatory approach is seen as a central tool to reposition the role of the community and the public space, which will reflect the aspirations and serve the needs of the public (Houlstan-Hasaerts et al., 2011). However, some crucial questions stay rather under investigated. What are the main motivations of people who are actively involved in these processes? Why do they want to have a say? What are their personal and professional characteristics? How can the capacity of the public space be improved? To answer these questions, the main goal of this paper was to research the motivations, triggers, dynamics and goals.

The three factors that favoured participation by the owners in this study were the nature of expected payoffs, their earlier belief in the local and national government’s seriousness of the action and greater connection to place. Renters may be unlikely to participate in activities focused on the long-term future as they are more motivated and actively involved through the functional logics of the administration. An attentive listener at the bottom-up manner are not clear either. They might be researched into some more detail. The three factors that had to be addressed in order to get the public properly involved. What interest in urban settlements people with lower levels of income and education were more likely to participate, which once more can be explained with their greater dependency from and thus involvement with the public programmes and amenities. This again points out the cultural embeddedness too, and the complexity of mechanisms that influence people’s motivations for participation.

Based on the US evidence Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) also link the question of active participation to the question of inequality and representativeness by arguing that the level of participation is an indicator of inequality—the higher the level of participation is, the higher the degree of political inequality and the more serious the problems of representativeness are. This clearly puts part of the responsibility for the operational participation into the hands of the political and official procedures. The role of administrative structures is pointed out by Denters and Klok’s study too (2005). They studied a participatory approach to not the lack of opportunities for participation but sometimes it is rather the initiation in the number of participatory forums without proper cooperation that limits the involvement in participatory approaches, which if it will be built in a participatory fatigue, similarly the inappropriate administration’s response—the production of participatory structures that respond to the functional logics of the administration more than to the capacities, interests, and dynamics of the local network of civil society organizations can again lead to the reduced motivation of citizens.

A survey

The review of the scholarly work shows that participation in urban planning has many facets that have to be addressed in order to get the general public properly involved. What interest in urban settlements people with lower levels of income and education were more likely to participate, which once more can be explained with their greater dependency from and thus involvement with the public programmes and amenities. This again points out the cultural embeddedness too, and the complexity of mechanisms that influence people’s motivations for participation.

The property ownership was identified as an important factor in a study by Hospaer and Ortolano too (2012). It showed that contrary to the expectations of movement leaders, the question of property ownership was central to the decision one will take (or not an action). Smith et al. (1980) point out the general wealth that people who were the property owners were significantly more likely to participate in a risky action in the central urbanization. The factors that involved participation by the owners in this study were the more expected payoffs. Their earlier belief in the seriousness of the action and greater connection to place. More may be unlikely to participate in activities focused on the long-term future as they are more motivated and actively involved through the functional logics of the administration. An attentive listener at the bottom-up manner are not clear either. They might be researched into some more detail. The three factors that had to be addressed in order to get the public properly involved. What interest in urban settlements people with lower levels of income and education were more likely to participate, which once more can be explained with their greater dependency from and thus involvement with the public programmes and amenities. This again points out the cultural embeddedness too, and the complexity of mechanisms that influence people’s motivations for participation.

Moore and Elliott (2015) pointed out that often the motivations of urban planners to work in a bottom-up manner are not clear either. They stress the importance of participatory design for the planning process as it can serve as a tool for getting in a dialogue with the communities. True dialogue is only possible if the parties besides the ability of speaking also have the ability of listening. An attentive listener at the bottom-up manner are not clear either. They might be researched into some more detail. The final goal of such research is to have a clearer picture of the appropriate approaches to get the public properly involved in urban planning initiatives.

The research was done between June and October 2015 and implemented through a structured questionnaire accessible on-line. For the potential interviewees that refused the access to such a questionnaire a structured questionnaire was transferred into the on-line database by an interviewer. The gathering of a data was done in cooperation between Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia and Dutch Saxon University. The sampling was based on the results of the State of the art ISAO mapping within Human Cities Challenging the city scale endeavours (Hooper et al, 2015) and previous mapping done at earlier stages of Human Cities project (Nikšič et al., 2011) – the representatives of all mapped communities made by the former residents in the re- construction of a devastated district in the city centre and showed how a well-ordered process and a mobilization campaign helped keeping people motivated and actively involved through the whole process of the urban reconstruction. By studying people’s subjective interests, place of residence (i.e., the distance of their home from the epicentre of destruction) and the homeownership, they concluded that two most important motivational factors are people’s various subjective interests and the physical proximity of their homes to the palace(s) that is being examined. The property ownership was identified as an important factor in a study by Hospaer and Ortolano too (2012). It showed that contrary to the expectations of movement leaders, the question of property ownership was central to the decision one will take (or not an action). Smith et al. (1980) point out the general wealth that people who were the property owners were significantly more likely to participate in a risky action in the central urbanization. The factors that involved participation by the owners in this study were the more expected payoffs. Their earlier belief in the seriousness of the action and greater connection to place. More may be unlikely to participate in activities focused on the long-term future as they are more motivated and actively involved through the functional logics of the administration. An attentive listener at the bottom-up manner are not clear either. They might be researched into some more detail. The final goal of such research is to have a clearer picture of the appropriate approaches to get the public properly involved in urban planning initiatives.

The research was done between June and October 2015 and implemented through a structured questionnaire accessible on-line. For the potential interviewees that refused the access to such a questionnaire a structured questionnaire was transferred into the on-line database by an interviewer. The gathering of a data was done in cooperation between Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia and Dutch Saxon University. The sampling was based on the results of the State of the art ISAO mapping within Human Cities Challenging the city scale endeavours (Hooper et al, 2015) and previous mapping done at earlier stages of Human Cities project (Nikšič et al., 2011) – the representatives of all mapped communities made by the former residents in the re- construction of a devastated district in the city centre and showed how a well-ordered process and a mobilization campaign helped keeping people motivated and actively involved through the whole process of the urban reconstruction. By studying people’s subjective interests, place of residence (i.e., the distance of their home from the epicentre of destruction) and the homeownership, they concluded that two most important motivational factors are people’s various subjective interests and the physical proximity of their homes to the palace(s) that is being examined. The property ownership was identified as an important factor in a study by Hospaer and Ortolano too (2012). It showed that contrary to the expectations of movement leaders, the question of property ownership was central to the decision one will take (or not an action). Smith et al. (1980) point out the general wealth that people who were the property owners were significantly more likely to participate in a risky action in the central urbanization. The factors that involved participation by the owners in this study were the more expected payoffs. Their earlier belief in the seriousness of the action and greater connection to place. More may be unlikely to participate in activities focused on the long-term future as they are more motivated and actively involved through the functional logics of the administration. An attentive listener at the bottom-up manner are not clear either. They might be researched into some more detail. The final goal of such research is to have a clearer picture of the appropriate approaches to get the public properly involved in urban planning initiatives.
Civil Initiatives Improving Urban PublicSpaces

Ljubljana

The questionnaire was partitioned in three sections. Section one dealt with the personal characteristics of each interviewee. Firstly the basic statistical data (e.g. age, gender, education) was collected, followed by data that helps understanding the broader context of their personal lives, such as respondents’ childhood experience with the living environments, their current job status and responsibilities, the wider socio-economic characteristics of the household they lived in as a child and live in now etc. Section two dealt with the respondents’ engagement with the bottom up initiative, it addressed the motivations that made the respondent active in initiating or joining it at an early stage and the aspects that are important for this initiative run smoothly. Third part addressed the respondent’s general values in life as well as specific values related to public space provision in an urban environment.

This article is a sum-up of all the answers received to the data as in November 2015 for the sections one and two of the questionnaire. The results from part three of the questionnaire are not reported in this paper. This report does also not comparatively interpret all the answers yet, but quantitatively and qualitatively analyses particular answers.

The sample

The majority of the respondents is aged between 26 and 55, 2 between 16 and 25. The majority of the respondents (13) changed their place of permanent residency at least three times, 8 of them even more than three times.

Not many of the respondents declare that they have no financial worries at all to sustain their household– only 3 respondents choose this option, while 8 declare their financial situation as average and nearly the same number (7) described it as somehow making the ends of months meet.

The majority of respondents (13) changed their place of permanent residency at least three times, 8 of them even more than three times.

The respondents come from different professional backgrounds (e.g. arts and culture, journalism, healthcare, geography) and nearly all of them from humanities and social disciplines – there was only one respondent coming from the technical disciplines. 11 respondents estimate that their profession is strongly related to urban public space (level 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale, where 5 is a strong relation), this scale applies in further text too. On the contrary more than a half (10) respondents estimate that their study was little or only average related to urban public space (level 2 or 1 on a 1-5 scale), 13 respondents estimate that they deal with high responsibilities at their job (level 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale). Nearly all respondents (except one) find their jobs creative (level 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale). Another observation to be made is that only one was a retired person while all the others in an active career stage.

When asked what respondents think motivates other active members to join the initiative they are doing something good for the community, the bigest benefits of the initiative’s actions are the citizens in general by respondents’ opinion, followed by members of the initiative itself and members of the specific local-commune the initiative addresses. Another motivating factor recalled by respondents was the conviction that by their activity they are doing something good for one’s children future in a neighbourhood, as well as proving that people have capacities to create their living environments on their own.

When asked what respondents think motivates them to start and develop the initiative, the most common choice is the pleasure of seeing results of initiative’s actions, the ranking of other listed motivations is shown in table 1. [3]

Some other motivations that respondents find important were recalled additionally to the pre-listed ones. One of them is a notion that by running such an initiative they are doing something good for the community. The bigest beneficiaries of the initiative’s actions are the citizens in general by respondents’ opinion, followed by members of the initiative itself and members of the specific local-commune the initiative addresses. Another motivating factor recalled by respondents was the conviction that

Table 1: Final ranking of listed motivations that respondents have to judge according to the significance in their decision to start and develop the bottom-up initiative for public space provision in an urban environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Average Value for the Whole Group of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure of seeing results of initiative’s actions</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have fun</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving my skills</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know local environments better</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing new friendships</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of being useful</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know local community better</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better chances of promotion in my career</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal recognition</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting political career</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial benefits</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility of meeting my future life partner</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the great majority (16) of respondents declared that their initiative is in some form supported by the institutional bodies, when estimating the importance of such a support from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), the average score of the respondents is 3,7 – only four respondents marked this importance with 2 or less.

One strong motivating factor is a need to “dance” with the system and all its bureaucratic and political peculiarities. One respondent mentioned that if the initiative is perceived by general public as politically motivated this decreases the eagerness to work within the initiative too. As well as if too much time needs to be sacrificed this demotivates people to take part.
According to the respondents the most important characteristics of a good leader of a bottom up initiative is the ability to motivate people to join and contribute followed by the ability to integrate the professional expertise of the members into the functioning of the initiative. The respondents find it also important that the leader has good ideas and is able to think out-of-the-box.

The important factors for the initiative to run successfully are good communication and teamwork, followed by some other factors, as shown in Table 3.

Other than above listed factors that respondents mention in a second recall are shared vision, addressing the appropriate societal challenges, commitment, humour and cosiness feeling within a team, as well as preparedness of the members to listen to others suggestions and ideas.

The most important contribution of an initiative is bringing life back to public space, but also strengthen the social ties within local community according to the respondents, while an indicator of a long term success of an initiative is a spin-off effect—new activities, programs or new initiatives born out of an existing one are a prove of its real success. The ranking of some other factors is shown in Table 4.

Besides listed ones, some respondents additionally mention the fulfilment of the goals as well as long term financial stability as the indicators of a long term success of an initiative.

As the Human Cities project is built around the notion of the shared values on public space, the respondents were asked to point out the values that they find important for the members of an urban society to cohabit well. The respondents were given the list of values and asked to pick five most important ones. The interpretation of the meaning of each value was left to the respondent herself/himself. The table shows there seems to be a consensus among the respondents that the following values are most important arranged in an ascending order: aesthetics, conviviality, leisure, mobility, respect, sensoriality, solidarity, sustainability and well-being. When the initiators of the civil initiatives are asked to evaluate how important each of these values they indicated is for them, it turns out that sensoriality, aesthetics and leisure are the three front-runners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUMAN CITIES SHARED VALUE</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EMPATHY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11,50</td>
<td>3,83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WELL-BEING</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>6,99</td>
<td>5,89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTIMACY</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>6,06</td>
<td>5,72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUSTAINABILITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>6,99</td>
<td>5,89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVIVIALITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>5,50</td>
<td>5,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOBILITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>6,50</td>
<td>5,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESSIBILITY</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>8,29</td>
<td>6,44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMAGINATION</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12,00</td>
<td>2,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEISURE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>7,16</td>
<td>5,16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AESTHETICS</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>7,61</td>
<td>5,61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENSORIALITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>8,00</td>
<td>5,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLIDARITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>6,72</td>
<td>6,72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPECT</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>7,44</td>
<td>5,44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The ranking of the so called Human Cities shared values

** Table 3: The ranking from the most to the least important factor for the initiative to run successfully by the opinion of the respondents.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>82</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEAM WORK</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTHUSIASM</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INITIATIVE TO BE NETWORKED WITH OTHER ALIKE INITIATIVES</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEQUATE HUMAN RESOURCES</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF MEMBERS</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAVING SUPPORT BY OFFICIAL/INSTITUTIONALIZED BODIES</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WELL DEFINED GOALS</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD PLANNING OF THE ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A PROPER WORKING/MEETING SPACE</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL KNOWHOW AND GOOD PRACTICES</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents were also asked to define a question that they would ask to their fellows in similar initiatives across Europe, thus their central concern regarding the existence of the initiative is revealed. The most of the suggested questions are related to recruitment processes and getting wider public engaged. Questions like these appear on the list: How do you get volunteers involved in the project? How do you motivate people to join– which are the three best tools proved to be useful in your case? How do you keep all members engaged in participating in the community and various projects? How do you make inhabitants participating? When you make events– how many people attend them?

Another broader group of questions was related to the organisational structure and functioning of the initiative, such as: How are you organised? How do you facilitate both visibility and making money out of it? The survey suggests that people who perceive their job positions responsible are more susceptible to become initiators of civil initiatives related to public space. The initiators do not start their initiatives out of the perception of their job as uncreative, just on the contrary– the survey suggests that people who can develop their creativity at their job are more likely to become initiators of public space related initiatives. Thus their active involvement can by no means be interpreted as a compensation for a boring job or a compensation for a finished career (retirement life stage).

Regarding the management of their initiative the following observations can be made:

One of the biggest challenges that initiators find in running an initiative is motivating and getting new people on board to help run an initiative. This issue was risen many times, which calls attention to the need of further research to better understand the drivers and motivations of one’s active involvement.

The human resources are a more important factor for a success of an initiative than the financial ones according to the replays of the respondents. Two most important prerequisites for a success of a bottom-up initiative dealing with urban public areas:

- Enthusiasm of members: this was clearly among most important factors for the initiative to run successfully mentioned by the respondents.
- Financial support is not central but an important factor influencing the successfulness of the initiative too. Especially a long term financial stability is seen as a crucial aspect to reach the goals.

Regarding the long-term success criteria, the following observations can be made:

- The most important contribution of an initiative is bringing life back to public space.
- Strengthened social ties within local community are also seen as a proof of a long-term success of an initiative.

And finally the last observation is related to the motivations of initiators to start an initiative:

- The initiators’ work is rather altruistic– they invest their resources in order to contribute to a better life of the community.
- Having good time with other people and friends is an important motivator to start and run an initiative too. The importance of the sociability factor is reflected in a notion that low respond rate by general public is a strong demotivating factor.
Conclusion

The overall goal of this research is to have a clearer picture of what can be done to get citizens more active in the initiatives that aim at improving their local public spaces. A central role in these endeavours play the initiators of concrete initiatives – they are the true motors of bottom-up initiatives, therefore the planning practice can benefit from getting to know their motivations, aspirations and personal goals better, and thus offer a greater support. A survey shows that these are enthusiastic people who believe in possible improvements of their living environments with their own contribution. They are well aware of the importance of getting others working in the same direction and trust in the citizen’s power, while they are still aware of the limitations that the lack of financial resources may cause. They generally come from financially average or under average positioned households, but do not seek financial benefits. In their civic endeavours – besides the pleasure of new friendships and social ties built up through collaborative processes, in order to better understand their values they hesitate to get in contact.

Besides all interviewees, special thanks for making this study and paper possible go to Lucile Fauviaux, students at Saxion University under supervision of Javina Medina and the Human Cities Ljubljana Biha Tominc and Nina Goršič. The findings of this research were partly published within Klabs project too.

Limitations to the study and next steps

This paper reports the results of an ongoing survey. The current size of a sample as in November 2015 allows some preliminary conclusions. Adaptation of the questionnaire according to the findings of the above presented stage of the survey can hopefully lead to a broader sampling. When implemented in different cultural milieus this can help understanding the cultural differences too.

The sampling in a current survey was centered on the initiators of the initiatives only, in order to gain an overview of possible differences between initiators and other members of initiatives, therefore the survey sampling shall include all categories of members of initiatives (starters/later joiners, active/passive members etc.) in the future. Such an approach can point out some crucial differences and help addressing the important group management issues.

In 2016 and 2017 a continuation of survey is scheduled, if you would have interest in getting actively involved in a research or being informed of the progress and results, do not hesitate to get in contact.

References


In the 1990s, after decades of population decline, London has restored itself as a magnet for people from all over the world. It is now estimated that London’s population will hit 9 million before 2020. As a capital of international finance, London has seen major developments leading to an ever-changing cityscape; planning has taken place for more than 200 buildings over 50 meters tall. Major developments such as Battersea Park and Royal Docks are spurred by international capital flows and aimed at serving the global elites. Even less prolific developments in lesser-known areas of London, such as Woodberry Down in Hackney, go on sale first in places like Hong Kong, Shanghai or Kuala Lumpur to cater for the newly rising Asian elites. In fact, the British Property Federation reported that 61% of all new homes sold in the capital in 2013 were bought not to live in, but solely as an investment.1

These developments are usually facilitated by a network of “traditional” urban stakeholders; major investment companies, large developers and international architecture firms in conjunction with local borough councils, most of whom are eager to attract new investments to their area. These developments however are often confronted with local resistance, particularly in those areas where new developments replace council housing estates. Local action groups have mushroomed around London in areas where social housing residents are being evicted to make room for new housing to be sold on the global market. They have had mixed success; whereas in Hoxton residents have successfully opposed the takeover of their estate by a New York investment company with the help of left-wing campaigner and media personality Russell Brand, residents in other areas, such as the Heygate Estate in Elephant and Castle, have not been able to prevent the demolition of their homes.

Apart from these concerns about gentrification and social cleansing, there is an increasing awareness that these new developments lead to a further privatisation of public space. Privatisation of public space is not a new phenomenon in London; famously, Canary Wharf, built in the late 80s and 90s, is under surveillance of its own private security company.
Bottom-up placemaking & emerging urban actors

the Broadgate development around Liverpool Street, including a "public" plaza, is owned by British Land and GIC and even the publicly accessible space surrounding City Hall is owned by a Malaysian investor. More recent and future examples include areas such as Granary Square in Kings Cross, the Nine Elms development in Vauxhall, and the Olympic Park. As written in an article in the Guardian in 2012, developers often argue that in fact public space is created where none existed. This might be true from a spatial perspective as often times these places are indeed publicly accessible and visually indistinguishable from "real" public space. The reality is these spaces are privately owned and their use is restricted and controlled by private security.

These kinds of developments have recently led to discussions about a loss of "urban commons", i.e., spaces that are publicly or community owned, and strategies to reclaim them. In the spring of 2015, LSE Cities/Teatrum Mundil organised a high-profile competition asking for new ideas and models to address these concerns surrounding urban commons. Arguably though, London is already seeing an exciting range of initiatives that create a new kind of urban common. These are "bottom-up" initiatives, introduced by a wide range of "newly emerging" local urban actors and often aimed at creating tighter communities and increasing community well-being. London has a dynamic landscape of charitable organisations and community groups. Some groups tend to be more activist, while others are focused on community-based projects such as community gardens, collective housing, and public space improvements.

This article will explore some of these recent initiatives and the newly emerging actors behind them—and focus specifically on the interests of the groups and organisations driving these initiatives. This is of interest particularly from the perspective of creating "human cities" and the question of how the creation of more "human" cities can be facilitated. Understanding new actors' motivation to initiate and drive bottom-up projects could help policy-makers to work together with them and design policies to make best use of the energy and skills within these community groups and organisations.

Clear Village has researched five such initiatives from different London-based organisations. The initiatives are:

- Haringey's Warehouse Initiatives—driven by Haringey Arts, a group of local residents
- Brixton Market—driven by SpaceMakers Agency, a professional agency consulting local residents and other stakeholders
- Canning Town Caravanserai—driven by Ash Sakula Architects, an architects' firm focused on community participation
- St. Clements Hospital—driven by East London Community Land Trust, an action group
- Bedfords Park Walled Garden, a community-focused food growing space run by Clear Village.

In the rest of the article we will briefly describe each project, discuss the similarities and differences between the 5 initiatives, and conclude with some reflections on the wider significance of these newly emerging urban actors for the practice of placemaking.

Haringey Warehouse Communities

The Haringey warehouse community is comprised of two areas of formerly industrial warehouses. Over 1500 people live here as part of a community of artists, makers, performers, architects, etc. Some of them have lived in the area for twenty years. The warehouses in the area previously hosted textile manufacturing which from the beginning of the 1990s began to move out of the area. The spaces left by the industries have gradually been converted into a mix of uses, mostly communal housing and artist workshops.

Initiatives to support the warehouse community in a structured way began in 2008, when Haringey Arts was set up in 2008 with funding from Haringey Council. When funding ran out a few years later a period of low activity began, until 2012 when local residents James West and Carolina Khouri took a lead as co-directors and revived Haringey Arts as an independent organisation.

Since then Haringey Arts has focused strongly again on supporting the development of a true warehouse community and facilitating initiatives by local artists that support this goal. One of their first initiatives was to open up the community on an Open Warehouse Day in May...
Bottom-up placemaking & emerging urban actors

London

2013. Together with local landlord Provewell Ltd they have set up a programme to develop the identity of the warehouse community through a series of commissions to local artists. These include a series of four destination signs, including a large mural on one of the warehouses’ façades. New commissions for 2015 include a fence upgrading project and a courtyard upgrading initiative to create permanent outdoor spaces for local residents to meet.

In addition, local residents have started taking initiative to promote the warehouse community. This includes the InHouse Festival, first organised as a Film Festival in 2014, but now a broader event spread over several locations in the area. Haringey Arts supports these initiatives by acting as a platform, making connections between related stakeholders. Local residents can also raise finance for their initiatives via The Village Fund.

Although the warehouse community has recently come under threat from the local Council following a report on “dangerous” living arrangements and overcrowding, both directors assert that Haringey Arts is not politically motivated. Working closely with the local landlord makes Haringey Arts vulnerable to accusations of political bias, yet the absence of any strategic plan underlines that argument substantially. Haringey Arts’ objectives, according to the directors, are purely in the interest of building a local warehouse community and facilitating community action aimed at creating a common warehouse identity, stronger support networks and a more productive place to live.

East London Community Land Trust

Although many areas in London have experienced something of a property boom in recent decades, East London in particular has been subject to major transformations. This started in the early 1980s with many of the dysfunctional docklands being transformed into housing and office areas, a process continuing today. A new node of intensive property development has also emerged around the site of the 2012 Olympics.

These new developments have often provided housing unaffordable to local residents. The price of existing housing has surged too, as a result of high demand across London, and cash-buyers in Tower Hamlets in particular.

Average house prices in 2014 were as high as £620k, way out of reach for families living on the area’s median income. It is often the price of land that makes house prices this high, rather than construction costs. The story of the East London Community Land Trust started in the late 1980s when local residents constituted Telco (The East London Communities Organisation), now Citizens UK. The lack of affordable, decent-sized housing for local families soon came up as an important issue. The first steps towards a community land trust came in the early 2000s. In 2003 the proposal was made to mayoral candidates to hand over land to a community land trust, enabling local people to build their own homes. All mayoral candidates said yes and the search for a site was on. In 2004, a petition written by ELCLT that asked for affordable housing in the form of a land trust was included in the London Olympic 2012.

However, after London was awarded the Games, ELCLT was asked to first pilot a scheme before a site in the Olympic Park would be made available. It was December 2008 when ELCLT decided to start campaigning for the site of St. Clements Hospital, which had become dysfunctional in 2004. The campaign gained political support from the London mayor and eventually also from Tower Hamlets council. ELCLT put in a bid with two partners to develop the land, but lost. However, the developer of the winning bid decided to incorporate the ELCLT proposal in their plans. ELCLT became the owner of the whole site, with Peabody and Galliford Try as leaseholders (meaning only a home, not the land will be sold to new owners). Homes built for ELCLT will be made available for members of ELCLT and sold at an estimated price of half the market price in East London. The price of a home is calculated using mean income in the area as a starting point, meaning houses are truly affordable for local people.

The development process has been inclusive and community design absolutely central to the process. In total over 500 local people involved in workshops during the bid development and master planning stage. Even more locals have been engaged with the site through the Shuffle summer and winter festivals, taking place in the historic yet dilapidated buildings on site. Construction works have now started on the site and it is expected that the first homes will be delivered in 2016.
Brixton Village Market

The story of Brixton Village Market starts in 2008 when the owners of this 1930s indoor market in South London proposed a major redevelopment of the site. At the time the market had been going downhill for years and a fifth of the one hundred units were sitting empty. To maximise the return on their investment, the owners proposed to demolish half the site and construct a ten-storey apartment block on top of it.

Brixton is one of the areas in South London that are on the brink of major transformations—leading to concerns about and protests against gentrification. Also the redevelopment of the market met with local resistance. Residents formed the "Friends of Brixton Market" and led a determined campaign to conserve the market and the owners were eventually forced to withdraw their proposal in 2009. The result was a deadlock.

Lambeth Council then proposed to turn to regeneration agency Space Makers in the hope that they could initiate a project that could achieve a win-win situation for both the developers and local residents. With seed funding from London & Associated Properties, Space Makers started their initiative to rebuild the social life of the market. They launched a social media drive and managed to attract more than 350 people to their first ‘Space Exploration’ event. Space Makers gave interested people a week to come up with proposals for taking over a vacant unit; those with successful proposals would then get three months free rent.

98 proposals were submitted within the week and Space Makers selected 30 of them. These ranged from food stores to lantern-makers, from fashion boutiques to community shops, and from galleries to band rehearsal spaces. Space Makers continued to support the revitalisation process afterwards. They facilitated regular events to increase footfall and worked closely with the community to increase local participation. As Dougald Hine, the founder of Space Makers, said: “it wasn’t just about businesses. You came down there and it felt like a space you wanted to spend time in.”

Six months after the project started, Brixton Village was being written about in the New York Times and Time Out. And by the time Space Makers finished their work, the market was fully let for the first time in 30 years.

Space Makers call themselves a “utopian regeneration agency”. They work on a project or consultancy basis with local authorities, architects, funders and private developers, yet their interest goes deeper: one could call Space Makers a team of individuals searching to be a catalyst for projects/interventions that make a difference in places. They see their work in facilitating positive bonds between different stakeholders, always including local communities and supporting these communities to organise themselves. Crucial to them is not to “build themselves into the fabric of the place”, but to pull out at the moment a local community can carry an initiative further themselves.

For Space Makers, the process is the core of their own inspiration. Reflecting on the success of Brixton Village, Douglas Hine said: “We could have turned into this company that was basically a guerrilla regeneration agency going in and mobilizing the cool to transform spaces that were getting a bit down at heel. But to me that would have been ignoring all of the bits that I knew coming out of that project that hadn’t felt quite right and I knew that if instead we dwelt on those bits and we went through the bits of brokenness, we would find new and different things to do that would continue to matter to us and be exciting, in the way that Brixton Village had mattered to us and been exciting with all of its imperfections.”
Canning Town Caravanserai

In 2011 the mayor of East London borough Newham, Sir Robin Wales, and mayor of London Boris Johnson launched a competition to find “meanwhile uses” for three brown field sites in East London. The competition invited anyone with an idea, from developers to investors and community groups, to devise temporary uses for the sites that are local in nature but able to reach a global audience.

One of the sites was just opposite Canning Town station—a rather deprived area in the shadow of London’s finance centre Canary Wharf. London-based architecture firm Ash Sakula won the competition for this site with their proposal to establish a “Caravanserai”. The idea was to create, in Ash Sakula’s co-director Cany Ash’s words, a “small village of community activities, inspired by the medieval network of safe, hosted spaces along the Silk Route that provided resting spaces for travellers and traders”.

A few months before the opening of the Olympic Games in 2012 the Caravanserai opened. It had been built gradually with the help of over 50 volunteers who trained their construction skills and used remediated and salvaged materials sourced and donated from various construction sites in the area. The site itself contained a community garden with 18 allotments, an open-air theatre, a children’s play area, sheltered tables with seating for 60 people, a micro-manufacture workshop, market kiosks and the Oasis café/bar. With such amenities Caravanserai has been able to host a wide variety of activities and events, ranging from school visits, language classes, corporate volunteering days, community feasts, performing art shows and music festivals. Other activities continue to be developed with different community groups. As such, the Caravanserai is intentionally a cumulative process with participatory opportunities emerging, enabling the local communities to become active in their public realm.

Beyond creating a community space, the project has to be understood as an experiment in creating local employment opportunities and an economic and cultural legacy for the area. In Ash Sakula’s own words: “It is a living manifesto for a new generation of public spaces, integrating forums and facilities, workshops and workspaces, all collaboratively produced by hosts and guests, with artists and architects, thinkers and makers, businesses and communities, it centres on a vibrant, adaptable, open courtyard, surrounded on all sides by busy shops and bustling production spaces where innovative and sustainable business ventures are invented or re-imagined.”

In Ash Sakula themselves, at first sight, seems a conventional architecture firm, though with a broader than usual portfolio, including housing, art and public space projects. Yet the Caravanserai shows a practice devoted to actually taking leadership over a civic project, putting themselves in the heart of the community. The Caravanserai is run as a not-for-profit limited company, with Cany Ash acting as chair and executive director. Funding has come from a variety of sources—London & Quadrant Foundation, the Development Trusts Association, Newham Council, Comic Relief and the European Union’s Youth in Action programme. Yet commercial viability is a challenge and there is a continuous exploration of potential income streams including grants, donations, cross-subsidisation from commercial activities elsewhere and income from the space itself through events.

Bedfords Park Walled Garden

Bedfords Park Walled Garden, built in the 1770s, was the food growing space of Bedfords estate manor house, dating back to the 1400s. It later became Havering Council’s plants and flowers nursery before being abandoned in the end of the 1990s. Since then it was left overgrown, with the walls on the brink of collapse and many of the glasshouses subject to vandalism.

In 2011 Clear Village founder Thomas Ermacora came upon the Walled Garden during a walk in Bedfords Park and, interested in the opportunities of the space, discovered that a local community group, the Friends of Bedfords Park was already putting an effort into an initiative to restore the space. They decided to start collaborating on the project and engaged Havering Council, the owner of the space, into the project as well. After a period of fundraising and project planning, the project really kicked off in the spring of 2013 when full-time Clear Village staff came on site. The renovation of the walls started and growing space was cleared up and prepared for production. Since
A project board made up of project partners (in this case Friends of Bedford Park, Haringey Council and other local organisations) governs the project. The board is chaired by Clear Village at the moment, but the goal is to develop this group into an independent community-led board by 2018 when it is planned that the garden will be handed over into community ownership. This will require the development of different long-term income streams that will make the Walled Garden financially self-sustainable, which is one of the main responsibilities for the project board.

A hand-over to the community is an explicit goal of Clear Village, which aims to be a catalyst for community-led regeneration. Clear Village is set up as a charity aimed at delivering social impact projects on a site of 5.5 hectares on London’s South Bank. Other types of community groups, such as so-called “Friends groups” have been involved with the maintenance of public spaces while sometimes campaigning for or developing new public amenities themselves.

We’d argue though that the non-traditional actors we describe are quite different from traditional citizen-led groups. Many of these traditional groups, including the Coin Street Community Builders, who developed affordable housing, Bedfords Park Walled Garden was the result of the discovery of the garden by chance. And whereas Haringey Arts was (re) initiated by two individuals, Caravanserai was ultimately the result of a competition started by local authorities. Newly emerging actors are “activated” in different ways.

This suggests that policy makers could help activate actors in different ways. In fact, in the recent years London has known a few different policy programmes that have supported newly emerging actors. Examples includes:

- competitions, such as the one from which Caravanserai resulted. Other examples include a recent competition for a pop-up park in Brixton, won by another architecture firm in collaboration with a range of local organisations.
- the pocket park programme, which was a city-wide programme aimed at supporting the development of small green spaces around London. In two rounds the programme provided 100 pocket parks with a total 1.5 million of match funding. The programme supported a wide of actors, in-
including community groups, charities, architecture firms and others to complete their projects.

The Mayor’s High Street Fund, which makes use of crowdfunding platform Spacehive to support local initiatives to improve High Streets. Not only does the Mayor pledge to fund the most promising projects, the High Street section of the Spacehive website itself is an opportunity for the individual projects to present themselves and become part of a “movement” around the particular goal of upgrading high streets around London.

The above shows that, as much as London is a playground for global investors, London is also a fertile ground for urban social innovation through new groups of citizens, both professionals and non-professionals. While global capitalism is the dominating force behind the shaping of London’s skyline, on the ground, local people are driving numerous examples of citizen-led projects that create places that aim to contribute to community well-being. In fact, all around the world we see examples of new groups of citizens or professional organisations taking action to improve their neighbourhoods and cities. Examples outside London range from the cheap, informal “spot-fixing” of the Ugly Indian to high-profile, multimillion-dollar projects such as New York’s High Line and +pool. To a certain extent it can be argued that these projects of citizen-led placemaking reflect broader, upcoming trends in society, such as the rise of social entrepreneurship, crowd-funding and the sharing economy. It is now the task for policy makers to recognise the need for these projects, understand people’s motivation and develop the policies and tools to support them.
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers’ work in the public space

By Lubomira Trojan
Introduction
The presence of crafts workshops in European cities is a common phenomenon dating back to early Middle Ages. In Poland, the progress of crafts resembled that in other European countries, however, it reached its ending phase at the turn of the 21st century. Some of the workshops were closed, and some of the skills were forgotten as the last masters were gone. A few artisans remain professionally active, though. It is estimated that Polish crafts organisations comprise around 300,000 enterprises nowadays.

This article presents initiatives reflecting the interest in traditional crafts in Poland. Polish designers are becoming more and more fascinated with quality handmade products, which is the result of the latest global design trends and a natural reaction to world’s market economy as well as the mass production of poor-quality objects and wastefulness. Crafts have become a source of inspiration for creating new products and they start appearing in the public space – both in cities and in the media – thanks to the designers’ activity.

The subject proves very interesting as it is a reflection of social changes from the last few years. In the communist times, Polish crafts flourished. The disappearance of crafts businesses was caused by the growth of the new capitalist system and market economy, the emergence of big shopping centres, and the society’s mass excitement with purchase possibilities and the constant exchange of goods which had not been available before. Talented people vanished along with their businesses. The designers who bring crafts back to the public space and awareness save particular competences and talents from oblivion. At the same time, they present their role in the creation and conservation of the identity of small communities. The new products and solutions, being a result of the designers’ and craftspeople’s cooperation, are tailor-made from good-quality materials and are meant to serve for years. Therefore, the designers’ presentation of crafts’ significance can promote solutions which are best for the environment and become an inspiration and good counsel for the development of local communities and cities.

The studies on the crafts inspirations present in Poland have been based on the accounts of designers who have participated in some of the processes as well as co-created them. The phenomena have been divided into two groups: those which raise awareness and promote crafts in the media and those which have resulted in specific installations in the urban space. The scope of the phenomena, the adopted design methods, and the grounds for the designers’ research have undergone a comparative analysis.

Zamek Cieszyn
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers’ work in the public space
By Lubomira Trojan

Cieszyn
Crafts in Poland

In the beginning, Polish crafts business was aimed mainly at the needs of the family and neighbours. With time, the demand for hand-made products increased: people inhabiting particular villages started to specialise in particular sectors. Then, crafts enterprises began to move to cities, where they experienced a boom. The branches which were the first to develop were smithery and steelwork. Furthermore, trades such as coopers, pottery, baking, weaving, tanning, shoemaking, and tailoring emerged. Certainly, all the crafts had their ups and downs, and the status of a craftsperson and of handicraft weakened in the times of industrialisation.

In the newest history, in the days of communism, which lasted until 1989 in Poland, artisans were widely respected. They formed quite a numerous group, and Poles, living in the constant state of shortage, needed craftspeople’s skills to have their goods repaired. Then, customers did not care as much about quality or mastery of the work as about the possibility of renewing the objects which were absent from shops. Instead of being repaired, they are thrown away, which is caused, unfortunately, by economic reasons as well: repairing broken equipment can sometimes be as expensive as buying a new product.

Modern design’s fascination with crafts

The recent fifteen years have brought changes in the design sector, whose process of development in Poland is a very interesting one. When Zamek Cieszyn – the first regional design centre in Poland – was born, the English word “design” was approached with mistrust. Design was understood as a symbol of luxury and extravagance, as something for the wealthy and the elite – thus, it created distance. Designers’ activities and projects were usually connected only with the products and graphics as such, not really with changing people’s lifestyles. Polish design in those times did not aspire to be a tool of change, although this was the very characteristic that designers tried to propagate. The English word finally found its Polish counterpart (which is now normally phonetically transcribed as dizajn) before that, phrases like wzornictwo przemysłowe ("industrial design") or projektowanie ("designing") would be used. Polish designers started to creatively and successfully adapt Western solutions to Poland; they borrowed not only innovations related to products, public space design, and raw materials but also design thinking and service design methods. Inspired by the Scandinavian “design ladder” and particularly by all the examples of companies employing design in their development strategies, the designers undertook new challenges, which were the consequence of understanding design as a process.

The natural flow of currents and inspirations as well as the observation of the growing wastefulness of resources and materials made some of the designers start projects which were a reaction to consumerism. The eco trends, the DIY approach, and the cradle-to-cradle design were promptly and positively accepted by Polish designers. The memories of the hard days of communism, the permanent want of goods, and the impossibility of satisfying basic needs, which were typical of that system, as well as the ability of making and repairing everyday objects with your own hands and reusing them are still present in the minds of Polish families and the social tradition, and reflected in Polish design. It is worth pointing out here that discussions about the nature and individuality of local design are frequent in Poland, as we like asking ourselves the question whether there is something that makes it different from design in Western Europe. Tomasz Rygalski, a recognised Polish designer, claims that Polish design does differ from the European and that fact can be best described by the word “ingenuity”. That ingenuity is visible in the ability to create things from scratch, “make bricks without straw”, and reuse materials; it is evident in people’s tech-
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers’ work in the public space Cieszyn

Creative workshops in the Beskid mountains allowing the designer to meet the local culture.
© Rafał Kuchni

A chest seat inspired by traditional local doors. © Rafał Kuchni
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers’ work in the public space

that it is worthwhile to return to handmade
decades. The play with conventions, the eclec-
tic of the age of postmodernity in the recent
understand them completely, to immerse them-
mixture of cultures, but they do not attempt to
appreciate the mastery of disappearing talents,
It must be emphasised, though, that the fas-
tical shrewdness, and in curving, understood
postmodernity. That context and that approach gave rise to some designers’ fascination with the “slow”
move, ecosystem, and design, and creative combin-
ing of traditional culture and innovations, while
natural materials attracted and inspired them to
research further, “The modern times are a
good moment to rediscover crafts, whose tradi-
are still strong, and the generation of
understood eclectical-
ly to meet the needs of mass culture—are also characteris-
tic elements of the postmodern era.

Nevertheless, the meetings and the process of rediscovering traditional crafts are also mean-
ingful for the artisans themselves: they can see the
value of their work from a new point of view,
give it another context, and after many years of
repeatiing schematic movements, accept new
technological challenges. To notice fascination and
interest with their work in young people’s
eyes is also of importance to them. The main
problem of today’s craftspeople and artists is the
lack of trainees, continuators who would not be
discouraged the difficulty and arduous-
ness of their work or by the fact that it is not
well-paid. In the past, artisans’ children would
follow in their footsteps, but now they are not
interested in continuing their profession.
However, the superior value of this kind of
collaboration is what they gain from the inter-
esting image of a particular space, city, or
area, where people maintain the skills related
to wood processing and creating furni-
ture. The shape of the seat was
inspired by the techniques and solutions which
the designer learned during the

Another initiative of Zamek Cieszyn realised for the Adam Mickiewicz Institute to celebrate the 600th anniversary of Polish-Turkish dip-
loomatic relations was a creative international exch-
changes three designers from Poland worked in
Turkey and Turkish designers worked in Polish
crafts studios. The project was called “Craft.
Did for New”. The exchange was especially in-
spring, as it allowed a meeting of two distinct
cultures and sets of values conveyed by them.
The products created during the project were
exhibited in Turkey at the 2nd Istanbul Design
Biennial and in Poland at Zamek Cieszyn. One
of the objects was dedicated to public space:
A Turkish designer Şule Koc observed inhab-
ants of Polish cities while drawing the sun after
the long winter, exposed their faces to the
sunlight and put your face always in the di-
rection of sunlight. The shape of the seat was
inspired by the techniques and solutions which
the designer learned during the

The results of the three projects coordinated by Zamek Cieszyn – “Kool Design. Carpathians” was particularly
impressive. It included activities from Poland, Czech, Hungary, and Slovakia, and it was run under the
International Visegrad Fund. At the
planning stage, a method employing elements of
design thinking was adopted. Two kinds of
workshops were organised: first, creative
workshops allowing the designers to meet
the local culture, and then workshops which let
them verify, realise, or modify their concep-
tions. After the workshops, the designers
concerning the promotion of urban
places; then, she created a one-parson public
seat which lets you follow the apparent motions
of people and put your face always in the di-
rection of sunlight. The shape of the seat was
inspired by the techniques and solutions which
the designer learned during the

The cooperation of the designers and artisans
resulted not only in the prototypes displayed at
exhibitions but also in products which actually
entered the market. Ewelina Czaplicka-Ruducha
collaborated with craftspeople from Kraków, a
district of Warsaw, to create a fashion col-
lection and a series of men’s shoes. Weronica
Koeh sewed leather bags in cooperation with
fishermen from Sopot, while a tailor from the
owner of the studio offered the designer to
take it over from her and now Weronica is the
sole owner of the studio. Another designer, Iza
Słota, opened the first cement tiles studio in
Poland. The first commercial experience of
the designers has proven that despite the
relatively low standard of living in Poland, there
are growing group of consumers who appreciate the quality, uniqueness, and indi-
viduality of handmade objects.
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers' work in the public space

Cieszyn

Due to the growing number of products appearing both at exhibitions and on the market, numerous activities aiming to list and promote the remaining active master artisans were undertaken. For example, Fundacja Lokalny Certyfikowany ("Local and Certified" Foundation), which promotes entrepreneurs, created an online map of craftspeople from Warsaw. Detailed descriptions of artisans, their trades, skills, and achievements have started to appear in the media, on the internet and in the lifestyle press and programmes. Nonetheless, two design graduates, Marta Mach and Agata Napórńska, founders of Zwykłe życie ("Ordinary Life") magazine, point out that the subject of crafts is hardly present in the media: "We decided that presenting a new lifestyle image of crafts may be a chance to revive it." The girls have created a brand called Edward, selling products made by artisans and redesigned by designers. They remark: "This is all about changing the way people think. We want them to stop thinking: I'll buy something cheap and when it breaks, I'll throw it away and buy something new. Things can live more than one season. If we shop less, we have more time to reflect on what we are going to buy. That means reduction and selection." This becomes a design manifesto and a hint for the consumers helping them make their purchase choices. The designers take yet another step by means of initiatives promoting crafts and related values as well as through ensuring that crafts find a special place in public awareness. They design a change of people's habits, behaviours, and attitudes.

"So you want to save the dying crafts calling for change of thinking?, Janek Gleń, a journalist, asked Marta and Agata. The designers responded: "Saving is too big a word. We can support them, though, thanks to our magazine and the Edward brand. Many young people are able to spend a lot of money on popular designer clothes. Why not go to a fashion fair and buy them from their peers, why not go to a crafts shop and buy handmade gloves? This is not a question of lack of resources, but a lack of knowledge and fashion."

Projects in the public space

Thanks to the designers’ work—creating new products and promotional actions in the media—the knowledge of the value of crafts is becoming widespread again. A new fashion emerged, for all that is handmade, pro-eco- logical, sustainable, and anti-consumerist. This fashion is characteristic of the community of designers, however, people centred around the broadly understood human studies take an active part in its popularisation.

Another project which played an important role in the promotion of the value of folk art and handmade products in Poland was a festival organised by designers and the Seweryn Udziela Ethnographic Museum in Kraków. "The Małopolska Thing. Ethnodesign Festival" took place in 2009 and 2010 and was an inspiring impulse to take a closer look at the relations between ethnography and design (which have existed in Poland since the 19th century) and their modern connections. During festival, there were discussions about the significance of patterns from ethnographic collections in contemporary times. The participants wondered whether the popular references to cultural heritage respond to the market needs or if they are simply a way of aestheticalisation of daily life. What is important, the organisers of the festival invited Polish designers and gave them a task to try to understand what the artisans wanted to convey through the objects they made, to examine the museum’s collection, and to turn on their imagination. The designers entered the museum’s storerooms and acquainted themselves with the meanings, functions, and ornamentation of the objects located there. There were two exhibitions forming a part of the festival: "Rzecz małopolska – park doświadczeń kulturowych ("The Małopolska Thing: Park of Cultural Experiences")" and "Wolność, Wyobraźnia Imagination") and "Imagination"). The latter exhibition, whose curator was Olaf Cirut, was a result of the cooperation of designers and artisans who co-created interactive installations: a world of things which lets you play with both design and ethnography. The installations were located by the Vistula river in Kraków and in two other Polish cities, Nowy Sącz and Tarnów. You could find among them a gar-
A part of the "re:design" project realised by north of Poland, in the city of Gdynia. It was action taken by leading Polish designers in the 1980s. The city was transformed and adapted to modern times, with new shop signs and displays for various workshops: leatherworking studio, sewing machine repair point, tailor's, shoemaker's, and a metal forging workshop. The objects – big, clear, colourful, and playful in design – were inspired by different craftspeople, their work, and their environment. The installations, made by designers and artisans, were located by the Vistula river. The designs were not encouraged to come in. Therefore, the museum items as our own historical traces, it became distorted by trends, system changes, and deficiencies in aesthetic education of the society. That is why it is high time to fix it. As we were working with the artisans, it turned out that they are open even to far-reaching transformations. Cieszyn is another example of a city whose space is modified in order to underline the potential of local crafts in improving its tourist appeal and fortifying the identity of its residents. In 2012, the design centre of Zamek Cieszyn and Cieszyn city hall founded the so called "Chamber of Cieszyn Master Artisan". The place was opened at the workshop of the last Cieszyn gunsmith, Jerzy Walga, and is meant to commemorate the achievements of the artisans who worked in Cieszyn not so long ago. People thanks to whom the history of the city and the region is so colourful and versatile. Gunsmithing (Jerzy Walga is now the only person in Cieszyn who knows the tricks of this trade) of the "Cieszyn school" is incribed on the Polish UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The place was designed by young designers from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. However, not many residents and tourists found it, as it was not sufficiently advertised outside the building and people were not encouraged to come in. Therefore, the next initiative of Zamek Cieszyn was to design a new information board next to the entrance of the building and to improve the look of the hall leading to the gunsmithing workshop. The works were undertaken by the local housing authorities (Zakład Budynków Miejskich). To make the sign, the designers used the motif of artisan tools and local materials (wood). At that was shown in Zamek Cieszyn at the exhibition entitled "Design In Public Space. Change". It is a good example of the concept which formed the basis for the projects how local institutions can join their forces to change and improve the perception of the city at least on a small scale. All that was shown in Zamek Cieszyn at the exhibition entitled "Design In Public Space. Change". It is a good example of the concept which formed the basis for the projects how local institutions can join their forces to change and improve the perception of the city at least on a small scale. A small workshop and slightly forgotten people have been reintroduced and returned to the col-

1. http://designalive.pl/
2. Ibid

Cieszyn
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers' work in the public space

Cieszyn
Crafts inspirations behind Polish designers’ work in the public space

In Katowice, a popular Polish music festival, which wants to be perceived as a unique and ecological event. By treating crafts as a set of techniques, skills, and competences which can be of value in the modern world and by discovering the needs of the modern users of public space, the living architecture objects have become objects for sale. The traditional weaving techniques were used in a non-traditional way and thus found their place in the commercial free market.

The future of the cooperation between designers and artisans

All of the abovementioned examples prove that the cooperation between designers and artisans can be successful. Nevertheless, the actions are still taken on a small scale, mainly in the centres of larger cities or in cities where you can find institutions promoting this kind of approach, setting a good example, and initiating new projects like in Cieszyn, or Gdynia, with its design centre and powerful community of designers). Those examples show how great opportunities can be found in the rich craft tradition as well as how inspiring and interesting it can be for the people who design new products and services and recreate the public space. Some of the Polish designers who draw from the handcraft tradition declare that they have great aspirations regarding the change of consumer habits and behaviours. The designers want to change the attitudes of the buyers and users by providing them with high-quality products which can be used for a long time, by promoting such products, and by highlighting the role of the author (craftsman, designer, creator) who has put a lot of time, effort, and attention into the creation of such objects. That is the goal of the designers’ activities which transfer crafts to the public space. They enhance the consumers’ awareness concerning the importance of crafts in the development of society, they also strengthen the feeling of pride in our family, neighbours, and fellow citizens contributed to the growth of cities.

Moreover, all the projects reflect the sense of responsibility assumed by the designers who want to change the reality and stay independent of mass-market production and the system, fuelling global consumption. Many designers replace the authoritative style of designing with a role of coordinators cooperating with various specialists. Such attitudes and behaviours will surely never become large in scale and so they will not change the consumers in a radical manner. The products which are commercially attractive and—as this is still an important factor in Poland—do not exceed the purchasing capabilities of the Poles have the greatest chance to reach the collective consciousness of people.
The projects were the result of recreating traditional decorative patterns and artisans' objects typical of the region of Małopolska © The Małopolska Thing, Ethnodesign Festival.

Belgrade Design Week

From “100 Creative BDW Playgrounds for Children of Serbia” to the Grand Park of Kragujevac

By Vesna Jelovac, Jovan Jelovac, Aleksandru Vuja, Natasa Cica, Desanka Belancic
How to transform a periodic initiative into a continuing, sustainable and effective design process, counterbalancing missing institutional policies support? The project 100 creative BDW Playgrounds for Children of Serbia is an example of action led by the independent citizen’s association Belgrade Design Week, who’s original mission was the annual production of the leading design festival in South East Europe. Faced with a lack of organization of public authorities on this matter, the association decided to rely on its own resources—a network of international companies and experts, design methodologies, and the Human Cities: Challenging the City Scale European programme—to answer the emergency of upgrading the playgrounds in Serbia. As the approach initiated in 2014 received successful feedback, expanding in the city of Kragujevac, the methodology seems to pave the way for an innovative form of public space planning in Serbia.

After 10 years of Belgrade Design Week’s editions (2005-2014), disappointed with the impossibility to extend a seven-day festival into a year-long project and Serbia’s non-ability to create its own design institutions which would work continuously during the whole year, such as UK’s Design Council, BDW has decided to shift its intentions to a more hands-on experience. After learning invaluable lessons from lectures, exhibitions and workshops by the “Greatest Creative Minds Of The 21st century” from all over the world, connecting them and networking them with the local creative scene, we looked around and identified the most neglected and weakest members of our population—namely children, youth and seniors—who needed assistance in improving the quality of their everyday life by applying “design thinking”.

In our search, BDW embraced the possibility to become part of the EU HUMAN CITIES family, in order to sample and exchange the best “design thinking” methodologies from EU-wide partners, and promote it in a still non-EU country, with no significant design industry and no design institutions at all capable of being a leading guidance. Hoping that a new focus on such a prominent EU project may contribute to a wider acceptance of “design thinking” in the Serbian public, institutions and media, BDW paused its festival’s editions from 2015 to 2018, with the vision to improve planning processes relating to quality of life in Serbia using “design thinking” as a tool. Following our mission to improve the built environment and facilitate citizens’ participation in dialogue with the public sector, BDW investigated in particular the situation with public spaces and concluded that playgrounds for children and exercise grounds for seniors, often life threatening and closed by inspections, had been completely neglected.
As first step BDW launched a national PR campaign "100 Creative BDW Playgrounds for Children of Serbia", with the aim to build environments designed according to EU environmental and sustainability standards in as many municipalities and towns across Serbia as possible. We established collaboration between some of the best Serbian creatives in the fields of urban planning, architecture, innovation and design, with some of the leading international equipment manufacturers. The idea was that new, innovative playgrounds would be built on public land selected in cooperation with local municipalities, utilising a unique formula of public-private partnerships between local governments and private corporations, who donate the equipment and project, all strictly on a non-profit basis for all participants.

In the first two years of 2014 and 2015 BDW implemented the State of Art phase of the HUMAN CITIES/project. The goal was to test and build our own capacity to plan and manage, as an independent citizens’ initiative, such projects of public-private partnerships on a satisfactory high level, and within an optimal time and budget framework, connecting the users – citizen, with donors, creatives and producers – construction companies. BDW conducted numerous surveys and analyses of the state of desolate playgrounds and city squares in Belgrade, as well as interviewed key stakeholders for the project from the administration of the City of Belgrade, all the way to numerous potential investors and partners from business, academia, media and other related independent citizen’s initiatives.

In that process, BDW defined, for the first time in Serbia, the term of "destination" playgrounds and opened two innovative creative playgrounds at the, arguably, most prominent leisure location in Belgrade, the central Kalemegdan park at the confluence of the Sava and Danube river. This way, we set a highly visible benchmark for everyone who wanted to repeat the formula. The playgrounds were built in 2014 and 2015, with total areas of 800 m² and 2000 m² respectively, implementing successfully the first ever private/public partnerships in Serbia.

As next step, mixing the selected methodologies of Jan Gehl and the IDEO HCD TOOLKIT for a successful participation of citizen in the process of urban regeneration, with our own lessons and experiences learnt from the first two Belgrade projects, BDW decided to embark on its most ambitious "participatory urbanism" project. To proof the point, the tailor-made project for the HUMAN CITIES/initiative was aimed not at Belgrade, but at Kragujevac, a most interesting post-industrial city in transition, deep in the heart of Serbia, with structural and regeneration problems akin in many respects to Saint-Étienne in France, as the former historical "weapons foundry of the nation".

The result of the process was the new project for the "Creative Park for Children and Seniors", that covers an area of about 10,000 square meters in the Grand Park of Kragujevac, with key financial and operational support by the "Dragica Nikolić" Foundation, the First Lady of Serbia’s own charity, in cooperation with the City of Kragujevac, designed by Serbian creatives, build by local construction firms, with help of global equipment makers, planned and managed by BDW. On a greater scale, it was also the start of the process about the revitalisation of important historical green areas in Kragujevac, beginning with the central "Great Park".

The new concept for Kragujevac’s most important park opens the doors for the development of the city’s key green areas for at least the next ten years, both through public-private partnerships in the financing process, as well as with full participation of citizen in the decision-making process. This way the city boldly goes beyond the local, and signals a desire to assess the social responsibility of Kragujevac in the framework of European cities that belong to the HUMAN CITIES/project. As an ecosystem, the Grand Park is a rare urban tissue of park greenery maintained over one hundred years. What BDW did was to combine the best benefits of this heritage with the potential of new social interactions, a microclimate and emotional aspects that it generates with a new urban planning. The idea was to contribute to the general perception of "participative urbanism" as a focus point, around which we can gather our attention, assess our will for a better tomorrow, and present it as our contribution to the urban community gathered around the pan-European HUMAN CITIES/project.
From “100 Creative BDW Playgrounds for Children of Serbia” to the Grand Park of Kragujevac Belgrade
From “100 Creative BDW Playgrounds for Children of Serbia” to the Grand Park of Kragujevac Belgrade
Saint-Gilles Esplanade Urban Renewal Project Brussels

From the Brussels Urban Land to its Landscape Stories
Interview of Bas Smets (Bureau Bas Smets)
By Lise Coirier (Pro Materia Association, Brussels, Belgium)
Lise Coirier: We are here in your studio in Brussels, rue de Flandre, in the center of Brussels. We are going to speak today about Human Cities, how do people change the city and how to scan flow space in Europe today, especially here for Brussels. What would be for you the DNA of the City of Brussels in terms of urban landscape and how do you work on the urban fabric in your various projects?

Bas Smets: It is interesting to talk about DNA when applied to Brussels because I think the main characteristic of the city is something that has been lost. Brussels lost its river that has been vaulted in the 19th century. And ever since, urban planners, landscape architects, artists are looking in a way to bring the lost city or the lost river back into the city. And same for us, when I started the office some years ago looking at how to bring this value back into the city. The public authorities did recently a study on Brussels, on how to build up a vision for Brussels in the upcoming 20 years. We understood it’s not the river but the tributaries and the secondary valleys which have brought the water towards the central river. Ever since, we’ve made this image and have applied it as an exemplary landscape, the best ‘belongscape’.

LC: Can we see this image?

BS: Yes, you can see it. In Brussels, there is no more river. There is the canal, it is just behind the other side of the street and here you see all the tributaries which are the small waterways bringing the flow towards the central canal that drains water to Antwerp and then into the North Sea. And starting from this exemplary landscape or the best ‘belongscape’, you can actually understand the use of this map as a kind of reference to the different projects developed in Brussels. It is interesting to see that we actually use it both for big parks such as Tour and Taxis (12 hectares transformed into Saint-Gilles Esplanade Urban Renewal Project Brussels From the Brussels Urban Land to its Landscape Stories Interview of Bas Smets [Bureau Bas Smets] By Lise Coirier [Pro Materia Association, Brussels, Belgium]
“Saint-Gilles Esplanade Urban Renewal Project Brussels”

**LC** And Brussels is mainly urban?

**BS** Brussels offers a cityscape made of tributaries. Compared to Paris, the city which has one river and a centralized power system. Brussels has 19 municipalities and no main centralized power. 8 tributaries could be the image of 19 municipalities which means that they have to work together to make these 8 tributaries becoming one singular and powerful system.

**LC** You don’t really see Brussels as one municipality but you look at the region, the new territorial unit that has been created in 1989 with the 19 districts.

**BS** And even for the region, I think that Brussels by definition is not a centralized city but actually a kind of network city where we have to find the new type of landscape which is not based on concentric growth but on connected links to the secondary nature. It’s not a main nature but the secondary one which would be the most important.

**LC** What will be your statement in very short about Brussels and potentially what it can offer?

**BS** It always starts with the reading of the territory to re-understand all the elements in place and how – by a kind of mental switch – we can certainly use elements to create another image, another use, another ecology, another climate in some case, another way of organizing and using the city fabrics. It’s more like a scientific approach where you have a precise reading of existing elements. We try to understand how we can interact, implement a system and make sustainable changes. It’s applicable to a landscape park at Tour & Taxis of 12 hectares but it’s also true for a more human scale public space like the one we are doing now on Saint-Gilles Esplanade. This is a small space but a big picture. We are not only starting with a reading of the large scale but also a reading of the material from which the space is made up today to see how we can change it.

**LC** Is it due to the density?

**BS** Yes, because of the density. It’s one of the highest populated areas in Western Europe. So we have to find a new way of bringing nature in.

**LC** Can you tell us a little bit more about the “landscape stories” of Brussels?

**BS** Brussels is quite typical for most of the Belgians because we are in a city without a river, mountains or landscapes elements. We are looking for secondary details to be put together to create a network and a continuity. Every competition we do, we try to use it to make of course public spaces but also to give a meaning to the existing elements around it. I will later illustrate my thoughts with the two of the most extreme examples: Tour and Taxis park and Saint-Gilles Plaza.

**LC** But first, what is your methodology applied to an urban landscape?

**BS** Brussels is typically for most of the Belgians because we are in a city without a river, mountains or landscapes elements. We are looking for secondary details to be put together to create a network and a continuity.
We are entering in the most specific question of the multifunctionality of the space and the mix of functions. And also the story of people owning the space. How do you deal with people owning the space? Because you have to take into account many actors and flow spaces.

And what have been the stage of the project? At which point you stand now in terms of the duration, conception and construction of the project? At which point you stand now in terms of the duration, conception and construction of the project? At which point you stand now in terms of the duration, conception and construction of the project? At which point you stand now in terms of the duration, conception and construction of the project?

First of all, the municipality decided to have a car free space, of course the parking space isn’t necessary anymore. They tried for the last years and it worked very well, except now people are between parking spaces not used anymore and the terraces. It’s a kind of misuse of the available space. So we decided that we cannot make a space unified as a whole by looking on how the market is organized. We have found out the number of bands, 5 of them can be used for half terraces on each side of the plaza. Half double terraces organize the market space in-between or even occupy the whole space. The 5 bands can also allow ‘wild’ terraces but they also mark the different uses of the spaces. And these bands are in final well designed to re-create the concept of the street in a very simple way to order the limits of the terraces.

The psychological consciousness and aesthetic dimensions are between parking spaces not used anymore and the terraces. It’s a kind of misuse of the available space. So we decided that we cannot make a space unified as a whole by looking on how the market is organized. We have found out the number of bands, 5 of them can be used for half terraces on each side of the plaza. Half double terraces organize the market space in-between or even occupy the whole space. The 5 bands can also allow ‘wild’ terraces but they also mark the different uses of the spaces. And these bands are in final well designed to re-create the concept of the street in a very simple way to order the limits of the terraces.

That’s part of your approach to try to reuse and to innovate with what already exist on the territory?

That is also the way with Tour and Taxis?

So for you the materiality of the space is very important, the factility as well as the visual and aesthetic dimensions?

We work with materials, like naturals stones and trees. Of course it’s not like Internet where you can create like you want. You have to keep the foundation.

The moment on which we present a project, we know that the population is an important actor. For Saint-Gilles Esplanade, we have been doing different meeting for people who have bars, restaurants and market spaces. During these encounters, we made some consultations. Because they use the space, they need the space. That’s why it’s important to see how we can design it. Our research is only for achieving the best possible design.

Are you happy with this project? What are the strengths and weaknesses?

The strength is a very clear organization of the use of such a big space in a natural way. The plaza will give the unity of the space. Today it’s very cut up by the use of the different parts. We will reveal the 19th century facades. We will link the church to the plaza and to the square. We will try to activate the space with the market, terraces, open cinema, concerts... to create some volumes and real use of the living esplanade.

Will it become as an open air stage?

It will become like a theater which the idea that the city is a stage knowing that Brussels has so many bars and potential recreative spaces.

For Saint-Gilles Esplanade, what is your reference?

Sienna has its plaza which has been revealed. The plaza of Saint-Gilles is now really empty and that is why people living in Belgium like Antwerp because of the fantastic and marquable facades in this city. So we will create the same scenographic effect on Saint-Gilles Esplanade with its 19th century facades and a flow space only dedicated to recreative activities, the market place, the church and the pedestrians.

What could be the weaknesses?

The psychological consciousness and tensions could be a weakness. We have to make sure that everyone follows the same logic. For
instance, with the bus company we have to make sure that having smaller streets could not be a problem. We talk with people from the market to explain them how to organize the market and the flow space. Even if we are not directly activating the plaza, It was necessary to meet all the actors. Because public space is used by so many people, that is the reason why we have to talk with each other. That’s the main part in our communication system. That’s the key for a public space to communicate when and how we would like to organize and reveal the space.

That is the work of design. We try to be minimal but to maximize the multiple usage of the space.

It was a very important decision to find the limits for the intervention in the public space. You can see it clearly in our drawings and 3D images. Mostly through the consultations of the public. We talked with the people who are involved.

That’s the work of design. We try to be minimal but to maximize the multiple usage of the space.

We work with the church to organize weddings and how to use the space in front the It. We always take into account their questions and try to explain them the steps of our decision making.

Empathy was managed by the municipality, it wasn’t my merit. The design follows all the decisions to give them a beautiful plaza.

The well-being and the different uses of the space are present because people can meet, organize activities, in combination with the market. The market is important in a city because people doesn’t need to go to a mall to get what they need. We enhance the contacts with the locals. That is the reason why this plaza is an important place.

The city council is present with us. For us, it’s really important to have their support because you do that for them and for the citizens who live there.

The idea here is a strong simplicity and at the same time a possibility to find a new position in the urban space.

Trees are really important. The problem is that there are couple of trees on the plaza but it looks like an oversize avenue. Taking away these trees and organizing them more in front the church is for us the best solution. Presence is there but we make more urban space.

A frame is necessary for some uniformity. We design for the city and the public choses for its public space.

It’s always hard to speak about timing but it should be delivered in 2017.
Are you in love with Brussels? Do you like the city?

It's a difficult question because Brussels is a city in which we can do many things but at the same time it is a quite difficult one. Before improving the flow, we first look at the quality of public space. There is a lot to be done! With collaborations between associations, designers, artists, and the politics, we can even push more changes.
This article handles key concepts of spatial urban development associated with the theory of participatory design from the point of view of the current Finnish architectural discourse. From our perspective, it is apparent that much of the concepts used in participatory design are already inherently part of contemporary architectural and urban design, even down to the legislative level. On the other hand, a problematic rises when concepts from one field are transmitted to another. Concepts find different meanings in different discourses. Thus communicating conceptual counterparts between discourses is seen as an important phase in an interdisciplinary project such as Human Cities.

Further this article makes first steps in identifying a current mainstream architectural aesthetic present in Finland, perhaps also the Nordic cultural area. Drawing comparisons from the well-known Helsinki School of Photography -movement, we call this current stylistic sensitivity its architectural parallel, Exit School of Architecture. From the perspective of this stylistic regime, stereotypical results of participatory architecture are seen as lacking local identity, often constitute of ad hoc constructions and a haphazard overall feel. Thus we seek to question the possibilities of creating a local Finnish/Nordic aesthetic and approach for a participatory project. Aalto University project Labs for Learners is examined as a potential future ground for experiments on implementing a new kind of participatory architecture in the form of a new kind of school concept.

This article will critically analyse the type of key concepts of spatial urban development associated with the theory of participatory design, including “participatory design" itself, “innovating with people", “challenging design", “design with people", “design as a tool", "human-driven design", "human-based design", "urban experiments in design", "engaging design", "co-creation in design", "design change", “empathy in design", “wellbeing in design", “conviviality in design", “unplanned activities in design” and many more.

The focus of the Human Cities project (2014-2018) is to analyse, test and implement the process of engaging people in co-creating and challenging the city scale in Europe today. Underlying the project there is an assumption that “people” are the key to “design change” in a network society and to respond to the changes in physical and digital space. Through applied research and co-creation, Human Cities network appears as a continuous “human-driven” cultural programme questioning the position and status of people in relationship to their city and the dynamic cityscape.
A discussion analysis of participatory concepts

Before starting up with experiments in the various cities involved into the network, it was decided to create a common ground to all the partners based on the State of the Art projects/programs/actions in the urban space. The project focuses on unplanned activities following the principles of social innovation as defined by Ezio Manzini: professor at Politecnico di Milano and manager of DESIS Network. Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability, and one of the mentors of the previous Human Cities projects. In order to create a common ground for interdisciplinary discourse and multi-professional urban development projects, it is crucial to have common understandings on key concepts and the feasibility of their usage. Ezio Manzini states that today, social innovation is as important and maybe more important than, technoscientific and business innovations. Because these social innovations tend to be grassroots efforts developed from the bottom up, the top needs to help cultivate them or risk crushing them. This danger exists because these grassroots efforts are currently not recognized for their potential in quite the same way as are other, more established types of innovation. Most of Manzini’s core concepts are however already inherently part of today’s architectural and urban design, social innovation, when inserted into architectural and urban design processes, can be a source of misunderstandings, because architecture in itself is social innovation. Even the very common project management practices that address an architect as a person, who assists the client in project development (and leads design development), designing places for living and working is core social innovation, in other words, taking social innovation away from architecture, which is the main concern of social innovation. A place devoid of the social sphere of transactions is a non-lieu, a place for no one and nothing. It seems thus that a concept such as social innovation points more readily to items, products of industrial design for instance, that are born and act in surroundings that are, already, materialized social innovation, that is architecture—our built environment. Because of these differences in discourses, it is important to discuss what these different concepts could mean within different disciplines. It is however true that grassroots efforts could be more readily and subtly involved in architectural and urban design processes. New methods, technologies and approaches ought to be developed in order to produce architecture that takes into account perhaps a broader understanding of the concept of a “client”.

There are also other key differences between common terms in architectural design and other disciplines. One of them is “participator”— a term from social discourse, often phrased as “stakeholder” in more economic jargon. Both of these have traditionally been referred to as project team members, clients or users in architecture, with slightly different meanings. “Participatory design”—referring to collaborative design methods utilizing a wide range of information from project participants to negotiate concepts and processes. It requires an open mindset, social skills, and extrovert mentality from the project members, social and economical bottom-up methods thus not strongly entered architectural vocabulary, but also brought certain practical imperatives.

Helsinki and social governance

The field-specific meanings, which are crucial to Human Cities network and project, are part of the problems of participatory to be part of legislation. Social innovation, when inserted into architectural and urban design processes, can be a source of misunderstandings, because architecture in itself is social innovation. Even the very common project management practices that address an architect as a person, who assists the client in project development (and leads design development), designing places for living and working is core social innovation, in other words, taking social innovation away from architecture. This is the main concern of social innovation. A place devoid of the social sphere of transactions is a non-lieu, a place for no one and nothing. It seems thus that a concept such as social innovation points more readily to items, products of industrial design for instance, that are born and act in surroundings that are, already, materialized social innovation, that is architecture—our built environment. Because of these differences in discourses, it is important to discuss what these different concepts could mean within different disciplines. It is however true that grassroots efforts could be more readily and subtly involved in architectural and urban design processes. New methods, technologies and approaches ought to be developed in order to produce architecture that takes into account perhaps a broader understanding of the concept of a “client”.

There are also other key differences between common terms in architectural design and other disciplines. One of them is “participator”—a term from social discourse, often phrased as “stakeholder” in more economic jargon. Both of these have traditionally been referred to as project team members, clients or users in architecture, with slightly different meanings. “Participatory design”—referring to collaborative design methods utilizing a wide range of information from project participants to negotiate concepts and processes. It requires an open mindset, social skills, and extrovert mentality from the project members, social and economical bottom-up methods thus not strongly entered architectural vocabulary, but also brought certain practical imperatives.

Helsinki and social governance

The field-specific meanings, which are crucial to Human Cities network and project, are part of the problems of participatory to be part of legislation. Social innovation, when inserted into architectural and urban design processes, can be a source of misunderstandings, because architecture in itself is social innovation. Even the very common project management practices that address an architect as a person, who assists the client in project development (and leads design development), designing places for living and working is core social innovation, in other words, taking social innovation away from architecture. This is the main concern of social innovation. A place devoid of the social sphere of transactions is a non-lieu, a place for no one and nothing. It seems thus that a concept such as social innovation points more readily to items, products of industrial design for instance, that are born and act in surroundings that are, already, materialized social innovation, that is architecture—our built environment. Because of these differences in discourses, it is important to discuss what these different concepts could mean within different disciplines. It is however true that grassroots efforts could be more readily and subtly involved in architectural and urban design processes. New methods, technologies and approaches ought to be developed in order to produce architecture that takes into account perhaps a broader understanding of the concept of a “client”.

There are also other key differences between common terms in architectural design and other disciplines. One of them is “participator”—a term from social discourse, often phrased as “stakeholder” in more economic jargon. Both of these have traditionally been referred to as project team members, clients or users in architecture, with slightly different meanings. “Participatory design”—referring to collaborative design methods utilizing a wide range of information from project participants to negotiate concepts and processes. It requires an open mindset, social skills, and extrovert mentality from the project members, social and economical bottom-up methods thus not strongly entered architectural vocabulary, but also brought certain practical imperatives.

Helsinki and social governance

The field-specific meanings, which are crucial to Human Cities network and project, are part of the problems of participatory to be part of legislation. Social innovation, when inserted into architectural and urban design processes, can be a source of misunderstandings, because architecture in itself is social innovation. Even the very common project management practices that address an architect as a person, who assists the client in project development (and leads design development), designing places for living and working is core social innovation, in other words, taking social innovation away from architecture. This is the main concern of social innovation. A place devoid of the social sphere of transactions is a non-lieu, a place for no one and nothing. It seems thus that a concept such as social innovation points more readily to items, products of industrial design for instance, that are born and act in surroundings that are, already, materialized social innovation, that is architecture—our built environment. Because of these differences in discourses, it is important to discuss what these different concepts could mean within different disciplines. It is however true that grassroots efforts could be more readily and subtly involved in architectural and urban design processes. New methods, technologies and approaches ought to be developed in order to produce architecture that takes into account perhaps a broader understanding of the concept of a “client”.

There are also other key differences between common terms in architectural design and other disciplines. One of them is “participator”—a term from social discourse, often phrased as “stakeholder” in more economic jargon. Both of these have traditionally been referred to as project team members, clients or users in architecture, with slightly different meanings. “Participatory design”—referring to collaborative design methods utilizing a wide range of information from project participants to negotiate concepts and processes. It requires an open mindset, social skills, and extrovert mentality from the project members, social and economical bottom-up methods thus not strongly entered architectural vocabulary, but also brought certain practical imperatives.

Helsinki and social governance

The field-specific meanings, which are crucial to Human Cities network and project, are part of the problems of participatory to be part of legislation. Social innovation, when inserted into architectural and urban design processes, can be a source of misunderstandings, because architecture in itself is social innovation. Even the very common project management practices that address an architect as a person, who assists the client in project development (and leads design development), designing places for living and working is core social innovation, in other words, taking social innovation away from architecture. This is the main concern of social innovation. A place devoid of the social sphere of transactions is a non-lieu, a place for no one and nothing. It seems thus that a concept such as social innovation points more readily to items, products of industrial design for instance, that are born and act in surroundings that are, already, materialized social innovation, that is architecture—our built environment. Because of these differences in discourses, it is important to discuss what these different concepts could mean within different disciplines. It is however true that grassroots efforts could be more readily and subtly involved in architectural and urban design processes. New methods, technologies and approaches ought to be developed in order to produce architecture that takes into account perhaps a broader understanding of the concept of a “client”.

There are also other key differences between common terms in architectural design and other disciplines. One of them is “participator”—a term from social discourse, often phrased as “stakeholder” in more economic jargon. Both of these have traditionally been referred to as project team members, clients or users in architecture, with slightly different meanings. “Participatory design”—referring to collaborative design methods utilizing a wide range of information from project participants to negotiate concepts and processes. It requires an open mindset, social skills, and extrovert mentality from the project members, social and economical bottom-up methods thus not strongly entered architectural vocabulary, but also brought certain practical imperatives.
In this experiment, we collaborate with project participants to actually realize the new school in Otaniemi. As part of Human Cities project, we are going to concentrate on certain aspects of this co-schools the methods and implementation of:

- PARTICIPATION
- FACILITATION
- COMMUNICATION
- BRANDING
- PROTOTYPING
- POST-PRODUCTION
- REPORTING

Initially we find hotels as an interesting approach to control their everyday life is at the bottom of our experiment called Labs for Learners. This is a project based on renting access, not space. Critical thinking is part of the project as well during the project development stage of the project, the students are asked where they would like to learn and when. The school will use several locations on the Aalto University campus for its activities. This symbols also requires a behavioral change. Co-working will work not only in the level of development of local identity and contextual differences in developing the co-school. A local adaptation is needed. Spaces are part of ideology in the sense of their expressivity, Individualism, and existentialism. There is a certain Nordic cultural ambience we found culturally cohesive and applicable here, as the basis of the co-creation of shared value. This is a holistic human background, which brings meaningfulness on existential level to also Finsness equality, quality, social realism, existentialism and experimental ambience.

The Nordic cultural heritage can be seen based on common features, themes, motifs, expressions, mentality and atmosphere – in a wide range of art forms from painting to moving images and sculpture to architecture and literature. It is related to the dynamics in a culture of pioneering democracy, equality and respect of Individuality. This requires consideration of how to take into account introvert tendencies both in a design process and in actual design.
The gravity of Helsinki School of Photography certainly stems from the cultural associations of this genre. Salmenperä and Antti Heikki Pesonen. Eija-Liisa Aaltonen, as well as the social realism of Aleksi Louhimies' suburban depictions of domestic life, seem to come from a Helsinki School mentality while naturalness encompasses a more urban and social side of Photography. The apparent modern Nordic heritage in arts and architecture tell not only about darker manifestations of downshifting etc., generally ban activism, spontaneity, perhaps different artistic goals are hardly ever given much emphasis, budgeting falls in the DIY segment and the whole project generally tends to follow a kind of grass root level democracy type of narrative?

Is it then possible for a “Helsinki School of Architecture” sensitivity to be injected into the DNA of a participatory design project? Certainly this must not only be an extra layer of gloom onto an otherwise socially laid back and reckless architecture. The Communication of a certain type of sensitivity should perhaps be attempted to the core of the whole design process. Assuming that possibly any Finnish or Nordic citizen potentially participating in a design process would possess some inherent information about how to make something with a sacred feeling might be too farfetched, but essentially we might be talking about something like a less unmediated, less unmediated, less unmediated.

Exit School of Architecture

Our experimental thought is this how Helsinki School of Photography appears if it was about architectural creation? Which kind of architecture could be called “Helsinki School of Architecture”? Maybe this is already existing? Which could the exemplary works of architecture in this genre be? We think that it should be identifiable stylistic pattern. One might even talk about a Helsinki School of Architecture in a participatory context, the participatory designer is thus the way to start understanding an already vastly communicated and familiar cultural “feeling”. To unearth and crystallize this aesthetic from the mental imagery of any participatory designer is thus the way to start creating a co-created simulation of “Helsinki School of Architecture”.

Based on this theme, we at Aalto University have produced an exhibition called Exit School of Architecture, which does not aim at competing with the brand of Helsinki School of Photography. The word “exit” refers to a detachment both from normative, mainstream architecture and from urbanism to nature. We are also planning to turn this project into a book.
The pressure on public space has been increasing in recent years. Inner cities in particular are becoming progressively “eventised”; a phenomenon that can also be observed in the city of Graz, with activities of a purely promotional character being held in addition to traditional events, such as Christmas or Easter markets, carnival parades or demonstrations. One of these promotional activities was “Pole Position Graz” where virtually all of the inner city was blocked off for a racing—or rather advertising—event for Red Bull. There is also less conspicuous appropriation of public space, with al fresco restaurants, for example, spreading out into squares and streets.

Given the growing privatisation of public space and the blatant lack of consumption-free, open urban areas that are available to everyone any time, many citizens share a growing desire to have a say in the development of their city or their neighbourhood. They wish to exercise a determining influence without delay, as the implementation of projects by municipal planning offices often involves lengthy processes. We are talking here of a strategic appropriation of public space by individuals or groups. Such interventions can certainly lead to long-term plans; but they are primarily an initial spark that creates awareness of the potential for change and the benefits it may entail.

This is also the central approach taken by the European research project HumanCities, Challenging the City Scale within the Creative Europe programme. “People are the key to design change in a network society and to respond to the growth of ‘flow space’, which is both physical and digital”.

Reference is made here to the flow space concept developed by Manuel Castells. “The ‘space of flows’ the concept I advocated a decade ago, represents the material arrangements that allow for simultaneity of social practices without territorial contiguity. (...) The geography of the new history will not be made of the separation between places and flows, but out of the interface between places and flows and between cultures and social interests, both in the space of flows and in the space of places”.

Top-down town planning, i.e. the conventional approach to urban planning, is certainly still justified in cases of technical/infrastructural issues. The supply of infrastructure or the disposal of waste water and refuse, for example; or the legal implementation of concepts and construction. In Austria, the proportion of spatial and urban planning that is not determined by particular, individual interests is generally rather small.
Three projects of Graz presented in the first part of the book have been selected for in-depth analysis with regard to their position between bottom-up and top-down. The analysis involved interviews with the main actors in these projects to discover: To what extent do we act independently? How many constraints imposed by authorities do we encounter in terms of licences, but also financing? How much can be achieved exclusively through citizens’ initiatives and how much through respective subsidies from public authorities? How do we develop projects that are not subsidised, how much money is attributed to which project and how do these structures take on a life of their own? Where do the projects rank between the poles of bottom-up and top-down and where are their limitations?

This in-depth review focuses on Demon Graz, a project carried out by Iconoclasistas, Reni Hofmüller, director of ESC medien kunst labor gave a video interview and shared with us the genesis and effect of this project about collective mapping. Collective mapping is a tool that allows the generation of a collective understanding of a certain space [Figs. 1-2]. The first step in a workshop on collective mapping, requires a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. In the case of Demon Graz, Reni Hofmüller contacted Graz-based artists and sociologists and asked them to first clarify which relevant questions these could be and to what extent the art scene can create room for discussion or possibilities for implementation. From the beginning, Reni Hofmüller wanted to adopt a transdisciplinary approach to her research, “because the city is such a heterogeneous and intersectional space that it is much more exciting if I try to bring different people with different perspectives together”.

Four topics were identified; the focus of this paper will be mainly on the community garden project [Figs. 1-2]. What were the objectives in terms of bottom-up?

Reni Hofmüller interprets bottom-up as follows: A group of people living, for example, in the same street who are faced with the same issues or problems. Collective mapping can be very helpful here because it is conducive to the discussion process.

She is, however, not altogether happy with the term “bottom”. “How do we define bottom? who is bottom and when are you bottom? Depending on the current situation, I will be somewhere between bottom and top. Bottom may not be such a good term in general after all who wants to be at the bottom? I think if we want to use this analogy, bottom-up really means community gardens. This can be used as a group decision-making method that symbolizes openness and dynamism. Thanks to the networking that results among the participants and their networks, collective mapping makes it possible to discuss possible ways of handling conflicts in public space. Venue: Schloßbergplatz Jakominiviertel association.

Collective mapping is a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. The central theme of the workshop on collective mapping was to discover various efforts adopted by the Municipality of Graz and businesses in the Jakomini quarter in recent years to counteract the vacancies in this district of Graz [Figs. 1-3].

The central theme of the workshop on collective mapping was to discover various efforts adopted by the Municipality of Graz and businesses in the Jakomini quarter in recent years to counteract the vacancies in this district of Graz [Figs. 1-3].

Collective mapping requires a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. In the case of Demon Graz, Reni Hofmüller contacted Graz-based artists and sociologists and asked them to first clarify which relevant questions these could be and to what extent the art scene can create room for discussion or possibilities for implementation. From the beginning, Reni Hofmüller wanted to adopt a transdisciplinary approach to her research, “because the city is such a heterogeneous and intersectional space that it is much more exciting if I try to bring different people with different perspectives together”.

Four topics were identified; the focus of this paper will be mainly on the community garden project [Figs. 1-2]. What were the objectives in terms of bottom-up?

Reni Hofmüller interprets bottom-up as follows: A group of people living, for example, in the same street who are faced with the same issues or problems. Collective mapping can be very helpful here because it is conducive to the discussion process.

She is, however, not altogether happy with the term “bottom”. “How do we define bottom? who is bottom and when are you bottom? Depending on the current situation, I will be somewhere between bottom and top. Bottom may not be such a good term in general after all who wants to be at the bottom? I think if we want to use this analogy, bottom-up really means community gardens. This can be used as a group decision-making method that symbolizes openness and dynamism. Thanks to the networking that results among the participants and their networks, collective mapping makes it possible to discuss possible ways of handling conflicts in public space. Venue: Schloßbergplatz Jakominiviertel association.

Collective mapping requires a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. In the case of Demon Graz, Reni Hofmüller contacted Graz-based artists and sociologists and asked them to first clarify which relevant questions these could be and to what extent the art scene can create room for discussion or possibilities for implementation. From the beginning, Reni Hofmüller wanted to adopt a transdisciplinary approach to her research, “because the city is such a heterogeneous and intersectional space that it is much more exciting if I try to bring different people with different perspectives together”.

Four topics were identified; the focus of this paper will be mainly on the community garden project [Figs. 1-2]. What were the objectives in terms of bottom-up?

Reni Hofmüller interprets bottom-up as follows: A group of people living, for example, in the same street who are faced with the same issues or problems. Collective mapping can be very helpful here because it is conducive to the discussion process.

She is, however, not altogether happy with the term “bottom”. “How do we define bottom? who is bottom and when are you bottom? Depending on the current situation, I will be somewhere between bottom and top. Bottom may not be such a good term in general after all who wants to be at the bottom? I think if we want to use this analogy, bottom-up really means community gardens. This can be used as a group decision-making method that symbolizes openness and dynamism. Thanks to the networking that results among the participants and their networks, collective mapping makes it possible to discuss possible ways of handling conflicts in public space. Venue: Schloßbergplatz Jakominiviertel association.

Collective mapping requires a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. In the case of Demon Graz, Reni Hofmüller contacted Graz-based artists and sociologists and asked them to first clarify which relevant questions these could be and to what extent the art scene can create room for discussion or possibilities for implementation. From the beginning, Reni Hofmüller wanted to adopt a transdisciplinary approach to her research, “because the city is such a heterogeneous and intersectional space that it is much more exciting if I try to bring different people with different perspectives together”.

Four topics were identified; the focus of this paper will be mainly on the community garden project [Figs. 1-2]. What were the objectives in terms of bottom-up?

Reni Hofmüller interprets bottom-up as follows: A group of people living, for example, in the same street who are faced with the same issues or problems. Collective mapping can be very helpful here because it is conducive to the discussion process.

She is, however, not altogether happy with the term “bottom”. “How do we define bottom? who is bottom and when are you bottom? Depending on the current situation, I will be somewhere between bottom and top. Bottom may not be such a good term in general after all who wants to be at the bottom? I think if we want to use this analogy, bottom-up really means community gardens. This can be used as a group decision-making method that symbolizes openness and dynamism. Thanks to the networking that results among the participants and their networks, collective mapping makes it possible to discuss possible ways of handling conflicts in public space. Venue: Schloßbergplatz Jakominiviertel association.

Collective mapping requires a group of people sharing the same concern or question about a specific location. In the case of Demon Graz, Reni Hofmüller contacted Graz-based artists and sociologists and asked them to first clarify which relevant questions these could be and to what extent the art scene can create room for discussion or possibilities for implementation. From the beginning, Reni Hofmüller wanted to adopt a transdisciplinary approach to her research, “because the city is such a heterogeneous and intersectional space that it is much more exciting if I try to bring different people with different perspectives together”.

Four topics were identified; the focus of this paper will be mainly on the community garden project [Figs. 1-2]. What were the objectives in terms of bottom-up?

Reni Hofmüller interprets bottom-up as follows: A group of people living, for example, in the same street who are faced with the same issues or problems. Collective mapping can be very helpful here because it is conducive to the discussion process.

She is, however, not altogether happy with the term “bottom”. “How do we define bottom? who is bottom and when are you bottom? Depending on the current situation, I will be somewhere between bottom and top. Bottom may not be such a good term in general after all who wants to be at the bottom? I think if we want to use this analogy, bottom-up really means community gardens. This can be used as a group decision-making method that symbolizes openness and dynamism. Thanks to the networking that results among the participants and their networks, collective mapping makes it possible to discuss possible ways of handling conflicts in public space. Venue: Schloßbergplatz Jakominiviertel association.
The central theme of a workshop on collective mapping is the collection of all of the information that the participants find noteworthy. This information is written down on a large map, and based on this input, icons are developed that can be placed on the map.

What is essential here is that the map is only part of the process. The actual product is the discussion among the participants and the networking that results between them.

The dialogues that emerged for the community gardens included statements such as "Great, you’ve found a solution for the waste water issue." or "Cool, you have a bus. Can we rent it?"

Hofmüller also notes that the focus is on the participants’ reflections on the environment in which they move. It is not about achieving rapid results or about promising that the results will automatically lead to improvement.

According to Hofmüller, the method of collective mapping was a successful approach to the topic of community gardens. "In this case, the tool was lucky of a kind that they (the participants) could readily use. They were neither instrumented nor manipulated, which I believe is very important. And their time was not wasted either."

Hofmüller also takes a critical stance towards the term "participation," although she appreciates that there are people who concern themselves with things that are not right and try to find alternatives. "There are people who stand up and advocate something, but in most cases the something is actually a somebody, usually a group of people deemed to be discriminated against. I don't know, but there is always this distance between US and THE OTHERS." Hofmüller makes a case for "complicity" - meaning above all the absence of any hierarchy between the actors involved.

What was the timeframe and what does it tell us about the sustainability of the project?

For Reni Hofmüller it is important to emphasise that such projects above all require time. It was some nine months from the first phase of communication to the implementation of the activities in public space. The activities themselves took about one week. The results were then prepared over another week and exhibited for two weeks at ECS during the steirischer herbst festival. Hofmüller believes that the project’s sustainability is demonstrated by the fact that she is still receiving inquiries about how to use the method of collective mapping. The map created for the community gardens was put up in a garden shed and used and edited for another two years.

Hofmüller notes that she was positively surprised when members of the community gardens of Graz actually started to exchange views, ideas and even things that are not right and were previously not considered. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. For Hofmüller, it is important to emphasise that the focus is on the participants’ reflections on the environment in which they move. It is not about achieving rapid results or about promising that the results will automatically lead to improvement.

According to Hofmüller, the method of collective mapping was a successful approach to the topic of community gardens. "In this case, the tool was lucky of a kind that they (the participants) could readily use. They were neither instrumented nor manipulated, which I believe is very important. And their time was not wasted either."

Hofmüller also takes a critical stance towards the term "participation," although she appreciates that there are people who concern themselves with things that are not right and try to find alternatives. "There are people who stand up and advocate something, but in most cases the something is actually a somebody, usually a group of people deemed to be discriminated against. I don't know, but there is always this distance between US and THE OTHERS." Hofmüller makes a case for "complicity" - meaning above all the absence of any hierarchy between the actors involved.

What was the timeframe and what does it tell us about the sustainability of the project?

For Reni Hofmüller it is important to emphasise that such projects above all require time. It was some nine months from the first phase of communication to the implementation of the activities in public space. The activities themselves took about one week. The results were then prepared over another week and exhibited for two weeks at ECS during the steirischer herbst festival. Hofmüller believes that the project’s sustainability is demonstrated by the fact that she is still receiving inquiries about how to use the method of collective mapping. The map created for the community gardens was put up in a garden shed and used and edited for another two years.

Hofmüller notes that she was positively surprised when members of the community gardens of Graz actually started to exchange views, ideas and even things that are not right and were previously not considered. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. For Hofmüller, it is important to emphasise that the focus is on the participants’ reflections on the environment in which they move. It is not about achieving rapid results or about promising that the results will automatically lead to improvement.

According to Hofmüller, the method of collective mapping was a successful approach to the topic of community gardens. "In this case, the tool was lucky of a kind that they (the participants) could readily use. They were neither instrumented nor manipulated, which I believe is very important. And their time was not wasted either."

Hofmüller also takes a critical stance towards the term "participation," although she appreciates that there are people who concern themselves with things that are not right and try to find alternatives. "There are people who stand up and advocate something, but in most cases the something is actually a somebody, usually a group of people deemed to be discriminated against. I don't know, but there is always this distance between US and THE OTHERS." Hofmüller makes a case for "complicity" - meaning above all the absence of any hierarchy between the actors involved.

What was the timeframe and what does it tell us about the sustainability of the project?

For Reni Hofmüller it is important to emphasise that such projects above all require time. It was some nine months from the first phase of communication to the implementation of the activities in public space. The activities themselves took about one week. The results were then prepared over another week and exhibited for two weeks at ECS during the steirischer herbst festival. Hofmüller believes that the project’s sustainability is demonstrated by the fact that she is still receiving inquiries about how to use the method of collective mapping. The map created for the community gardens was put up in a garden shed and used and edited for another two years.

Hofmüller notes that she was positively surprised when members of the community gardens of Graz actually started to exchange views, ideas and even things that are not right and were previously not considered. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. Hofmüller also pointed out that such projects cannot be completed in a single month, but are often scattered over several months. For Hofmüller, it is important to emphasise that the focus is on the participants’ reflections on the environment in which they move. It is not about achieving rapid results or about promising that the results will automatically lead to improvement.

According to Hofmüller, the method of collective mapping was a successful approach to the topic of community gardens. "In this case, the tool was lucky of a kind that they (the participants) could readily use. They were neither instrumented nor manipulated, which I believe is very important. And their time was not wasted either."

Hofmüller also takes a critical stance towards the term "participation," although she appreciates that there are people who concern themselves with things that are not right and try to find alternatives. "There are people who stand up and advocate something, but in most cases the something is actually a somebody, usually a group of people deemed to be discriminated against. I don't know, but there is always this distance between US and THE OTHERS." Hofmüller makes a case for "complicity" - meaning above all the absence of any hierarchy between the actors involved.

What was the timeframe and what does it tell us about the sustainability of the project?
change, one can say that relations can develop if the encounters were positive. And these rela-
tions will then make it possible for things to hap-
pen, whether they will happen nobody knows.”
Hofmüller is very much in favour of making indi-
vidual initiative the top priority. She considers it to be the most essential aspect, but also thinks that it makes a lot of sense if interested people can consult people like her who have many years of experience in this field. She could ima-
gine offering a "how to", a sort of guideline on how to approach similar projects, e.g. whom to contact, when to contact them and how. Again, she makes it clear that projects of this kind take time. “Things like this cannot be conjured up within a week, over a weekend or even an evening. At the outset, I know that it will take as long as it will take.”

How was the project financed?
ESC is managed by a small team of two working part time and two people each working 10 hours a week, plus some freelancers hired for light or computer engineering tasks as required. ESC receives some basic financing through multi-annual contracts with the Cultural Office of Graz and the Cultural Department of the Province of Styria. In addition, there is pro-
ject-specific funding from the federal level, in some cases for the annual programme too. ESC is very well networked with other organ-
isations. This networking mainly involves the exchange of know-how in implementing projects simply and at low cost. This is very important to Hofmüller, who is convinced that sustainability and saving resources should also mean using good materials and avoiding exploitation.

In the case of collective mapping, there is also volunteer work provided by members of the community gardens who give their time and networks.

The in-depth analysis of the Graz "State of the Art" projects showed that none of these pro-
jects was initiated by citizens alone. In two cas-
es, the initiative was triggered by people from the art scene who provided the impetus. The Jakominiviertel pilot project was even a top-
down project that – at least initially – received good infrastructural and financial support from the public domain which made it possible for young creative people to set up in the vacant premises. Their experience in the development and implementation of ideas and concepts then led to many small-scale bottom-up activities.

As far as the connection between sustainability and financing of the examined projects are con-
cerned, all interviewees agree that such pro-
jects will only be viable in the long term if there is regular new impetus. Reliable, stable fund-
ing is not the only factor, but it is important.

Projects could easily peter out if there is a lack of support. “Without funding it would be very difficult” says Michael Wrentschur. Financing requests, however, are becoming ever more complex and consume time and energy. All the people interviewed agree that the procedure could be designed in a way that saves resource much more effectively. Erika Thümmel thinks applications covering more than two pages are unnecessary and calls the current method a "waste of public capital.”

Erika Thümmel and Michael Wrentschur agree that two factors are essential for the success of sustainable projects in this sector. Firstly a place, a point of contact, with the necessary infrastructures and secondly, a contact per-
son. In the case of the Jakominiviertel district and the problem of vacant premises, this would be a small office staffed for a few hours at least. The office could also be used by creative artists as a shared space. For Thümmel it is important that there is a person who takes care of the coordination of the many activities in the quar-
ter. People who run shops or organise work-
shops and the people living in the quarter need a go-to person, and they expect this person to be ready to assume responsibility for their success.

At the same time they are also convinced that without the input of the public domain it will be very difficult for such projects to be successful in the long term.

Conclusion

According to Wrentschur, the participative theatre work of interACT also requires a contact per-
son in addition to the basic infrastructure. This person should be qualified to accompany the processes “without wanting to influence their outcome.” Wrentschur says. All the people interviewed agree that volun-
tary work is needed and desirable, because the stakeholders will then identify with the activities and be ready to assume responsibility for their success.

Between Bottom-up and Top-down.
An Approach

15. From video interview with Reni Hofmüller of 19.08.2015
16. Wrentschur and Erika Thümmel 16.08.2015
14. From video interview with Michael Wrentschur and Theresa Thümmel of 26.08.2015

214  Graz  215
Foreword

Many of us have found ourselves cursing aloud when:

→ Your wheeled suitcase gets stuck in the holes in the pavement or you cannot cross the street when looking for a hotel or when the metro does not have an escalator.
→ The elevator is not working or you cannot fit into it with your big bags.
→ You are lost in a foreign city—you cannot find the hotel, bus stops, etc.
→ You accidentally take the bus which goes to the opposite direction and miss your plane because of it
→ “Thanks” to an inefficient sign system, you find yourself in the wrong airport.

Furthermore, what should a conference guest in a wheelchair feel when he is not able to get to the city centre from the airport within 24 hours and cannot give his presentation because of that?

Who do you blame? Yourself? That would be the case if you believed that we need to change our behaviour based on the circumstances.

Grounds for change

Product and service developers and architects should be able to immediately react to the changes which occur in the world and predict their possible consequences. The designers, architects and urban planners have the responsibility for creating an environment where both a mother with a stroller and an overweight person would feel good.

But what is happening in the real world? Design concentrates on the traditional mainstream and on the young, healthy, right-handed, technology savvy, wealthy male who belongs to the race and culture which is predominant in the area. Even though older people constitute the majority of the market and people over the age of 55 have managed to save a considerable amount of money, they as consumers are ignored.

The changes in the society are usually caused by the technology and the market forces, where the products, production capacity and the image of the brand play an important role. Lately, the user with its needs and peculiarities has started to influence these processes. We might say that the era of social innovation and design...
Many people might feel left out because they might think that we are only concentrating on the needs of disabled people. The popular prejudice seems to be that universal design is just a buzzword, it is expensive, bothersome, inauthentic, aimed at older people, can be applied to physical objects only and regards only services provided by the public sector. However, if you think about it, it is actually the other way around, it is not expensive if users are involved in the design process from the start, it is innovative because it presents a greater challenge for the designers and the architects. And it is aimed at all of us because none of us can be sure that we will not be in a wheelchair tomorrow.

Even though automatically opening doors, ramps and packing aimed at people who suffer from arthritis are designed for people with special needs, they have also become the part of the so-called normal people’s daily life. Tourists with wheeled suitcases and mothers with strollers are also grateful for the ramps. While developing a comprehensive transportation system solution, you cannot get by without an engineer and a designer – low-floor buses, trams, easily accessible bus stops which tourists find very helpful (for example, information centres), testing the public transport system, auditing information systems (different accesses from the point of view of stroller and wheelchair accessibility, analysing the transportation system, auditing information systems (different signs), observing the quality of public services (for example, information centres), testing how easily tourists can get lost when going around the city and the disabled people gathered for mapping the needs of the elderly population.

In 2010, the Estonian Association of Designers launched the project "Cities for All – Tallinn for All", which is part of the International IFL Innovation Festival programme. In order to make Tallinn a more user-friendly city, the aim of the project was to get tangible results for making Tallinn user-friendly and inclusive. All the workgroups communicated in a special international seminar Mobility, Tourism and Quality of Life, which took place in Tallinn in September 2010, and from which three main achievements are selected.

Now is the time to celebrate Tallinn’s achievements because tomorrow we start setting up travel regulations of the city and the disabled people gathered for the first time in September, 2010, as part of Design Night Festival. They started mapping Tallinn,” evaluating the pavements and entrances from the point of view of stroller and wheelchair accessibility, analysing the transportation system, auditing information systems (different signs), observing the quality of public services (for example, information centres), testing how easily tourists can get lost when going around the city and the disabled people gathered for mapping the needs of the elderly population.

Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. The aim was to

Research

In 2010, the Estonian Association of Designers launched the project "Cities for All – Tallinn for All", which is part of the International IFL Innovation Festival programme. In order to make Tallinn a more user-friendly city, the aim of the project was to get tangible results for making Tallinn user-friendly and inclusive. All the workgroups communicated in a special international seminar Mobility, Tourism and Quality of Life, which took place in Tallinn in September 2010, and from which three main achievements are selected.

Now is the time to celebrate Tallinn’s achievements because tomorrow we start setting up travel regulations of the city and the disabled people gathered for the first time in September, 2010, as part of Design Night Festival. They started mapping Tallinn,” evaluating the pavements and entrances from the point of view of stroller and wheelchair accessibility, analysing the transportation system, auditing information systems (different signs), observing the quality of public services (for example, information centres), testing how easily tourists can get lost when going around the city and the disabled people gathered for mapping the needs of the elderly population.

Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. The aim was to

Research
which she has gotten from being involved in different product development processes.

The students tackled the following topics:

- Evaluating how easy it is to find your way in Tallinn
- Does the street furniture take into account the needs of disabled people?
- How accessible are the public toilets?
- Evaluating the communication of public knowledge and labelling objects
- Is the existing information graphics system in the public transport informative?
- How to distinguish low-floor buses, etc.

Furthermore, they evaluated the efficiency of the existing city maps and transportation system. One of the important topics was accessibility which is limited in Tallinn due to high curbs, cobbled stones and insufficient information. “During the years 2007-2010, we mapped the accessibility problems on the main tourist routes (Toompea, city centre, Kadriorg, Pirita) in cooperation with the Estonian Union of Persons with Mobility Impairment and informed the Transportation Department, the Municipal Engineering Services Department, the District Administrations and the owners/custodians of the sites, tourist objects, etc.” summarises Leelo Ilbis, Leading Development Specialist at the City Enterprise Board.

The design teams try to combine design and engineering in order to make the popular sites in Tallinn accessible to all. These people are constantly cooperating with each other and with the representatives of the city to make sure that their work serves its purpose and to find ways of applying their ideas. One of the challenges they faced was auditing the accessibility of cinemas. Black Nights Film Festival wanted to make sure that their service is available to everyone and contacted our workgroup with a proposal for cooperation. The students and the test group, which consisted of people with different disabilities, visited several cinema screenings and expressed their opinion on how to make the visit to the cinema more convenient for all.

The work group of French students tried to solve the problems which stem from the lack of social design and from an unsafe and inconvenient infrastructure. It was not easy to design navigation products for tourists and blind people. While testing the products, the students learned a lot about what needs to be taken into account when designing a product.

As a part of the “Cities for All-Tallinn for All” project, the Gulliver Map (the name is based on J. Swift’s novel) is installed in the city centre. Gulliver Map is a project launched by a Japanese architect, Junzo Okada, and it aims to find a consensus between the citizens and the city and to improve the atmosphere of the city.

A huge map is installed in the centre of the city where people of different ages can write about their pleasant and unpleasant experiences in the city while concentrating on the issues of accessibility and functionality. Prior to that, a group of students conducts a questionnaire among the inhabitants of the city to get an overview of the most significant problems. The project is carried out by students, volunteers and designers who supervise them. The project has been carried out in several cities, most recently in Catalonia. The results will be presented to the city government for analysis. The outcomes of the project will hopefully draw attention to the concerns of people with special requirements and help urban planners in making the city a better place for everyone.

Accessibility

Kalle Pabut, Interior architect-designer:

The Accessibility Workgroup which included students from different universities presents two solutions/environment analyses—one of them tackles the topic of the accessibility of Tallinn Old Town and the Gulliver Map project and the other includes the accessibility analysis of the cinemas which take part in Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF). The final presentations of these projects were compiled by the students of the Design Department of Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences Merike Saks, Reena Rist and Katrin Kobolt.

In order to solve the problems of accessibility, analytical studies “Accessibility Analysis and Solution Offers for Old Town” by Deli Trestip and Triin Valk and “Mapping Accessibility in Ylemiste City and Solutions” by Hindrek Väravas were conducted as a part of the project. The latter is a
Accessibility working group was supervised by Kalle Palub, and mentored by Francesc Aragall from Barcelona Design for All Foundation, Francesc Aragall:
The aim of our working group was initially to analyse the accessibility of the Old Town and explore possible solutions for the problems that we would encounter. Surprisingly in the initial phases of the work we realized that the Old Town has become an attractive tourism destination, an environment that Tallinns use and enjoy usually. That fact changed radically the scope of our project towards another subject: How the Old Town can be made more accessible and visually attractive and it is that fact which became the joining force between the community, the city government, urban designers and other people who are connected to urban planning.

Cities For All, Tallinn For All

The solutions offered to Black Nights Film Festival will be implemented in order to improve the accessibility of venues where their films are screened which will definitely help to improve the usability of these venues outside the festival as well which will help us from noticing the problems around us. Furthermore, the lack of informative materials and training may hinder people who are involved in these problems to develop effective solutions for accessibility problems. Despite that, there are several positive examples in Estonia of how companies, organisations, administrative agencies and local governments have cooperated to guarantee accessibility in their area, for example, the mapping of the Tallinn tourist routes which was started by Tallinn Tourism Board, if-kumisvabadus inveinfo.ee, low-floor buses, etc.

Artificially directed economical or political innovation is informing – creating a unified notification and information system which would include different interest and user groups. According to the European custom, different foundations deal with these issues: with companies rather than helping to solve the accessibility problems. As a result, several solutions which are proposed in good will may become obstacles rather than helping to solve the accessibility problem. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications has adopted the regulation no 14 M of titled “Requirements for ensuring that persons with reduced mobility and visually impaired and hearing impaired persons are able to move in public places and buildings” which the designer should follow in order to guarantee the accessibility of public spaces for disabled people. Unfortunately, no regulations have been introduced in the living environment. However, the problems exist not only for disabled people but many of these issues concern everyone. Thus, it would be preferable if everyone’s needs would be taken into account when eliminating these problems or else borders between different environments are created. In addition to that, the lack of material resources and time also complicates taking the problems in this field. The lack of awareness and our attitude towards other people can sometimes hinder us from noticing the problems around us. Furthermore, the lack of informative materials and training may hinder people who are involved in these problems to develop effective solutions for accessibility problems. Despite that, there are several positive examples in Estonia of how companies, organisations, administrative agencies and local governments have cooperated to guarantee accessibility in their area, for example, the mapping of the Tallinn tourist routes which was started by Tallinn Tourism Board, if-kumisvabadus inveinfo.ee, low-floor buses, etc.

The solutions offered to Black Nights Film Festival will be implemented in order to improve the accessibility of venues where their films are screened which will definitely help to improve the usability of these venues outside the festival as well which will help us from noticing the problems around us. Furthermore, the lack of informative materials and training may hinder people who are involved in these problems to develop effective solutions for accessibility problems. Despite that, there are several positive examples in Estonia of how companies, organisations, administrative agencies and local governments have cooperated to guarantee accessibility in their area, for example, the mapping of the Tallinn tourist routes which was started by Tallinn Tourism Board, if-kumisvabadus inveinfo.ee, low-floor buses, etc.

As a part of Design Night festival, “Gulliver Map”, which is a 40m² map of Tallinn Old Town, is installed in the city centre, Vabaduse square, on September 19, 2011. The project is based on the methodology which was developed by Junzo Okada, who is a Japanese architect, in Tokyo in 1989. The input of the product is collected from different interest groups in order to guarantee better access to Tallinn Old Town area, to products, services and information. The inhabitants and the tourists have the opportunity to express their feelings, wishes and needs and share their view on what the historical centre of Tallinn should be like. Furthermore, the event can become the joining force between the community, the city government, urban designers and other people who are connected to urban planning.

Information design
The main topic of graphic designers was information design of public transport. Two working groups were dealing with bus stop problems and in addition to the accessibility study of Old Town, the aforementioned working group also in- 225 224

Tallinn

joint analysis of ÜLÄMISTE CITY and TECHNOPLUS ÜLÄMISTE territory with suggestions for making it easier for everyone to use the city attractively and it is that fact which became the joining force between the community, the city government, urban designers and other people who are connected to urban planning.

The solutions offered to Black Nights Film Festival will be implemented in order to improve the accessibility of venues where their films are screened which will definitely help to improve the usability of these venues outside the festival as well which will help us from noticing the problems around us. Furthermore, the lack of informative materials and training may hinder people who are involved in these problems to develop effective solutions for accessibility problems. Despite that, there are several positive examples in Estonia of how companies, organisations, administrative agencies and local governments have cooperated to guarantee accessibility in their area, for example, the mapping of the Tallinn tourist routes which was started by Tallinn Tourism Board, if-kumisvabadus inveinfo.ee, low-floor buses, etc.

As a part of Design Night festival, “Gulliver Map”, which is a 40m² map of Tallinn Old Town, is installed in the city centre, Vabaduse square, on September 19, 2011. The project is based on the methodology which was developed by Junzo Okada, who is a Japanese architect, in Tokyo in 1989. The input of the product is collected from different interest groups in order to guarantee better access to Tallinn Old Town area, to products, services and information. The inhabitants and the tourists have the opportunity to express their feelings, wishes and needs and share their view on what the historical centre of Tallinn should be like. Furthermore, the event can become the joining force between the community, the city government, urban designers and other people who are connected to urban planning.

Information design
The main topic of graphic designers was information design of public transport. Two working groups were dealing with bus stop problems and in addition to the accessibility study of Old Town, the aforementioned working group also in-
Now young graduates have established a professional design team—Disainioskond. They have been working on Tallinn Transport design strategy and implementation for over 4 years now and made some great breakthroughs. They have implemented a design standard and applied it throughout the whole system. All the mediums of Tallinn Transport are following the design standards: vehicle design, geographica! and schematic maps, digital solutions and printed matters. New connections with other public services have been found. In 2012 Tallinn Transport work won the European Design Management award. Due to that their other clients from public sector are Port of Tallinn, Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Estonian Center of Architecture etc.

Social design

The challenge for French students from Saint-Étienne Cité du design was lack of social design, insecure and inconvenient existing infrastructure. New or improved products designed to fit public urban space. Services and products which could help blind people and foreign people to situate themselves in the town.

Theme: Triangles

Fabien Barrero-Carsenat and Jean-Baptiste Bru.

The triangles are orientation benchmarks allowing to guide blind people or partially sighted persons in a particular direction. They constitute because of their shape an extra help for the white stick guidance in a urban environment full of obstacles. For example, they can be used in the malls to indicate the route to the information center or to keep the person away from a potential danger like the curbs.

Theme: Bornes RFID

Fabien Barrero-Carsenat, Jean-Baptiste Bru, Valentine Henry, Jo-Anne Kowalski, and Camille Tricoire.

Nowadays we notice that more and more partially sighted people or blind people travel autonomously. Because of this idea of autonomy we thought about the following idea when you arrive in the airport or port, station, an information center of tourist office gives you a card (credit card format). You will have to give some personal information such as your age, mobile phone number, origin and languages; they will give you a card programmed according to your profile. This language parameter and your choice of type of card (orientation, access, shopping, freeways) will allow you once in town to scan this swipe card in the different yellow terminals located in a wide environment and to obtain directly on your mobile the formation in the sound (image, text format according to the parameters and the eventual disability). This system is accessible for everybody and can be updated in real time answering the needs of each person in an optimal way.

Theme: Carte

Jo-Anne Kowalski and Camille Tricoire.

The map completes the action of the terminal and the natural location tools of the user. The work consisted in the working out of a very simplified map, easy to read for a sighted person and for blind people. Thanks to this map, the visitors can get their bearings in the city in a very autonomous way, and travel the way they want, contrary to a guided tour which leads you from one point to another following a specific route. It defend and allows the intuitive and independent moving while giving a mean to get one’s bearings anytime they want, through various types of data.

The map was drawn following the particularities of any city/village: different districts, or parts of cities, which names and boundaries often depend on the history of the city or on the inhabitants’ preferences. Consequently, our map is a booklet composed of several maps, one for each part of the town. The maps contain the most important information the terminals deliver more detailed information about the place where we are. Any information indicated on the map like colors, pictograms names is transcribed in tactile languages (Braille for the words, textures for the colors and/or pictograms.

A RFID chip is located inside the back cover. It is materialized by a schema which allows the users to perceive well the chip and to familiarize themselves with the electronic element. The RFID chip interacts with the terminal which gives hearing information which comes to complete the map information. At anytime, a contact be-tween the terminal and the map is enough to be able to locate oneself and/or to receive more detailed information about one’s situation.

The design working group was supervised by designer Fabien Combe and mentored by Avril Accolla, Vice President of EIDD Design For All Europe.

Participants of the project

• Estonian Association of Designers
• Cité du Design, Saint-Étienne
• Ecole Supérieure d’art et de design de Saint-Étienne
• City of Tallinn
• Tallinn – European Capital of Culture 2011 Foundation
• Estonian Academy of Arts
• Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences
• UT Pärnu College
• Transportation Department
• Municipal Engineering Services Department
• The Estonian Chamber of Disabled People
• Tallinn City’s Board of Disabled People
• Black Nights Film Festival
• EIDD Institute for Design and Disability-Design For All Europe

Cities For All, Tallin For All
As it is the case in disciplines such as the industrial design which links both the creative and the business outlook in the same project, to obtain productive work involves fleshing out in detail the objectives of the project from the very first moment and integrating both visions in it. Arteshop is above all defined as a community promoted by the innovative shops in Bilbao; CIB with the aim of disseminating and get the innovation message across the commercial sector in Bilbao. In order to achieve that objective, CIB has chosen to follow the Living Labs EnoLL’s philosophy: a network of living labs created in 2011, which is: “generate innovation through collaboration among agents from different sectors and promoting research in real environments through creative process”. A first approach to the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of the Basque Country allowed participation of its pupils in the Arteshop project; every student would carry out an artistic intervention specifically for every shop and the latter would showcase it for two weeks. The competition’s slogan is: “Every shop, a work of art”. 24 shops and 24 students took part in the first edition. Overall assessment was positive and the project continuity soon became clear. Despite this, the organization underlined the importance of the language gap and the problems it brought about.

Improving the dialogue between artists and traders became a goal to be accomplished. For that purpose, collaboration with the Foundation Bilbao Arte was sought. This is a centre of artistic production, also under the authority of the City Council of Bilbao - that makes the required means and infrastructure available to young creators for the development of their artistic proposals. It was agreed that 10 artists from the Foundation would become mentors for the Fine Arts students and would provide them with support and supervise their interventions and their progress.

There was also an intermediate figure that provided a larger perspective of the artistic reality, that had a bigger knowledge of the working processes, facilitated the students’ involvement in the Arteshop project, and their relations with the shopkeepers. In the first edition, there was a high level of expectation on both sides whereas in the following ones, the perspective changed; it was assumed that, above particular interests, the final objective was primary; that of achieving sales promotion through synergies. From that moment onwards the project definition process was considered key; furthermore, and in order to underscore the result of the collaboration between traders and pupils, a competition was organized so that the three best projects could be rewarded with a jury made up of respected artists among other professionals. The number of participants multiplied and amounted to 75 and three well-known commercial areas joined in the project. These hosted exhibitions with the own works of the mentors in their premises. This initiative has been maintained in later editions and has had a multiplying effect in the dissemination of the event. Further on, the Ribera market of Bilbao joined in the project. This is the biggest covered market in Europe with 10,000m2 and also the new Bilbao Tourism Office located in a landmark building of the city. This has implied a professionalization process in the way the work is being tackled by artists and shopkeepers to the point that the fourth edition has included a document with the description of the project, the technique, materials used and several drafts. It has to be signed by them.
Arteshop is no longer an initiative solely for students, mentors and shops, the role of citizens has been strengthened and their influence has grown more important. This can be seen through traditional media and social networks and the interest they follow every edition with. It is therefore clear that what started as a project to boost the local commerce has turned into a learning opportunity for all of its participants: shopkeepers, students, artists, organizers and citizens. Two of the main lessons learnt via the Arteshop initiative are working with people who provide new outlooks to daily work is stimulating and initiatives are enhanced when different agents get involved in them. In particular, shopkeepers highlight the fact that the project has helped them be able to offer their clients a new shopping experience, achieve a higher visibility for their business, assume that citizens back up those shops that make an effort towards innovation and appreciate the added value generated by art. Pupils highly appreciate to have their work showcased before the great public, the challenge of facing the particularities of the project (limited budget, space characteristics, etc), getting involved directly through their art into the community, as well as the awards granted by a prestigious jury. Artists value the fact that they can make their artistic capacity available for the students and also the acquired experience in coordinating and adapting their works of art in the exhibiting spaces, lastly, the opportunity of showcasing their creations in unusual places of great visibility for new publics. Concerning the Faculty of Fine Arts, Arteshop has made possible that faculty students can carry out practical work in a real space, in such a way that the artistic quality of such a space can be perceived directly and that links with other institutions that are beneficial to its development can be strengthened. As to Fundación Bilbao Artes, it points out that it is through such an experience that art gets closer to the city, that it has become a referent in artistic assessment and that artists can have the opportunity of creating new works and showcase them in open spaces to the public.

Arteshop has achieved the goals of offering a higher visibility to the trades of Bilbao, stimulating consumption in the districts of the city as well as broadening relations with institutions. In regards to the citizen, he or she values Arteshop simply because small shops can be better known and because it is a new, attractive and surprising initiative that presents art as a common good, enjoyable in an ordinary environment. Can all the positive assessments take credit for the effort carried out along these years by the organization in improving the matching between shopkeepers’ objectives and students when defining the project? This is inevitable although not exclusively one of the key factors. As a matter of fact and as we pointed out in the beginning, strengthening the first contact and the exchange of information prior to the drawing of any kind of proposal have been and still are the permanent challenges of Arteshop, apart from being one of the great teachings that the competition has left to its promotors. Recently, the Bilbao Bizkaia D Week 2015 was celebrated in the city of Bilbao, an event sponsored by the City Council of Bilbao and the Regional Council of Biscay through the BiDC (Bilbao, Bizkaia Design Council). The programme included 44 activities that had been fostered by different local agents all of them involved somehow in the creative industries sector and among them, Bilbao Ekintza, CIB and the University of Deusto. As a result of the collaboration between Bilbao Ekintza, CIB and the University of Deusto, the first edition of the Technoshop programme was kicked off. This initiative was also inspired in the living labs philosophy in which 16 city shops and 34 university students of industrial design engineering have participated. The specific objective of the project was to improve the aesthetics and the use of shop windows of those
shops through new technologies and to a lesser extent to prove that an alliance between engineering, technology, innovation and commerce is possible and even key in the improvement and development of the city. Rightly, the project’s foundations stated that both pupils and trades/shipkeepers had to make an effort towards the initial briefing.

The methodology chosen was that of BootCamp, a comprehensive workshop with a three-day format and that was inspired in experiences carried out in American universities. Over 30 Industrial Design pupils participated in those activities, conducting different dynamics that generated ideas and creativity applicable to projects. They were also introduced to Arduino, the new free software platform. Once the finalist projects were selected, those were further developed along six weeks in which weekly meetings were held with the tutors who were in charge of guiding the work from the initial stages of the draft projects up until those ideas were put into effect. Likewise, constant meetings with shopkeepers were held for a period of two months. According to everyone’s needs and after an intense idea-generation process, the pupils carried out models and prototypes in the Deusto FabLab, the fabrication laboratory of the University of Deusto. The outcome of the projects resulted in the installation of 16 shopwindows in different shops in Bilbao which became intelligent and interacted with the presence of the citizens that came up to look at them, fostering thus the commercial activity. In a subsequent analysis and before confirming that a second edition will be launched, both, the University, Bilbao Ekintza and CiB verified the fact that the previous definition of the projects, together with the tutors’ role as a link between one’s expectations and others’ proposals had been key to the success of the project in the whole.
Artista: Jesús Pueyo, Maite Leyún y Miriam Martín. Shop: "Oficina de Turismo"
As cities organizations are facing major urban and technological transformations, European citizens are taking possession of their cities, collaborating or acting for its renewal. Which kind of tools are set up to think and produce the public space together? How to make these bottom-up initiatives sustainable?

Human Cities_Challenging the City Scale is a European project, co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union 2014-2018. Gathering 12 partners from 11 countries led by Cité du design Saint-Étienne, it explores how inhabitants reinvent the contemporary city through experimentation and surveys. This publication is a collaborative research work, made from more than 80 case studies collected by the partners in Europe. They tell about actions led by creative citizens to transform their urban environment. Researchers from Cité du design Saint-Étienne, the Department of Design of Politecnico di Milano and Urban Planning Institute of The Republic of Slovenia Ljubljana provide a state of the art of these initiatives. Analysing these multiple examples, they investigate how urban dwellers participate, get organized and collaborate with creative professionals to prototype more liveable cities.

ISBN 978-2-912808-79-0