Urban Civic Education LAB
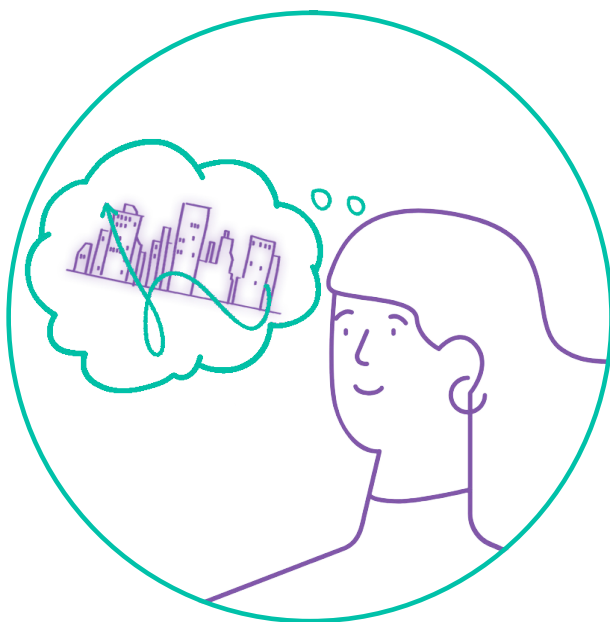
Placemaking

European Exchange

Youth Empowerment

Social Entrepreneurship

wonderland
project space

Content

Chapter 1:
What is UCE LAB?

How to adapt dynamics of social life?
By Bahanur Nasya

European Exchange – Social Entrepreneurship – Youth Empowerment – Placemaking

www.urban-civic-lab.eu

Today the diversity of cities takes on a new dimension due to globalization, political, economic and social restructuring. Globalization and the increasing interdependency of settlements, crystallises and emphasizes the collective challenges. People are more and more seen and treated as a nation and group of citizens, which are competing for the same positions (housing-, working- and education-places). Most of run through the same education and same socialisation processes. At the same time migration from countryside to cities and from cities to new adventures and cities is decreasing the sense of belonging. The community aspect, growing organically to a community, taking care of each other, knowing each other's needs is more and more less accessible for younger generations.

Without the social skills and without the bound with the community a whole field of economy is almost not accessible for the younger generation. Our current dynamics, do not allow youngsters to grow in a network, to find their mission and role in the society. Therefore, they rely on given opportunities, given job roles, given and perhaps old companies. The increasing lack of local jobs, have led to the accelerated circulation of people, commodities, capital, identities, and images through global space.
This leads to increasing mobility of ideologies, economic principles, policies, and lifestyles. This is true, for especially young people, who could have real impact in their local communities. This consortium therefore recognizes the urgent need to implement actions to improve the teaching of the civic and citizenship education.

The partners in this project identified the Erasmus+ programme as the right framework and funding scheme for the implementation of this project idea. The project is based on a lab constellation for youngsters which can be inspired from rather established entrepreneur counterparts, for a lively exchange and direct knowledge transfer.

The "Urban Civic Education LAB" project is designed with practical approach to learning and education. We strongly believe that for the social entrepreneurship, we can only successfully work in the field of non-formal education. The applied methods will allow the development and increasement of social entrepreneurship capacities for youngsters, who are living in the urban areas. At the same time the international exchange and trainings are enhancing the social networks of youngsters, the accessibility of real examples and entrepreneurs, which altogether adds social value to their lives and their communities.

"Urban Civic Education Lab" is a -24month strategic partnership youth involving three very well-established NGOs located in Austria, Italy and Germany. The partners are experienced in working with young people. In this project they want to open up the avenue of social entrepreneurship for youngsters, especially NEETs. Since the employability and job opportunities are decreasing for people with soft skills and experience. The aim here is to foster transition to autonomy, which can lead to entrepreneurial engagement. At the same time gained experience in such engagements, increase the future employability, as well as have a very good impact on the local community.

Partners
By Yilmaz Vurucu

Wonderland - platform for European architecture

Wonderland is a network of planners, designers and entrepreneurs, which use a territorial approach to identify challenges and work with local actors and decision makers to improve our built environment for all. The network considers itself to be an open network, where information and know-how is shared. Wonderland supports architects, urban or regional planners, artists and all sorts of designers in their creation of solutions and positive impact. A special attention is paid to facilitate emerging practitioners with lectures, publications, events, trainings and similar to enhance their outreach throughout Europe.

CRN

The Comparative Research Network was founded in 2007 and works since then in the field of adult education and research. CRN is specialised in training activities within the fields of intercultural competences, intergenerational learning, mobilities and migration. Additionally, CRN is creating and performing evaluation and dissemination processes. The Comparative Research Network is based in Berlin and works in the framework of in Horizon2020, Erasmus+, REC, national and local programs.

In the participatory lab, the organisation addresses placemaking, empowerment, inclusion and urban planning from the perspectives of the citizens. In the projects the team focus on co-creation between stakeholders and decision makers. For this they explore community mapping (in projects like MAXICO), gamification of participation (in EURBANITIES 1.0 and 2.0) or community storytelling (like in INCLUDATE). Important aspects are questions of the effective re-design of deliberative democratic tools (EUARENAS) or the question on how to empower neighbourhoods to co-create policies and initiated their own action plans, by "hacking" the city from below (Kieztraum, Voicitys). The team connects research, community working and education, combine this with co-design, create innovative and (sometimes) surprising results.

Comparative **R**esearch **N**etwork:

Aims – People – Projects – Methods – Results

MVNGO

Mine Vaganti NGO is a fluid organisation, whose work is based on the enhancement and optimization of intellectual work. Since the beginning, the organisation promotes working in remote areas. They promote the working method "agile", based on the use of social media and online management tools. MVNGO was born with a corporate philosophy of perpetual movement and such remote work has always been promoted as an organizational style, specially devoted to creativity of project designers. MVNGO is present in North Sardinia, Vicenza and Berlin with operating hubs but has active collaborators all over the globe. The team consists of collaborators from all over 5 continents. MVNGO main office is located in Sassari, Italy.
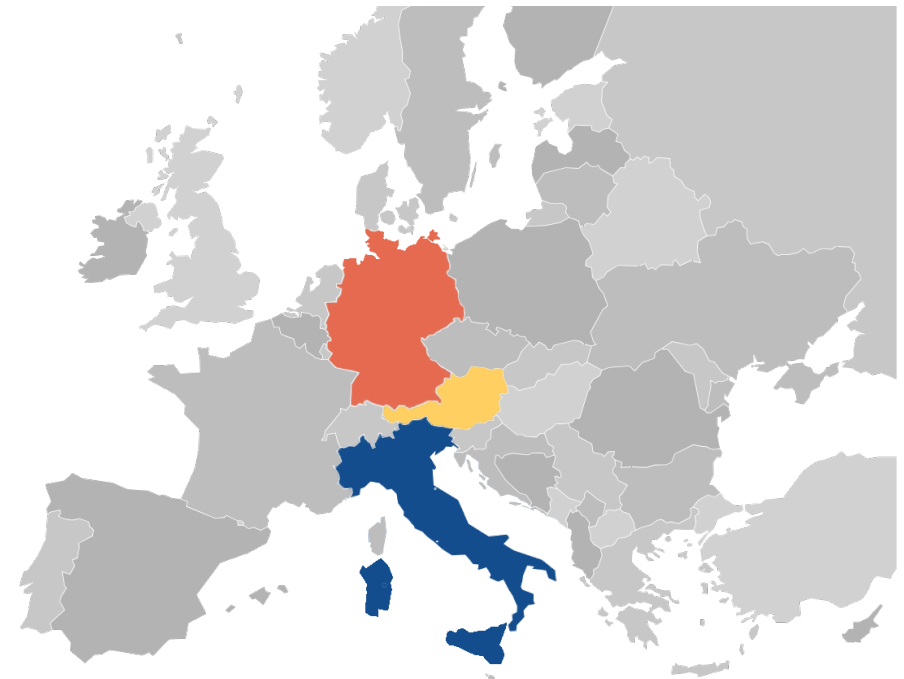
What does UCE LAB do?
By Bahanur Nasya

The UCE LAB was designed by the 3 partner organisations with lots of international and local experience. They all do their best to help young citizens in organizing their skills and develop their own work. The project is designed in a way that non-formal education methods will be best modes of action and are the most promising approaches in work with youth, who are mostly not too keen on formal education or need the different approach to balance their other curricula. From beginning to end the partner organisations excerpt the knowledge, the experience from experts and themselves and the best practices. The partners identified three categories which can be most relevant for youngsters as placemaking, social entrepreneurship and social campaigning.

The partners decided to use a case description as methodology, which will allow an identification and deeper comprehension for beginners of social entrepreneurship. For this the partners identified several cases, from which the youngsters could learn best. The best cases are selected and distributed in three categories, which the partners found relevant. Those categories are :

      Placemaking
      Social Entrepreneurship
      Social Campaigning

Within the UCE LAB the partners identified the transferable knowledge of specific practice cases in Europe. They developed a comprehensive overview and content about those cases for young people. The aim of the case descriptions is to encourage them and give ideas how to develop own projects. The implementation of an entrepreneurship model includes educational approaches. That is the reason why we chose Placemaking as on own category, as the territorial aspect allows a proximity to youngsters and is perceived as hands on and tangible application of an idea. Since the physical space and its transformation can inspire and make visible, how little changes can affect society and the wellbeing, we tackle projects from this perspective in our project. The aim to develop skills among young people to embark a journey in social entrepreneurship is tackled in its own category. Next to what you do, whom you tell about it and who is with you is the most important factor to success. Therefore, we created an own category dealing with Social Campaigning.

The project development included, next to compilation of the content and learnings for youngsters, the two real LABs in Vienna and Berlin, with participants from the participating countries and several webinars that took place online to reach out a wider audience and document first-hand the approach and the experience of the invited experts. The two trainings, designed as LABs, the participants were able to have insights on projects themselves and gain important skills and knowledge to transfer into their own local context and field of work. In each of the LABs the partner organisations planned and performed sight visits, interviews, filming, content creation for the website and social media and many more activities with the participants. The used methodology combines non-formal, as well as political-democratic, social and entrepreneurial education approaches. These are used to enhance components of a comprehensive and progressive approach to entrepreneurship skills projected to the social issues of urban areas.

What does the UCE Lab want to accomplish?

By Yilmaz Vurucu

In Urban Civic Education Lab we are working in the field of civic engagement of young people. Especially young people can have new ideas and ambitions to transform our society. In this project our priority was to teach about the layers of participation and empowerment to get the targeted youth started in the social entrepreneurship. The created training material visualises and contextualises, how youth can use participation and empowerment to transform their local environment into a more democratic and more social inclusive space. The empowerment stems from the participation in the process, learning about decision making, and impact of activities, as well as through success they can achieve through civic engagement. It is important for young people to see in real examples how their efforts can make a change for the better. The local Labs were not only created to show inspiring role models but also to obtain a chance to try out few methods and strategies.
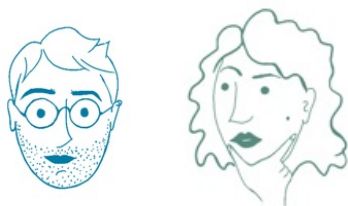
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In this project every interested person can become an actor of change. The trainings and the elaboration of best cases were created in a way, that they can be appealing and useful for a wide range of people. But especially projects in current trend and contemporary field were chosen as best-case examples, to be appealing for youngsters. The goal is to give ideas and show ways of implementation to a young audience. The participants were chosen carefully, with an open call for participation, upon their knowledge, experience and skills in different fields. A mixed group of participants, with different backgrounds could than experience the labs in two different capital cities, which have a vibrant social ecosystem, to learn from. There were many different people from the 3 partner countries, each with their own expertise and experience that they could share with each other. The cultural diversity of the participants was one of the most important parts of the learning process. The participants could evaluate the practices on the basis how certain approaches could work or not work in their home-city. This intercultural exchange is one of the key factors of the successful implementation of such labs and can be fruitful impressions of young people's lives.

Chapter 2:
Context is the shadow of each act

Getting started: Common good – Empowerment – Social innovation
By Bahanur Nasya

Tools, which can help to address the democratic values of our societies. Tools that empower the citizen and promote social inclusion in many different areas. We encounter many people, who look at our societies and have the will to change them into socially and ecologically more sustainable societies. Yet, finding the means and methods is very difficult for most of us. We feel like we are not taught the right things in our lives to combat inequalities and don't know how to implement change. It is very important to look out for the right tools which are comprehensive, easy and can have impact quickly. The collected evaluated and inspirational cases of this publication pave the way for people with the idea to transform their local environment. We tried to categorise our attempts to support everyone in their change-journey with this publication. Here is the key element we are addressing in this project and publication. The Urban Civic Education Lab is an attempt to create synergies between different disciplines, in order to make change possible for everyone and everywhere. So, the great umbrella for our efforts is the common good. To achieve this, we need to engage and perhaps train individuals and groups. We chose for this project youngsters as our target group. By sharing stories and tools with them, we want to empower them to take up the journey and try out things in their respective communities. The project aims at increasing therefore the social innovation capacity of our young fellows.

Empowerment

To give power to someone or in our case to the people is the basic act of empowerment. It is based on the belief or wish that the individuals or the citizens can take decisions, which is followed by actions. On the one hand it requires qualification on the other hand authorisation. "The term comes from the American civil rights and women's rights movements in the 1960s, when many would not put up with the existing power structures (any longer). A proven empowerment strategy can be found in the joint production and sharing of knowledge". (Glosssary p. 49) Our project aim is to grow a breeding ground for participation, so youngsters can feel included and can take decisions to shape their immediate environment. (Glossary p.49)

Social innovation

"Social innovations offer new solutions to social challenges. A social innovation can contribute to the transformation of social relations by improving access to power and resources. The decisive factor for the long-term impact is that an innovation is established and actually leads to a change in social structures or attitudes. Historical examples of social innovations are the introduction of social insurance, multi-generation houses or the cooperative movement". (Glosssary p. 116) The social innovation of youth is very important part of their future and we need the innovation capacity of every single citizen to tackle the challenges ahead of us. (Glossary   p.116) For this project we agreed as a consortium to use practical approaches to tackle those topics. We selected three ways to work with youth. All three concepts Placemaking, Social Entrepreneurship and Social Campaigning can be used as tools for societal change.

Common good

For sure the term "common good" is discussed in many contexts and we see that there is difference in understanding. "What it is that constitutes the common good is a question bound to local culture and community. However, what is certain is that a common good-oriented and open city for many is based on values such as solidarity, community, self-efficacy and engagement." (Glosssary p. 45) The common understanding is, that the concept should improve the "well-being of the community", while the individual needs can be conflicting. Therefore the "common good" is a continuous process of negotiation of interests and needs and their satisfaction. This fluid process requires the redistribution of resources, say and power. To bring the "common good" concept to live, it has to have practical actions, like access to space or access to decision making. This task can't be left to the politicians only, it needs all parties participation, no matter if it is negotiated in the parliament or applied in a neighbourhood. (vgl. Glosssary p. 45)

PLACEMAKING to fit the needs
By Bahanur Nasya

Why would placemaking be the topic in an Urban Civic project dedicated to youngsters of various backgrounds? Yes, this project aims to empower every young person to take place in the urban civic life. But we do not expect anyone to opt for architecture, planning or design professions. But all of our targeted participants and our audience meets in the public space where our public labs take place and changing here the DNA of the places towards to more fairness and inclusion, will bring the power balance and visibility of social actions we are looking for. Not everyone has to study place dynamics, but everyone will be exposed to place dynamics. Therefore, trying to shape places together is the most natural way of improvement. The Gehl institute has developed very easy and comprehensive categories to understand and evaluate a place (cf. Gehl Institute) They use 12 categories, which are easy to assess by everyone with their instincts. The meta topics are protection, comfort and enjoyment. A place needs to provide protection from accidents, traffic, noise, wind and unpleasant other experiences. The protective attributes of a space are very urgent challenges in most urban landscapes and critical to the regular use of places. The protective character of a place can make us feel free, safe and potentially also empower us to do something for the space, as we might feel ownership over it. Since we are humans, most of our activities are deprived from our physical shapes and needs, the place in focus needs to allow us to be active in it. That's the reason why we choose places which offer us options for mobility, to stand or linger, to sit, seeing things and experiencing things, to converse, and of course also play, exercise and much more. The comfort aspect of the evaluation pays attention to these aspects. Finally, the place can also bring joy to its users if the scale between people, buildings and space is appropriate, the place creates an enjoyable climate and has perhaps aesthetic values, which is appreciated by the user. (cf. Gehl Institute)

We tried to look at the places for the public from a personal experience point of view. What really makes the endeavour more complicated is, the complexity of the public. Since the users are so different, the places need multiple creators, maintainers and advocates to be really good for everyone.

"Cities cater to everyone, regardless of lifestyle, religion, culture, wallet size, age, sexual preference or demand for theatre, food, sports or greenery. They absorb newcomers, negotiate differences between opposites and create narratives for everyone to relate to. Such is the story we are often told, and of course, it is all true. But at the same time, we must ask ourselves, do the residents of our ever-popular cities continue to feel at home in them? And are the public places within a city really even ours?"

Minouche Besters, Juni 2019
from Our city: Countering exclusion in public space

What makes a city a liveable place? Currently most of us search for an education, job and housing opportunity. We choose places according our needs and means to "pay" for it with our monetary and time resources. But do we have in mind, that all those places are created? They are planned, build and owned by people. The space between the built architecture is perceived as the public space, which is usable by everyone. But who owns all those spaces? Who decides on those places' qualities? Who decides on who might use them? And what can be done here to make life better? Public spaces are the part of the city that are really open to everyone. So, they should cater to the needs of everyone. But most of the time or in most places in our built environment there is a big gap between needs and the opportunities of such places. The creation of public spaces plays a big role in the city planning. But who cares about the quality of public spaces? Whose job is it, to make great public spaces, which work for everyone and not a few? We believe, that "how public spaces are designed and created" should be a democratic process, so that the outcome of the process can accommodate the needs of the society. The civic society needs to play an important role on the definition of those places. For this role, we need to activate as many citizens as possible in this process. They should feel connected, as it is their space, and the places should be claimed and used, so they can have a meaning for the people. Placemaking as a tool and approach can facilitate this place claiming, improving and maintaining through people for their individual and collective needs, is proven to be successful for more than a half century.

In the creation or transformation of places, placemaking works on different layers, such as sociability, uses, users' needs, activities, access, connections, comfort, and bonds between people and a sense of and for the place. Placemaking is understood as a process of creating places with meaning for its users. This "creation" means often the transformation of a public space, to address or accommodate the citizen's needs. Placemaking projects aim to strengthen the connections between people and these places, to increase the feeling being home, which can improve significantly the wellbeing and also the belonging. In this process the placemakers focus on people and their needs, aspirations, desires, and visions. Successful examples are heavily reliant on community participation. (cf. Moreira 2021: URL 1)

This transformation from a public space, which is somehow accessed by everyone but not really used (with pleasure) by everyone, to a place which feels safe, homey, which perhaps invites to spend time and engage with others is called placemaking.

From this point of view, the city is not only a place of movement, but also a place of staying, of dwelling, and of locating oneself. For this purpose, locating oneself and staying is seen as the practice of living. People that live in a city fill the built space with meanings. It's therefore among their rights as well as responsibilities to create places that cater to everyone's needs. (cf. Smolarski, Pierre. 144 :2017)

The quality of public space is the foundation of a sustainable city. Cities require great streets, places where you instinctively want to stay longer, human scale inspired by interaction between buildings and streets, user ownership, placemaking, good

plinths, and a people-centred approach based on user experience to ensure a quality public realm. (cf. Besters 2019: 8)

In this regard placemaking, can transform from an intervention to a strategy, which assists people in co-creating economically viable, liveable, and sustainable city spaces, which rely on the interaction of three key components: Infrastructure, housing and design. The people's activities determine whether or not a space is actually useful place. (cf. Besters et all 2019: 9)

The inherent value of placemaking as a process is that it is closely tied to the needs and circumstances of the local community. And the important aspect here is: they change with the communities. People change their life circumstances, children become adults, adults can become families or couples, they grow old. Each change in personal lives, will change the needs and expectations of these spaces. However most urban spaces are very static in constellation and hardly ever react to the society. (cf. Bester et all 2019: 9)

They use the cases developed and implemented in other places as inspiration to tackle local challenges. This practice is extremely useful to think about the opportunities of a given space. It allows to think out of the box, come up with new ideas and communicate within the team and community about the options. This practice is used in Urban Civic Education LAB as the framework approach, to empower youth to rethink and reinvent the space which surrounds them. "Placemaking encourages creative patterns of use to inspire people to the collective reimagination and reinvention of public spaces, thereby strengthening the bond between the people and the places they share." (Moreira 2021: URL 1)

Placemaking can be the tool of change and empowerment if used by the civic society to create the space that fits their needs. The process involves an active evaluation process of the local circumstances, about users and a creative process to change and improve the place. It's an active creation like an off-theatre play. The actors, e.g. placemakers, come to an empty set, which is the meaningless public space. By choosing the actors, e.g. the user groups among citizens, and deciding on the play's concept, e.g. goals for the dynamics between the people, makes obvious how you have to adapt the stage to a place which can accommodate the people to act according to the concept. In the urban context, this is mostly having positive dialogical exchanges, use the public place and resources and increase the social coherence among citizens. This metaphor of a "play" can help us to comprehend and develop the needed aspects of a placemaking project. And it can also help us try perhaps in real, perhaps in our imagination, different scenarios. Also, the play metaphor shows the process character of such interventions. But the reason why we suggest an off-theatre play is, that the script can be very variable and individual, and doesn't follow any established "rules" plays. We need this openness in placemaking, to really address real needs, real wishes and real people, with real place circumstances, with an open end for prolongment.

Further readings
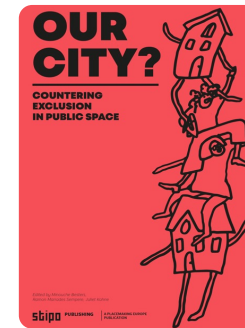
Our City
encountering exclusion in
public space
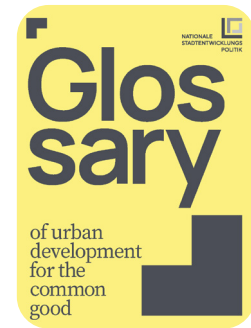
Glossary
of urban development
for the common good

SOCIAL CAMPAIGNING to bring common good on the spot light

By Yilmaz Vurucu

Would you believe us, if we say campaigning is a pretty old tradition of the humankind? Since we speak with each other and recommend things, paths, people, etc. we are promoting one idea over the other idea. We did this always to share our experience and so that the others do not have to invent the wheel again and again. We could somehow claim that the campaigning or promoting is one basic ingredient in human development. But why does campaigning still have an uncommon connotation in a social project and in a social context. While basically the campaigning was used by the industries to promote their, and only their products and services and also on the expense of hiding negative effects on life as a whole. What is social campaigning than? The social campaigning is in a way the approach to make campaigning again useful for humanity. The social campaigns differ from commercial advertising campaigns, because of their overall umbrella of "public good". The planning, implementing and evaluation makes of course use of other campaigns as well, but uses as well quality insights to extract learning points of such campaigns. As soon as the social campaign promotes products and services with price tags, they are often criticised by the audience. But also, the use of human information and perhaps individual's context, comes up against the ethical limits of influencing behaviour through campaigns.

 "Campaigning can help give a voice to those without one, or bring together disparate voices to create a collective roar." (The National Council for Voluntary Organisations, 2021) And this aspect is the most important one of social campaigning. With all kind of media outlets, we are so used to be entertained and guided by them to form our opinions or make our decisions. But many important topics, like justice, equality and many more never make it to the media. Social campaigning can be a very important vehicle to make overseen issues seen and overheard voices heard. Underrepresented opinions and issues need to be translated and disseminated throughout all kinds of the media outlets and in our public awareness, so they can be debated, discussed and a collective acting can be organised.

Campaigning can be defined here as the art of pulling together resources to achieve the communication goal as effectively and efficiently as possible. The concentrated communication and audience proof designed messages have the capacity to move people. So, the basic aim is to get attention and the goal can be creating awareness about some issues. Campaigning can be physical, digital and in best case is a right cross-media constellation, and often an interdisciplinary mix to reach diverse people. Campaigning methods include classic marketing, PR, public affairs, storytelling, networking, online communication with social media, apps, websites and online tools as well as shaping the public space and streets by different kind of means. (cf. Metzinger 2016: URL 2) In other words, our activities in public space (no matter if it is intended or not) is also campaigning (physical campaigning). That means also, the way how the public space is pre-occupied by cars, advertisement of companies,

underused due to quality and shape, is campaigning in a way. By putting places in positive use for the community needs, we are actually doing "social campaigning" already.
Campaigning relies primarily on mobilising people and to attract their attention and their engagement towards a social activity. Campaigning is about winning people over for a cause and inspiring them in such a way that they themselves become actively involved in a cause. Campaigning turns the target group not «just» into a customer, but into a somebody who is engaged in a topic and in the best case into an ambassador. The identity of the campaign is here really defined by is the ultimate goal the common good or not. And we see that people nowadays are much more interested in behind the scenes-stories. Social campaigning therefore can really tell a deeper story, which may show how the content is relevant for the humankind. By involving the audience in the process, they also get a voice and are involved in a partnership, rather than client/salesmen relationship. (cf. Metzinger 2016: URL 2) Should campaigning be used by the civic society? We believe, yes! We need to publicly see, discuss and work on the collective needs. Creating social awareness through campaigning is one of the main practices the Urban Civic LAB focuses. Social campaigning is exchange. It raises awareness to social issues but also listens to the audience, to learn how to deal with the issue. It is a form of dialogue, but can be also a confrontation, that seeks attention.

Depending on the country, the urban landscape is often dominated by advertising. The advertising purpose is to sell something. There is no balance act, public good topics have yet no space in the urban fabric to be communicated. The streets should have instead a fair number of diverse messages, and especially the public good should be present here thoroughly and communicated well. The urban landscape belongs to the public and should have relevant information therefore. Also, the public space should be shaped by the public, so it can truly meet the needs on site. Social Campaigning is bringing therefore a kind of public expression to live. It can address the roots and causes of a problem. It has the power to activate people and involve them in further actions up. That kind of visibility can lead also to attention of decision makers. The activities and the messages than can be picked up by policy makers. (cf. NCVO 2021: URL 4) Such campaigns often pull together the society's thoughts and opinions, to express them in a comprehensive way through social campaigns. This way of campaigning is used by many activists around the world to start the conversation on their problems. So many problems seem to be too big and systemic to be handled by individual members of the civic society. But since many people relate to the same problem, as soon as someone starts a social campaign there are good chances, that the topic takes off and finds many supporters and activates masses. (cf. Zimmermann 2015: URL 3)

«The greatest benefit of committing to activism is the feeling of empowerment it provides, ...These groups give students a sense of power and encourage conversations that increase a sense of community and purpose, ...»

Della Mosley, BLM activist 2015

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP to promote our values

By Hannah Breit

Successful entrepreneurship requires drive and a good knowledge of what is needed from the society. If we look back in the history of first professionals, it was always requiring a good understanding of people's needs and wishes. Traditional handcrafts like smiths or carpenter were the unifying link between resources and needs. Only with mass production this custom-tailored link was a bit broken. Suddenly the product and the companies behind became powerful, perhaps even dictated the people what they need to have or directed them in decision making. By putting the social benefits and needs in the foreground, this dynamic should be changed.
Social entrepreneurs follow a socio-political mission in their activities. They seek and find innovative solutions to existing social or ecological problems. They aim to have a positive impact with their ideas and their dissemination on a local, national or global level. Their mission is «to make a difference» in the business world by creating ‹social added value›. And this is precisely where they differ from traditional entrepreneurs: they want to maximize social benefit, not their own financial profit. Wherever public institutions, welfare state or non-governmental organisations have difficulties, they are there with creative thinking, know-how and cost efficiency. As actors from the middle of society, their solutions and activities depend very much on the entrepreneurial creativity they bring on board but also their activities depend highly on the opportunities available to them. Basically, there is a big difference among social entrepreneurship between countries, regional and urban contexts. Society and entrepreneurship have a complex interdependencies, principles and rules. Of course, they are interlinked to the globalized market economy. (cf. Hackenberg et all 14 :2011) A social entrepreneur is fully oriented towards the creation of social added value.This requires also to be on the lookout for new opportunities and persistently pursues new concepts. The social entrepreneurship is also a process of continuous innovation and learning, acts courageously. Social entrepreneurs therefore have a strong sense of responsibility for society and for the social consequences of his actions. (cf. Hackenberg et all: 13)

In this way, they differ from traditional social institutions a lot. They no longer teach pure solidarity, but social competence. The focus is no longer on forms of help, but on activating self-help. The aim here is clearly set on self-sustaining and not to get in further dependencies. (cf. Hackenberg et all: 17)

EMPOWERMENT - PARTICIPATION - CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
by Mine Vaganti NGO

EMPOWERMENT as a long-lasting impact model

Empowerment is the process of becoming self-aware and conscious of one›s choices, decisions and actions, both in personal relationships and social life. Empowerment, as a process of becoming stronger and gaining confidence, especially in controlling one's life and rights, enables people to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. Empowerment can be both individual and collective, in the sense that it can be stimulated by being part of a community, it can refer both to the process of self-empowerment and to professional support of people, which enables them to overcome their sense of powerlessness and lack of influence, and to recognize and use their resources. Empowerment of local communities can be realised through participatory planning projects, tactical urbanism, and co-/self-managed public spaces.
A successful example of the latter is represented by l'asilo, the former Asilo Filangieri in Naples, a place where a practice of shared and participatory management of a public space dedicated to culture is being consolidated. Open to all those working in the field of art, culture and entertainment, in a participatory and transparent manner, l'asilo is a self-managed space which uses public assemblies to share projects and cohabit a collective space.

PARTICIPATION to activate potentials

To participate means to take part or to be part of and to intervene together with others in something that is collectively supported. When it comes to urban development, participation is one of the basic prerequisites for achieving it. Lately, municipality and local governances have understood the fundamental importance of participatory processes within city planning, since only a city that is user-friendly is a functioning city, in continuous social and economic evolution.
Example of participatory processes in urban context, are participated planning and tactical urbanism, as those implemented in Milan. This latter one is a modality of rethinking public spaces by implementing low-cost and temporary changes to the built environment, usually in cities, with the intention to improve local neighbourhoods and city gathering places.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT for all not the selected or elected few

Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to see and implement a difference. Civic commitment actions have to do with promoting the quality of life in a community and they can involve both paid and unpaid forms of political activism, social volunteering, environmentalism, community, and national service.
A good example of civic engagement is that of Venice Lagoon Plastic Free, a young non-profit organisation (ONLUS) based in Venice the attempt of which is to promote collective clean-up operations in the historic centre, to encourage public debates about plastic pollution.
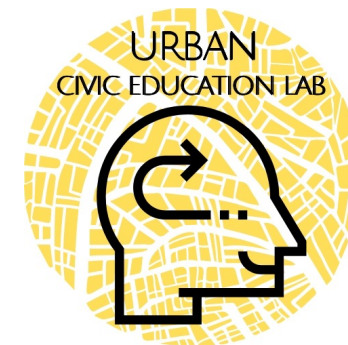
Chapter 3:
National context

by Yilmaz Vurucu

Civic rights and activities are strongly embedded in the environmental and societal context. Some activities which are possible in one society are not appropriate in the other. Or the application is very difficult because the legal and cultural framework is so different. In Urban Civic Education we look with the selected projects beyond the activities and try to understand, the background which enables activities or hinders them. Our aim is to translate the experiences in a way, which strengthens youth in their choices and not just simply copies them. This approach needs next to comprehension of the roots and impact of projects also a good understanding what the replicators need, are skilled to do and can implement in their natural background. In this chapter we will see such experiences imbedded in the national context, which strongly refers to the geographic area where the project partners are located. Even though some aspects of the background, like national laws and guidelines, are the same for the countries and the described projects are potentially at least legally possible throughout the country, social connotation of the societies are very different and we encourage our readers to read these examples as idea givers or inspirational content. A one to one copy might not possible but an adapted version might help you in your work a lot.

Austria

by Hannah Breit and Bahanur Nasya

The case studies from Austria shine with creativity, democratic values and empowerment. Many bottom-up initiatives throughout Austria seem to have understood the importance of civic engagement and social inclusion. Placemaking, social entrepreneurship and social campaigning are widely practised among the Austrian society. International terms or names for actions are often not so commonly used in the local society and might be therefore a bit difficult to be identified on the first look. For instance, the term "Placemaking" is not very well known, even though as a method or approach the tool is used throughout Vienna and all over Austria. Some even unknowingly. This stems from the reality, that these international known practices are rooted in activities and practices which happen independently. Since, placemaking is creating places for the citizens and their needs, the professionals dealing with spaces and especially with public spaces fall in the category. For learning purposes this categorisation is very useful but in practice, it doesn't matter if it is called differently, depending on the language use of the initiatives.
The evaluated cases in Austria show the profound research and creative approach practices by the local players. The initiatives create a dialogue with the citizens in order to fit their needs as well as engage and empower them. Our selected Austrian social entrepreneurs, deal predominantly with social and/or ecological issues. They are taking on the necessary steps that lead into a more sustainable future – and aim to increase our future-proofness. Their civic engagement connects to specific needs of the society, which are not addressed adequately. For this publication we evaluated ten cases to give an overview and a variety of potentials in each category. We will look on examples of how to deal with heat-islands in the city, how to include diverse groups of people on a common activity, how to build trust and increase the capacity with citizens, and also develop very practical ideas and projects to very common or daily life challenges.

Evaluated Cases for the Placemaking category
Zukunftshof – the farm of the future or dreams?

by Robert Körner and Bahanur Nasya

Once upon a time, we knew only local economy, which was mostly sustainable, which had to sustainable. The urban settlements were built up by the local resources, people were fed and dressed by the surroundings. Some civilisations created therefore city-states. And so forth goes the story. Vienna was no exception to the interconnectivity of its surrounding land. But since the consumed goods and services travel lands and continents, this interconnectivity is more and more lost. The farm-lands around Vienna are lost acre by acre to infrastructure, housing, industries and similar. Zukunftshof is one example of this kind.

On the site of the old Haschahof, a former farm at the southern edge of Vienna's Favoriten district, stands today's Zukunftshof (meaning Future Farm), which has been a place of forward thinking since the 1980s. Rothneusiedl, was formerly a village at the border of the capital city of Austria. In this neighbourhood is Zukunftshof located. The future plans are made already for the area. It will become a new settlement for approximately 20,000 inhabitants in the next decades according to the masterplan of the municipality. In this there was no use for an old and vacant farm. To prevent the demolition of the old Haschahof and to integrate the heritage building and perhaps function into the new area, a group of residents and experts joined their forces. In the beginning it looked like a resistance, but then the idea of the Zukunftshof was born, a place that brings innovative urban agriculture, water management and sustainable energy production together. The farm shall bring this futuristic lab closer to the people and benefit from the old farming traditions and knowledge of the former users. The aim is to bring those values and identities into a new urban development and shape its ecological impact in a positive manner, towards a self-sustaining and -feeding district. This vision allowed the interest groups to win the Haschahof competition and since 2019 the group is using the farm interim until 2045, to experiment with the vision, actors and concepts. They want to set here social and ecological parameters for holistic sustainability.

Zukunftshof in a Nutshell

Bring old users and futuristic ideas on agriculture together
Start a collaborative process with various stakeholders and get involved in the future scenarios of the neighbourhood
Organise financial and human resources
Experiment and find new solutions

How did the concept come about?

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the place was a farm, located in the former independent village of Rothneusiedl. After many decades of traditional farming and feeding people in Vienna, Rudolf Hascha took over the farm from his family. The modern times made farming around Vienne more and more difficult. He developed the first self-harvesting project and re-started in 1991 as one of the first certified organic farms in Vienna. That was already the reaction to the market impulses. The changes caused declines in professional farming activities in the area. The plots were turned one after the other into self-harvesting fields, which allowed farmers to continue in a way and families were provided with fresh food and the experience of self-harvesting. These served a variety of communities, engaged and connected with the fields. Perhaps this change was the beginning, of feeling ownership or connection for a wider group of people to these lands.

But time was passing, Hascha's contract was finishing and Wohnfond, which allows Viennese people to have affordable housing, bought the ground, to prepare the area for the masterplan. However, after several years of citizen demonstrations and a lot of volunteer work, Wohnfond Wien launched a competition for an experimental use, in the future centre of the new housing neighbourhood. The association "Stadtlandwirtschaft Favoriten" won the competition, with the idea to develop an innovative, culinary district centre. The concept integrated urban agriculture, sustainable energy production and innovative water management into a circular economy neighbourhood.

©David Schermann/Eutropian

Financial sustainability

"Two years after the foundation of Zukunftshof, everything is future-in-progress," says Gugumuck, one of the Co-founders and neighbours of the farm. The construction of the new residential quarter has begun, the infrastructure is being developed and at the same time Zukunftshof is being set up. New sub-renters, new financial partners, new cooperations, such as the Viennese universities BOKU, TU and University for Applied Arts. Together, they are starting to rethink and rebuild the premises. Around the farm, there are still plots which are used as farmland, some even as self-harvesting farmlands. This brings old and new users together. Festivals, cultural events and parties do not only financially support the rent and part of the renovation, but also contribute to the setup of a new social centre for the area to build connections between the original residents and the new ones.

Innovation built on tradition

In addition to testing innovative urban forms of agriculture and production according to the principles of circular economy, community, neighbourhood, education, art, culture and movement are to be brought together here. Zukunftshof as a kind of real city laboratory offers the ideal place to try out a new city model while at the same time dealing with people and the environment in a socially and ecologically sustainable way. The placemaking aspect here is stemming from the community work, ad-hoc and quick adaptation of the available space to the needs and the experimentation on site. Instead waiting for the planners to do the planning and waiting for decades for building the settlement for the people, this group of people came together and started to transform their traditions into a future context and created a very specific vision for themselves. This trial of the future makes the this "future-farm" to a great example for our publication.

Challenges and Possibilities

The farmland had a very specific use in the past and the future-use needs lots of physical adaptation. But these investments are too big for the Zukunftshof group. So, they are financially challenged and are experimenting with different kinds of uses, while keeping the vision alive. So, the group needs to create possibilities to finance the investments, to be able to use the space and at the same time stay true to the vision and not lose the support of initiators and supporters.

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Treecycle – anti-heat islands

An urban tree as a solution against overheating in the city?

by Robert Körner

«Let's face it: your city is great! But between concrete blocks and asphalt tracks it can get unbearably hot. Trees would be the solution! But unfortunately, it›s not so easy to plant trees in the city. Even if they could combat climate change locally.»- Johannes Wiener/Treecycle.

Our built environment brings too much of the same material in one spot. From the material perspective our cities are the dense storage space for concrete, tiles, asphalt and bricks. These materials have a huge capacity to store the heat energy, which is accelerated with the climate change. As a result, the perceived local climate in the cities can differ very much to the general weather or climate conditions of the city or nation. These local heat islands are unpleasant for everyone, but dangerous for many vulnerable groups like elderly or children or sick people.

A good method to change such heat islands is having vegetation in the area and therefore changing the consistency of the built environment. But unfortunately, since the urban space is densely used there is often literally no room have this kind "greening". The ground underneath the asphalt of paving is full with infrastructure items, from canalisation to metro… many elements are built underground, which do not give space for vegetation. Especially trees are very helpful in combat with heat islands, but they are the ones which need the most space for their roots as well, plus they need lots of water, which an additional challenge for new trees in the city. Treecycle is an environmentally and socially sustainable street furniture that offers solutions for overheated neighbourhoods. Each Treecycle consists of a tree and a water tower, both mobile and place-able anywhere. The cycle of the urban designer furniture is self-sustaining and virtually independent of the urban infrastructure. Elements and planting are produced by the Treecycle team. The group of young people works on the grounds of the Zukunftshof and on selected and specific sites. This flexibility allows them to support everyone, whether private individuals or public institutions, can create their own heat island solutions and simply make their areas a little greener and more comfortable.

Treecycle in a Nutshell

Solution for quality spaces in heat islands in the city
Resilient pocket eosystems
Modular units
Multifunctionality and multibenefits

How did the concept come about?

While the "Grätzl" Tour 2019 in Vienna, the team of treecycle created a set alternative uses for parking slots in the city. The five meters parking slots were turned from car parking into a recreation area. A "Grätzl" is a Viennese term for local neighbourhood, it usually comprises several blocks of houses, but there are no official boundaries for a "grätzl". They can be seen as smallest urban units. The Grätzl Oase, «Tabor Parklet» became the first testing ground for the idea. The densely built neighbourhood was provided with an installation to cool down the local urban heat island.

The installation consisted of a mobile tree and a seating area. However, in no time the team realised that constant watering in an urban context was not sustainable and was eating up lots of resources. At this point, Johannes Wiener came on board, who, with his agricultural background, developed a sustainable watering system and a closed loop, using a variety of plants. Thus, the installation turned into "the tree island" with a closed ecosystem loop. The partners soon realised how effectively this model can become a sustainable piece of street furniture against climate change.

How does the tree-island work?

A construct made of re-used transport containers is wrapped with wooden seating. In one of the containers, a substrate mixture is mixed with soil, from which a tree with many different small plants protrudes, creating an urban biotope. Water pipes connect the container to the adjacent container island consisting of 2 water containers one of the Container is also filled with plants underneath. The water containers absorb rainwater through the opening at the top and store up to 2000 litres of water. Recycling of IBCs (Intermediate Bulk Containers), which were themselves previously designed to carry large quantities of liquid, provides the basis for a stable, long-lasting construction. These islands can be placed anywhere, especially in open spaces such as squares, but also at bus and tram stops. In all places where people seek shade and cooling, and may enjoy a sitting and resting area.
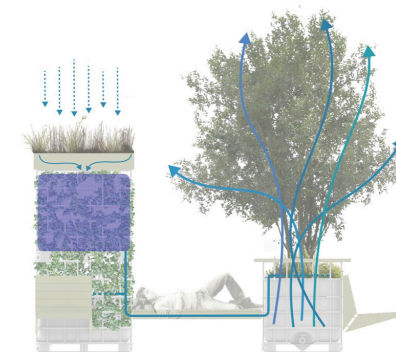
©Treecycle

Where do the plants come from?

Together with a group of teenagers, the treecycle team have been working for several years on creating an urban biodiversity on the grounds of the Zukunfthof, a former agriculture hub, and an insect bed right next to it. A variety of these plants are placed in the containers, creating a small biotope. After some time of acclimatisation at Zukunfthhof, which acts as the incubation hub for treecycle, the planted tree moves in a new place in the city. The constellation guarantees no or low maintenance tree ecosystem for urban areas, where trees would have no space in the ground or where the heat island, would restrict the pleasant use of the public space. The mobile structure allows the team on the first hand to move the ecosystem from Zukunftshof to the destination. But also allows the urban dwellers, to experiment with various locations and change according to local needs. For such a project the deep knowledge about plants and also the destination of the tree-islands is of uttermost importance. Not all plants can tolerate all conditions.

Currently the team has some local collaborations, to involve various stakeholders and groups in the creation of such islands. In the cooperation between "Jobtrain" of Volkshilfe Wien and treecycle, the participants take part in their pre-vocational training project. The participants consist of young people with mental disabilities and they learn here how to maintain a tree nursery at the base of the team, in Vienna's Zukunftshof. They also plant urban climate-resistant trees while obtaining the opportunity to find their way into the world of work through simple and tangible activities and reduced working hours.

©Treecycle

Challenges and Possibilities:

The collaboration with Volkshilfe is very insightful and the tree-islands are providing added value in the urban fabric. In addition to the social benefits of the trees emergence, the island can not only provide shade from the ever-heating cities, but also a way to cool the urban climate through constant evaporation by cleverly absorbing up to 2.000 litres of water. The project is replicable throughout the city and work with current climate conditions very well. Future changes might need further mitigations in planting, choice of trees and volume of water reservoir. At the moment the biggest challenge though is finding the right partners and collaborations. Especially the lockdowns of the recent years and ongoing war created a shift in the public attention or awareness from the climate challenges. However, promoting such modules can be a good social entrepreneurship model and placemaking intervention at the same time.

Since the project is relatively new, we looked at it from the placemaking perspective.

Watch this inspiring video wonderland filmed in collaboration with Yilmaz Vurucu. They met treecycle and followed them for one day in their workshop and in the public space of Favoriten.

© Yilmaz Vurucu/xentrikarts

https://vimeo.com/585780115

Garage Grande

by Robert Körner and Hannah Breit

Even from a distance, one building in the "Deinhardsteingasse" stands out. A colourful variety of plants climb their way up to the top floor on a barren concrete structure, with bees flying lively back and forth between them. The former use of the building as a garage cannot be seen directly from the outside, but the diversity within is even more evident. The five-storey, 2.500 m2 garage could no longer be used for modern cars and stood empty for several years. In June 2020, the team of the «Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung» negotiated a contract with the owner of the garage for a three-year interim use. Almost two years later, the garage has become a lively meeting place in the residential neighbourhood

Garage Grande in a nutshell

free creation space for visionaries in the neighbourhood
experimentation towards a greener neighbourhood
collective gardening experiences
public and open to everyone but still protected in the building
visibility of collective acting

A garage for everybody and not cars only

Let›s take a look at what is behind the now no longer empty garage in the heart of Ottakring, a district that has always been known for its diversity. The owner of the building plans to demolish the building in 2022 and left it in the meanwhile for three-years interim use to the team of the area management. When the team took over, the first difficulties emerged in reaching out to the neighbourhood. However, the team went from door to door to present the project and ask for ideas for its use, with the guideline that the space should be also adapted according to the existing needs of the surrounding residents. With success: a few days later, many of the people visited the former Garage to get a clear picture of it and start dreaming of alternative   uses.

So, in only few years, the former vacant space has become a focal point and started animating the area to a lively neighbourhood, with an extraordinary gathering place in the Grätzl (Viennese term for neighbourhood). Here, knowledge on the topic of «urban climate and urban greening» is gathered and exchanged. This frames the activities and invites to experiment new uses, away from one›s own home and public space. With events like the «Spielstadt Ottakring», where they invited around 300 children and young people from the surrounding area and all over Vienna to design, develop and appropriate their own city and community, a lively exchange is also created beyond the neighbourhood.

Versatility

The open and flexible building structure makes it possible to create a space for an open innovation laboratory right in the middle of the city. Together, the microclimate in the district is improved through versatile forms of greening and social cohesion is promoted - this creates a good climate on all levels. Today, plants grow insight as well outside on the façade, a beekeeper looks after the house›s own bees and residents of the neighbourhood meet here regularly. Building or repairing furniture, sowing seed balls, printing on fabrics, roller skating - the area management for urban renewal curates a diverse programme to meet the needs of the neighbours. In the grey solid building, neighbourliness is animated and the omnipresent theme of «urban greening» is interpreted playfully.

A concrete block turned into a green innovation laboratory

As a «space for a good climate», the Garage Grande is a place for the exchange of knowledge and the development of new ideas on topics related to sustainable and climate-friendly coexistence in the district. In cooperation with Green4Cities, BOKU Vienna and people from the neighbourhood, different possibilities of urban greening are tried out in and in front of the Garage Grande building. The aim is to create awareness for the topic of urban nature.

The only parking spaces in the five-storey building at Deinhardsteingasse 14-12 will in future have raised beds. The problem of lack of biodiversity in the city is also being addressed here: Instead of places for cars, vegetables and fresh herbs will grow there. Hop plants, climbing kiwis and wild vines will slowly climb up the grey concrete façade and provide a cooling summer freshness. With thousands of bees in two hives, food is collected from balconies, roof gardens and parks within a radius of 3 kilometres, saving many kilos of honey by the end of 2021.

Most importantly the neighbours are also involved in the greening of the grey concrete block, from small to large scale. Thus, from the first planting attempts to the annual supply of vegetables, one can freely try things out in either the pots one brings along or in the existing areas of the raised beds.

© Garage Grande

Interim use as potential

In the densely built city, there is often not enough space to try out new things, which are not business oriented. This prevents many citizens from being active and to try out new ideas. With the «Garage Grande», the GB* Ottakring team has succeeded not only in identifying the potential of the abandoned garage, but also in making it accessible for the neighbourhood. The GB* experts coordinate the project and the local actors, provide information on all activities and invite the residents of the neighbourhood to join in. In this way, the concrete block becomes gradually a lively meeting place in the predominantly residential neighbourhood. The residents can get deeper knowledge «urban climate and urban greening», as well as try out activities in this framework. Next to knowledge sharing, the Garage Grande builds capacities within the neighbourhood to address climate change with tangible activities. At the same time, a temporary space is created that offers space for activities. The participants become active in a public space, away from one›s own home, and yet the building is a different kind of a public space, since open to everyone but the activities create a kind of ownership. The project relies heavily on the methodology and the approach. It's not the single activities, like bee keeping, which define the project, but the collection of all. This is replicable in any other neighbourhood as well. Indeed, the project team is seeking to inspire imitation in other neighbourhoods.

© wonderland

Challenges and Possibilities

Garage Grande relies on the untapped resources, vacant buildings have and bring with a great effort and specialisation the neighbours in contact and in collaboration. The collective thinking, changing and working is a unique opportunity for the neighbourhood. Especially following green goals is a very valuable contribution to our collective lives. But the biggest challenge of such interim uses is, what happens with the activities, created solutions and community after the interim use? How can such a big space be absorbed by the existing built environment? And what are the long-term impacts of such projects on urban life and urban planning. In any cases new communication ways are installed with the community and the hopes are high, that the created capacities here will find their own way to have sustainable impact in future.

Creative Cluster

by Hannah Breit

Creative Cluster in a nutshell

Affordable working space for cultural and artistic entrepreneurs
Common spaces and uses for interaction and exchange
City-wide strategy
Fluid concept, can be transferred from one vacant space to another
Collective acting
Creating spaces through art
Connecting people through art
Reuse/Reinterpretation of abandoned spaces
De-centralization of art

Vienna is organised in circles around the first district which is old Vienna, which was surrounded with the ancient city walls. Around this district are the districts two to 9 and the fifth district in this ring is called Margarten. Those districts are tight and rather expensive, production spaces are diminishing and affordable spaces are rare, this is also true for the fifth district of the city. But in recent years, in Vienna's Margareten a first-time opportunity occurred, through the reinterpretation of a public building as the city tendered an old school for interim use. Creative Cluster took the opportunity and created a completely new space to connect people and spread art to wider sphere of the society. Creative Cluster is a non-profit organisation that facilitates affordable workspace for freelancing artists from all fields and sees itself as an interdisciplinary and curated art incubator and creative breeding ground. Through activating vacant urban spaces for the creative industries and various other supportive and networking services, it is also a business hub and communication platform for creatives. An important key value is to operate as an open and diverse home for transdisciplinary and international artistic practice that lives up to contemporary global developments as well as to the local Austrian social life and its needs. Moreover, the project explores new forms of collaborative working practice and tries to build on and shape synergetic future communities.

The old school building in Margareten Vienna should be a valuable impact on the Austrian society and help shape its citizen by connecting them with each other and various forms of art. Creative Cluster teams are open, innovative and participatory placemakers that deeply care about creative placemaking that also works on a social scale. Art should not only be presented but should be interactive and available for different kinds of people. Cultural events, workshops and classes, guided tours, free sport programs, recreational sitting elements in the neighbouring streets and the huge interdisciplinary creative spaces are all elements of the project that are

contributing to the cultural vitalization of the district and the city in general.

Social impact of Creative Cluster

The building hosts multiple commonly used spaces, such as gym, workshop, kitchen, lounge, and garden. Those so-called common rooms are important spatial elements to implement this forward-thinking philosophy of community driven art and cultural work and the exploration of new urban life-forms. Within the scope of active designing of cityscapes, Creative Cluster is setting impulses for the productive crosslinking of local artists and creative workers and tries also to include all other culturally interested city dwellers through inclusive participation possibilities. Thereby, new quality living space and valuable social interrelations emerge. At this point, creative energy, and artistic potential concentrates at a central place, to guarantee high quality art and other top-notch creative work and be able to present to all interested people an as much diverse and innovative picture of the local creative scene as possible. Especially in times of Covid19- and its aftereffects the role of Creative Cluster as a placemaker, that revitalizes and reorganizes public spaces and local communities for the sake of the contemporary arts and creative industries, is a crucial forward-looking social engagement that takes up responsibility for shaping future developments.

© Claudio Farkasch/Ceative Cluster

City-wide interventions

Creative Cluster focuses on art and cultural work for everyone and therefore launches projects in different parts of Vienna. Their aim is the decentralization of culture and art and the possibility for everyone to take part in the cultural life of Vienna. They are choosing their locations according to their visions of connecting people and art and the inclusion of art into peoples' everyday lives.

Creative Cluster is all about supporting art and engaging art with the local community. With different formats they try to create art spaces throughout the city of Vienna and transform vacant buildings and public spaces into art incubators, exhibition spaces or cross disciplinary meeting points for artists and everyone interested in art. Creative Cluster is a non-profit association and sees itself simultaneously as a curated, cross-disciplinary creative incubator and art incubator, as well as a business location and communication platform for creative professionals.

The Margarten branch in Viktor-Christ-Gasse is also curated as a creative incubator in order to promote synergy effects and interdisciplinary artistic practice. Thus, artists› studios, workshops, stage designers, goldsmiths, musicians, a DJ school, designers, architects, a dance collective, a sound studio, illustrators, a city magazine, etc. can be found under one roof. As of today, the project will run at this location until 2022 and will offer space for cultural work and exchange between art and culture professionals, businesspeople, and the surrounding population in the previously vacant building. In this way, the joint production workshop will make a valuable contribution to the cultural and educational offerings in Vienna›s fifth district.

© Florian Mair/Creative Cluster

Who is behind the cluster?

The project was initiated by Karim El Seroui, who is a graduated architect and freelancing artist in the field of visual and fine arts and Zita Maria Kral, who studied cultural and social anthropology, worked several years in the advertising industry, and freelances also as actress and voice-over artist. Together they already realized numerous socially engaged projects and cultural events like the charity-art-festival "Barrierefreiheit im Kopf" in 2015, that combined an exhibition, workshops, music and panel discussions around the topic social inclusion of disabled-person-communities. Another Project was called TETE- A-TETE / Stadtlabor Floridsdorf, where a city-laboratory for artistic research was implemented in a marginalized Viennese district to create a social encountering-zone between residents and artists. In 2017 they finally started their project Creative Cluster, which was first located temporarily in a former industrial tractor-factory before it moved to its current location in 2019. Now around 140 creatives work on 3.600m2. Among them are 11 graduates from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna within the framework of a yearlong scholarship-program. Both locations are successful examples for the revitalisation of vacant urban spaces, independent bottom-up placemaking and decentralized, socially engaged cultural work with a focus on transdisciplinary practice and participatory strategies.

«Culture should be accessible to everyone. At the same time, since the modern era, art has repeatedly removed itself from socio-political fields of tension and has often remained only for itself and a knowing avant-garde. As an urban laboratory, the Creative Cluster will give art and cultural work a stage so that it can once again make a social statement and be experienced by all. In addition, decentralized cultural work will add value and raise awareness for social togetherness.»

DI Karim El Seroui, Künstlerischer Leiter Creative Cluster

Challenges and Possibilities:

Creative Cluster defines the discipline and is open in terms of location and people. This openness gives an enormous flexibility and visibility throughout the city. They are raising awareness on how important the city-wide access to affordable working places are, which is often forgotten in our gentrifying cities. But their concept also relies on interim use and vacant spaces. Which are getting more and more rare in the ever-densifying urban settlements.

Watch this inspiring video wonderland filmed in collaboration with Yilmaz Vurucu. They visited Creative Cluster in Margareten and got a glimpse of the versatile practices in this former school building.

https://vimeo.com/725966793/c6b66284cb

Social Entrepreneurship
Raumpioniere

by Hannah Breit

Filling urban voids

The Raumpioniere is an agency, which moves itself and others, in private and public spaces. Sometimes it takes off to expand its horizons and open up new worlds - but it always comes back down to earth to implement projects and ideas on the ground. The agency feels comfortable in open processes and broad fields of action and enjoys working with people and their visions.

Urban projects are often complicated to implement. Special knowledge is needed to obtain permits and to master the bureaucracy. The support and agreement of neighbours are important, the running and future costs must be considered. Raumpioniere helps people with these steps so that they can realize their vision of the city. To present their project, to get in contact with local people and to promote it, Raumpioniere provides them with the «FOA›RUM». The participation mobile offers you the opportunity to take your campaign from the online platform to where your supporters move every day: On the street, in the neighbourhood. With various activities Raumpioniere supports and guides the local community into new urban worlds.

Facilitation for all projects

Raumpioniere created a platform to facilitate and support people who have ideas. A big part of the platform are the activities related to crowdfunding, crowdsourcing and crowdengaging. It supports and guides visionaries to take the first steps in realisation of their project. Raumpioniere turn urban visions into reality. They accompany visionaries from the idea to the implementation of urban projects and support them through crowdfunding, crowdsourcing and crowdengaging. Raumpioniere see themselves as a cooperation hub, in solution-designing for issues of the city.

Raumpioniere in a nutshell

crowdfunding
Start your campaign and finance your urban project with the crowd! Raumpioniere will advise you and support you from start to finish.
crowdsourcing
Your campaign is unique - and has added value for other project starters. Share your experiences during the project process and bring excitemen to our discussion forum!
crowdengaging
Your campaign can be supported not only financially, but also by the time and know-how of the crowd. Where are the open questions of your project hiding?

(www.raumpioniere.at)

©Raumpioniere

Social entrepreneurship during Covid-19

Life changed during the COVID-19 pandemic in a very drastic way. Especially, at the beginning of Covid-19 the players in the field of placemaking or social entrepreneurship had to adapt to fit their activities to the new requirements and stay active, while attempting not to lose contact with their network and base. Raumpioniere were of course one of the pioneers in Vienna to come up with solutions to social problems during the pandemic. In the midst of the first lockdown, together with the concept office Visionistas, Raumpioniere launched quickly a virtual festival called "Homestage". The festival was linked to a crowdfunding campaign where the public could support artists who suffered from the regulations, by cancelling all their activities and losing their income sources. Especially artists who need audience and a crowd to perform their art and manage their livelihood were hit hard and for a long time from Covid-19. The proceeds were divided equally among all the artists and the organizers in the spirit of solidarity. Raumpioniere created a concept to support them and make their art available for their audience even in a time of social distancing. The concept relied on the mix of better and lesser known artists from different genres, to show solidarity and to enable artists to perform even in times of crisis and to reach a new audience. The "homestage" festival was the first virtual festival at that time - many, many more were to follow. Due to the success of the festival and the connected crowdfunding campaign, which raised more than 15,000 Euros to support the artists, there was a second homestage festival including a crowdfunding campaign. Participating artists included: Lou Asril, Ernst Molden, Thomas Maurer and Robert Palfrader, Folkshilfe, Mira Lu Kovacs and many more.

Who is behind Raumpioniere?

Raumpioniere was founded by Jan Gartner and Lisa Reimitz-Wachberger in 2017 and has since then been built up with great commitment. From the beginning, the goal was to involve as many city makers as possible in the process to build a functioning network of experts in the real world who deal with the same or similar issues and challenges. Jan and Lisa are studied/trained in spatial planning, cultural management and professional speaking. They work in project planning and event management, urban planning, exhibition design, publishing, university teaching and some more. Their collective work as urban designers are characterized by fresh ideas, creative actions and innovative (solution) approaches. To cover the running costs and to ensure the best possible further development of the platform, they are always looking for strong companies and initiatives interested in participatory urban design.

©Raumpioniere

Challenges and Possibilities:

Supporting initiatives and visionaries is a very honourable job to do, yet it costs lots of resources and capacities. For instance, the digital platform is a tool which needs lots of attention and work load to pull off. The project can be understood as an approach to strengthen good ideas and allow the implementation of them. In a context where these ideas and people are not available, the approach would be less successful.

LooPi® plant-based urinal for public spaces

by LooPi

Public spaces are aiming more and more for longe stay and having great wellbeing while using the space. Additionally, public spaces often have activities for certain times. We often think about food and drinks such event times. How can the public fulfil their other needs? LooPi® is a standalone plant-based unisex urinal for public spaces. Flushing water is treated with an integrated vertical ecosystem and reused for flushing. Microorganisms at the root zone convert urine into plant nutrients. The plants take up the nutrients, thereby cleaning the water. Surplus nutrients are absorbed at biochar made from agricultural residues. Saturated biochar can be used as soil conditioner and fertilizer. Water evaporated by the plants reduce urban heat islands by cooling and humidifying surrounding air. Water supply for LooPi® is mainly rainwater. The urinal in the single-person cabin is gender neutral. It can be used contactless and hygienic by adults and children. Within the current project "LooPi. BETA VERSION" (funding program: "Stadt der Zukunft", funding agency: Federal Ministry for Climate Action), a prototype is built, which will be tested in operational environment in Vienna, Austria, starting in June 2021.

A closed system wherever needed

LooPi® size is restricted to fit on a truck in order to be mobile. LooPi® is designed to take up and treat 30 litres of urine per day. Calculations result in evaporation of 80 litres of water per day during dry summer days, reducing the impact of urban heat islands. LooPi® contains 200 plants from 30 different species, attracting insects and birds, thereby boosting urban biodiversity. Detailed impact analysis (specially on nutrient harvest) will be conducted during project time until end of 2022.

Who is behind the project?

The project consortium is made up of alchemia-nova (idea, knowhow wastewater treatment with green walls) and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (water and biochar quality). EOOS Design GmbH is responsible for the design of the unisex urinal and general appearance. LooPi® is manufactured in Lower Austria, supporting regional suppliers. The project consortium is composed of four women in leading positions (shared project lead, water quality, design), one female junior scientist, two male senior scientists and one male junior scientist.

Challenges and Possibilities:

The projects potential is widely recognised. LooPi® is the winner of innovate4nature 2018, ClimateKIC Austria 2018 and Green Concept Award 2021. The multiple benefits of the project address different challenges in public spaces (human needs, heat islands, temporary increase of needs,) and can support the wellbeing on many levels. The maintenance of various units can be resource intensive also the mobile concept would need interim storage, which would need to rely on good spaces with natural light and rainwater access.
Loopi® Benefits in a nutshell:

©LooPi

LooPi benefits in a nutshell

Mobile and free from sewer connections
Water & energy self-sufficient
Stylish modern public toilet
Gender neutral
Aesthetic & functional plant wall
Inner urban biodiversity
Cooling & humidification
Nutrient recovery

Der Wiener Deewan

by Hannah Breit

Pakistani food for all

While we are talking about basic human needs, how about social entrepreneurship within the gastronomy? The "Wiener Deewan" opened on April 30 in 2005. As the "Day of the Unemployed" in Austria, the date marks an importance to the founders. The date inspired them to create a restaurant that could feed all, not only the ones who can afford a good and healthy meal. It is a curry restaurant near the university with a Pakistani buffet and the principle "all you can eat / pay as you wish". Guests help themselves to the buffet with a vegetarian-vegan focus and then pay a price at the cash register according to quantity, satisfaction, liquidity, which seems right to them. Drinks have moderate fixed prices and water is served automatically as well as free of charge.

Experiment became the business model

What was initially intended as a limited experiment has been able to be maintained since 2005 due to the overwhelming fairness of the guests, who have been convinced by both the concept and the quality. Natalie Deewan and Afzaal Deewan are the initiators of this experiment that by now is an established restaurant and a permanent address in Vienna. They employ 12 co-workers for full or half time, who were mainly former guests of the restaurant and liked the idea so much that they jumped in.

The Wiener Deewan has since then become a famous restaurant in Vienna. It is famous especially for the tasty food and the welcoming atmosphere. The decision to pay as you wish had several motives. Afzaal Deewan had in mind an opening campaign à la "free food", but since there is the risk to fall below the financial bottom, they opted for "pay as you wish". Besides, the people themselves would certainly know best how much their food is worth to them. In any case, it should be low-threshold. For the restaurant "pay as you wish" is the fine line between feeding people who are in need but surviving as project maintainers. So, in fact, our guests seem to want to preserve "their Deewan" and feed the communicating vessel system of the Vienna Deewan accordingly.

© Der Wiener Deewan

Deewan in a nutshell

Affordable food for everyone
Job opportunities
Trust based business model
Collective acknowledgement of the social contribution

© Der Wiener Deewan

Who is the target group?

Their concept is simple but well thought out and successful. Products from the Weinviertl farmers to the Indian wholesaler are cooked in rough quantities. The meat is halal, which allows a variety of guests to dine in the Wiener Deewan. They offer everyday vegetarian and vegan options. They really attempt to create food options for everyone and also remain affordable for everyone. And that's who the customers of the Wiener Deewan are: everyone. From businesswo:men around the district, local people, curry-fans, families… up to students of the various universities of the city. The Restaurant is a real transnational meeting point in the 9th district of Vienna.

The restaurant truly mirrors the initiators motivations: to create a fair food place, a food place for everyone. Not only the transnational and diverse costumers are an example of that but also the concept that food that is regional and healthy is made available to so many more people by just creating this place that helps them and their employees to sustain themselves and their customers to eat well.

Challenges and Possibilities:

Such projects need an investment front up and lots of trust in the individuals of the city. For sure not everyone has this premises but the Deewan is a beautiful example how things can be balanced and trust can pay off. At the same time the project builds on the confidence that the owners have, that their cooking is appreciated and at the same time it is a commitment to keep the quality and the welcoming attitude. In very expensive surroundings, where rents are very high, such projects may not be possible. But we truly believe in high replicability of such projects.

Social Campaigning
Julian Jankovic – Plastic Love

by Hannah Breit

One might ask why this would be an important and interesting example in the field of social campaigning, as plastic is seen as a threat to the environment and global ecological sustainability and after all working with plastic has nothing to do with any social aspects. Julian approaches plastic in a new and different way. He tries to link plastic, social inclusion and participation to enhance the neighbourhood community in Floridsdorf, an outer district of Vienna and find a way to give plastic a new purpose.

From waste to art with the community – for the community

The two main goals of the work are to raise awareness among the citizen of Vienna that plastic can do way more than just be this disposable product with this bad reputation. The other main goal is to create a supporting community around the neighbourhood. The artist approaches his goals by getting in touch with the shop owners around the district. The shop owners are invited to collect plastic waste for him, in exchange for their efforts they will get a handmade piece of furniture made out of the "waste" which they contributed. With this idea he set a milestone of support and exchange in the Floridsdorfer community. The recycled furniture is creating a lot of attention around the neighbourhood and people are really motivated about collecting the plastic waste in order to give it a new purpose and receive one of his beautifully designed and crafted stools or tables. For Julian and also the shop owners it is very important to raise awareness among the society around the topic of waste reduction and recycling. With this main goal in mind, they are creating a sense of community in which local actors and artists work together to have a more liveable Floridsdorf. Art and craftwork should not only be available and participatory for the people living in the city centre but also for the neighbourhoods in the outskirts of Vienna.

Who is behind the project?

Julian Jankovic is an Austrian Artist who mainly works with different kinds of plastics. His special interest in the material plastic started when he was trained to be a material and plastic engineer. He has great knowledge about the chemical and physical characteristics of different kinds of plastic and likes to use it in a special way for his art. He chose plastic to be the main subject of his work and art.

Challenges and Possibilities:

The local market in Floridsdorf will soon be showing one of his artworks that shows the benefits of recycling and represents the whole community participating in the creation of it.

Plastic Love in a nutshell

Collecting problematic material and giving it a new purpose
Bringing local business together and working with each of them
Awareness raising
Collective acting

Watch this inspiring video wonderland filmed in collaboration with Yilmaz Vurucu. They met Julian Jankovic and followed him for one day in his usual routine collecting and exchanging with the community in Vienna Floridsdorf.

https://vimeo.com/583426517

© Yilmaz Vurucu/xentrikarts

Vinzi Rast – Mittendrin

by Robert Körner

A social alternative to living together in the city

In another four-storey historic building in the same district operated Vinzi Rast. Since 2015, the social organisation has breathed new and diverse life into the building. Together with the architect team gaupenraub+/-, they have turned the old residential building into a mixture of shared accommodation, study space, work areas and in the first floor a restaurant. The building is enlivened by its different residents, who consist of students, formerly homeless people and refugees.
How did the concept come about?
During the Bologna protest in 2009, a group of students, homeless people and refugees discovered the vacant historic building in the middle of Vienna near the Votivkirche. With the support of the CEO of STRABAG, they approached the caritative organisation Vinzi Rast and suggested them to run the place, along the idea of a shared flat for students and people in need. Vinzi Rast itself was founded in 2003 by Cecilja Corti and from the initially small but ambitious project of a night shelter, an organisation with many different projects in Vienna and the surrounding area was created.

Vinzi Rast in a Nutshell

Mix of ifferent inhabitants
Common spaces and usess for interaction and exchange
Openness to visitors and space users
Self-financing elements through rent and restaurant
Collective awareness raising
Learnings and impact go beyond the one building
Shared activities bring together diverse groups
Backgrounds are normalised and not brought to the forefront
A sense of belonging is created, which many residents lacked in their lives before

The connecting place

The core of the historic building has been renovated to accommodate three shared flats per floor, which share a common room and kitchen, as well as their own small kitchens within the units. Each shared flat consists of students living with refugees or formerly homeless people. On the second floor is the study room, which, in addition to space to work, also gives a group of refugees the opportunity to take part in a language course every morning during the week. Workshop rooms are located in the basement and the roof is used for gardening. Together with a volunteer and the residents, the garden develops over the summer into a real urban oasis. The rooftop studio next to it is often rented out, besides providing additional income, it also creates a unique kind of exchange between the residents and the visiting people, which kind of advocates for the mixed use.

The Restuarant as an opening gate to the outside:

The restaurant on the first floor is run by Vinzi Rast and is not only offering good food, but is also the meeting point of the rather lively neighbourhood. This not only provides financial support for the project but also opens the doors to the outside world, creating a good visibility on urban scale. On the one hand, it helps potential donors to see where the money goes, and on the other hand, it is also a plinth, a connection between the building and the street, the zone between private space and public space. An additional integration aim of the restaurant is, to offer residents of the area a place to work, especially people who need support in re-entering into professional working life are welcome here.

© Eutropian/ David Schermann

Who is behind it?

"Vinzi Rast would never exist without the help of volunteers", says Renate. Only a small part of the staff is actually employed - a large part works on a voluntary basis. Some only work a few hours a month and others even lead projects. This diverse support is what makes the wide range of projects and services, that Vinzi Rast runs, possible. But that it can reach such a big audience of volunteers is also part of the history or even tradition. Cecily Corti, the founder of the organisation was a very well-known Viennese woman, famous for her commitment in helping homeless people. She knew influential people and had great contacts within the Viennese society. Her presence and work inspired many of her contacts to come, do voluntary work and support the project financially. Nowadays good communication and social media presence is taking over her part. One example among many successful volunteer projects is the language course that takes place during the week in the mornings in the study room. It not only gives the people a solid basis in the language but also gives them a structured daily rhythm, which many newcomers initially lack, since they have often no working permit.

How do homeless persons, migrants and students mix in the building?

Living together is always a challenge in the beginning, as the backgrounds of the residents are diverse, the needs and routines are different, often even the spoken languages are different. With time, people learn to live together and appreciate each other's personalities and particularities. In short, people learn to respect each other and perhaps redefine their expectations from each other.

What is the financial model behind Vinzi Rast?

The private donations are a very important part of the cashflow for Vinzi Rast. The organisation refuses public funds as this would constrain them to follow rules and regulations or having contracts. This topic is very delicate, especially when dealing with marginalised people like homeless or refugees. Having the freedom to help everyone, and not only those who fulfil the public criteria is exactly what the society needs. For all the others, there are also official institutions.

Only with this liberty, they can create a synergy with the public organisations. With this conscious choice, they find themselves in a niche, a very vulnerable niche.

People coming to Vinzi Rast usually don't receive any kind of support from the state. They probably don't come from the right country or haven't lived here long enough, or are not fitting certain criteria to be supported. Since some supporting schemes for homeless and refugees have excluding criteria or requirements, the offer of Vinzirast to everybody is filling the gaps.

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Challenges and Possibilities:

In addition to the benefits of the house, the residents are given lots of freedom to use and shape it according their needs. Motivated individuals have lots of space for themselves and create their own space for own action. For example, a refugee created with the support of the house management, his own Youtube workspace in the basement of the building. The project brought also lots of big actors, like STRABAG, into play, which shows how also bigger ideas for inclusivity can be pulled off. At the same time the project needs constant supporters and contribution of volunteers, which makes the project vulnerable but interesting at the same time, since it brings the hopes of various people into play.

Brunnenpassage

by Hannah Breit

"Art for everyone" ArtSocialSpace Brunnenpassage

After the Viennese "Gürtel" - the traffic belt around the inner districts - are crossed, the peripheric districts start which were formerly home for farmers and then to workers. Those districts get their fair share of densification and are a hotspot for societal changes and challenges. Otakring is one of the eleven so called outer-districts of Vienna. The entry to the district (from the Vienna centre) is marked with the Yppenplatz, which connects with the Brunnenstraße which hosts 6 days of the week the biggest open-air street market of the city. The Brunnenpassage is the cultural centre here, creating bridges between the inner-city and the outer district. It is located right in the middle of the square, at the connection point to the famous Brunnenmarkt. In this colourful and lively neighbourhood, the Brunnenpassage gives space for more than 400 events annually that range from theatre or dance performance to music formats, exhibitions, and film screenings. The former market hall is known for its transdisciplinary approach and work in the cultural sector.

The "Passage" is a place in Vienna where art, that is usually omnipresent in the city centre, is being decentralized and made accessible for a greater variety of people. The focus is clearly on participation and breaking down the stereotypes of "Who can do art?" and "Who can participate in cultural events?". It shows another important layer of the "typical Vienna" that was before the project came alive was often left out. "There are so many different languages you hear here on the streets. The school here has 90% of kids with migrant backgrounds. This is also typical Vienna, but not corresponding to the typical upper-class image of the city. What does it mean to be a Viennese person? Who has access to art and to society? Who decides what art is? These are the questions we asked ourselves and for us the response led to the creation of Brunnenpassage", says Anne Wiederhold-Daryanavard, the artistic director of the passage.

Brunnenpassage in a nutshell

Multilingual activities and events
Space for the cultural diversity of the space
Eye-level communication and collaboration
Changing paradigm on what culture and art is
Changing paradigm for whom art and culture is
Shared space for diverse groups
Backgrounds are seen as added value
A sense of belonging is created

How to do transcultural work?

The "lab for transcultural art" shows the richness of diversity in artists and arts in Vienna. Society in all its diversity is considered the starting point of creative production for the Brunnenpassage. The art productions are created in co-creation between professional artists and people from civil society. They promote encounters at eye level.

The commitment to diversity at all levels of production is fundamental. The artistic focus is on transcultural, transdisciplinary, multilingual, multi-perspective and intergenerational formats and productions. Artistic quality and socio-political goals are combined to create new collective spaces for a heterogeneous audience and to enable new aesthetic experiences. The Brunnenpassage is conceptually concerned with the question of how artistic production can establish practices that can be of interest to as broad a segment of the population as possible.

The passage is a learning space in which these insights are constantly incorporated into the work, with the goal of sharing the experiences gained and making them available to other actors. Multi-year collaborations with established cultural institutions in the city centre are part of the core concept.

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How to raise awareness?

Social campaigning is a big deal for the "ArtSocialSpace Brunnenpassage". It promotes a more heterogenous approach in artistic production and dissemination. A greater variety of artists have the chance to be seen in the city as well as more differentiated parts of the society will be reached through their approach. A very important step in the city of Vienna that is filled with artists of all kind and all backgrounds. In this space not only the already established and acclaimed artists find their voice in this space. As the slogan of the passage says "Art for everyone" they feature the artists that seem to be left out in the mainstream art world as well as they target the audience that often doesn't have the possibility to go to the city centre and enjoy the cultural life of Vienna.

Anne Wiederhold-Daryanavard, the artistic director of the place states the purpose and intention clearly: "Activism and art work together. It is like acupuncture, where you have many points in the body to stimulate. In the society of Vienna there are also

many points where you can really make a change and inspire. We need to show people what Europe is. Show them a new way: post national, postcolonial, post migrant. We need more spaces like Brunnenpassage."

Who is behind the project? The passage's diverse audience is reflected in the team of it. A really important factor according to Anne Wiederhold-Daryanavard: "Often people try to bring communities together, but they don't succeed because their team is too homogeneous. For example, I come from Germany. If the whole team was made up of Germans, we would never reach the Arab community. If we hire people who speak Arabic, it is much easier. I had a Muslim colleague and since she has been working here, other Muslim women joined because they trust her. When you have such a diverse team, you also have access to different social media groups and have different ideas." The Brunnenpassage employs 12 people and works the way it does with a lot of help of asylum seeker volunteers who work at the bar, as public coordinators or in childcare.

Challenges and Possibilities:

The colourful programme and multidimensional work are a crucial aspect of the project. The eye-level encountering with the multi-ethnic groups is for sure the main success criteria. This project brings voice to various groups of the society, which are often left out from free expression in a public manner. Of course, each ethnic group has their own mechanisms and dynamics and perhaps also spaces to be heard among each other. But bringing all those communities together and being the hub for such a wide range of people is truly an achievement. This approach is for sure replicable in many urban areas, potentially difficult to implement, when the diversity is not given or when the awareness is not ready for that. Also, financially the project is resource intensive and needs some experience to pull it off or good collaborators to make it successful.

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Germany

by Martin Barthel

Active participation in Germany has a long and strong tradition. It started to arise in the late sixties, when the post-war generation started to question the status quo. Topics of concern had been civil rights issues but soon so called "Bürgerinitiativen" (BI) started to appear concerning peace, environment but as well urban issues.
The BI's at the start often promoted an alternative lifestyle, trying to save old houses and neighbourhoods of the so called "Kalhlschlagsanierung", which aimed to destroy whole quarters and transform them to car-friendly zones, with - at that tme - modern perceived housing. Even in inner city quarters like Kreuzberg gigantic highways where planned, aimed to remodel the city to the ideals of the functional city as expressed in the Charta of Athens.
The mix of urban planning and environmental planning gave raise to many initiatives and ideas, which are still relevant and used today. Many of the evaluated case studies are concerned on environment (such as ElisaBeet or Mut zur Lücke) or reorganising traffic in the city (like Tag des guten Lebens or Kiezkiosk Südstern).
Additionally, many projects are re-thinking of how the city can be understood and organised as a community. The "Refugio" is working on integrating migrants and refugees, while "Tuechtig" is trying to provide a space where people with and without disabilities work together. The "Kiezhaus" is trying to organise life around collective decision making, while the "Haus der Materialisierung" is seeking to explore ways of how the city can work as a space for circular economy, using just the resources it has.
Further projects are re-thinking of how we communicate in urban spaces. The "Mall Anders", initiated by all Berlin universities, is promoting a direct conversation between science and citizens, "Map me Happy" as a method is seeking to show spaces of positive experiences, helping citizens to concentrate on "Happy Urbanism" by showing what people would like to have more of and finally the "Kiezkappelle" is not just offering a space for activities, but through the "Schillerraum" is visualised the full potential of public and private spaces in a neighbourhood, citizens can use to be active in.
While the focus of our case studies is rather on two big German cities (Berlin and Cologne), the practices however represent on the one hand innovations but also show the state-of-the art of placemaking, social campaigning and the promotion of social entrepreneurship in Germany.

Evaluated Cases
Kiezkiosk Südstern

The aim of the "Kiez-Kiosk" is to promote solidarity in the Kiez, German term for neighbourhood, and support the neighbours with a meeting place to exchange ideas, while mediating between those willing to help and those looking for help, creating opportunities to get involved in good neighbourly relations, more mobility in the neighbourhood through cargo bikes and rickshaws. The project started in 2018 and was initiated with the aim to increase social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Another activity is the maintaining and redesigning of the square in front of the metro station "Südstern", in order to aim for a better quality of life. The team is organising small events for the neighbourhood on topics such as health, culture or lifestyle. The project has good impact in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin in Germany.

How does it work?

The project "Wir hören Dir zu" was initiated due to raising anonymity in the quarter. The area has many newcomers and the isolation with COVID 19 lockdowns made the intervention necessary. Two to three long-time inhabitants of the neighbourhood are sitting down in the central square of the neighbourhood with two additional chairs - and anyone who feels like talking can sit down and start a conversation about any topic important to them. It is not a therapeutic offer, but rather seen as model for starting conversations between inhabitants' groups, who otherwise might not happen. The aim here is to bring neighbours together, increase social cohesion and activate neighbourhoods.

Website: https://www.bg-suedstern.de/
Mail: info@bg-suedstern.de
Tel. 030 - 311 66 00 70

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Who is behind the project?

The organisation behind is called "BürgerGenossenschaft Südstern e.V." and the collaborators are local citizens. The Kiezkiosk wants to facilitate interactions between users of the space and inhabitants of the Südstern Kiez in general. The project is a non-profit project and is supported by "Stiftung Leben in Berlin".

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Achieved results?

The Kiezkiosk exist since 2018 and helped to activate the neighbourhood. Beside the national acknowledged Covid-19 project, the Kiosk and the cooperative, running it, achieved further projects in the field of climate change (making the Kiez and other areas greener). The project is fully run, financed, and controlled by the local citizens. They can use the space as an independent institution, contributing to the development of the neighbourhood. The organisation has the form of "citizens cooperative", where not the municipality is the initiator. but any group of interested citizens. The innovation was underlined by the overwhelming engagement, as the financing of the actions are as well mostly in the hands of the citizens.

ElisaBeet

Together with the neighbourhood and other social organisations in the neighbourhood, it was possible to realise the "ElisaBeet" in summer 2020 as an intercultural garden and meeting place with a strong focus on environmental education and sustainable food production. In addition to a vegetable garden, a recreation area is being created on the 2.5-hectare open space. In addition to almost 500 square metres of cultivation area, the project also has about 1.5 hectares that will be used as a community leisure and recreation area.

The large open space and the wide meadows with their old trees offer a lot of room for various activities and uses to enrich the scarce open space in the Soldiner Kiez. The project focuses on the topics of integration, intercultural exchange and intergenerational exchange. The organisation is open for all kinds of collaborations in the area. The organisation conducts explorative workshops to generate new ideas and projects to improve qualities to stay in the field and increase recreation moments in the area. The ideas are developed and implemented together with the neighbourhood.

Who is behind the project

The "Elisabeet" is mainly aimed to be an inclusive learning and gardening space. Thus, the garden is open to any user, but the project team is conducting workshops with a special focus on people with handicaps and school classes and kindergartens. The project is financed by project funds of the City of Berlin and other donors. Thanks to the help of many hardworking hands, the vegetable plot, the heart of the "Elisa-Beet", has been created and acts as collective field of interest and activities. Over the course of March to November, the seasonal Fridays open activities attracted many people from the neighbourhood. Also, institutions like kindergartens and school classes visit the project for their educational days. The project is run by Himmelbeet gGmbH, which is a non-profit company established in Wedding district of Berlin in Germany. The follow their sustainability goals with placemaking and education. They work predominantly with local citizens, local schools, and kindergartens.

Website:
https://himmelbeet.de/projekt/elisabeet.html
Contacts:
elisabeet@himmelbeet.de

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Achieved results?

The "ElisaBeet" is a well-established open urban garden project, revitalising a former cemetery in a social-disadvantaged area of Berlin. The courses and workshops offered, already trained hundreds of children on wildlife in the city, sustainability but as well as gardening and intercultural competences. Urban Gardens are already well-established forms since the late nineties. The innovation here is on the one hand the location, as it is revitalising a former cemetery and on the other hand the idea to create a community garden as a direct green classroom, which is offering both – gardening and education. "Himmelbeet" itself is a neighbourhood's initiative, empowering local citizens to start their own projects. However, gardening has empowering and therapeutic elements. Gardening together is strengthening the local cohesion and let different social groups work together, share interest and exchange Ideas, helping to empower everyone.

TUECHTIG - Co-Working Space for Inclusion

"TUECHTIG" is Berlin's first inclusive coworking space. This means, in this office, people with and without disabilities work independently or sometimes together on a wide variety of projects. There are over 150 office communities in Berlin - but only one like TUECHTIG. It is Germany's first inclusive coworking space. Freelancers, entrepreneurs and employees come to TUECHTIG to work on their projects independently or together with others, to hold workshops, meetings and conferences, to celebrate parties, to make films or to be creative in other ways.

TUECHTIG offers freelancers, entrepreneurs and employees the opportunity to work independently or together with others on their projects, to hold workshops, meetings and conferences, to celebrate parties, to make films or to be creative in other ways. They offer 700 square metres of space, 20 desks and 4 rooms for rent, Wi-Fi, free coffee and much more.

TUECHTIG is an office for all people - regardless of whether they come from Berlin or Baghdad, whether they speak with their mouths or their hands, whether they are in a wheelchair, blind or hard of hearing, whether they are just starting up a business or looking for a way back into working life after an illness.

The aims are to improve the social participation of every individual and thus, they are constantly working to further reduce existing barriers - be it through additional on-site support from work assistants and psychologists or through adaptable furniture and new technologies that is developed together with experts from the fields of business, IT, research and design.

Website: https://tuechtig-berlin.de/

Contacts: KOPF, HAND + FUSS gGmbH,

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Who is behind the project?

KOPF, HAND + FUSS gGmbH is a non-profit company established 2010 in the Wedding district of Germany's Berlin. They follow their inclusion aims with social entrepreneurship. The project brings together a network of organisation working on inclusion of people with and without handicaps. The project benefits co-workers, who can work on their projects and business ideas, despite disabilities. At the same time, the project is very well organised in terms of financial management. The project is directly financed through the income from the co-workers and project funding.

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Achieved results?

The aims are to realise inclusion - in all areas of life in a society in which being different is not only accepted, but also supported and individually promoted. There is still a lot to do in the areas of education and work. Barriers in the minds and infrastructure still make access difficult for people with physical or mental disabilities. TUECHTIG, wants to show that there is another way, that inclusion has to be possible in the work environment and is ultimately an enrichment for everyone involved. TUECHTIG is the first co-working space in Germany focused on offering a work environment for any kind of freelancers or workers, creating a community. The primary goal is to create a working environment where everyone feels comfortable and can be productive - no matter if young, old, disabled, non-disabled, mentally ill, with a migration background, female, male or diverse.

Kiezhaus - Agnes Reinhold

The "Kiezhaus - Agnes Reinhold" is a non-commercial place where the idea of a solidarity-based society can be experienced directly. It is a concrete space in the neighbourhood that provides various offers for self-empowerment in the face of (social) exclusion, discrimination, exploitation and social isolation. Especially the immediate neighbours are invited to be a part of it. Solidarity, self-determined learning and mutual support in everyday capitalist life are the basic principles of the organisation. People who meet and get to know each other in the "Kiezhaus" have the opportunity to autonomously engage and organise themselves in political groups and initiatives based on their needs. Through consultations, workshops, courses, cultural offers or even information events, there is the possibility to make first contacts.

The idea is to build a space as part of the communal structure in the neighbourhood (Berlin, Wedding) and to manage it together. In the "Kiezhaus", different realities of life and social struggles come together. In this sense, radically democratic neighbourhood and district assemblies and councils mean future perspectives for a more self-determined life in the neighbourhood - beyond the logic of nation states and capitalist exploitation.

Various initiatives have so far decided to be part of Kiezhaus Agnes Reinhold, like Camp Mobilisation Network Berlin, Hands off Wedding, Oficina Precaria Berlín and Solidarity Farming. The joint action of the participating initiatives and individuals in the Kiezhaus is ultimately decided and represented by the Kiezhaus council.

### What is the structure of the place?

Those who are committed to a solidary and class-conscious neighbourhood need political spaces for this. The Kiezhaus sees itself in this responsibility. They make decisions in the Kiezhaus council and implement them within the spaces. All groups and initiatives can become part of the council, as long as they want to, according to the self-image, and at the same time part of the joint action of the participating initiatives and individuals in the Kiezhaus is ultimately decided and represented by a Kiezhaus council. Through this body, the space is politically administered and gives the active neighbours a common voice.

Website: https://www.kiezhaus.org
Contacts: Afrikanische Straße 74
13351 Berlin – Wedding
info@kiezhaus.org

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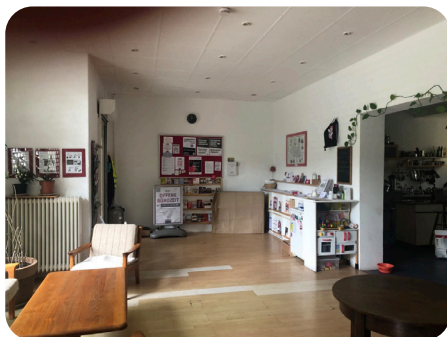
Who is behind the project?

Kiezhaus Agnes Reinhold collective is aiming for social cohesion and solidarity in the neighbourhood of Wedding, in Germany's Berlin. The members of the collective are the active stakeholders and their activities benefit local citizens, special focus on refugees and socially disadvantaged citizens. The place is financed mainly through donations and income from the Café.

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Achieved results?

In the Kiezhaus many initiatives take place and it became a place for so called "Kiezküche"- the neighbourhood kitchen. The Café and the initiative for solidarity farming give the Kiezhaus a good outrace into the neighbourhood. The Kiezhaus is an autonomous run space, which is despite political orientation open for the neighbourhood. This combination is rare, as in other similar projects tendencies of polarisation are recognisable. The groups organised in the Kiezhaus work autonomously and sometimes represent different positions and approaches. At the same time, they make binding decisions through a democratic council structure and try to create a blueprint for solidary heterogeneous cooperation despite all differences. On this basis, the Kiezhaus strives for local, regional and international networking with other progressive forces in order to be able to fight beyond the neighbourhood on broader social levels.

Refugio - Berliner Stadtmission

"Refugio" is a place where new and long-time Berliners live and work together on six floors. Refugio was established in the summer of 2015 and is part of Berlin City Mission. The first two floors are more for public life. In addition to the Refugio Café, here are the event venues such as the festival and conference hall, conference floor and catering kitchen located. The private living and retreat areas of the residents are located on the three upper floors. Everything is crowned by a roof garden with a view on Neukölln. The buffer on the second floor is formed by the studio floor and the dance studio.

To enrich the building, there are additional commercial tenants. "Give Something Back To Berlin" and its associated "Open Music School", "Querstadtein", "Stadtteil Mütter in Kreuzberg", "Bikeygees e.V.", "Rückenwind" and the "Kreuzbergprojekt" work in their rooms to make the world a more beautiful place.

What is behind the concept?

The basic idea of Refugio Berlin is to live, work and share. Considerate and mindful cooperation is indispensable. This makes it possible for cooperation partners, initiatives, the studio floor and, of course, the three residential floors to practise an often wild but also very human togetherness with each other on six floors. Refugio Berlin grew out of the idea of share houses, which founders Sven Lager and Elke Naters brought with them from South Africa. They built up and established the Refugio with the Berlin City Mission and are now planning their own share houses. Their own share houses. In these houses, the focus is on community and cohesion. This founding idea has become an important component of today's Refugio Berlin and has inspired the operator, the Berlin City Mission, to give this fundamental idea a place in the middle of Neukölln district.

Since the beginning of 2017, the Refugio team has been working more intensively on the financial security of the house in order to keep this extraordinary project in Germany open for all people seeking refuge. For example, the Refugio now has a professional event management team that rents out the rooms and organises events. Without the Berliner Stadtmission, however, this would not have been conceivable.

Who is behind the project?

Berliner Stadtmission is operating the practice in Berlin's Neukölln in Germany, which was founded in 2015. They follow the objectives of social cohesion and intercultural understanding. They work with NGO's with migration and refugee backgrounds. The project benefits local citizens, a special focal point is laid on refugee involvement and socially disadvantaged citizens. Their financial scheme relies on rent of rooms for events and workshops, Café incomes, donation and project funding.

Website: https://refugio.berlin
Contacts: Refugio Berlin, Lenaustraße 3-4, 12047 Berlin
E-Mail: refugio@berliner-stadtmission.de, events.refugio@berliner-stadtmission.de
Telefon: +49 (0) 30 / 695 966 -521 or -522

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Achieved results?

The Refugio is working self-financed since 2017 and has since than become a meeting places in the area, attracting not just locals but visitors from all over the city. The concept of shared houses, alas established in Africa a while ago, has for the first time been implemented in Berlin. Working and living together is building community and is helping especially newcomers to find a quick way into the community and participate in local activities.

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Kiezkapelle – neighbourhood networking

Since 2020, the Kiezkapelle at the New St. Jacobi Cemetery has been a neighbourhood space for a variety of uses. It provides space for workshops and discussions, hosts exhibitions and other events, and is a contact point for information and exchange on developments at the cemeteries on Hermannstraße. Various projects regularly fill the former funeral chapel with life. The Schillament accompanies the development of a citizen participation process in the Schillerkiez, the "Raumkoordination Schillerkiez" networks neighbourhood locations and offers. It showcases usable spaces at www.schillerraum.de. At the same time the Campus Climate Café approaches the topics of climate change, migration and everyday sustainability in various formats. The "Prinzessinnengarten Kollektiv" works in the community garden, conducts environmental education workshops and regularly puts delicious cemetery vegetables on the plate, while the district coordination builds a bridge between residents, actors, politics and administration and provides residents with diverse knowledge from the neighbourhood in the future.

How did it start?

The Protestant Cemetery Association Berlin Stadtmitte was founded in 2009, in order to meet the challenges posed by the sharp drop in demand for cemetery space. In order to be able to maintain the over 40 affiliated cemeteries, concepts for the conversion of some the connected areas are being thought out. The organisation accompanied the transformation process. The reuse of the spaces had to address common good, sustainability, public green space and social aspects. In the New St. Jacobi Cemetery, the EVFBS provides the neighbourhood and stakeholders with areas and chapel for neighbourly uses.

Who is behind the project?

Evangelischer Friedhofsverband Berlin Stadtmitte is the organisation behind the project, which is situated in Neukölln in Germany's capital city. Since 2019 the neighbourhood Management Schillerkiez is a strong partner and the local citizens benefit from the offers. The projects are often funded and the structural funding through the cemetery network ensure continuity.

Website: https://www.kiezkapelle.de
Contacts: Neuer Friedhof St. Jacobi, Hermannstraße 99–105, 12051 Berlin
h.gegenmantel@evfbs.de 0176-735 126 08
www.schillerraum.de

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Achieved results?

The Campus Climate Café achieved a lot in awareness raising in the community. The issues of climate change and migration have come into sharp focus in recent years. Although they are closely linked, they are often discussed independently of each other and aspects of climate justice are ignored. At the Campus Climate Café, we would like to discuss global connections with you and adopt perspectives on the climate crisis that are critical of racism. In addition, we would like to explore with you how we can live more climate-friendly in everyday life: together we will build furniture from scrap wood, make natural cosmetics, cook vegetarian dishes from all over the world and get to know sustainable and solidarity projects in the neighbourhood. The Kiezkapelle combines with many other usable rooms of the other neighbourhood institutions in the neighbourhood on the website www.schillerraum.de. This helps local citizens who are looking for spaces to implement ideas to get an overview and activate the whole neighbourhood. Such platform is unique in Berlin.

The chappel is a space open for everyone to implement ideas and launch initiatives. This helps the socially disadvantaged neighbourhood to let citizens join in and let their voices be heard.

Haus der Materialisierung

The House of Materialisation is an association of various initiatives and institutions that research, practice and work on the topics of sustainable business and climate-friendly resource use. The House of Materialisation is part of the model project House of Statistics, which has been developed in 2018 by the so-called Koop5 not far from Berlin's Alexanderplatz. The actors in the House of Materialisation work self-organised, as freelancers or (partially) funded in various associations and business models.

How is the house organised?

Since summer 2021, the Centre for Climate-friendly Resource Use has also been located in the House of Materialisation under the project management of Kunst-Stoffe Berlin, which was developed as part of the Berlin-wide Re-Use Strategy.

The development of the House of Materialisation is scientifically accompanied by a three-year research project funded by the DBU: "Reallabor Zirkuläres Wirtschaften im städten Kontext, Umweltkommunikation im Haus der Materialisierung" in cooperation with the TU, ZKB and Material Mafia.

Since 2021, the Centre for Climate-friendly Resource Use opened in the House of Materialisation. As part of Berlin's large-scale zero-waste strategy, the centre aims to inspire Berlin households citywide to embrace sharing, re-use and circularity. The Kunst-Stoffe e.V. association developed the project in cooperation with the Berlin Senate Environmental Administration as part of the Berlin-wide re-use strategy.

In 2022, the "Centre for Climate-friendly Resource Use" will have a permanent location in the House of Materialisation as a further Re-Use component, where residents and interested parties can participate in various formats. Kunst-Stoffe e.V. as the project management and other local partners from the HdM, in cooperation with SenUVK and ZUsammenKUNFT Berlin eG, can link the topics of climate protection and resource conservation with educational offers and actions on site and anchor them in the neighbourhood development in the long term.

Website: https://hausdermaterialisierung.org/
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c/o ZUsammenKUNFT Berlin eG,
Genossenschaft für Stadtentwicklung
Karl-Marx-Allee 1, 10178 Berlin
info@hausdermaterialisierung.org
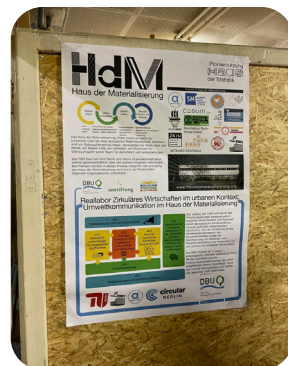
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How is the project financed?

The Centre for Climate-friendly Resource Use is funded within the framework of the Berlin Energy and Climate Protection Programme 2030 by the Berlin Senate Department for the Environment, Transport and Climate Protection, by Koop5 and by the German Postcode Lottery, in cooperation with Re-Use Berlin.

Who is behind the project?

The House is a collaboration of various actors, namely RE-Use Berlin, TU Berlin and many freelancers. The organisation is called "Initiative Haus der Statistik". The actors are using placemaking techniques and open up the patch for the re-use of areas. The project in the centre of the city, Berlin – Mitte, benefits local citizens, freelancers and researchers at the same time. The funding is secured through the city, and research projects access their own funding and also private donors support the project.

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Achieved results?

Inside the house more than 20 freelancers have settled in, focused on circular economy and helping to fight climate change locally. The concept of creating labourites between the city, universities and local small craft man to understand how a city like Berlin can fight climate change by re-using materials and resources available ion its territory is innovative. The house helps to bring the abstract concepts of climate change to local businesses and citizens, showing them easy and innovative ways how to contribute to the fight. It helps to empower and to understand the role each one can have in this fight.

Tag des Guten Lebens – The day of good living

On the Day of the Good Life, the streets of an entire Cologne district belong to the residents and associations for one day. Since 2013, the citizens' initiative Agora Köln has enabled the residents of one neighbourhood at a time to shape their neighbourhood the way they want it to be for one day, thus setting an example for change in Cologne.

Agora Cologne has been organising the "Day of the Good Life: Cologne Sustainability Sunday" in changing Cologne districts since 2013. The Day of the Good Life is a participatory project: it is organised by committed neighbours, residents, associations and institutions who work for a better neighbourhood and a diverse urban society in Cologne - for "the Cologne we want".

How does the project work?
Agora Cologne closes streets and some of the parking spaces in the area to car traffic. This creates a broad public space that can be used for neighbourhood, creative development, political debates or mobility for one day.

In 2013 and 2014, the day took place in Ehrenfeld, in 2015 in Sülz, in 2017 in Deutz, in 2018 in the Agnes- and Eigelsteinviertel around Ebertplatz and in 2019 in Ehrenfeld "hinterm Gürtel". With over 200 actions and up to 140,000 visitors in each of the last few years, it has established itself as part of Cologne's urban society.

Who is behind the project?
The Day of the Good Life was and is supported by a broad group of committed citizens from Cologne - also and especially from the respective neighbourhoods. "Agora Köln" is using placemaking since 2013 in the streets and neigbourhoods of Germany's city Cologne. The activities benefit the local citizens and allow them to enjoy the car-free streets as extended public spaces available for them. The stakeholders of the day are City of Cologne, local NGOS and citizen initiatives. Funding is provided through the city and by each actor for their own activity.

Achieved results?
The "Tag des Guten Lebens" was already carried out 6 times. In the meantime, spin-offs had been created in other cities like Berlin, Wuppertal and Dortmund. The innovative approach is to close down a whole quester for one day and fill it with life and ideas from the local citizens, companies, initiatives, giving total freedom to live "the good life" for one day. A free space for everyone is enabling everyone to express themselves, sometimes spontaneously, sometimes in a group, sometimes individually. For everyone with a positive attitude is space.

Website: https://tagdesgutenlebens.koeln
Contacts: AGORA Köln e. V., Körnerstraße 77, 50823 Köln
info@agorakoeln.de

MallAnders - Co-Working Space for Inclusion

The temporary learning lab in the Wilma Mall, initiated and supported by the Berlin universities, leaves the spatial context of the university buildings with the aim of increasing openness and interconnection with urban society. This new meeting place in the middle of the neighbourhood offers students and local actors with a wide range of expertise the chance to think together about the pressing questions of our future, to discuss innovative solutions and to test them directly on a small scale. After an interdisciplinary group of students creates a spatial infrastructure, the doors of the experimental space will open in early December for a wide range of interactive events on various topics such as social urban development, the future of teaching at universities, sustainable consumption and production, and much more.

Global challenges such as climate change, rising resource consumption, increasing health risks and changing mobility needs require new kinds of research and learning processes that involve actors from as many areas of society as possible. Public participation is in demand. To this end, members of the Natural Building Lab at the Technical University (TU) Berlin are designing a space on a 300 square metre shop floor that breaks down the (perceived) barriers between science and society. They want to invite citizens, civil society actors, business representatives, artists and politicians to debates, workshops, pop-up exhibitions, performances, science slams, hackathons and project workshops with researchers.

Who is behind the project?

The project is initiated by Berlin University Alliance, who wants to bring science and society closer in Berlin-Charlottenburg. The project is designed to happen between 2021 and 2022. The designated stakeholders are Fu, TU and HU Berlin, Charite. They aim to benefit local citizens, academics and students at the same time. Funding is given through the city and the Federal Government.

Website: https://mall-anders.berlin/
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Mall Anders
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Wilmersdorfer Str. 46, 10627 Berlin

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Achieved results?

The lab had already more than 60 events organised and is showcasing every day at the normal mall opening hours a forum of how science and society should get into contact and is inviting the neighbourhood to discuss and explore together with scientist the question of tomorrow. Placemaking is meeting citizen science. The concept is relatively new and especially using a "normal" shop in a mall is an innovative concept. The AndersMall project is promoting the dialogue between locals and science. This helps on the one hand to better understand wider context and on the other helps scientist to better understand the needs and perspectives of citizens, creating a better dialogue and understanding.

Map Me Happy – from positive place to positive space

Mapping positive experiences can change the way citizens collectively see and appreciate their city. It is very contagious to know what makes one and others happy in places. Individuals soon start seeing places through new eyes and start seeing positive features in other places.

A more positive imagination of space can have very real effects. Only if one knows what makes one place better than others, we know what to keep, what we need more of and where. It is then an easy step to compare what is planned by the government to what is publicly desired. The "Map Me Happy" becomes an instrument that city planners cannot ignore. In the end, public places can only exist when they are actively used and when there is a real need for it. With Map Me Happy one can re-image, diversify, open-up, shape and reclaim the public space with positive solutions.

A major aim of Map Me Happy is to help to see a city through the eyes of others. For this everyone can use the website for original excursions or look up the place one has a connection with. Map me happy wants to map any feature of a public place that gives a positive experience.

How does the mapping work?

The Mapping process can happen in two ways. Either individually anyone can open the map on their phone and map a positive place. For NGOs it is as well possible to use the method in "offline mappings". Here in public events the locals will be asked to map their places either on a huge map or give the points to a team of interviewer. The method is using the concepts of emotional mapping, which is a reply to the idea of "unhappy urbanism".

Who is behind the project?

EGEA Alumni started the project on the internet in 2014. The idea started in Kiev in Ukraine, but as well in Berlin in Germany. The project uses placemaking and works with NGOS as stakeholders. The beneficiaries consist of local citizens and urban planners at the same time. Finances are secured with project funding, donations, as well as volunteer work.

Website: https://mapmehappy.com

Contacts: EGEA Alumni

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Achieved results?

On the website already more than 500 places have been mapped. Public mapping events took place in Ukraine, Romania, Germany and Slovakia. Using positive emotions to map an area is a new and innovative way to focus on what people like and bring them together to discuss what they would like to have more off. Combined with a digital tool, allowing high visibility, map me happy is still an innovative project. The method is creating public debate, where everyone can contribute. Everyone has a place or a reason, why the life or use a specific area. So, it is easy to relate and be involved in concrete, not too abstract discussion on urban development.

Italy

by Mine Vaganti NGO

Mine Vaganti NGO presents us with some interesting initiatives from Italy that were evaluated through the process of the Urban Civic Education LAB. The main aspects of their evaluation are empowerment, participation and civic engagement. Those aspects were explained earlier and are the initiatives tackling them in Italy.

Placemaking

Il cantiere della Rigenerazione Urbana
– Online learning for urban regeneration

The project consists of an online programme, dedicated to regeneration of the urban areas. The objective of this online programme is to build shared competencies for business innovation. The conditions dictated by the pandemic make it even more urgent for urban actors to work together to build more efficient and inclusive cities, in accordance with SDG Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Who is behind the project?
The project was initiated in 2020 with multiple Italian actors, namely Assolombarda, Confcooperative Lombardia e Legacoop Lombardia, con il patrocinio di Città Metropolitana di Milano e la Direzione scientifica di AUDIS. Here professors and professionals are working together and make up the foundation of this programme.

Achieved results?
Institutional and entrepreneurial actors in the Milanese metropolitan area were called upon to discuss the construction of a "toolbox" useful to tackle Urban Regeneration processes. And set it all up to make it available for a broader audience.
The programme was created as free webinars with four Modules:

Urban regeneration and post-pandemic crisis challenges
Urban quality, climate, public space and new forms of mobility
Actors' engagement and regulatory tools
Economic-financial tools

The design of the training proposal was intended to be open, from the outset, to various players in the Milan area, with the creation of a Board which will play an accompanying and evaluating role throughout the training process, facilitating the dissemination of the proposed approach and the engagement of participants.
The programme is allowing anyone who would be interested in the topic of placemaking to acquire knowledge in the field as it is free and available online.

Contact:
cantiererigenerazione@audis.it

Urban play to regenerate

Gen.Z 4 BZ – Urban play per la rigenerazione urbana, is a project which was implemented in 2020 in Bolzano in North Italy.
Contemporary cities are rich in transformation processes. The elements that give life to these processes enable the gamification of the urban environment, creating new ways of using public space and experiencing social relations.
The challenge is to foster urban exchange and regeneration in the different neighbourhoods of the city of Bolzano through the active participation of young people. In line with the current requirements of social distancing, the girls and boys involved will use the city districts as a playground to become aware of their own urban needs, old and new, and those of their community.
The participants will be organised into teams and will work on different projects to readjust urban spaces for well-being and recreation, intervening to protect the environment or to facilitate the most vulnerable sectors of the population at the moment. The best project ideas will be selected by the young people themselves and will become a tool for dialogue with the city administrations.

Who is behind the project?
The GRUPPO INFORMALE DARIA SHMITKO - EMILIO GRAZZI, initiated the project to promote urban exchange and regeneration in the different districts of Bolzano. With the collaboration of the social cooperative Studio Comune, under the scientific supervision of Professor Beate Weyland of Libera Università di Bolzano and the architect Alessandra Galletti, expert in inclusive design, and with the partnership of the language school Alpha Beta Piccadilly the project was initiated and took place in August 2020. The main target group were boys and girls between the years of 13 and 25. The "Bando Generazioni" is financing the project.

Achieved results?
The innovative nature of the project lies in the involvement of young people in the Placemaking of the city of Bolzano, through workshops that will develop not only their creativity, but also their capacity to make decisions. The project aims to stimulate the empowerment of the Z generation by promoting their ability to make autonomous and responsible decisions on the basis of joint, creative and multidisciplinary work.

Contact:
www.genz4bz.it
info@genz4bz.it

Re-Generation – promote mobility and opportunities for youth

The basic idea of the project was to promote the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme with the twofold objective of increasing the volume of youth mobility and introducing elements of internationalisation within the youth realities active on the territories, with particular attention to the theme of recovering abandoned spaces and reconverting them into cultural and social activities. Youth workers are the main beneficiaries from this project that is funded by Erasmus+ an EU programme.

A virtuous mechanism was thus activated and concluded with the realisation of the blended mobilities and a final meeting during which various project proposals for the future were summarised and elaborated.

The project has produced a report, which can be downloaded free of charge, collecting the main youth experiences encountered during the project, and a continuously updated map of regenerated urban spaces dedicated to youth leadership.

The project made it possible to relaunch active participation in many contexts and stimulated interest in the European dimension, allowing young people to broaden their horizons and approach for the first time on the themes of diversity and intercultural learning, with an impact that it is already visible in the short term but that, it is easy to foresee, will have a long and lasting wave over time. Network of personal and professional relationships formed and grew over time.

Who is behind the project?

Re-generation worked between 2016 and 2018 in Italy and was initiated by ASSOCIAZIONE CULTURALE. The association aimed to increase the volume of youth mobilities and introducing elements of internationalization within the youth realities active in the territories involved in the project, with particular attention to the issue of the re-use of abandoned spaces reconverted into cultural and social activities are the main objectives of this programme. The project has international stakeholders as it is an Erasmus+ programme. Initiatives and Associations from Poland, France and Spain are involved.

Achieved results?

The topic of re-using abandoned places and involve young people in territorial changes is by itself the innovation of this project since the topic is not well developed in the formal education. Youth workers get upskilled in the specific topic and will provide and spread the knowledge they have learn among young people at the local and national level.

Contact:
https://www.linkyouth.org/news/-905re-generation-i-risultati
link@linkyouth.org

Social Campaigning

Paulownia Social Project

Paulownia has the mission of high-yield timber trees like those of the Paulownia species, following a regime called Short Rotation Forestry (SFR), in order to allocate the timber, cut on national and international markets. The project was implemented between 2014 and 2015, in Italy's capital Rome.

Paulownia Social Project is an innovative start-up with a social vocation, created by a team of experts from the fields of renewable energy, agriculture and environmental protection. Paulownia has the mission of high-yield timber trees like those of the paulownia species, following a regime called Short Rotation Forestry (SFR), in order to allocate the timber, cut on national and international markets.

Pulownia Srl has conducted a campaign of capital raising through the platform Assiteca Crowd, authorized by CONSOB, in 2014 and indicated in the report on crowdfunding in Italy (2016) as one of six most successful campaigns between 2014 and 2015. The campaign represents a best practice of crowd investing as in just 56 days has raised a capital of 520.000 Euros.

Who is behind the project?

It was managed by Assiteca Crowd, authorized by CONSOB to operate in Italy as a Manager of portals for the collection of high-risk capital. 520.000 Euros that represent the strong interest of investors for innovative Italian start-ups. The roles of the people behind the project are mixed, Stakeholders and investors work closely together. 12 Professional investors are the stakeholders of this project.

Achieved results?

The accumulation of 520 thousand euros needed through a crowdfunding campaign was the main result that was achieved through the project. The campaign represents a best practice of crowd investing as in just 56 days has raised a half million Euros. Innovative way of providing resources promoted through social campaign. Lesson learnt: In order to have a successful equity crowdfunding campaign, there are fundamental pillars that this campaign followed: 1/a product that everyone can understand (in this case, trees), 2/profit distribution, 3/reduction of risk for the investment made (in this case, the start-up already had a contract with a fixed price for the 20 following years), 4/possibility to sell its shares to the funders making it easy for the investors to get out of the investment made.

www.paulowniasocialproject.it/
Registered office: Via Famiano Nardini
Roma
Phone: 089919191

Campagna Green

Graffiti to promote the commercial financing organisation Banca5

Street advertising is still relatively uncommon in Italy, and a street advertising tour is practically unheard of. A Milan agency launched one to promote Banca5, a new banking service by the Sanpaolo Group. The goal of this campaign was implementing the values relating to the new service to the already existing brand reputation and to establish Sanpaolo as being "Europe's first proximity bank". The adverts appeared in several Italian cities in the form of horizontal graffiti on roads and pavements, making generous use of a bright green colour that made them instantly recognisable. One definite upside to this kind of advertising is its sustainability: it does not require any material to be printed on paper and therefore saves on both budget and waste. It is also easier to target micro-zones with a campaign such as this one, thereby implementing what is, in essence, a proximity marketing campaign without the use of beacon technology. Handcrafted messages made from a mixture of yoghurt, chalk and cellulose, completely natural and temporary. A media solution that achieves excellent performance and millimetric targeting, while guaranteeing minimal environmental impact and zero waste production.

Who is behind the project?

Jungle, an independent Unconventional Marketing agency, started the campaign in 2017 in Italy. The aim was to promote Banca5, the Intesa Sanpaolo Group's new banking service and 'first proximity bank' in Europe. The campaign benefited Sanpaolo Group but also the environment since this particular street advertising is made by natural products and avoid the use of physical materials. As a commercial campaign it was also financed by the Sanpaolo Group.

Achieved results?

The adverts appeared in several Italian cities in the form of horizontal graffiti on roads and pavements, making generous use of a bright green colour that made them instantly recognisable. The innovation lies on the street advertising which is a form of outdoor communication, the result of a synthesis of street art and guerrilla marketing, which transforms pavement surfaces into potential communication spaces.
One definite upside to this kind of advertising is its sustainability: it does not require any material to be printed on paper and therefore saves on both budget and waste. It is also easier to target micro-zones with a campaign such as this one, thereby implementing what is, in essence, a proximity marketing campaign without the use of beacon technology. The advertising creates less negative impact on the environment.

Contacts:

info@wearejungle.com

Nuova campagna social per SELFIEmployment

Launch event of the new social communication campaign of the "SELFIEmployment" and "Yes I Start Up" projects. The initiatives, under the auspices of the Youth Guarantee, are concrete tools to encourage youth entrepreneurship. "SELFIEmployment" is a micro-financing fund with no interest or guarantee, for the creation and start-up of entrepreneurial activities, and "Yes I Start Up" is a training course that provides the skills to turn a business idea into reality.
The new campaign will have new graphics and text created by an international group of students from the IED in Milan. Its strong point is the involvement of creative youngsters who speak to young people, in order to intercept the NEET target, which is one of the most difficult to reach.

Who is behind the project?

ANPAL AND ENTE NAZIONALE DEL MICROCREDITO, started in 2020 in Facebook and you tube channels the campaign. Create a new campaign for two projects that try to reach young NEETs. The first challenge, and perhaps the most complex one, is to reach this target group, to get useful information to them.
Offering young people who are far from the labour market an otherwise inaccessible opportunity is a crucial objective. Here a wide range of stakeholders work together to make "Yes I Start Up" and "SELFIEmployment" possible. The Fondo sociale Europeo; Sistemi di politiche attive per dell'Occupazione; Garanzia Giovani; Invitalia all work together.

Achieved results?

The new campaign saw the creation of a graphic line, a style of copywriting for the digital channels and social cards based on thematic headings: all digital tools useful to better intercept the young target at which the project is aimed. It is the first media project in the public administration carried out in smart working mode and approved by video conference, challenging all physical, social and logistical barriers, with the aim of involving more and more young people, especially those who are discouraged, disillusioned and consequently lazy, and accompanying them to the labour market. Young people involved in the project got to improve their skills in marketing and to gain an important and visible experience that can influence their entrance on job market.

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Social Entrepreneurship

Progetto LavoriAMO

Percorsi innovativi ed imprenditorialità per giovani svantaggiati

The main objectives of the programme are to contrast youth unemployment and increase disadvantaged youth employment. In order to do so SCS/CNOS promote entrepreneurship culture. This means they promote entrepreneurship in the cultural, social, touristic/environmental fields and promote entrepreneurship that promote social inclusion of disadvantaged youth.

How does the programme work?
- Educational training regarding social youth entrepreneurship (5 meetings of 3 hours. Total of 15h.
- Practical experience with a social and cultural companies (40 hours)
- Group project elaboration. 5 of them will be selected according to its social impact.
- Selected projects will receive a support and assistance - meetings with business experts for start-up consultancy.

Who is behind the project?
SCS/CNOS initiated the programme in 2014 in Italy, with the aim to nable entrepreneurial experiences. Start beneficiaries' ideas implementation process (help beneficiaries to build their ideas according to economic and political environment, to get to know financial possibilities, build business plan, …). The partners consist of CGS, TGS, CNOS/Sport and they worked with the supporting partners CISL and Enti locali. Disadvantaged youngsters, who are facing difficulties to enter labour market without any assistance (18 – 28 who do not have secondary school certificate, 25 – 28 unemployed for 12 months in the last 16 months, youth who belong to a ethnical minority and who need to improve language skills, professional education) benefited from the programme. The programme was co-financed by the Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali.

Achieved results?
18 ideas could be implemented through the programme. Innovative part is to hook up experienced entrepreneur with the targeted youth and to develop social entrepreneurship ambitions and the exchange and share professional experience. The direct contact with entrepreneurs, contrasted the reality of the youth, who are rather experiencing social exclusion and develop ideas for youth entrepreneurship.

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MARNOSTRUM Formazione e Assistenza per giovani immigrate

The Programme consists of 4 seminars to begin and educational trainings focusing on entrepreneurial activities such as accountancy, marketing and communication, labour law and computer skills. To support and coach young immigrate women in the implementation of their social entrepreneurship project using financial tools offered by legislation. The project aims to contribute to labour market development in the region of Puglia through implementation of new businesses and thus, new job offers.

Who is behind the project?
L'Aitef Onlus e la Rahma Onlus initiated the project in 2017 in the Province of Bari and BAT (Barletta, Andria, Trani). Young immigrate women between 18 and 35 years old whose residency is based in Bari or Bat (Barletta, Andria, Trani) – Puglia were benefitting from the project. Co-financing is provided by Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Dipartimento della Gioventù e del Servizio Civile Nazionale.

Achieved results?
Innovative part is the combining of two social challenges: migrants' social exclusion and the lack of women entrepreneurship. The project empowers women through promotion of entrepreneurship and social inclusion.

www.marnostrum.it

IN^3 (INcuba): INcubazione di imprese di INnovazione sociale per l'INclusione socioeconomica giovanile.

- Information and sensibilisation.
- Education
- Coaching and assistance/incubation
-

Who is behind the project?
ICEI and Cittadini del mondo worked between 2016 and 2018 on the project in Milan in Italy, with the aim to promote entrepreneurship and social inclusion. The aim is to give professional opportunities through entrepreneurship to vulnerable youngsters in Milan who could be facing social and economic exclusion. The stakeholders are FabriQ (Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini e Impact Hub Milano); Comunità Nuova onlus. Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano and Ente aderente: Comune di Milano. The project supports youth NEETs in the age group 15 - 34 years, which are socially vulnerable and live in the region of Lombardia. The project is financed by Fondazione Cariplo and Fondazione Giulini.
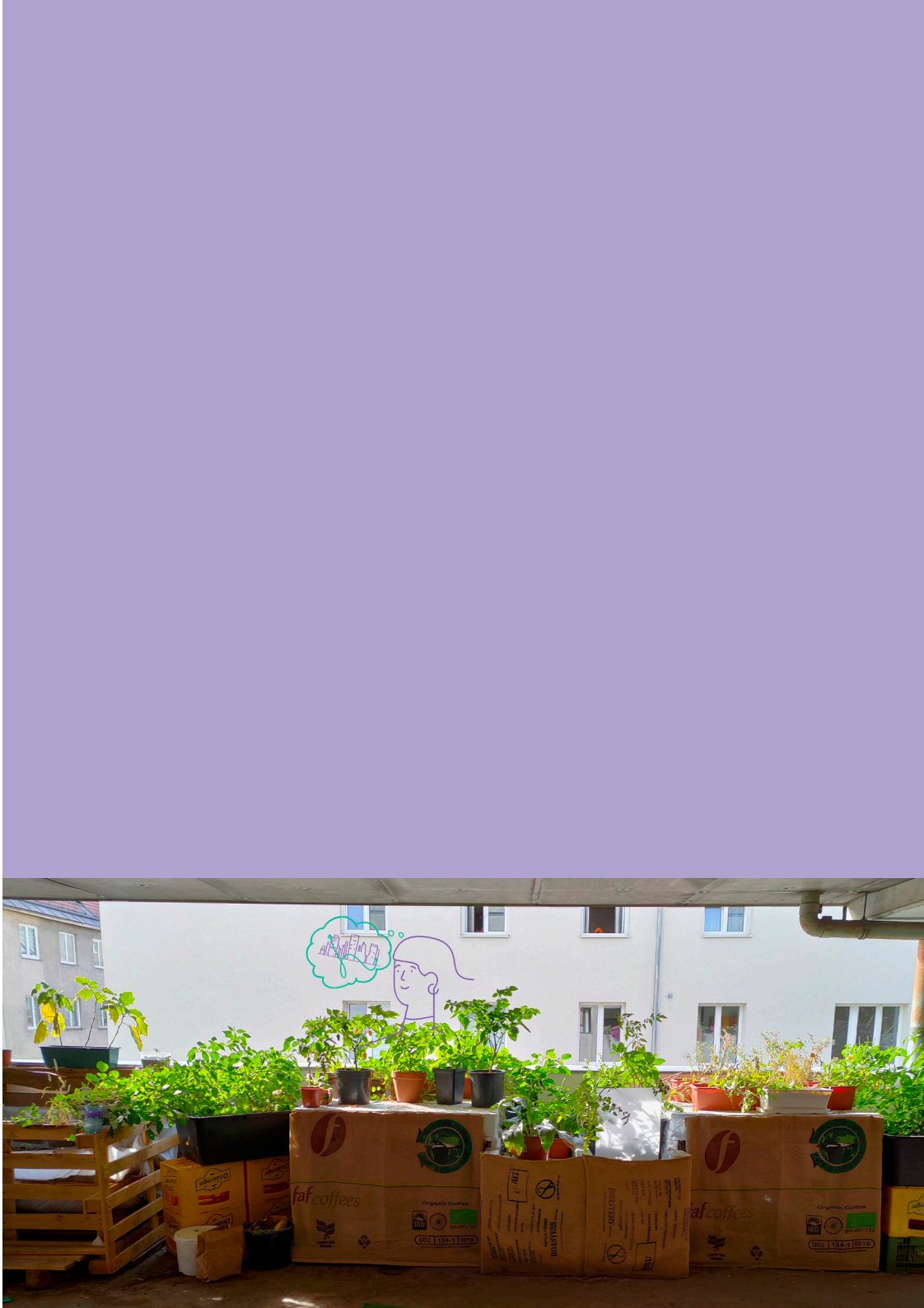Achieved results?
The project promotes social inclusion while promoting social entrepreneurship among youth NEETS.

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Chapter4:
Learning and Exchange

In the UCE LAB project the project aims include also cross collaboration and and interdisciplinary learning. With the reach experience of the evaluated cases, the project partners elaborated a learning program in order to empower the Training participants. Cross collaboration learning was achieved with the international trainings.

Training 1: Learning from Vienna experiences
by Hannah Breit and Robert Körner

The training week in September 2021 in Vienna was the first international training for the participants from all three partner countries. Wonderland prepared a week full of interesting site visits and daily tasks for 5 days of training. Approaching the contents with a non-formal education methodology the participants who were selected by the partner organisations could get into the topic very easily and have a soft start for the upcoming tasks and training activities. The training had the objectives to meet some local practices and give ideas for own projects and reflect on the objectives, achievements and also risks of each practice. Therefore, the on-site tasks were a preparation for the implementation of own project ideas. The participants were eager to complete all the tasks and learn more and more about the topics of the project.

Tuesday, 09.2021 .14

Wonderland and the participants met on Tuesday in Vienna. The first impressions of Vienna took place in the 9th district as the participants and trainers came together at WUK a socio-cultural center in Vienna. From there they all went to the first venue the Vinzi Rast. The Vinzi Rast was the first site visit of the week and the tasks for the participants started right away. As the Vinzi Rast is one interesting place, the participants undertook their first activity with a lot of curiosity. Taking pictures, asking questions, recording the interview was among the tasks and it seemed like everyone was enjoying it. The morning filled with tasks and presentations was also the perfect opportunity to get to know each other, find out about the other's backgrounds and find the perfect working groups for the week. Wonderland introduced the LAB, Vienna, and themselves. The morning went by in a minute and the participants could get a first impression of Vienna, wonderland and each other. (Link to evaluated cases) The afternoon was off, so everybody could take a little tour through the city and have a look at the sights they really wanted to see. In the evening all came back together to have a film screening. It was a great night with an interesting discussion following the film. After the first day every one of the participants was fed with impressions, new information and excitement for the upcoming week.

Wednesday, 15.09.2021

Meeting point for the 2nd Day of the Training was Columbusplatz in Vienna Favoriten. The 10th district of Vienna is famous for its tasty Döner and lively streets. The team met specifically at the Columbusplatz because before they would go on to visit Zukunftshof they had a look at what's going on in the public space of Vienna Favoriten. A special city furniture with included trees was presented. Later, the group would find out that this was the product and idea of Treecycle. With that little knowledge they had gotten at Columbusplatz the group headed to their next visit. They went together by bus and by underground to the Zukunftshof, that is situated in the southern outskirts of Vienna. Arrived there everyone needed to take a little break in the community space of Zukunftshof. It was a hot day with lots of sunshine, so the perfect weather to escape the heat of the city to the gentler temperatures of the outskirts, and at the same time get a quite different perspective on vienna. Before lunch the initiator of Zukunftshof Andreas Gugumuck took of his time to show the group around the place and explain its purpose and function. (Link to evaluated cases) For lunch the trainers were so kind to bring self-made couscous salad and the group enjoyed the lunch together with the people from Zukunftshof and Treecycle in the common room.
After lunch they took a tour into the garage of Treecycle. Theresa Schütz and Johannes Wiener from Treecycle explained the concept of their urban furniture with all its features. The group could have a look behind the scenes of a placemaking project that involves social entrepreneurship as well as social campaigning. The participants had a lot of questions on how to get started with their own ideas in their own context and the people of Treecycle were perfect to answer those as they just been at this point a few months ago with their project. After the interesting talk the group got back to the common room, and they took some time to work on their assignments and tasks for the week.

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Thursday, 16.09.2021

On Thursday morning a hike through the city was planned. The group met between the 6th and the 15th district in Vienna at a small square to start the Street Art Hiking Trail from there. This hiking trail was put together by Vienna Murals and show the most impressing murals all over Vienna. The main purpose behind it was to experience what value street art could have other than the artistic and aesthetic one. The Street Art Hiking Trail was the perfect input on how social campaigning in public spaces can work and what influences it can create. The group had its daily exercise and saw inspiring work in terms of civic engagement in public spaces for artistic and social purposes. After walking for a few hours, they all met with the project managers for lunch at Yppenplatz. Yppenplatz is one of the coolest squares in Vienna now. It is located right next to Brunnenmarkt, the biggest street market in the city. A colourful and booming district has developed around the Brunnenmarkt in Ottakring. Many artists have taken up residence in the surrounding area, making Brunnenmarkt and the adjacent Yppenmarkt one of the city›s liveliest neighbourhoods. Lunch was brought to the group from one of the market booths.

Shortly after the break the project coordinators and participants got on their way to visit Garage Grande which is located closely, also in the 16th district. Garage Grande is an auto garage that was overtaken by the civic society for interim use until it will be demolished and a new building is erected there.

What Garage Grande made of this opportunity is quite amazing. On several floors of the garage there are many opportunities for the neighbourhood. From a bike garage, an urban garden, sport opportunities to an exhibition space there is lots to discover. (Link to Garage Grande) The afternoon was spent discovering all those things and experimenting within the space. Some of the participants took the space to work a bit on their tasks the others got to know the space and the neighbours that are involved in it.

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Friday, 17.09.2021

On Friday morning the group had a slow start at a café in a very popular district in Vienna. In the 7th district café, they had the chance to take a coffee and discuss the upcoming events for the upcoming day and prepare their "mission". The idea was to start their own social campaign in the city with stickers. Stickers are a very inconspicuous yet effective way to call attention to certain topics. The participants chose working groups and decided on a topic they would want to address in their campaign. The next step was designing the campaign. Creative juices got flowing as they started working their stickers. At the end of the task every group pitched its idea to the others and explained the design and purpose behind the campaign. After the pitches they took their stickers with them to spread their message around the city. On their way to the next station a restaurant to have lunch they already started sticking their messages. For Lunch they went to a very special restaurant. The Wiener Dewaan is a very successful pay as you wish restaurant in Vienna. They serve Pakistani food and follow the social concept, that anyone with enough money can help finance those who cannot afford it. However, before they started to eat, as usual, an interview was conducted with «Natalie Deewan», one of the chefs of the restaurant. There they learned that despite the Corona crisis and a concept considered by many to be unsustainable, the restaurant has been around for many years. After a late lunch, the group continued their social campaign in the city and enjoyed the evening in the lively streets of Vienna.

Saturday, 18.09.2021

On the last day the group started their day at the farmers market at the Brunnenmarkt. Once a week the marketplace invites farmers from around the area to sell their vegetables and homemade stuff. The market offered the opportunity to stroll around and experience Vienna in its purest form. After this soft entry into the day the group had its final presentations. The participants were divided into four groups for the whole week and each group worked on a social campaigning concept for one of the visited case studies. The results of the week testified the knowledge, motivation and creativity of the participants. The showed videos, presentations, pictures and many insights on their experience of the Vienna training. It was a gain for the whole group to have this last sum up before the week would end and they would all go back to their daily life. As a very last task the participants visited the Brunnenpassage which is located directly next to the Brunnenmarkt.

Training 2: Starting to implement

by Annaëg HIERHOLZER/ CRN

The UCELAB training in Berlin took place from 9 to 15 April 2022. It was an opportunity for young Europeans from different backgrounds to develop their skills in project development/social and solidarity entrepreneurship. The programme of the week included both informal and formal activities. It was organised as follows. Through preliminary activities, the young people were able to exchange views on their visions of the ideal city and discover examples of inspiring urban projects. On the second day, they had the opportunity to discover innovative places in the Wedding district through a digital treasure hunt called "Actionbound". (https://de.actionbound.com/bound/duplicate-crn.) The second part of the day allowed them to collect the positive views of the inhabitants on the district using the Map me happy methodology. The data collected was then sorted and analysed on the third day. Following this, an introduction to gamification in relation to the environmental issue was presented. The methodology of empathy storytelling was then delivered on the fourth day and put into practice with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. All these activities allowed to establish a diagnosis prior to the co-construction of an action plan for a community garden named Himmelbeet.

The members of the project were met in the afternoon of the fourth day. Finally, the last two days were an opportunity to use the reversed perspective methodology as well as those related to the analysis of the levels of involvement of the stakeholders in a project, the use of the project management triangle method (a qualitative goal depending on the scope, cost and time) and the SMART goals tool to describe and express the objectives in the clearest and simplest way.

Learning these methods led to the final drafting of the action plan for Himmelbeet. The action plan proposes specific objectives and actions to be implemented in the field of public communication, e-connection with the inhabitants, administrative procedures, the creation of events and workshops and the involvement of schools and social organisations the project. Finally, the action plans had been provided to the Himmelbeet team, which will use the input to create a future vision.

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Ad-hoc webinars for all

by Bahanur Nasya

Reaching out to as many people as possible and share our findings, was one of the main goals of the Urban Civic Education LAB. In times of Covid 19 we took the initiative to expand the outreach of the project through digital dissemination. The partners decided to create a library of useful and inspiring insight on the main topics from players in the field. The webinars were created in a way that the participants themselves could be part of it and ask the questions they needed to ask in order to elaborate their own ideas. The PROJECT SPACE INTERVIEW SERIES was the perfect format to facilitate this exchange and reflection moment. In a direct dialogue all the important information could be transferred and all questions could be answered. The webinars are online available on wonderland's social media and Youtube channel. They are a must watch for social entrepreneurs, designers, placemakers and everyone who would be part of the transformation of a city. The selected actors also pass on insights and know-how from their work and approach. The series aims to be inspirational for newcomers.

Webinar 1 – Business compass – Anna Bradley
Financing in placemaking projects

To know how to finance your project is one important step in the process of realising your visions. Especially young entrepreneurs are thankful to get ideas and experience from people who have already been through this process several times. We invited Anna Bradley from Placemaking Europe to talk to us about financing sustainable placemaking projects in a webinar. She gave us some really important insights on the whole the process and models of sustainability of such projects.

Webinar 2 – Simeri Laboratiorio Urbano – Sven Kohlschmidt

Starting your own project

One of our participants of the first training week in Vienna was Sven Kohlschmidt. Sven told us about an already ongoing project he is part of. The Simeri Laboratorio Urbano. We were very eager to know what the project is about and how Sven and his colleagues went about to realise their ideas for the community in Simeri in Italy. Sven told us how they started the project and how they got in touch with the community. A very interesting experience and a lot of valuable information for all those who consider doing a placemaking project themselves.

Blog sharing of the process

by MVNGO

www.urban-civic-lab.eu

The Urban Civic Education Lab Blog was born with the aim of creating a space of debate, exchange of ideas and practices between the participants of the UCE Lab project and other people interested in interacting, and being inspired, with this innovative initiative.

In particular, the Blog, as part of the UCE Lab project, has been created as a project diary to collect materials and experiences from the Lab, which have the scope to report both the placemaking and entrepreneurship workshops activities which took place in Vienna and Berlin, and the experiences of the young participants. The idea of a Blog and not just a landing page or website, then, came about because beyond fostering communication and information sharing, during the developing stage it helps with the accurate note-taking and regular reflection. Also, given that participants are located in different countries (namely: Italy, Germany, Austria), to have a blog become an essential instrument to store data and exchange materials.

As the UCE Lab main project objective is to enhance the critical thinking of young people living in cities and foster the development of their social, civic, and intercultural competences, the participants were selected among +18 youngsters living in urban context, interested in developing their social entrepreneurship capacities as providers of added social value to their communities. To this regard, the Blog does not only represent a communication and dissemination tool useful to collect and exchange good practices, but it also constitutes a practical opportunity of self and community empowerment because it gives a chance to participants to elaborate and experience how knowledge is transmitted to others and which are the modality to elaborate and transfer expertise.
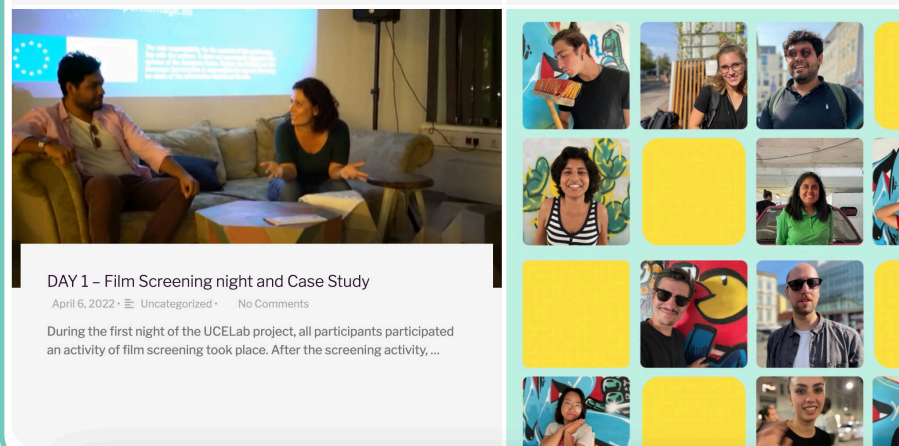
Chapter5:

Inspiring Cases beyond the partner countries

As a part of the research activities, wonderland started an international call on contemporary examples, which can enrich the studies performed in the UCE lab project. Thanks to a very big outreach of the organisations, entries from all around the world reached us. We selected the inspiring and interesting ones from various corners of the world, to get ideas, inspiration and motivation. This is a small selection of what can be done in our urban areas, when the civic actors are facilitated to thrive in our built environment.

Kieztraum – creating new ownership to a marginalized neighborhood

By Martin Barthel, Charlotte Warin

http://www.kieztraum.de/

"I like it here. This is an area where Berlin still is like it was. I am happy that my son is growing up here – I want him to see what life can be as well about. He should see that there is more than one group of people and that there is not just sunshine, but as well people struggling." This quote by a mother living in Berlin-Wedding was part of one of the stories which had been collected by the "Kieztraum" project of the Comparative Research Network.

Wedding is part of central Berlin, but it is off the beaten track. In the local media, Wedding is seen as the neighborhood of crime, drugs and violence. Locals complain about dirt, traffic and raising rents. Still many people love to live in Wedding and many more love to explore the neighborhoods original character. The "Kieztraum" project was initiated as a reply to raising competition on social and public space in the area. Since Wedding is a traditional worker district, the old inhabitants are rather poor, less educated and have migration background. They moved to Wedding when rents where cheap, pushed out of areas rents became more expensive. However, in the recent and past years students and artist moved in the Kiez and started to occupy more and more space. Old pubs where replaced by expensive cafes and green spots used mostly by the dogs of the area, turned into art spaces or other venues.

While the new creativity is welcomed by many locals, the older inhabitants feel like they are slowly losing their home. Together with the Quartiersmanagement Pankstraße, CRN developed a project to engage the older inhabitants, in a new dialogue between old and new inhabitants and co-create action plans to create a new sense of shared ownership for the public space. For this experiment, CRN combined three methods: positive community mapping, community reporting and action plan design.

©CRN

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Community Mapping

The approach of Kieztraum was to start a discussion about what people like in the area they live in. Thus, the project team decided to use the "map me happy" approach, which is focusing on positive emotions associated to places. The goal of this technique is to create through collective mapping positive spaces where citizens can meet and discuss. More information can be found on the website of the project. (https://mapmehappy.com/de)

This technique consists in asking people for the places where they feel good in their neighbourhood and placing it on the map. The mapping was done in public spaces in the neighbourhood. On a walkable map, the inhabitants started discussions about what they like in the area. They mapped places, which for them smell good, have a good optic, have nice sounds or make people relaxed and inspire them. Some neighbours came together to find their house but also to share places/their favourite places in the neighbourhood. In one of the mappings on Leopoldplatz, a group of Turkish teenagers started to talk with an elderly couple and a homeless man about why they like the rose garden in Humboldthain. A dialogue, which usually rarely happens.

After the inhabitant's favourite places were collected, the team asked in small questionnaires why they like the place and what they would like to improve if they could. Altogether the information was transferred to an online map which is still growing. By simply counting the team could identify the 5 favourite places of the neighbourhood. The top 5 places are a mix of cultural venues (such as Gerichtshöfe or Wiesenburg), public squares (Leopoldplatz and Nettelbeckplatz) and green spaces (Panke). Some places were expected but the popularity of the squares was surprising since they are often associated in the local media with alcoholism, drug abuse and violence. These insights helped to understand where the emotional spaces for the locals are. The Kieztraum team started to collect stories at those places for the second part of the process, the community reporting.

Community Reporting

Community Reporting is not journalism. It is a storytelling method where peers in the community collect personal insights, opinions or stories from their peers. The first step for Kieztraum was to train locals in the community reporting methodology. They learned how to collect stories, how to record and reflected on the ethics of collecting and sharing stories. Together with them the Kieztraum team identified the topic of the stories. The topic should connect the positive emotions with the challenges. The question was: "What makes you happy and what makes you sad in the neighbourhood?" During the next months, even during the lockdown of the COVID pandemic, stories had been collected. The stories where then summarized and together with the local reporters, sense-making sessions had been held. The results can be found at the website of the project. (https://communityreporter.net/kieztraum)

The main outcome was that people love to live in the neighborhood. They are annoyed by the trash on the streets and worried about the rising rents. This was shared across all groups in the neighborhood.

There were a notion that more community is needed and NGOs but as well coals felt they want to have a better network. All over they felt/feel proud (a pride) to live in Wedding as they perceived/a neighborhood that they see (like the mom at the beginning,) as the real Berlin, but people from other neighborhoods don't get it, as the media concentrated on the bad image.

The conclusions had been collected by the Kieztraum team and the storytellers had been invited, together with anyone interested to action plan design sessions, which formed the final part of the process.

Action plan design – from happy places to social impact

During two years, Kiezraum participated in the creation of new networks, in the activation of locals and started a conversation among locals on how they would like to change the neighbourhood, the perception they have of it and the challenges they are facing. The project team brought together locals in small workshops. First, they were taught through the EURBANITIES gamification how participative processes could be organized. Secondly, how to structure small projects and social actions, which would be carried out in the Quartiersmanagement area. Beside active citizens, representatives from the city and the QM participated.

The ideas where widespread. I.e: creating mobile green spaces for parking spots, doing actions to clean-up playgrounds with the children, installing art out of the trash found in the streets, organising public flea markets.

The action plans are currently still pending but the groups of active citizens are still connected and work on other topics. The key lesson from Kieztraum is, that you must take time to listen to the people. Connecting them though positive approaches strengthen the feeling of ownership of public spaces, which at the same time is addressing the challenges.

While understanding the challenges, Kieztraum showed that listening to the insights but as well let the community create their own curation and sense-making, motivates many to participate and contribute. Urban planners should not come with visions or plans on how to design participatory processes, but rather come with an empty canvas they will be helped to fill, following the discussion among the neighborhoods.

©CRN

Simeri Laboratori Urbano – Placemaking in the countryside
by Martin Barthel. Charlotte Warin, Sven Kohlschmidt

In Calabria, South Italy, is located the village of Simeri. Near the city of Catanzaro, it oversees three settlements, scattered between the mountains and the sea. Crichi is the newest while Simeri Borgo is the oldest, situated on top of a hill overlooking the Gulf of Squillace. The newest settlement, Simeri Mare, located along the coast, makes it more populated with locals and tourists. The oldest village covers a scenic hilltop, surrounded by a valley and consists of a dense agglomeration full of history dating back to the early middle age and Byzantine times.

In the second half of the last century the inhabitants began to abandon the place due to financial challenges and limited spaces for living. Today roughly 200 inhabitants are remaining. Only a few families with children, the rest consists mainly of elderly people. Infrastructure is in decline. Indeed, the one primary school and the kindergarten had to close recently and a mapping showed that approximately 75% of the buildings are vacant. The few bars and shops disappeared and the urban decay is becoming a serious problem, just like elsewhere in Calabria. Still, the villages have much to offer. Beside their natural beauty, they have rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In Simeri Borgo, the smallest settlement, one can find the remains of a Byzantine castle and ruins in the valley as well as those of a historical church, which is still in use.

This was as well Flavio Mancuso's conclusion, who grew up close to the villages. While working in Hamburg as architect, he kept thinking of the potentials of the area and had the desire to reactivate it and finally founded together with Sven Kohlschmidt, Sara Chinchilla, Greta Colombo, Lorenza Manfredi and Giulia Gualtieri "Simeri Laboratorio Urbano" - a passionate and international team of professional activists. They got in touch with different regional organisations working on revitalising abandoned places through public events, cultural initiatives and activities. They share the mission of creating better living places for people and exploring new forms of co-living. Their collective is involved in an international network and applies a co-creative approach based on a strong sense of community and local actions to the initiative.

The team went first to the villages, mapped the status quo and shot a documentary called "la scomparsa dei luoghi" in order to get a better understanding of what the real conditions of the area are. The second step was an international summer school held in the area and based in the former school of the town. Before the summer school started, the collective contacted many local actors, decision makers and citizens in order to understand what would be needed to revitalise the villages and bring the vacant houses and public spaces a new life. On the day of the opening ceremony, this idea came to life. Locals, summer school participants and people from the surrounding areas were present. Even the majors of the nearby municipalities showed up. Simeri was young again. The participants of the Summer School and other young visitors brought their energy and their creativity to push the project

in the right direction. Soon enough, the locals started to engage in the project. Little by little the collective became deeper involved in creating activities for the town. These preparatory steps should have been followed by an international Placemaking Week with physical actions in the public space on the spot to get some more actors together and exchange ideas for Simeri. Unfortunately, due to COVID, most events had to be postponed.

Watch: https://vimeo.com/570309528

The Simeri Laboratorio Urbano understands itself as an experimental long-term project, dedicated to the reactivation of the villages and to unfolding the full potential of Simeri. The collective's plan is to reactivate the settlements by improving the quality of space, exploring new forms of living together, generating new activities and by rehabilitating the tangible and intangible heritage. The goal is also to create it with, by and for the community. Indeed, co-creation and cooperation are the key. From young people to elderly, everyone contributes in their own way. Tourist's participation is also important to foster inclusiveness and local engagement.

While local networks were built on the spot, the collective created an international support network remotely from Hamburg. Partners like Placemaking Europe, Huasipichanga from Rotterdam, Stelle Polari from Berlin or the City Space Architecture and the Public Space Museum from Bologna soon were on board, providing outreach and expertise. Much knowledge came as well from the local association APS Asperitas, who had already worked with Simeri in the past. Suddenly the village was in the centre of the debate of revitalization involving local, international and national actors. The summer school program was diverse with activities like excursions, talks, inputs, mapping workshops, cultural activities and an open-air exhibition. The visitors had to follow a blue line between vacant spots in the village. The abandoned

houses were used as a place to exhibit the photos from the summer school exhibition or to show documentaries and good-practices, bringing them back to life. The participants and locals talked together about the past, present and future. The community experience involved spending evenings together, playing the Briscola card game and learning more about the local culture like cooking local pasta for example or craftsmanship like basket weaving. Both sides wanted to learn from each other. Many natural connections had been built, going far beyond the pure work logic. Art became a tool to engage the community. It helped to gather people in a public space that was once vacant. People would play, interact, experiment and connect with each other. Many locals were happy with the collective's work. Together, they re-imagined their villages.

What is the future of the Simeri Laboratorio Urbano?

The Urban Lab would like to give the process more and more in the hands of the local community. This includes developing a model or strategy with the municipality to map all vacant houses and try to give them an active use again, what they call the Commons of Simeri. The project team wants to give awareness to the inhabitants that there are actually a lot of spaces that could be used. In addition, the networks will be extended to attract politicians, property owners, summer school participants, local associations and to create a coalition of those willing to run the project in the future.

The LAB team got an understanding of the territory and got accepted to work in the village. They managed to get people to participate in the project's activities with enthusiasm. On a methodological level, the project is an inspirational case. Indeed, it rethinks the issue of abandoned villages in decay, which is not only a problem in

Italy but in many parts of Europe, where demographic changes like aging and brain drain are great challenges. The Urban Lab Team wants to learn from others to improve the own project. They also want to provide workshops, showcasing how local communities can get involved to design their own future in co-creative ways. As a result, and synthesis of previous steps, the team elaborated a comprehensive plan, containing various interventions and projects, that could be realized within the next years in terms of the enhancement of landscape, culture, public space and public facilities, infrastructure and heritage. In order to realise these ideas, many alliances have already been made, but so far they are waiting for a suitable and sustainable funding model.

Eurbanities – Playing Participation

By Krisztina Kerestely

Eurbanities is a game-based learning toolkit designed for empowering citizens to active participation in the local, neighbourhood level. This learning tool has been developed in two stages, and contains two handbooks based on local experiences of citizen participation, two online games based on the results of the analysis of experiences and two teaching curriculum that proposes 3-5 days long non-formal training sessions embedding the game. The handbooks, the game and the curriculum are designed for a large target group: first, to trainers and teachers who are engaged in teaching active citizenship in formal or non-formal teaching environments to adults or youth; second, to citizens who want to be active in their local areas but need to learn more about the possible tools and methods; and last but not least to students and academic or non-academic researchers who want to learn more about the practical issues of citizen participation in European cities.

EURBANITIES 2.0

Two stages – two concepts of participation

The two parts of the Eurbanities toolkit have been developed in the frame of two consecutive transnational projects realised in the frame of the Erasmus+ KA2 program. [1] Eurbanities 1.0 is designed for empowering citizens to identify an issue in their local environment – let it be about their wish to use of an abandoned green area, or a political decision to transform a park into a shopping centre – and to find their ways and methods to engage an action in order to improve the situation.

When gathering the experiences, it became clear that the description of participatory processes based on a comparative template would be misleading if we want to understand methods and tools used. First, because participatory processes are all constituted of their specific sequence of events, determined by internal and external factors that are often unpredictable, and that may lead to a radical derivation of the sequence of events compared to those originally planned or wished. Second, because participatory processes cannot be described as "achieved" ones: they are never ending sequences of events, where each result reveals a new potential goal or improvement to be achieved. Therefore, the success of a participatory process cannot be measured only by the usual performance indicators such as the number of realised actions, or involved people: it is much more interesting to evaluate these processes based on the change created or achieved compared to the initial situation where the process was started.

In order to keep the analysis as close to the reality as possible, and to describe the complexity and singularity of each participatory process, the team decided to use the method of storytelling. Storytelling also permitted us to describe the main scenarios of participation, that could be used as the basis of the creation of the storyboard of the first Eurbania game.

The scenarios of participation

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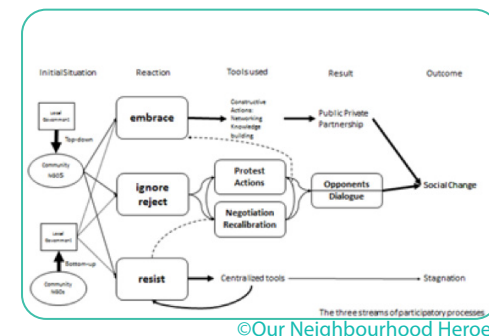
While Eurbanities 1.0 is focusing on how citizens understand their role and find methods for intervening in local policies, the second part of the toolkit is dedicated to the situation when the involvement of citizens in local policies becomes part of the local policies, but the level of their involvement is not clear and needs further analysis and recalibration. The second part of Eurbanities started its reflection based on the model of Arnstein's Ladder of Participation and its different modifications.

The experiences gathered in this second stage tried to concentrate on situations where citizens are considered as partners of co-design and cocreation of policies, and thus where a certain level of citizen control could be realised. Our examples represent different topics such as gaming and participation, teaching and participation, mapping citizen's needs, dialoguing with citizens.

The game –the story of Eurbania

The experiences analysed with the help of storytelling served to the co-creation of the game scenario and storyboard. The game brings the players and the learners into the a peripherical neighbourhood of an imaginary, but in the same time, quite realistic city: Eurbania. We meet and get to know the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, their characters and their mutual relationships and accompany them in the cocreation of their local community and the acknowledgement of the strength of their voices.

Eurbanities 1.0 is the story of Anna, a young inhabitant of the neighbourhood who one day discovers that some unusual manipulation is taking place in the green abandoned space that is used by the inhabitants as a park. The traces of the activities go back to the local government: Anna and her friends will understand that contrary to an initially adopted plan, the local government adopted the plans of an investor to build a shopping mall on the spot of the abandoned green area. The inhabitants understand that they need to do something to keep their beloved space green and they engage in a resistance movement: they write a petition, contact the local shopkeepers and dwellers to sign it, they organise a social media campaign and launch a demonstration. And parallel to this, they also learn that they can even go beyond their original aim, and they can start making their own action plan for the improvement of the abandoned area into a real park, to be used by a real community.

Eurbanities 2.0 brings the players back to Eurbania some years later. The local community is already well settled, the citizens are smoothly collaborating with the new mayor; Anna is also part of the municipality, bringing her knowledge of a citizen into the local government's work. The protagonist of this game is the player itself, who comes back after long years being away, to take into his/her hands the inherited leadership of the community centre of the neighbourhood after the death of his/her grandparents. Unfortunately, the situation in the neighbourhood is less happy than it seemed to be at the first sight. The Community centre is in a bad shape, the inhabitants are not ready to be engaged for the sake of the community, and the mayor has, once again, some "other plans" with the community centre… The player has to resolve a series of challenges before getting to the final public debate on different topics inducing the neighbourhood.

Some scenes of Eurbania game

The Curriculum – teaching participation

Teaching participation is not an easy task. Participation is subjective and practice-based knowledge, impossible to teach by staying on a theoretical level. When teaching methods and tools of participation, the trainer needs to simulate the real situation, in general by using a role play. However, participation is also a sensible topic: the causes citizens are mobilising for are in general strongly linked to their personal, social or cultural vulnerabilities. A special attention is therefore needed to keep distance from their personal stories in the training context. People usually don't feel ready to participate in a role game that is simulating their own real personal stories often made difficult due to frustrations and ongoing challenges.

On the other hand, people usually like playing, having fun and solving problems, challenging themselves with situations that are not theirs. Playing is a well-known and often used method in teaching and learning context, because it helps the learner to reach a distance with the topic and to learn in a playful but on the other hand, challenging way. This is the reason why we considered that embedding a game into our learning program would be an ideal solution.

Eurbanities curriculum aims at accompanying the learner through a participatory process, by facilitating the use of different co-creation methods in the different stages of participation.

The sessions support the main stages of a community-based process:

> 1) revealing and understanding the initial situation, the challenge and the needs of the people concerned;
> 2) analysing the challenge, and suggesting different ways as solution;
> 3) based on these preparing an action plan based on the commonly identi fied objectives and actions
> 4) participants learn also how to present their plan in a convincing way to the local government and other stakeholders, and how to find supporters through the mediation of their idea.

All the sessions are linked to different parts of the game that the participants play in between the sessions. The curriculum also permits the participants to base their action plan on real situations, therefore a field visit is recommended part of the sessions.

Eurbanities curriculum, tailored to the 3 main target groups of our project, is edited in 2 consecutive handbooks, containing recommendations, suggestions and variations to be potentially used by the trainers and facilitators.

The Eurbanities toolkits are available as open access to all potential users on the Eurbanities website – www.eurbanities.org

Guldängen Adventure Playground

Malmö (SE)

by Guldängen Adventure Playground

"Guldängen Bygglekpltas" - Adventure playground - is a child's Neverland in the heart of Malmö, Sweden. It is an outdoor place where children can let loose and the adults take a step back and hand over some control. The visitors are encouraged to use their creativity and build whatever they feel, with simple tools. At Guldängen, children of any age can visit without charge and utilize the equipment and space. They can come alone, with their parents or with their friends. They build houses, huts, art pieces or toys. Sometimes they just take things apart or saw a piece of wood into tiny bits for hours. Sometimes they just hammer 20 nails into a board. Some hold a hammer for the first time and others have never been allowed to use a saw. Adventure play is a way for young people to learn about shapes, structures, tools and materials in a hands-on process, to start influencing their urban environment and include them in the circular economy by encouraging the use of waste materials as a resource.

Beyond the children's free zone, Guldängen has become a meeting and gathering space for the community. Neighbours, parents of the children and others also garden on the plot. The space is used for barbequing on the weekend and outdoor birthday parties. It also has become an event space for cultural events, such as concerts or comedy nights. Originally adventure play was often praised for the possibility to let the child learn and explore on their own. Make lots of first experiences, try lots of things, learn self-directed and through their own exploration. Learn motoric and social skills. Create and have fun.

© Växtvärket / Nikolas Keller

© Växtvärket / Nikolas Keller

Starting from these assumptions we also believe that adventure play can be a young person's first step in appropriating space through architectural practice, empowering them as citizens and increasing their sense of local identity. An adventure playground is a unique space where young people take control in the public realm. And so Guldängen is important to create a space for young people to discover, participate and begin to shape the urban landscape on their own terms.

Who is beind the project?
Växtvärket is a so-called ideell förening, a non-profit association, built up by a member base. The association employs around 10 people to lead different projects, one of them is Guldängen adventure playground. As the members are free to use the infrastructure of Växtvärket to develop their own ideas and search for partners and funding, it functions also as an innovative ecosystem and platform. The team is made up of horticulturalists, designers, landscape architects and educators. As the organisation is built up as an association the structure is very horizontal, without anyone being in charge of everything. Each of the members carries a lot of responsibilities and the organisation thrives only through the engagement and passion of its members to start new projects or to engage with new topics

DANCING MACHINE IN THE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

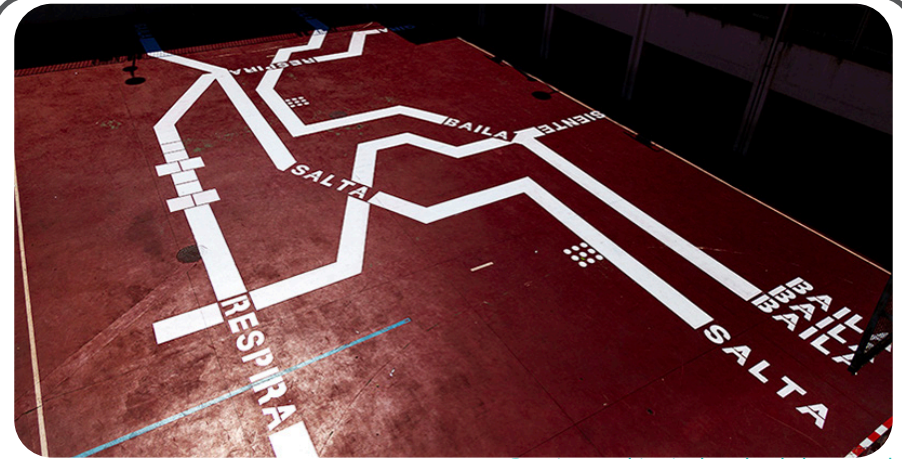by Dancing machine in the school playground

Zaragoza (ES)

How do children and the teachers who deal with them live in the school playground? To what extent can the Dancing Machine stimulate dance and playful movement? Will there be a correlation between the artistic design of the machine and the development of children's creativity at recess? What will happen when we put a new element in the middle of an everyday space? Will it leave any mark on what happens every morning in the playground, in the children, in the teachers, in the school itself? And in the team that prepares this project? The project is ommisioned by the festival "TRAYECTOS. Dance in urban landscapes". They began working on the elaboration of a "dancing machine". The goal was to build an artefact to introduce into a schoolyard so that, through music, it would change the behavioural dynamics of children at recess time. The machine, should appear by various educational spaces of the city, within the municipal program "creating neighbourhoods " that encourages inclusion, integration and participation.

The spaces of power

The first question consists of a reflection on the occupation of the free space of the schools through the various activities developed. An overwhelming dominance of the football world, which, in a position of centrality, appropriates the best spaces. In parallel, an alternative occupation of other residential spaces is detected by children who were not immersed in the dominant system. The intervention reflects a research about occupations, flows and dynamics, analysing the appropriation of the interstices and evaluating the dialectic of the different spaces hierarchized by the most common habits.

© Dancing machine in the school playground

© Dancing machine in the school playground

The transformation of space

Various experimental ways have been formulated to transform the space that children are accustomed to perceive in a very specific way and, therefore, an associate to a very concrete activity. It was decided to modify the perception of the place (the ludic scene) as a first step to create an unprecedented, almost dreamlike space that could host unforeseen activities.

The dancing machine

The dance machine materializes the arrival of music in a space. It contains everything necessary to develop the action. Beyond its container function, it is a mobile device that, once a place arrives, is deployed allowing the transmission of music that can be connected from any mobile device.

Beyond its purely musical function, there is also room for contemplation, formulating urban landscapes through mirrors built with mirrors, which deform space through various reflections. In this way, one can contemplate an everyday space transformed into the distinctive lake, something magical, in which the Cartesian laws of space dissolve into a thousand fragments and are concemiten that another space is possible.

Houch-Houma-H'ay

by Oecumene Studio
Egypt and Tunisia

"Houch-Houma-H'ay" - translates as '' Yard - Neighbourhood - District"- is a bottom-up placemaking project addressing social issues through play. The project' incentive is driven by the social and urban challenges in MENA cities which face questions of social cohesion, inclusion and diversity, scarcity of resources and overloaded infrastructure, coupled with being dominated by privatised public spaces and commercial playgrounds. The aim of the project is to co-create age and gender inclusive child-friendly spaces that foster children's imagination and enhance their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development with the overarching goal of touching on issues of social integration, inducing a sense of ownership and reducing youth delinquency. The project has been realised in schools, pocket parks, rooftops, public spaces in more than 17 locations in Egypt and Tunisia where inclusion of the children, local community and authorities, the youth and university students take place through each step of the process. The created space is not only a product of the collaborative effort by the local community, but also a tool within the overall process to achieve the project's overarching goal. Thus, 'The space was 'both a product and producer of change", say the initiator of the project. (Gottdiener M., Hutchison R., 2011).

www.oecumene-studio.org

The project was implemented in 17 locations in Egypt including 10 schoolyards, 1 rooftop, and 6 pocket parks. The process was then replicated once in the Medina of Tunis. The projects were in response to social issues such as: integrating of incoming Syrian refugees in Egyptian government schools and cities, addressing child and youth delinquency and inducing a sense of ownership in newly formed communities.

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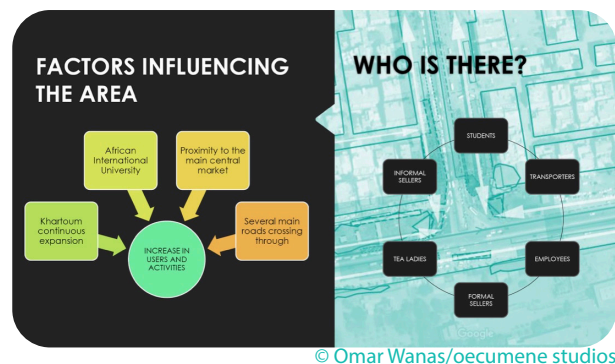
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The project brings all the local actors and community around one table to address their issues through a series of workshops with experts and university students.

The Project was implemented by Oecumene Studio in cooperation with and funded by UNHCR and Terre des Hommes, Egypt. The participatory approach is the backbone of the project and the diverse stakeholders assure the uniqueness of the output throughout the different contexts. Hence, participatory sessions were held individually then collectively with the ministries, local authorities, the local community, staff of the surrounding civic buildings (school teachers - library staff -health centre personnel) and most importantly the youth (local youth & University students) and children. The purpose of the workshops was for need assessment, round table discussions, design formation, design feedback and forming a community that would sustain the space in the future. The workflow of the project was youth-led where through Oecumene's partnership with local universities the students were the "Playworkers' who moderate the series of co-design workshops with the local community and children of the neighbourhoods or governmental school on the redesign of their surroundings. Finally, its worth mentioning that the projects were constructed with local construction techniques and through local craftsmen, resulting in economic benefit to the community and inducing a higher sense of ownership and sustainability.

LELKOL

by Oecumene Studio

Middle East & North Africa

LELKOL is an online annual collective knowledge incubation Workshop for Place-making projects in the MENA region that started in November 2020 as a response for COVID19. It is a Platform of urban activists in Middle East & North Africa countries who join their efforts to support local communities in transforming their public spaces into more inviting places. We support and collaborate with local actors who want to work on placemaking, social interaction, community mobilization, and human scale public space, and undergoing community placemaking to make the built environment meaningful, healthier and humanized. Maximize facilitating creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its evolution in a participatory collaborative process.

The main objectives behind LELKOL is:
- Promoting free dynamic inclusive public spaces for cultural activities with special focus on socially fragmented cities and underprivilege neighbourhoods.
- Promoting Placemaking as strategy for Peace-making through social inclusion and interaction among different community groups.
- Improving local authority's awareness on collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm.
- Improving community awareness on the right to have inclusive public space and on participating in planning and reshaping it.

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Through the first version of the project, fifteen teams applied and 6 were selected in 5 countries, namely Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Kuwait and Lebanon. Actions are initiated by community members, organisations, activists and placemakers. The program is divided into 2 phases. During the first phase, 12 online workshops, 14 private tutoring sessions, field visits, interviews, participatory need assessment took place from November 2020 to February 2021. The second phase is ongoing and it is the period where the teams are expected to develop their projects for potential implementation.

The project was launched and supported by Œcumene Studio and Placemaking MENA, Placemaking MENA Platform members. The team members are of diverse disciplines and backgrounds from urban planners, architects, artists, interior designers and products designers. The participant is also established members of the team which comprise of enthusiastic youth and students that aim to impact their surrounding environment and their countries.

Szabihíd - Bridge of Freedom

by Szabihíd- Budapest (HU)

The origin of Szabihíd was the spontaneously organized community 'meeting place' in 2016 on the Liberty Bridge, due to the bridge's closure. From 2017, as Valyo's initiative, the bridge becomes a creative and democratic community place for pedestrians and cyclists for a couple of weekends in the summer, consequently became one of the most popular leisure venues in Budapest, full of free, open, and colourful programs. Now Szabihíd is a non-profit cultural event. Its aim is bringing people closer to urban spaces, to their city and river, and uncover the opportunities lying in our urban spaces.

Part of the project's success and consequent sustainability is its nature in repurposing an iconic space of Budapest. Instead of creating a new community space for urban dwellers, Szabihíd integrated the community needs into an existing space. Through this, Szabihíd became the symbol of adaptable urban development, based in community building. This aspect also proved to be an invaluable perspective of sustainable urban development and planning. Szabihíd breaks down conventional genre and art schemes, and in contrast to the conception of art based solely on elite foundations, we place great emphasis on high-quality, free art accessible to all, regardless of social and economic background. During the festival, we present productions serving as good practices for the use of public spaces. As organizers it is very important to us to provide space for civic initiatives in addition to the invited programs, which contribute to the sustainable community- building.

The reputation of Szabihíd travelled all over the world. The Hungarian pavilion of the architecture program of 'La Biennale di Venezia' presented this project in 2018. Szabihíd has become an iconic event, a widely known symbol of urban freedom in Budapest as a bustling grassroot initiative, an open and accessible city festival based on developing a shared sense of ownership of the space. The event, through its numerous unique programs addresses and involves wide ranges of audience to use a new type of urban public space. Its popularity is extraordinary among the city's residents, visitors, leaders and those who are thinking about the city's future.

© Szabihíd - Bridge of Freedom

© Szabihíd - Bridge of Freedom

Following the example of Szabihíd, several similar initiatives are emerging in Hungary, and it also has a strong impact on community building: thousands of city-dwellers wait for the open weekends of the Liberty Bridge, and plan their own programs, be it sports, community events or art programs. Szabihíd serves also as a good practice for transforming an empty or unused space into a community space without building anything new. One of Valyo's long-term goals is to transform the Liberty Bridge into the first pedestrian bridge in Budapest, so we could call Szabihíd an experimental program and a preparation phase for a larger plan which would fundamentally change the infrastructure of Budapest, making the city centre more liveable.

Valyo (City and River Association) has been dealing with the public spaces of Budapest since 2010, especially with the Danube areas. In recent years, many positive urban developments have taken place in Budapest, and Valyo wants to inspire more similar initiatives. On an urban scale, they create small-scale investments which affects many people in spite of the low-budget. They are mainly developing underserved and unused urban areas, and transform them liveable and loveable public spaces.

Pro Progressione is a Budapest-based artistic hub that connects people, professions and ambitions by designing international collaborations in the field of culture. From this combination, creative ideas emerge – artists, cultural activists, scientists and experts of various fields meet and give cutting-edge answers for the questions of our age. We focus our capacities on the fields where we aim to have a positive long-term impact, thus Pro Progressione is built up on four main pillars, PP Social, PP Cult, PP Arts and PP Sound. We are active in the field of socially engaged arts, cultural & natural heritage interpretation, music as tradition and the productions of unique performances. Our innovative team disposes of a large scale of professional competences and creativity, each of our members are personally engaged with arts and culture.

LA RICHE URBAN FORESTb

by Mine Vaganti NGO

La Riche (FR)

The town of La Riche in France, inspired by the concept of "urban forest" of the botanist Akira Miyawaki, decided to plant over 600 trees and shrubs for the city community. The main scopes of this project were to contrast the rise of temperatures, implement the permeability of dense urban areas and the CO2 capture, together with improving the quality of life by nurturing the city liveability and aesthetics with natural   elements.

The concept of "urban forest" devised by Akira Miyawaki involves a method of restoring native forests reproducing the mechanisms of natural ones. Based on a specific soil enhancement coupled with the dense planting of local species, the urban forest becomes sustainable after three years of maintenance. The extension of this principle in urban areas consists in revegetating public spaces by planting a large number of trees and shrubs, in order to recreate islands of shade and freshness.
La Riche city municipality decided to gather participation and consensus by launching a special online engagement platform and asking the residents to choose the preferred location for installing the urban forest. During the voting process, a second location was so popular that the city decided to invest in a second green space by creating an urban orchard for the community. The project involved volunteers (inhabitants, schoolchildren, elected officials, local associations, etc.) with the planting of 200 square meters of urban forest.

www.jaimelariche.fr

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RENEW NEWCASTLE

by Mine Vaganti NGO

Newcastle (AU)

As many large city, Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia was suffering urban degradation. The most urgent problem regarded the spreading of empty retail and business properties which became a blight on the streets, putting off visitors to the area and leading to degradation.
Since 2008 the Renew Newcastle project has successfully tried to reconnect the local community with its spaces by supporting creative entrepreneurs who bring life, interest, and activity into under-utilised neighbourhoods. Funded from local government and business partners, the project pays landlords of empty buildings a nominal amount of rent to manage the short-term use of the buildings.
The Renew Newcastle initiative, with the help of local volunteer, carry out basic maintenance on the properties, such as a good clean, a lick of paint and fixing broken windows, etc., before handing them over to people and groups looking for cultural, creative and community spaces.

The immediate effect of the project has been to reduce crime, graffiti, vandalism and giving a significant economic and social value back to the community that has attracted business and residential interest in the city neighbourhood.

www.renewnewcastle.org/

© Renewnewcastle

SII TURISTA DELLA TUA CITTA'

by Mine Vaganti NGO

Naples (IT)

The artistic and cultural association Sii Turista Della Tua Città!, set up in 2011 in Naples, has devoted its energies to a process of cultural, social and artistic enhancement of the artistic and cultural heritage of the entire Campania region. The heritage, which is often abandoned by the institutions and is a catalyst for various forms of degradation, is upgraded by the association's volunteers through various actions such as: promotion of sustainable tourism initiatives, activities to raise awareness among citizens of the archaeological sites at risk, active citizenship workshops, urban planting and cleaning up, redevelopment of abandoned areas to give them back to citizens...
Over time, the association initiative gained affirmation and approval of an ever-increasing number of local and international supporters, including business partners, which has naturally transformed the cultural association into an artistic-cultural movement and has led toward increasingly concrete and impactful actions for the liveability of the Neapolitan territory.

www.siiturista.it/

© iiTuristaDellaTuaCitta

BUURTBENCHES (DEBUURTBANKJES)

by Mine Vaganti NGO

Netherlands

An interesting example of placemaking practice is that implemented by the dutch BenchesCollective (DebuurtBankjes) the aim of which is to create friendlier and more liveable neighbourhood by giving people the chance to meet on the sidewalks of their houses. Indeed, the Amsterdam-born idea behind the BenchesCollective initiative is to spark public interactions that might not otherwise take place.
More practically, through an online platform, the initiative encourages people to inhabit the streets around their neighbourhood by simply providing some urban furniture such as benches and seats, together with some meals and drink to welcome whoever wants to take part and get to know their neighbours.

The scope of the BenchesCollective project, the popularity of which has spread through the whole Netherlands and internationally, is to invite people to rethink the use of streets and urban furniture while giving them a degree of ownership over their own public spaces. Most of the people living in big cities, indeed, rarely get to know their neighbours and this kind of initiative can help not only in providing genuine conversation partners, but especially to reinforce the sense of local community in order to build safer environment as Jane Jacobs suggested in the '60ies.
The popularity of this initiative is also due to the online platform the BenchCollective made available to anyone interested in "opening" a bench, inviting strangers to join and to search for open benches around their neighbourhoods.

www.buurtbankjes.nl

© debuurtbankjes

URBAN KNITTING

by Mine Vaganti NGO

USA and Europe

Urban Knitting (or Graffiti Knitting, Yarn Bombing) is a street art movement which has started to spread from the USA to Europe. More specifically, the practice consists in covering, or decorating by knitting, part of urban furniture, trees and statues not only as a form of aesthetic embellishment, but especially as a genuine feminine way to do street art and affirm the existence of women in the public space.
While other forms of graffiti were mostly considered as acts of vandalism, Urban Knitting was about reclaiming and personalizing sterile or cold public places making them more attractive for the neighbourhood and especially for women who feel a female reassurance. Also, in contrast with other forms of street art, Urban Knitting works are considered non-permanent and for this reason can easily be removed without damaging the object they are covering.

The women and girls involved in the yarn bombing subculture are diverse in race, age, sexuality, class, etc., and create space for themselves and their art everywhere a space may need it: from college campuses to public parks. This creation and preservation of space is what motivates some of the participants, some of whom have never been able to access a political art space before.

One of the local Urban Knitting groups is located in the Giudecca island, Venice where a heterogeneous group of women yarns around the city in order to make the public urban space more inclusive.

© Yarnbombing-Giudecca

Summary

It is astonishing!

It is an incredible energy when people have an idea. It is even more amazing, when they succeed with their ideas. And it is absolutely breath-taking, when hose ideas are done for the common good. This was our starting point for our two years collaboration between the three NGO's which brought together Austrian, Italian and German experience. The project helped us all to shed a light on civic practices to make our collective encounters better, more meaningful and future-proof. We are thankful to all collaborators for all their inputs, practitioners who shared their insights, all participants who walked with us the path for a period and supporters who made this collaboration   possible.

This publication is a handbook, which is open access available for everyone on our digital platforms. We created it in the first line, to make the trainings available for everyone. Feel free to share the download link with anyone, who you think could benefit from them. Feel free to get in touch with partners and also with the portrayed practices. No matter if you have questions, feedback, collaboration ideas or just some nice words to share… we all need a bit connection, as well with you. Enjoy the reading.

Bahanur Nasya
For the UCE Lab partners

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Masthead

URBAN
CIVIC EDUCATION LAB

Erasmus+

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Republic of Austria

DEVELOPING

URBAN
IDEAS

CREATING

LOCAL CHANGE

wonderland
project space

www.wonderland.cx
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Project Space starts with an international idea competition where young teams from all over Europe are invited to suggest their ideas to improve an urban space and the selected teams are invited to test these ideas in the city.

Project Space has been held in Vienna (AT), Budapest (HU), Venice (IT) Kaiserslautern (DE), Cluj (RO), Paris (FR), Mannheim (DE) and Amsterdam (NL). If you would like to suggest a PROJECT SPACE in your city please contact: projectspace@wonderland.cx

PROJECT SPACE is an urban laboratory which selects workshop participants through an international competition. Since 2010, Project Space has successfully been held in Vienna (AT), Budapest (HU), Venice (IT), Kaiserslautern (DE), Cluj (RO), Paris (FR), Mannheim (DE), Berlin (DE), Amsterdam (NL), Peja (KO), Tirana (AL), Bar (MN) and more. Young participants from all over Europe are invited to submit their ideas on how to improve urban space. The selected participants are invited to test the ideas in the selected cities and collect first experiences. The main feature of Project Space is that citizens as well as members of the local stakeholders are also invited to take part in the co-creation phase. The target of the PROJECT SPACES is to come up with suggestions for the transformation of an area, so it can address the needs of the people. If you have an idea for collaboration feel free to contact us or follow us on our channels.

Contact:
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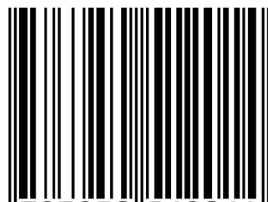projectspace@wodnerland.cx
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